

February/March 2022

Minnesota MFA Woodlands

Minnesota Forestry Association

MFA: an organization of, by and for Minnesota's private woodland owners and friends.

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

Minnesota Forestry
Association (MFA)

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MFA Newsletter
Vol. 24 No.1

February/March 2022
The Minnesota
Woodlands newsletter
is published by the
Minnesota Forestry
Association.

MFA Board Meetings
Conference Calls
8 - 9 a.m.

- March 8, 2022
- April 12, 2022
- May 10, 2022
- June 14, 2022
- July 12, 2022

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From the President

Greetings,

Thanks to all who took the time to cast a ballot for your fiscal year 2022 Board of Directors. The final ballots will be tabulated, and it appears all nominated incumbents and new members will be approved with board action to begin serving, effective Feb. 8, 2022. I would like to thank past members Gina Hugo, Chad Converse and Mike Vinje for their service to the board over the past several years. I wish them well and look forward to their continued support and advocacy for private landowners in Minnesota. I would also like to acknowledge and remember Larry Westerberg's years of service before his passing in the fall of 2021.

On another note, I would like to inform you that the Board of Directors took action in January to publish the MFA Woodland Newsletter once every three months instead of two. After considerable discussion, it was decided that we can continue sharing MFA news effectively with our membership and still be fiscally responsible because of rising costs. As we move into the future, we intend to utilize various technologies to ensure we communicate with all MFA members.

Finally, I would like to ask for your help in updating our life membership files. We have many memberships that have been in place for several decades, and would like to update our records. If you have had a status change in your life membership, my request is for you to call the MFA at 218-879-5100 or email me at president@minnesotaforestry.org. I have also been reaching out and will continue to do so. I enjoy visiting with members about their woodlands and am always interested in hearing how MFA can better serve our members. I thank you in advance for your help with this matter.

In closing, I am looking forward to sharing some thoughts and ideas about how MFA can better serve woodland owners in Minnesota.

I wish you all a happy and prosperous new year.

Your president,
Dave



Dave Roerick: Brrrrr... Today's high: 4° below zero.

Attend the Forest Pest First Detector Virtual Discussion Series

The Forest Pest First Detector program is offering another four-part virtual "Coffee & Chat" series. These are meetings, not presentations, so get ready to have a robust and responsive discussion! Invasive species experts will give a brief introduction to the day's topic and then open discussion with the group. Learn more and register at <https://extension.umn.edu/environmental-education/natural-resources-events>.

Minnesota Forestry Association

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Away from home for a time? Please contact the MFA office if you'll be away from home for an extended time and let us know when you'll be back. We'll hold onto the newsletter until you return so you won't miss a single issue!
Email info@minnesotaforestry.org or call 218-879-5100.

Forestry Taxes: Learn, Plan and Save Money

Many forest landowners pay more taxes on their timber than they should. Accountants can help to calculate taxes, but forest landowners need to understand how timber expenses should be reported, and how they are taxed.

Saving money on timber taxes starts by keeping good records and knowing how tax rules will affect your bill. The Woodland Stewards Regional Extension Program for Landowners, developed by a collaborative team of forestry Extension professionals from 11 different organizations, offers a webinar series on forestry taxes. Learn more and register at https://sref.info/woodland-stewards/2022?fbclid=IwAR2ABH_pbMmKjyMhtp32rU6GhwAPMqPnYQla2_J-UiazX9fLQqcJQrcfdwY.

Help UMN Extension Understand Barriers to Woodland Stewardship

Woodland stewardship has a tremendously important cultural, economic and environmental value for rural communities and others. Little research exists on understanding how changing forestland steward demographics may influence the ecological health of a forest and whether there are unique outreach, information or assistance needs for those interested in becoming woodland stewards, especially for historically excluded individuals.

The University of Minnesota Extension hopes to interview a diverse group of prospective woodland stewards in the state. Gift cards will be offered to participants selected for an interview. If you, or someone you know, are interested in being interviewed, please fill out the contact form at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdvW69Xbzv3W53Q1GFitw3UT3RY0GapU2TWknNg11DcfKpDzQ/viewform>. Contact Molly O'Connor at moconnor@cococanary.com with questions.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

For MFA members, the two best online sources of woodland information are the MFA website at minnesotaforestry.org, and the University of Minnesota Extension Forestry website at myminnesotawoods.umn.edu.



Our Shared Bookshelf

Each issue, we'll be selecting a favorite book to share with our readers to help build community and encourage the sharing of resources. If you'd like to submit a recommendation for Our Shared Bookshelf, please email Editor@MinnesotaForestry.org. We look forward to hearing about what everyone is reading and enjoying!

This edition, we're highlighting "Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest" by Suzanne Simard.

Simard is a pioneer of plant communication and intelligence. In her first book, Simard brings readers into the intimate world of the trees, in which she illuminates the fascinating and vital truths that trees are not simply the source of timber or pulp, but are a complicated, interdependent circle of life; and that forests are social, cooperative creatures connected through underground networks by which trees communicate their vitality and vulnerabilities with communal lives not that different from our own.



Adapted for Winter

By Ryan Heiderman and Kassandra Tuten, Editor

Do you ever wonder how trees survive the below freezing temperatures in winter? While we are hunkered down inside staying warm, trees don't have the benefit of escaping the cold.

However, trees in Minnesota have numerous adaptations and mechanisms that help stop winter from damaging their cell structures. While some of these mechanisms are outwardly visible—such as deciduous trees like maples and oaks losing their leaves in the fall and conifers like spruce and firs retaining their needles to continue to photosynthesize over the winter—it's also important to discuss how they internally prevent freezing water from damaging their cells.

Moving Water Out

While it varies by species and other factors, live trees are approximately—you guessed it—50% water. Just as freezing water can damage the pipes in your home, it can damage the tree's xylem, the water transport vessel, in a process referred to as embolism. (Have you ever heard a popping sound while walking around your woodlands in the winter? It may just be this process of embolism happening.) One way trees prevent this cavitation is by moving water out of the cells and into the spaces between the cells, causing cells to shrink and occupy less space.

Making Antifreeze

Come late fall and into winter, the trees increase their concentration of dissolved substances inside the cells—actually, it is sugars forming a sort of antifreeze. Due to the higher concentration of sugars, this lowers the freezing temperature of water inside the cells, whereas the water in the extracellular space can freeze, preventing damage to the internal structure of the tree's cells.

Supercooling

The final cold hardy mechanism used by plants is to prevent the water from freezing at all, even at extremely low temperatures. For water to freeze, the molecules need to align in a specific manner. Supercooling inhibits the formation of ice within the cell by not allowing them to line up since the cell membrane takes on a shape that prevents the formation (or nucleation) of ice and forces water into a supercooled phase.

Next time you're walking in your woodlands in 40 below temperatures, maybe take a moment to admire the hardiness of your surroundings.



On the subject of cold weather and trees, one of the greatest benefits of cold weather is the impact it has on many insect populations. For example, the emerald ash borer (EAB) is currently found in 30 Minnesota counties but has yet to reach the far northern counties in the state. According to a recent article by Matt Russell, Extension Forestry Specialist, it is of great concern if the insect reaches Northern Minnesota because of the expansive ash forests found in the region, representing 1 billion ash trees in the state.

Emerald ash borer larvae overwinter beneath the bark of ash trees. Research has shown that if the temperature reaches -20 degrees Fahrenheit, 50% of the EAB larvae will die. If the temperature reaches -30 degrees Fahrenheit, 90% of the EAB larvae will die. These temperatures can help to set back the spread of EAB in northern latitudes.

Join a Webinar Series on Family-Friendly Earth Care

Ever wonder what forest bathing is all about, how you and your family can reduce your carbon footprint or how you can grow edible foods in your backyard? Join Angie Gupta, Gary Wyatt and other speakers from University of Minnesota Extension for a webinar series for families to learn more and take actions for global health and wellness.

The webinar schedule is:

Reducing Food Waste: 11-11:45 a.m. Feb. 24;

Edibles and Decoratives From the Woods or Backyard: 1-1:45 p.m. March 3;

Food Composting 101: 1-1:45 p.m. April 7; and

Reducing Your Family's Carbon Footprint: 11-11:45 a.m. April 21.

Information: <https://extension.umn.edu/courses-and-events/family-friendly-earth-care>.

Creature Feature

By *Kassandra Tuten, Editor*

American Woodcock

The American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) is a long-billed woodland bird, and one of Minnesota's smallest game birds. It is a small cinnamon-colored bird with dark brown splotches, pinkish-colored legs and a long, slender bill. Birds reach 10-12 inches long, and weigh 10-12 ounces.

The woodcock is typically found in the eastern half of the state, near wooded areas and wetlands. Woodcock are migratory birds and spend the winter in a number of southern states.

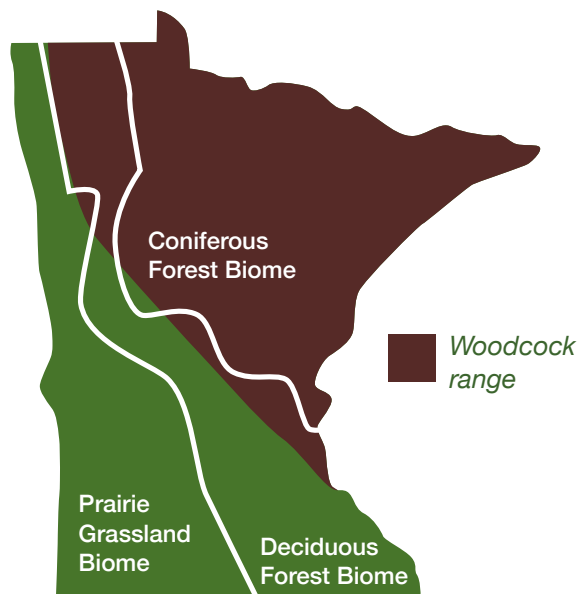
Woodcock, which are most active at night and in the early morning, eat mainly earthworms and other invertebrates they find in the soil, including snails, millipedes, spiders, flies, beetles and ants. Their bill has highly sensitive nerve endings that can detect earthworm movement below the soil. The bird walks slowly and sometimes rocks its body back and forth, stepping heavily with its front foot. This action may make worms move around in the soil, increasing their detectability. Woodcocks' large eyes are positioned high and near the back of their skull allowing them to keep watch for danger in the sky while they have their heads down probing in the soil for food.

The woodcock breeds early in spring, with males beginning their courtship displays—sky dancing at dawn and dusk—as early as December in the southern part of the range and as early as March in the north. The conservationist Aldo Leopold wrote that the woodcock's mesmerizing sky dances were “a refutation of the theory that the utility of a game bird is to serve as a target, or to pose gracefully on a slice of toast.” His writing helped spur the mid-Twentieth Century conservation movement.

The woodcock is a ground nesting bird. They nest in young, shrubby, deciduous forests, old fields and mixed forest-agricultural-urban areas across the eastern United States and southern Canada. They display in forest openings and old fields in the springtime, and they often use clearings for roosting in the summer.

The spring hatch takes 20-21 days, with an average of four young. Young woodcock leave the nest a few hours after hatching, but depend on their mother for food for their first week. They start to probe in the dirt three or four days after hatching. Young woodcock are able to fly in 25 days and are independent in six to eight weeks.

Woodcock are fairly numerous, although it is hard to detect with standardized surveys. Best estimates suggest their populations have slowly been declining between 1966 and 2014; declines are most evident in New England, parts of the Mid-Atlantic and Minnesota. Because they forage on the forest floor, woodcock can accumulate pesticides in their bodies from aerial spraying against forest-insect pests. Their heavy diet of earthworms makes them vulnerable to poisoning by lead, cadmium and other heavy metals. To prevent further population declines, landowners can focus on preserving even-aged habitats suitable for breeding, including large areas of shrubland and young forest.



Did you know? The woodcock is also known as the bogsucker, timberdoodle, hookumpeke and night partridge, to name a few.

Creating Wildlife Habitat

Excerpt from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Woodlands of Minnesota Landowner Handbook, with additional content by Jennifer Teegarden

Wildlife need four key features: food, water, shelter and space. Wildlife can generally find their own water sources, given suitable habitat. Adding food, shelter and space will enhance wildlife habitat in your woods.

Different wildlife species have different needs, so any action you take will inevitably favor certain species over others. Be sure you are clear about what kinds of wildlife you wish to attract before making any changes to your land.

Wildlife Openings

To attract wildlife, some landowners create wildlife openings—clearings in the woods. Unlike traditional food plots, which usually consist of planted non-native grasses or crops, wildlife openings use native vegetation more suitable to meeting wildlife needs.

Wildlife openings range from half an acre to five acres (10 acres if you live in the range of moose)—that mimic the type of openings created by natural disturbances such as fire or wind. Disturbance is nature's way of renewing a forest, and many creatures depend on specific habitats created by a forest disturbance. Methods for creating and maintaining your wildlife opening could include hand-cutting trees and shrubs, brush mowing and controlled burning with the help of a professional. Maintaining your opening is best done outside of the primary nesting season for birds (mid-May through early August). A natural resource professional can help you decide where to place the openings and best methods for creating them.

You do not need to remove all of the trees and shrubs in your opening. Wildlife can benefit from having a few nut- and fruit-bearing species, snags, fallen logs and brush piles for shelter. Openings are typically irregular in shape, placed on a south- or southeast-facing slope to take advantage of the sun, and about three times as long as they are wide if small.

You may not need to clear new areas if you can improve existing openings by planting or regenerating native species. Pre-existing openings include yards, old pastures, edges between forest



Photo credits: Tree: Minnesota DNR; Ducks: Pixaby; Moose: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

and agricultural fields, and open areas near lakeshore. You might also consider improving an existing food plot. Using pre-existing openings can prevent unnecessarily fragmenting your woods.

Snags, Brush Piles and Woody Debris

Large-diameter trees with cavities and dead trees—or snags—provide food and nesting for a variety of wildlife species. The insulation of a tree trunk allows wildlife to survive hot summers and cold winters. Many animals store their food in snags, while others eat the insects hiding under the bark. Mammals and birds take shelter in snags to raise their young. Bats, an important consumer of mosquitos, roost under loose bark, cavities or crevices in trees. You can create a snag tree by girdling the entire base of a live tree.

Brush piles provide songbirds, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians a place to nest, rest, escape predators and protect themselves from harsh weather conditions. To create a brush pile, first place large logs at various angles on the ground to form the base. Then, create a second layer by laying smaller logs perpendicular to the base. Next, lay three to six feet of brush using smaller limbs, sapling, loose brush and tree boughs.

Continued on page 6



MNWWN Partners With DNR to Collect Cones for State Forest Nursery

From the MNWWN

The DNR is in desperate need for seeds and cones to meet future seed and seedling demands. Many seed and cone collectors have aged out and there is a need to train a future generation of collectors. The Minnesota Women's Woodland Network (MNWWN) attended a Train the Trainer session to learn how to collect black spruce cones and will host cone collecting events in the future to generate revenue for MNWWN.

The Nursery provides seeds and seedlings for reforestation efforts on public and private land across Minnesota. Most of the Nursery's seeds and cones are purchased from the public. To help meet reforestation goals for 2022, we need more people like you to gather cones.

To be eligible for purchase, cones must be high quality, ripe, unopened and free of stems and debris. The Nursery is currently collecting black spruce cones through February 2022.

Gather cones on your own property or on State Forest land. But before heading out, contact one of the DNR seed drop off locations for more information and directions on how to present cones for purchase: Warroad, Baudette, Orr, Littlefork, Tower, Two Harbors, Hibbing, Cloquet, Minnesota State Forest Nursery, Bemidji, Deer River, and Northome. Be sure to track the locations where you picked cones. Find a location: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/nursery/collection-map.html>.



MNWWN Board Treasurer Ginger collecting cones.

Wildlife Habitat continued

Finish by loosely draping brush over the edges while leaving 6- to 8-inch openings in several places. Size should range from 10 to 20 feet wide by four to eight feet tall.

Keeping woody debris in streams creates habitat for juvenile trout and provides refuge areas and deep pools for larger fish. Woody debris in lakes provides habitat for species such as ducks, turtles, aquatic insects and fish. Finally, preserving any wetlands, bogs or swamps on your property provides shelter, food and water for many types of creatures.

Learn more about the Woodlands of Minnesota Landowner Handbook at <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/woodlands/index.html>.



A Non-Timber Harvest

By Stanley Musielewicz

I harvested this load, plus another one equal in size, and loaded it into my pickup. I took the load to a local Christmas Tree farm. The owner paid me for my load of birch sticks that were 2.5 inches and smaller in diameter (as he had ordered). He cut and bundled them, then sold them along with his hundreds of Christmas trees. What a fine use for a non-timber product from my woods.

MFA's *Forester Phone Line*

A free service for MFA members only!

Call for an appointment with
the forester: **218-879-5100**



Meet a Tree

Honey Locust

By Cassandra Tuten, Editor

Honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) is a woody, long-lived, native, deciduous, legume (Fabaceae family), and is capable of obtaining 100 feet in height. It is a slender tree, spreading with somewhat drooping branches that form a broad, open, flat-topped head. The trunk is often divided near the ground.

Honey locust is commonly found in overgrown pastures, fields, along fence lines and wood lot edges. It has a broad range of adaptation, and is distributed mostly nationwide. The greatest concentration of plants can be found in the central portions of the U.S. It prefers moist, fertile, alluvial soils and will withstand periods of drought and prolonged wetness. Honey locust can be found in scattered stands or as individual trees, especially in Southern Minnesota in counties along the Root River Valley and Mississippi bottomlands. Honey locust is often distributed by animals, which have consumed the seed and passed them through their gut.

The bark of honey locust is dark gray or brown on old trees, and divided into thin, tight scales. Brown, sharp, shiny thorns appear on 1-year-old wood and remain for years. Leaves alternate on the stem, are 6-8 inches long, and are doubly compound (featherlike) with 18-28 small egg-shaped leaflets with finely-toothed margins. Leaves are dark green and lustrous above and dull yellow-green below, turning yellow in the fall.

Wood from the honey locust is very dense, shock-resistant and commonly used in the timber industry. Honey locust wood is easily split, capable of obtaining a high luster finish, and is durable when in contact with soil. For these reasons, timber from honey locust has been used as fence posts, railroad ties, furniture, warehouse or shipping pallets, tool handles and fuel. Honey locust has also been planted for windbreaks and hedges in Southern Minnesota. Native Americans used the dried pulp from the seed pods as a sweetening agent and a minor food source. The wood was used to make bows, and a variety of medicines were made from various parts of the plant.

Honey locust is also used extensively by wildlife. The bean pods, which contain seeds and yellow

whitish pulp and often become twisted as the seeds ripen, are a favorite food of white-tailed deer, squirrels, rabbits, hogs, opossums and raccoons. Domestic animals such as sheep, goats and cattle will also forage on the honey locust bean pods. Browsing and grazing animals utilize the tender shoots in spring and the bark of young trees in winter. Honey locust is capable of forming dense thickets of thorny vegetation which provides excellent cover for a wide variety of game animals and birds. Flowers are incredibly attractive to pollinating insects.

Honey locust has few significant pests. Canker can sometimes be a problem, but rarely kills the tree.

Did you know? Alternate names for the honey locust include honey-shucks, sweet locust, three-thorned-acacia, thorn tree, thorny locust and sweet-bean.



Top left: Pods are 10 to 18 inches long and flat dark brown or black when ripe, containing seeds and yellow whitish pulp. Pods are eaten by many animals.

Bottom left: Leaves alternate on the stem, are doubly compound (featherlike) with 18 to 28 small egg-shaped leaflets that have finely toothed margins.

Top: Bark is dark gray or brown on old trees and divided into thin, tight scales. Strong, brown, straight, sharp, shiny thorns appear on 1-year-old wood and remain for many years.

Upcoming Events

Find more events, and more information on these events, at the MFA website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org, or by calling MFA at 218-879-5100.

FEBRUARY

AIS Management 101

Monday, Feb. 14-Thursday, March 31

This online class is perfect for anyone who wants to be better informed about aquatic invasive species (AIS) management strategies. Learn more and register at <https://extension.umn.edu/event/ais-management-101-0>.

Forestry and Wildlife Research and Practice Review

9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15-Thursday, Feb. 17
Cloquet Forestry Center

The Sustainable Forests Education Cooperative and Minnesota Society of American Foresters will present new applied research relevant to regional natural resource managers, with a focus on silviculture, forest management and forest-associated wildlife. Learn more and register at <https://extension.umn.edu/event/forestry-and-wildlife-research-and-practice-review>.

MARCH

Women and Forest Stewardship

6-7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 3

Gain inspiration from women woodland stewards from across the country. Learn more and register at <https://www.minnesotaforestry.org/events/women-and-forest-stewardship>.

Landscaping with Native Plants

1 p.m. Friday, March 4, Garden Stage, Minneapolis Convention Center; Minneapolis Home and Garden Show presentation

Learn how your plant choices can make a big difference to help native pollinators and wildlife, and even improve the effects of climate change.

Forging Connections

6-7:30 p.m. Friday, March 4

Connect with other women landowners through story-sharing and have your forestry and stewardship questions answered. Learn more and register at <https://www.minnesotaforestry.org/events/forging-connections>.

Stewardship Skills Courses

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 5

Learn from women professionals about topics such as forest health, wildlife, forest management, invasive plants, wildfires, agroforestry, legacy planning and more. Learn more and register at <https://www.minnesotaforestry.org/events/stewardship-skills-courses>.



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Change Service Requested

Forest Pest First Detector: Oak Wilt Updates

9-10 a.m. Wednesday, March 9

Attend the 2022 Forest Pest First Detector "Coffee & Chat" series. Learn more and register at <https://extension.umn.edu/event/forest-pest-first-detector-oak-wilt-updates>.

2022 Wild Rivers Forestry Conference

8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, March 24

The annual Wild Rivers Forestry Conference will be held virtually again this year on March 24 with in-person networking opportunities on March 25 throughout the watershed. The conference is designed for local, state, federal and private foresters, land managers and other natural resources professionals, and landowners interested in maintaining a healthy forested watershed. Learn more and register at <https://www.minnesotaforestry.org/events/2022-wild-rivers-forestry-conference-virtual>.