Woodland Owners Association, Inc. 11 University Way, Suite 4, Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-257-7967 ext. 302

WOODLOT TIPS

FALL 2012

Saturday, February 9, 2013 at 10 a.m. — Winter Tree Walk and Potluck Lunch

Bill Guenther will lead a winter tree identification walk on Ballou Mountain in Halifax, Vermont. Ballou Mountain has a special richness of hardwoods and conifers. Bring your snowshoes, as the north slope of the mountain typically has snow well into April.

The walk will begin at the home of Linda Lyon and be followed by a potluck lunch. For those who may not be up for snowshoeing, you are welcome to come and sip hot cider and talk about trees while the others are on the walk.

Parking is limited, so please carpool if you can. You likely will need four-wheel drive to get up the Lyon driveway. There may be limited additional parking at a neighbor's house for those who can make the walk through the woods to the Lyon's house. If you plan to join us, please contact Linda Lyon (Linda_Lyon@fws.gov or 802-368-2211) for directions.

Simon Howden, FreeDigitalPhotos.net

President's Column

By George Weir

My mother placed so many bumper stickers on the back of her Subaru wagon it was difficult to find the license plate among the array, and the rear bumper nearly dragged on the ground. The themes were peace and conservation and among the messages, "Think Globally, Act Locally" stood out, as much as any could. I wasn't so sure about that advice and tended more to farmer/poet Wendell Berry's view, "Think Locally, Act Locally." I had no idea and still have no idea how one can think globally. It seemed much more possible and productive to think and act within one's own community.

About a decade ago forester and member Dave Ketteridge asked me to speak about WOA at the New England Society of American Foresters meeting. I wondered why, and he pointed out WOA had existed as long or longer than any other landowner woodland organization in New England, and perhaps I could describe our formula for success and get others interested. So I made a presentation, described our organization, and suggested the formula for success included starting small and staying local, relying on ourselves for programs, presentations and organization, having a newsletter written by volunteers, keeping dues as low as possible and having a willingness to spend decades building an organization. Not an encouraging formula for a startup, and I sensed that my presentation was a bit of a wet blanket.

WOA's success truly affirms the value of "Think Locally, Act Locally." Windham County is our place. We've relied on expertise from within our membership for most programs; industry tours have always been to local companies; we've extended ex officio trustee status to our County Foresters and they have served us very well; our trustees have always included industry and consulting foresters as well as landowners; and we limit scholarships to Windham County residents. It amazes me that with little effort and following this low-key approach, we've maintained membership at close to 400 for decades and served our members well.

We have kept dues at $10 per year for as long as I remember. Dues pay for our nominal administrative expenses, mailings, copies and our newsletter. We are fortunate that members contribute more than dues and that the extras given support programs and scholarships.

For the last two years I've encouraged members to donate any extra they can afford to the scholarship fund. The two or three annual $1,500 stipends we provide only cover a small fraction of education costs. We hope to provide more. The young students to whom we contribute have excellent academic records and will work in forestry and related fields on graduation. This year we budgeted about $7,000 in annual income for the scholarship fund and wonderfully, we exceeded that donation amount in the first quarter.

So the message has been received, and thank you.

Woodland Owners Association Trustees 2012–2013

George Weir, President, Williamsville
Jeremy Schrauf, Wardsboro
John Caveney, Brattleboro
Barbara Cole, Wilmington
Linda Lyon, Brattleboro
Margaret MacDonald, Vice President, S. Newfane
Sam Rowley, West Brattleboro
Dianna Todd, Halifax and Silver Spring, MD
Willem van Loon, Guilford
Phyllis Weltz, Treasurer, Bellows Falls
Bob Twitchell, Londonderry
Pete Wimmelman, Wilmington
Phil Edelstein, Whitingham

Ex Officio:
Windham County Foresters: Bill Guenther, Brattleboro, and Sam Schneski, Springfield

Remembering Bob Hindmarsh

Bob Hindmarsh passed away in October at his home in Putney. He faithfully served on the Woodland Owners Association board for several terms and subsequently stayed active with John Caldwell on the WOA Scholarship Committee.

Bob was a veteran of the Battle for Okinawa in World War II and was awarded the Purple Heart. He had degrees in agricultural science from Cornell, and worked as a crop specialist for the Farmers' Exchange in Western Massachusetts in the 1950s.

Bob and Thera, his wife of 61 years, moved to Putney in 1989. In the 1960s they helped found the Quaker Meeting School in Ringe, N.H., where Bob taught math and biology and ran the school farm. Later Bob taught at a Quaker school in Concord, Mass. and became a fundraiser for the American Friends Service Committee in New England. He joined the national office in Philadelphia as Vice President of Development in 1978.

An active retirement in Putney included participation in the Quaker community. He also served as a lister, a member of the Historical Society, and a volunteer for Meals on Wheels. Throughout his life he grew fruits and vegetables, and friends and neighbors deferred to him on gardening advice, according to John Caldwell, a longtime friend, who also described Bob as a steady and even-tempered man.

Land conservation was one of Bob's major interests. He and Thera retired to a six-acre property conserved by the Vermont Land Trust (the smallest property — with a 1772 house — ever conserved by VLT). Not long thereafter, from 1990 to 1995, Bob served on VLT's board, one year of which as vice chair. With him on the board during part of this time were Harvey Pofcher and Nelson Withington, two other long time WOA trustees. After serving on VLT's board Bob became a WOA trustee for several years.

Windham County forester Bill Guenther noted that Bob was a modest guy, and remarked that as we get older, we often have regrets when learning "wonderful things about folks after they're gone."

MINUTES
Woodland Owners Association Annual Meeting
September 15, 2012

The meeting was brought to order at 1:45 pm. by President George Weir

Secretary's Report — The Secretary's Report was approved as written.

Treasurer's Report — Copies of the Treasurer's Report were distributed. George reminded the members that Woodland Owners Association dues had been kept to $10.00 per year in the hope that members would donate more generously to the two education funds. Currently, the Halsey Hicks Fund for educational purposes, such as programs, does not need additional funding, but the Scholarship Fund needs an infusion of donations. The cost of higher education has risen over the years. The scholarships Woodland Owners awards to worthy scholars should be increased to reflect this. A motion to raise the amount WOA offers in scholarships was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Scholarship Committee — Committee Chair Jeremy Schrauf reported that scholarships for the 2012–2013 academic year had been awarded to three outstanding candidates: Nick Haskell, Connor Hunt, and Ethan Tapper.

Nominating Committee — Bill Guenther reported that, in accordance with the Woodland Owners By-laws, two trustees who had served consecutive terms must retire from the Board: Tom Johnson and Stuart Thurber. Two other trustees, Peter Wimmelman and Bob Twitchell, were eligible to serve a second term and had agreed to do so. Several other individuals had been asked to serve as trustees but declined for various reasons. Bill asked the members present at the meeting for trustee nominations. Phil Edelstein volunteered to serve on the Board of Trustees. Bill moved that the membership accept the slate of Peter Wimmelman, Bob Twitchell, and Phil Edelstein to the Board of Trustees. So voted.

Program Committee — George reviewed programs presented by WOA over the past year and requested that members contact him or any of the other trustees with suggestions for future programs.

The business meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol

Carol R. Morrison

WOA 2012 Annual Meeting

WOA vice president Margaret MacDonald welcomed WOA members to her stunning property in South Newfane. President George Weir welcomed the WOA members and gave a short history of the forest management activities that had taken place in the 50 years since Margaret's parents, Shepard and Charlotte Stone, bought the property. He then led the morning walk into a nearby mature stand of white pine where Stone — guided first by forester Gil Cameron and then by George — had thinned the trees himself until his death in 1990. Selective harvests of the entire property have occurred at approximately 10-year intervals; the most recent harvest took place in 2008–2009.

County Forester Bill Guenther then led a discussion of several pathogenic fungi that have impacted white pine in the last few years. White Pine Needle Blight and Brown Spot Needle blight causes the previous year's needles to turn brown and fall off in June, causing light to moderate stress to afflicted trees. Additionally, there is a fungus called Caliciopsis canker that forms on the main trunk of the tree, and its canker can cause degradation of the wood. While none of these three problems are considered fatal to a tree, they do add stress, and when multiplied by other impacts, can lead to tree decline or possibly mortality. Well managed (properly thinned) white pine stands can help limit the effects of these problems by increasing air flow, which lessens fungi establishment as well as enhancing vigor through increased growth.

During the business meeting after the barbeque and potluck lunch, the minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting were approved, and Treasurer Phyllis Weltz distributed the financial report, which was accepted unanimously. Jeremy Schrauf, chairman of the Scholarship Committee, then presented this year's scholarships to two of the winners: Nick Haskell, a senior at the University of New Hampshire, and Connor Hunt, who graduated this year from Wilmington High School and has entered the Natural Resources program at Lyndon State. Our third scholarship winner, Ethan Tapper, a senior at UVM, could not attend in person.

Jeremy outlined the achievements of the three scholarship winners, including their volunteer activities, and urged members to contribute to the WOA scholarship fund to continue helping students like these young men. George Weir echoed this message, encouraging members to direct any extra contributions they can make beyond their basic dues to the scholarship fund, since the Halsey Hicks fund, which covers the WOA's operating expenses, is sufficient to meet its purposes.

Bill Guenther, representing the Nominating committee, reported that Trustees Peter Wimmelman and Bob Twitchell were at the end of their first term and both had agreed to serve an additional three-year term. WOA by-laws limit trustees to two consecutive terms. Trustees Stu Thurber and Tom Johnson will be leaving the Board due to term limits. Bill thanked both of them for their service to WOA and Stu, in

particular, as he had faithfully served several years as our President.

Bill said the Nominating Committee had approached a number of people to consider joining the Board, but all had to decline for various reasons. He then asked the members in attendance if anyone wished to be considered for nomination. Phil Edelstein, of Whitingham, indicated that he would be interested, and he was promptly nominated. Returning Trustees Peter Wimmelman and Bob Twitchell and new trustee Phil Edelstein were then elected. Welcome Phil!

Following the business meeting, Brian Colleran, from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, reported on his summer study of Japanese knotweed, an invasive plant commonly seen on riverbanks. The knotweed poses three severe threats: (1) rather than hold soil against erosion, the roots actually contribute to soil erosion; (2) water carries the easily uprooted plants from location to location, and even a small section of root can generate a new plant; and (3) because the plant evolved on lava plains and is adapted to rocky terrain, the roots grow into any crevices in concrete or rock, and can severely weaken bridge supports, concrete foundations, and retaining walls. The plant is resilient to cutting; thus, the roots must be killed in order to eradicate the plant. The most effective method of control is to applying glyphosate close to the flowering stage in late summer or autumn; some people, of course, object to using herbicides. Brian is encouraging the construction crews who are restoring bridges and riverbanks after Tropical Storm Irene to be careful about removing the knotweed they come across; this simple prevention can avoid serious problems later on.

[You can see a video of Brian discussing Japanese knotweed at http://www.wptz.com/tv/conservation/Tropical-Storm-Irene-spreads-invasive-Knotweed/-/8871650/14156074/-/n6ecfe/-/index.html]

Next, Bill Guenther gave a short update on the Big Three invasive insects. As we all know, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is present in Windham County and was also found in one town in Bennington County. One of the Emerald Ash Borer purple traps in Dalton, Massachusetts (about 40 miles from the Vermont border), caught a single EAB. The finding has been confirmed. http://www.mass.gov/dcr/news/2012/9-12PR.pdf.

At the end of the official meeting, George Weir led interested members up a logging trail on Margaret's property to show the damage that can result from (uninvited) ATVs driving over water bars. The ruts made in the waterbars on the trail meant that the water from Tropical Storm Irene, instead of being diverted to the side of the rood, washed down the trail itself and carried away the soil, leaving a deep channel and a jumble of rocks along a 100-foot section. This led to a more general discussion of irresponsible behavior by drivers of ATVs and other recreational vehicles, and the near-impossibility of preventing unauthorized off-road traffic on private property.

2012 — The Year of Weird Weather (and the year's not even over yet!)

By Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester

What a strange year it has been weather-wise! This story actually started last fall when we got several early snowfalls in October with one, around Halloween, dumping 16" up on my mountain in Newfane. By December 1st, I had received just about half of what the entire winter total would be. Normally a regular winter season would bring around 80", but the 2011–12 winter came out to a bit less than 55". A "Brown Christmas" is typically defined as having less than one inch of snow on the ground, and as hard as I tried to measure a full inch that day, it was not to be found, so a rare Brown Christmas it was.

For the 24 years I've been up on Bensch Mountain, I've kept records as to when the front lawn was bare of snow. For the first 23 years, the earliest date was April 1st, and the latest date with some snow still there was May 1st. But this year on March 7th, it was all gone.

In mid-March, I climbed Mt. Washington in what was still technically winter (at least that's what the calendar said), and was on the summit on a crystal clear day at 41 degrees with less than a 10 mph wind. I've climbed "Big George" before in late June and just about lost my life (18 degrees and 110 mph wind gusts!), and here it was, still winter, and I was in a t-shirt and got a bad sunburn! March brought some 80-degree days to southern Vermont, and the strangest event at home was that I burned more wood in April compared to March.

The early warm temperatures followed by much colder ones set up a perfect storm for a major Pear Thrips infestation. We saw the worst damage observed in many years. The warm weather opened up the buds enough for the thrips to get in, and then the leaf flush was put on hold by the cold, giving the tiny thrips lots of time to feed in the little buds. One small maple bud can hold up to seven leaves. Normally, once the leaves unfurl, little damage will occur, but with the leaves on hold due to the cold, the thrips did substantial damage.

Barbara Burns, the Forest and Parks Department's Forest Health Manager, has been keeping records on when red maple trees in Springfield start flowering. With 22 years of data, the average date for flowering emergence was April 16, but this year it was an astounding 27 days earlier — on March 19th!

April arrived with very dry conditions, with almost no measureable rain for the first three weeks, and then in May we got hit with a deluge, including late frost in the northern part of the state. The aqueous conditions brought out lots of leaf and needle fungi that persisted throughout the summer.

The summer brought us drought throughout much of Windham and Bennington Counties. Some localized areas, however, got hit by some violent thunderstorms and had near normal rainfall, while some places just a few miles away were starved for moisture. At the end of the summer, the USDA Drought Monitor showed something I had never seen: Drought (there are five levels on the Monitor) was found in *all* 50 states!

This Fall we've gotten some pretty good rainfall and things seem a bit more normal. And as I write this, Hurricane Sandy has come and gone without treating us as badly as Irene did, despite being followed by another storm and the season's first snowfall. Stay tuned!

White Pine Afflictions in the Summer of 2012

By Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester

In this newsletter you'll find an article about this year's WOA Annual meeting at the South Newfane property of Margaret MacDonald, WOA's vice president. During the morning tour, I gave an informal presentation on three fungal diseases that have been attacking our white pines for the last several years.

The white pine needle diseases came back with a vengeance this spring. After a dry April, May's rains allowed the White Pine Needle blight and Brown Spot Needle Blight to erupt over the Memorial Day weekend. Last year's' needles turned a golden hue, then dropped off the infected trees in June. The heaviest needle loss was typically closer to the bottom of the tree, where conditions for growth of the fungus are best. Further up the tree, the damage tends to lessen, with the condition often unnoticeable at the top of the tree. Tree mortality has typically not been observed for these diseases, but it is part of what I sometimes call "stress stew," where the cumulative impact of several stressors may have a multiplier effect that makes the simultaneous attack of multiple pathogens more serious, compared to each one individually. I have a flyer I would be happy to mail out to folks; if you'd like to access it on the Internet, just Google "NA-PR-01-11." The link is really long, so just putting this publication number in the search engine should bring it up.

The other disease I mentioned is Caliciopis canker. This disease causes profuse pitch flow from small cankers that form in the mid to upper trunk. Caliciopis is often mistaken for White Pine Blister Rust. The latter is found where the branches attach to the main trunk. Blister Rust initially enters a pine through a needle, eventually traveling all the way

down to the main trunk. But the Caliciopis cankers occur between the whorls (groups of horizontal branches that encircle the trunk at the same height on the tree). The cankers will disrupt part of the tree's vascular system, causing some stress, which may result in thin crowns, thereby reducing tree vigor. A good handout on this disease is available on the web: Google "Caliciopis," and look for the one produced by UNH Extension. The pictures in this flyer will give you an idea of what to look for.

While none of the diseases mentioned above is usually fatal by itself, a tree afflicted with all of them and other stressors, such as drought or root diseases, is more vulnerable to potential mortality. Well-managed stands that are properly thinned using careful logging practices can help lessen the impact of these fungal diseases.

Lots of things out there can attack our trees. But l always like to emphasize that the resilience of our forest trees never ceases to amaze me.

A Few Thoughts about Leaves

George Weir

We've owned the same hammock for over 20 years and it remains in very good condition, mostly because we don't use it much and put it away in the winter. This year I didn't string it between two maples at the edge of the back yard until the last days of August. I always enjoy the few moments I spend lying on my back and looking up into the forest canopy. This year, rather than simply relax and enjoy the shade and rest, I observed and thought about the leaves above. Some of my observations and conclusions are obvious; others required some out-of-hammock research.

The first thing I observed is maple leaves lower in the canopy are larger than those high in the canopy. That makes sense; they receive less light so they develop to a larger size to gather light. But it also makes sense that the smaller size of higher leaves allows light to penetrate the crown and reach the lower leaves.

I also observed that sugar maples tend to array their leaves closer to the outside of the crown than the ashes and aspens above me. Aspens leaves move in the slightest breeze. That allows light to reach leaves well within the crown. So their leaves are arrayed further down the branch and closer to the stem than maple leaves and they still gather light. I also observed the spread-out leaf arrangement in ash crowns allows one to look up and see a lot of blue sky. Again, that leaf arrangement allows light to reach deeper into the crown.

Deciduous tree leaves have a flat surface that maximizes the leaf area for gathering light, gas exchange and cooling. I didn't lie in the hammock long enough to directly observe this, but I've read that leaves will move during the day, depending on heat, exposing the leaf surface when cool, and turning the leaf somewhat away from the sun in very hot weather.

I've often wondered why leaves have different shapes. The two basic shapes are long and narrow and wide and lobed. Online I found a plausible explanation. Both shapes maximize the length of leaf edge and enhance cooling. This may explain why oak leaves low in the canopy are less lobed that those high in the canopy where temperatures are greater. Perhaps the longer leaf edge relative to leaf surface area on a smaller leaf high in the canopy allows it to disperse heat more effectively than the lesser leaf edge on a larger leaf low in the canopy. Perhaps.

By this date in late fall, all the leaves I looked at had found their way to our back yard. For us they are not a nuisance, they are useful. We rake them up onto a tarp, drag them down to the garden, and pile them up to use next year as mulch. The flat leaf surfaces of sugar maple and oak make their leaves perfect weed control mulch to place between rows of vegetables. A lot nicer to look at and less expensive then black plastic. We've done this for a few years and it really works. This year we piled leaves deep around our blueberry bushes. The shapes that make leaves great for weed control make them a poor mulch choice for protecting plants from winter cold. The flat surfaces don't allow insulating air spaces between the leaves, and heat is conducted through the leaves and away from plants. So keep them away from your strawberries.

Woodland Secret #8 — Food for Thought

By Arthur H. Westing, Former WOA Trustee

Our trees and other plants can make (synthesize) their own food — and from that food they can, in turn, make all the amino acids, proteins, hormones, and other substances they need for their continuing growth and development. This enviable ability is something neither animals nor fungi, nor most other forms of life, can do. The trees do this by combining liquid water (H_2O) with gaseous carbon dioxide (CO_2) in a chemical reaction powered by the sun's energy, the basic food thereby produced being sugar, and which as a waste product generates gaseous oxygen (O_2). This so-called *photosynthesis* occurs in the tree's green pigmented cells, and therefore primarily within its leaves.

The trees carry out their manufacture and distribution of food with the help of two plumbing (vascular) systems within their stems, branches, and roots, plus a considerable number of vents in the leaves (the stomata). One plumbing system (consisting of dead cells) is imbedded in the wood (the xylem) and serves to bring the water (with its dissolved minerals) up from the soil to the leaves. The other plumbing system (consisting of live cells) is imbedded in the inner bark (the phloem) and serves to bring the food (sugar dissolved in water) to all the growing and developing cells throughout the crown, stem, and roots. The vents permit the CO_2 to enter the leaves from the atmosphere, at the same time permitting the O_2 and excess H_2O to get out into the atmosphere (the latter referred to as *transpiration*).

Throughout the growing season the trees produce all the food they need in order to function properly. And then toward the end of the growing season they begin to produce an excess, which remains in storage during the dormant season. The trees must do this so that when the following spring comes around, and there are no leaves present as yet to manufacture the food necessary to provide for bud burst and early leaf and flower growth, they can call upon those stored reserves. Most trees store that over-wintering supply of sugar in their roots. But, very nicely for us, one kind of tree — the maple — has recognized that its xylem cells were empty and doing nothing during the winter, so decided to use them as its storehouse. And the rest is history! I should mention here that when tapping is done according to standard guidelines, only about 10 percent of the stored food is being robbed from the tree, with no apparently adverse effects on its subsequent growth or development.

Trees and all other living things must continue to breathe (respire) throughout their lifetimes, a process that draws in O_2 from the atmosphere and releases CO_2 to it. A suitably safe atmospheric balance for both CO_2 and O_2 has been maintained through the millennia. But to everyone's misfortune, a terrible side effect of the industrial revolution has been the addition of ever increasing amounts of CO_2 to the atmosphere, the most serious greenhouse gas. Between the mid-1850s and mid-1950s, the trees of the world were, in fact, able (via their photosynthetic activity) to keep atmospheric CO_2 levels from rising. But since then a worldwide combination of the heedlessly ever increasing industrialization, in concert with heedlessly ever decreasing forest cover, has overwhelmed that balance to produce the global warming we must now all face to our and nature's detriment. So on the one hand we can be thankful that tree cover at least in Vermont has been more than holding its own over the years; but, on the other, that we must nonetheless work harder to reverse our ever increasing reliance on fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas) and other CO_2 emitting activities.

Stumpage Prices — What Are They and What Do The Numbers Mean?

By Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester

"Stumpage" is one of those "forestry jargon" terms that simply means the amount of money that a landowner receives when standing timber is harvested and sold. Usually logging costs, trucking costs and foresters fees are deducted from a gross amount, with the remainder going to the landowner as net income. Stumpage can be paid in several ways with the most typical being based on a dollar amount per thousand

board feet (abbreviated "mbf") of each individual species.

I routinely get calls from landowners with inquiries such as "How much should get I get 'a thousand' (read per mbf) for my maple that's being cut?" That is a difficult question as a number of factors determine the value of timber at any given time on any given woodlot.

First, there are the variations in the market place itself, regardless of which woodlot the timber is coming from. Log prices can be quite volatile — sometimes I feel that equities can look stable compared to timber prices! So we have to consider that there will be up and downs in the markets, with much of this caused by what species of wood happens to be in demand for certain products.

Now let's take a look at the variables on your woodlot that will help influence the price you will ultimately receive for the sale of your standing timber:

1. The per acre harvest volume — The higher the volume the more your timber will likely be worth, based on economy of scale.
2. Market demand — The sawmills are likely to pay more for a log of a certain species and quality if demand is high for a product made from that species. The basic economic law of supply and demand really comes into play. Some species in the past have been "hot," such as white ash in the early 90s, which sold for up to $600/mbf on the stump. Today this species usually brings somewhere in the neighborhood of $200–300 in today's dollars.
3. Timber quality — This may be the single biggest factor in determining value, especially in the case of hardwoods. If a sugar maple log were of the highest possible grade of veneer log, it might be worth *25 times more* than the same board foot volume of a pallet-grade sugar maple log.
4. Total volume of the timber sale — There are fixed costs of moving logging equipment that often run up to several hundred dollars for each piece of machinery. If a log job has say, 3 or 4 pieces of equipment on it, there may be over a thousand dollars invested in the job before a stick of wood is cut. While there is no absolute minimum, it is rare for a timber sale to yield less than 25 mbf in sawlog volume. Typically the larger the volume of timber to be cut, the more valuable the stumpage will be.
5. Average tree size to be harvested — This also is a major factor. If you are cutting 24" diameter white pines versus 12" white pines of the same height, the volume of the larger trees is more than *four times* that of the smaller logs due the mathematical formula, where one of the variables (radius) in calculating the volume of a cylinder (a sawlog is a tapered cylinder), is ***squared,*** causing an exponential increase in volume. It takes almost as much time to cut the 12" tree as the 24" tree, but the production rate is 4 times higher. Time is money. Being able to harvest larger trees gives a huge production plus. At the end of the day the log pile is much larger, which in turn makes those larger trees more valuable.
6. Species — Certain species have much higher values than others. Sometimes we see a shift in how much relative value a species has. Again, back in the 90s, red oak and white ash were the "hot" species and commanded some very high prices. Now we tend to see the highest prices paid for sugar maple or black cherry. Some species have always maintained a low relative value, such as "popple" (local slang for the poplars and aspens) and hemlock.
7. Access to the woodlot — I typically define this as how you physically get into a woodlot and what impediments there may be. For instance, you may have to cross a major brook or river just to begin logging. If you need to build a bridge (let's say it will cost $5,000 to put up a basic bridge) just to gain access to the timber, you are already starting with a negative value that typically is paid for by the landowner, which will in turn make your timber less valuable.
8. Operability of the woodlot — Once you've gained access to the woodlot, operability refers to how easy it is to negotiate the logging equipment over the terrain. Some attributes that can really impact the operability negatively are steep slopes, bouldery soils, and wet soils that need a good dose of winter to freeze up. The direction of slope that the

timber needs to travel to the log landing also is a factor. If you have to pull the material a mile uphill, gravity will hurt your bottom line, but if the skid is a gentle downhill slope, the logging costs will tend to be much lower with larger payloads carried per trip. Another benefit to good operability is having good quality skid roads already in place from previous harvests. Not having to cut out and build skid roads saves time and puts more stumpage in your pocket.

My department's website is once again listing average stumpage prices by region, throughout the state. The link to this chart is:

http://www.vtfpr.org/util/documents/Stumpage%20Report%201st%20Quarter.pdf

Please keep in mind when viewing this chart that the prices listed can have many of the variables listed above. Additionally, on some of the species listed in our chart, the sample size is relatively small.

To sum things up, very few landowners are really aware of what their timber may be worth, which is why the Vermont Forests & Parks Dept. recommends that any commercial timber sales in your woodlot be overseen by a consulting forester who is working for you as your agent and will hopefully get you an honest and fair price for your timber.

Maple Maladies of 2012

By Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester

Our newsletter editor, Barbara Evans, asked me to comment on why our maples (especially the sugar maples) tended to have a poor foliage showing this year. In the preceding article on the year's weird weather, I wrote about the Pear Thrips outbreak this spring and why the warm weather allowed thrips to cause substantial leaf damage. Thrips live in the ground most of the year and emerge when the soil temperatures rise. Once we got those warm days in March, it was off to the races. The thrips damage tended to be extensive, with most of it in the upper end of the "moderate" category. If a tree is heavily defoliated, it will generate a new set of leaves. Our area's damage was in the range where no refoliation was observed. This thrips damage then stuck with us throughout the season, giving us small, tattered and damaged leaves.

Our summer had periods of low rainfall, but the humidity levels were significant; I felt like I was in the tropical rain forest most of the summer. These humid conditions allowed a proliferation of maple anthracnose leaf fungus. Lesions form on the leaf, commonly along the veins, causing discoloration and early leaf fall. This affliction does cause at least some stress to the tree, as it is unable to go through the full photosynthetic process for the entire growing season. Additionally anthracnose tends to rob us of our fall glory, otherwise known as Foliage Season. The best thing you can do with ornamental trees is to rake all the leaves up and burn them or get them off site.

Another cause of our poor-looking maples were the drought periods we suffered this summer. Sugar maples like a nice even flow of moisture throughout their growing season, and when faced with dry periods, leaf symptoms such as browning will occur.

This year, our maples suffered from insect damage, fungal diseases and the abiotic factors of weather conditions. Let's hope we get a more normal year (whatever that is!) next year, so that we can once again have the gorgeous fall colors we're so used to in the Green Mountain State!

New Program for Forestland Owners with Deer Browse Problems

Bill Guenther reported in a previous issue that earlier this year the Fish & Wildlife Department had prepared a report from a study committee appointed to explore possible solutions to our deer browse problems. While many of us in Southeastern Vermont had hoped for more proactive solutions, the report was at least a start. The committee did recognize that we have a serious regeneration problem in our re-

gion's forests that is especially threatening to three of our most important commercial timber species: Sugar Maple, Red Oak and White Ash.

Below is an October 4th press release from Vermont Fish and Wildlife describing the new program:

Hunters and Landowners Can Connect on F&W Website

VT Fish & Wildlife's website helps forestland owners find hunters to help control deer population

Vermont owners of forest lands who are concerned about keeping deer numbers managed can now connect with hunters who register their interest to hunt in the area by using a new feature on the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com).

Following a recommendation from an advisory group of landowners, hunters, foresters, wildlife biologists, and Fish and Wildlife Board members to investigate the issues of deer doing damage as well as hunters unable to gain access to private lands, the department created an online system where hunters can register for permission to hunt in an area of the state. Landowners can go to the website and then contact hunters they would like to invite to hunt deer on their property. There are no restrictions on whether or not the land is posted.

This new initiative is in response to hunters' concerns about access to private lands, and because foresters and forest landowners are increasingly reporting that deer are causing damage to young seedlings and saplings -- preventing them from growing into valuable commercial trees. Red oak, white ash and sugar maples in southern Vermont appear to be especially vulnerable to deer feeding on them.

Less obvious are the effects heavy understory browsing by deer is having on the overall health of the forest. Studies in urban areas of southern New England and in National Parks where deer are not hunted have documented not only problems with tree regeneration, but also marked decreases in numbers of flowering plants such as orchids and lilies, fewer songbirds due to a loss of nesting habitat, as well as reduced populations of upland game species such as snowshoe hare, woodcock and ruffed grouse.

A "Get Connected" quick-link for interested hunters and landowners is on the website under "Items of Special Interest."

"We believe this is a win-win situation where landowners can proactively coordinate hunter access to their lands, and hunters willing to put additional effort into landowner relations will benefit by finding more forest lands open to deer hunting," said Deputy Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Kim Royar. "It also enables deer hunters a chance to manage deer populations where it is most needed. The success of the program will depend on the interest of foresters and landowners to participate so that such lands become available to hunters."

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Mission of Woodland Owners Association

WOA is a non-profit association of woodland owners and managers, members of the wood products industry, and other interested parties in the Windham County Region who advocate both sustainable management practices and the enjoyment of forests and their ecosystems. In support of these ends, WOA offers educational opportunities for all age groups. Areas of interest include: biodiversity; clean air and water; cultural and historic resources; fair and equitable taxation of woodland; forest products; recreation; scenic beauty; and wildlife habitat. We recognize that these concepts are continually evolving and therefore will strive to consider the most current thinking and values regarding them.