



130 Austine Drive, Suite 300, Brattleboro, VT 05301-7040  
802-257-7967

# WOODLOT TIPS



## SUMMER 2017

### *Programs*

**Saturday, September 9, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Rain or Shine!) — WRWA Annual Meeting and Potluck Cookout at Molly Stark State Park, 705 Route 9 East, in Wilmington, Vt.**

The Hogback Mountain Conservation Association has accepted WRWA's invitation to participate, as our meeting will be in HCMA's "backyard." **IMPORTANT: Please provide information by Monday, September 4** if you plan to attend the meeting. Your timely notification will help to ensure that we have adequate grill foods. Once again Sam Schneski will be cooking up burgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers. Please bring a potluck dish to share — members' casseroles, salads, desserts, etc. — always help make the day special and convivial! *See inside for directions and full details.*

**Windham Regional Woodlands Association Annual Meeting and  
Potluck Cookout Lunch  
Molly Stark State Park, 705 Route 9 East, Wilmington, Vt.  
Saturday, September 9 (*Rain or shine*), 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Molly Stark State Park is in the “backyard” of the Hogback Mountain Conservation Association. HCMA has accepted our invitation to participate in our meeting and we look forward to meeting new friends.

**IMPORTANT:** Please provide information by **Monday, September 4, if you plan to attend the meeting.** Please let Carol Morrison (windhamwoodlands@gmail.com) know whether you would prefer a hamburger made from locally produced beef, Grand Kosher hot dog (low-fat, no filler), or a Vegetarian Burger. Your timely notification will help to ensure that we have adequate grill foods. You are welcome to enjoy more than one of the items; just let Carol know. Thank you!

**Let’s have a “Green” Meeting!** Molly Stark State Park provides a pleasant outdoor meeting venue. As in recent years, we continue to strive to “green” the meeting. To help, we ask that everyone be part of the Green Team.

**What to bring:**

*Potluck dish* for lunch, including a serving utensil

*Travel mug* for beverages

*Chair, if you prefer a seat with a back.* There also is ample seating at the picnic benches.

*For the field trip, suitable footwear* for forest trails with moderate hills; insect and tick repellent; and, if it suits your needs or style, walking sticks.

**\$7.00 registration fee** per person to cover grilling supplies and other meeting expenses

(*Note:* You do NOT need to pay the park admission fee to attend the WRWA meeting.)

**Directions:**

Coming from the East, take exit 2 from Interstate 91. Turn right (west) onto Route 9 and go about 15 miles. Turn left into the Park and proceed along the paved road to the picnic pavilion.

Coming from the West, at the intersection of Routes 9 and 100 in downtown Wilmington, go east on Route 9 for 3.3 miles. Turn right into the Park and proceed along the paved road to the picnic pavilion.

**Parking:**

Please park in the designated parking area near the park office. If we need overflow parking, a park representative will direct the cars.

**Dogs:**

The Park does allow dogs that are on a leash. If you bring your dog, please do so only if it is well socialized to people and other dogs. Keep your dog on a short leash ( $\leq 6$  feet), bring a water bowl, and clean up any “messes.”

**Program:**

**Morning**

**Registration:** Enjoy coffee and donuts while visiting with Woodlands friends, old and new.

**Welcome to Molly Stark State Park**

**Brief business meeting** presided over by WRWA President Marli Rabinowitz.

**Tour led by Tim Morton**, State Forester from Vermont's Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, of this winter's spruce patch clear-cuts designed by FPR and completed by Long View Forests Inc. The purpose of this cut was to increase trail views and enhance habitat for snowshoe hare while protecting existing recreation trails and park infrastructure. The project features large openings; retained connector habitat; riparian zone protection; and salvage of declining spruce, ash, and fir timber. If there is time, we will look at some of the hardwood areas and patch cuts that will be harvested next winter (if we have one!).

### ***Lunch***

Grill Master (and Windham/Windsor Counties Forester) Sam Schneski will cook our hamburgers, hot dogs, and vegetarian burgers. If you can, please bring a potluck dish to share as well as a suitable serving utensil. At a recent meeting, past president Stu Thurber remarked that the lunch gets better each year! Again, please let Carol Morrison (windhamwoodlands@gmail.com) know **by September 4** whether you will want a hamburger, hot dog, vegetarian burger (or all the above!) If you do not have e-mail, please call Dana Ruppert at Bill Guenther's office (802-257-7967, Ext. 302).

### ***Afternoon***

Diana Todd (President of Hogback Mountain Conservation Association and past WRWA Trustee) will make a presentation about HMCA's 10-year program to develop Early Successional Habitat on the former ski slopes in the conservation area. This experimental program hopes to combine ESH-generation with recreational use of the former ski slopes. Diana will share preliminary results for this program that is now in its fifth year.

Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester, will provide a legislative update and update on wood products markets.

We will end this year's meeting earlier than usual to enable participants to explore the area. Your options include the following:

Hiking in Molly Stark State Park (<https://vtstateparks.com/mollystark.html>)

Hiking the HCMA trails (<https://www.hogbackvt.org/maps>)

Southern Vermont Natural History Museum (<http://www.vermontmuseum.org/>)  
(Note that there is an admission fee for the Museum.)

*Park entrance and meeting pavilion*



**Thursday, October 5, from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. — Tour of Cersosimo Lumber Company Facility**

On Thursday, 5 October, the Cersosimo Lumber Company will host WRWA at their facility in Vernon, Vermont. This sawmill operation produces hardwood lumber and White Pine lumber from local forests that reaches markets all over the globe.

From the south end of Main Street in Brattleboro (near the Brattleboro Food Co-op) go east towards the bridge over the Connecticut River. Just beyond Main Street, make a quick right turn (south) onto Route 142. (*Do not go over the bridge into N.H.*). Continue south about two miles, looking for a red Cersosimo office building on the right (west side of Route 142). Park across the road from the red building.

Dress appropriately for a short walk; **closed-toed footwear is required**. Our hosts will provide hearing protection and safety glasses. All participants must be at least 12-years old, and no pets are allowed on the tour.

If you plan to attend, please contact John Caveney (802-254-4508, Ext.129 or [jcaveney@cersosimo.com](mailto:jcaveney@cersosimo.com)) by September 29 so that Cersosimo will know how many guests to prepare for.

**Saturday, October 7, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. — Tour of a wildlife patch cut after three years of regrowth at Lee and Diana Todd's woodlot in Halifax, Vt.**

On Saturday, 7 October from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m., landowners Diana and Lee Todd will host a second WRWA visit to their patch cut in Halifax, Vt. What does a site cleared with a forest mulcher (aka Brontosaurus) look like after three growing seasons? Come take a look at a patch cut that was cleared in the fall of 2014. The project's goal is to develop early successional habitat for wildlife. The patch is at the intersection of two roads, so it's very visible to the neighbors. The typical reaction after the work was done: "It looks like a bomb went off!" On this field trip, we will see how the patch has changed since the cut, the vegetation that is colonizing the site, and the wildlife that has returned.

From Brattleboro: From exit 2 of I-91, take Route 9 west for about 12.5 miles. At a big bend in the road just before ascending Hogback Mountain, turn left (south) onto Butterfield Rd. Follow Butterfield Road about 3.5 miles until it ends at a T-intersection. Turn right (west) onto Hatch School Road and go a few hundred yards to the first house on the left (#273, white house, white barn). Park on the lawn. (It's tough. It can take it.)

From Wilmington: Take Route 9 east. After passing the 100-mile view at Hogback, descend the mountain and take the first right (south) onto Butterfield Road. (Just before this turn, there will be a blue-roofed barn on the north side of Route 9.) Then follow the directions as above.

The patch cut is directly across the road from the house. We'll walk along the road a bit, then ramble through the flat, easy terrain of the patch itself, covering no more than about a half mile. *Wear footwear suitable for uneven surfaces and bring insect and tick repellent.* For more information, contact Diana Todd at [diana.todd@comcast.net](mailto:diana.todd@comcast.net)

**Saturday, November 11, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. — Big Tree Tour: A Great Program! (Rain or shine.)**

Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester, will once again lead a daylong tour to view some of the largest trees in Windham County, either champions or significant trees on the Vermont Big Tree Register. The tour is free and open to the public. **We ask that you please leave your dog at home.**

**Participants need to wear sturdy footgear and clothes to match the weather, and to bring water and lunch.** Lunch will likely be from **12:30 – 1:00 p.m.** at the **Newfane Courthouse**.

The tour will kick off at the information booth of the Brattleboro Common at the intersection of Park Place and Putney Road. After a short introduction, the tour will depart at 8:45 ***SHARP***, so don't be late! For more information contact Bill Guenther at the Extension Service Office, 257-7967, Ext. 305.

A booklet will be provided that includes the day's schedule, types of trees, locations, and tree identification information. There is also an explanation of how to take the three measurements that are used to qualify a tree for the Big Tree Register.

The tour involves driving from one area to the next, then hiking to the big trees, which are spread out around the county. There will be eight trees on the tour this year. Seven of the trees are within 100 yards of parking. Only one tree involves a bit of a short scramble down a bank.

In the morning, we will visit what will likely become the state's largest Japanese Maple, which we will measure on the tour. Following that will be a new champion Beech, state champions in Silver Maple and Red Mulberry and the runner-up Butternut, at the late Esther Falk's residence.

For those who wish to join just the afternoon portion of the tour, you can link up with the group at the Newfane Courthouse between 12:30 and 1:00 p.m. The afternoon will include visits to three champion trees – Apple, Sycamore, and White Pine.

Please contact Bill Guenther or check the WRWA website in October to confirm the final schedule, which could change as not all landowner permissions had been granted at press time.

### ***Save the dates!***

#### **Saturday, February 17 — Winter Tree Identification and Potluck**

If the weather cooperates, we will have a program on Ballou Mountain in Halifax, followed by a potluck. More details will be in the Fall issue.

#### **Saturday, March 24 at 11:00 a.m. — Sugarhouse Tour at Dave Matt's sugarhouse in Marlboro.**

**Late March** — Again, Bill Guenther hopes for conditions suitable for the winter expedition to Somerset.

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## **President's Message**

*By Martha (Marli) Rabinowitz*

Life never slows down. There are so many little tasks I have set aside and plan to do on a quiet day, but such a thing always seems to shimmer just ahead on the horizon, disappearing as the year turns. Maybe I will have time in August I say...maybe in September after summer is over...maybe after the holidays...or February....

Here it is April and the spring and then summer are in full swing....Some things did get done this

year, and some are already slated for "some time," maybe *next* year. I hope you are not putting off enjoying a cool breeze and a quiet walk outdoors, or the joy of cutting firewood on the hottest day of the year, or all that summer has to offer you.

Summer flies by, and next thing you know, the nests have fledged their birds and flocks are starting to gather and fatten up for fall migration. What have you seen this summer? One thing I enjoyed

was seeing inquisitive, toy sized young foxes roaming the neighborhood, fresh out of the den. A newly fledged bird perched outside my window one morning and looked around, tipping its head one way and another, more enthusiastically than usual. I try not to anthropomorphize but I felt this bird was amazed and excited by this beautiful world it had just jumped into. It probably was just really hungry and wondering what was edible today, but I had to laugh at how hard it was trying.

Hope you and your gardens, fields, and forests are flourishing this year. Come and report on September 9th at the annual meeting, or write a paragraph or two to share in these pages. We love to have experts like Bill, Sam, Arthur, and George explain it all to us but the annual meeting is a good chance to get together and share notes and stories over lunch – you are an expert on your own forest and forestry business. Don't forget the wonderful organic hamburgers from Lilac Ridge Farm and the mysteriously wonderful hotdogs Bill procures.

Last year I made vegetarian burgers; if anyone wants to do that this year I am not trying to hog all the fun. There is a sign-up sheet for helping out — we usually only bother board members with it but if you can pitch in, please email Carol at ([windhamwoodlands@gmail.com](mailto:windhamwoodlands@gmail.com)). I always look forward to the varied and delicious potluck dishes people bring. P.S. We always need new board members, so please think of taking a turn to

support this very local group. It's fun and easy! We especially need people to plan new programs in the year ahead and you don't even have to be on the board to do that. Just let a board member know you can help.

In case the food and great company isn't enough enticement to come to the annual meeting, the current program committee has put together another informative and interesting program, in a great spot to gather, at Molly Stark State Park on Rte. 9 in Wilmington. After the meeting you can hike Mt Olga, or the trails on Hogback Mountain, or visit the Southern Vermont Wildlife Museum. There is a full write up in this issue — hope to see you!

On another matter, we have been told that the Learning Collaborative on Route 5 in Dummerston is closing and for sale. We have had many programs there and it also houses our library. We are sorry to see it go and we will be looking for new venues for our indoor slideshows and talks. If there is a nice hall in your town let us (Carol) know as we would love to do programs in all parts of the county. We will report when we find a new location for our books, in case you want to borrow one.

We also extend a big thank-you to Cersosimo Lumber Company for sponsoring our new signs. They will help mark the way to our programs, which are sometimes off the beaten path.

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## ***WRWA Scholarship Awards***

Windham Regional Woodlands Association has awarded scholarships for the 2017–18 academic year to two students: Samuel Stevens of Brattleboro, and Tanner Bell of Guilford. Both scholars are graduates of Brattleboro Union High School, and both will be attending Unity College in Maine.

Sam plans to major in Environmental Studies leading into a study of Forestry. He says, "My interest toward forest management is strong. I am seriously considering a lifelong career in that field. I believe that it is among the most noble pursuits that can be undertaken because it is a pursuit that directly improves the state of the environment and the quality of life on earth."

Tanner plans a double major in Wildlife and Fisheries Management and Conservation Law Enforcement. He says, "I have recently shadowed my local State Game Warden for roughly twenty hours and the experience was truly amazing. The experience solidified what I already knew, which was that I truly belong in a job field that involves wildlife and the outdoors, whether that be a game warden or a wildlife biologist, because I have such a passion for the outdoors."

WRWA is delighted to be able to help these young men in their career paths, and will follow their progress with interest.

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## ***Tour of Historic Scott Farm Timber Harvest: a Twilight Walk***

*By Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester*

On July 25, a beautiful Tuesday evening, Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester, teamed up with consulting forester, Ian Martin, to offer a tour of a winter timber harvest completed on the Scott Farm in Dummerston. This historic farm, where part of *Cider House Rules* was filmed, is owned by The Landmark Trust USA, which also owns and operates Naulakha, the home Rudyard Kipling built when he lived in Vermont.

The outing was attended by 25 enthusiastic folks, including Andy Snelling, one of the late governor's sons, who now serves on the WRWA Board of Trustees. Ian went over the goals of the harvest, which was a shelterwood cut in large over-mature White Pine that also had some health problems. Bill discussed the various needle blights and *Caliciopsis* canker disease problems that are negatively impacting much of our White Pine resource. In addition, the drought conditions of the past several years were also brought into the discussion about various stressors in the forest.

Also joining the tour were two members of Long View Forest Inc., who were the logging contrac-

tors on the job. Rod Lampe, who had run the mechanical harvester was not able to attend, but his colleague Logan Sears, who also runs a mechanical harvester, gave a great overview of how these expensive and intricate machines work. The smaller trees were harvested with a dangle head mechanical harvester (a special harvester head that can both cut to size and limb a tree), and a forwarder was used to take the logs to the very small log landing. Much of the large pine had to be hand felled, which led to a discussion of the Swedish felling technique, learned in the Game of Logging (GOL) classes. Kyle Brennan did an excellent job of explaining the process of felling large trees with accuracy.

The group also had a good discussion about invasive plants and how the Scott Farm was willing to make an investment of 20 percent of the harvest proceeds to control invasive plants prior to the harvest, which can be critical to successful regeneration. All in attendance agreed it was a fun filled educational evening.

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## ***Vermont Sugaring Season 2017 Review***

*By Sam Schneski*

*Windham and Windsor County Forester*

The Vermont sugaring season of 2017 was yet another good one. Most Windham County sugarmakers I spoke to had a good year, while some even had a record one. The state of Vermont produced 1.98 million gallons, slightly below the record 1.99 million gallons made in 2016. Although the conditions have been favorable for the last few sugaring seasons, there is much more to the large number of gallons produced.

Demand for syrup has grown at an unprecedented rate and with that the number of taps put out and people going into the maple business has skyrocketed. According to the Agency of Agriculture's Maple Specialist Henry Marckres, in the early 2000s Vermont had about 1 million taps. By 2015 we had 4.55 million taps, and as of this year we have 5.41 million taps. The demand for syrup has increased especially in the bulk markets. The last I heard, bulk syrup prices were around \$2.10 per pound. A gallon of syrup weighs 11 pounds so a

gallon of bulk syrup at this rate would be worth \$23.10. For small producers and many others, that super low price is incentive to try to sell retail or wholesale. (Please buy your syrup from local producers!)

Other factors such as weather and technology have contributed to increased production. For years tapping around the first week or two in March or Town Meeting Day was widely practiced. With vacuum systems, tubing systems (barely any buckets), and good tap sanitation practices, many sugarmakers tap in February or sometimes earlier to catch the first runs of sap, and their season doesn't really wind down for a few months. Because of these closed systems, tap holes don't dry out as quickly as they would if they were exposed to the air like a traditional tap and bucket set-up would.

Since sugarmaking is an art and a science that is

ultimately dependent on Mother Nature, there will always be differences from one sugarmaker to another about what is the best way to produce the best product. Maybe efficiency is the goal, maybe pure volume, maybe (and hopefully) the best flavored maple syrup is the goal. Most sugarmakers fall somewhere in the middle, trying to make the best Vermont maple syrup they can while balancing many factors.

#### ***Current conditions:***

Recently some sugarmakers in Windham County have noticed the return of the Forest Tent Caterpillar. This native insect tends to be on a 10–12-year population boom and bust cycle. The last time we saw a population boom was 2005–2006. North central and northeastern parts of Vermont have seen the largest impacts in maple stands. Some other heavily hit spots detected by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation's (FPR) aerial survey crew have been north central Bennington County as well as south central Rutland County. In Windham County, the survey crew has picked up affected stands in the Westminster and Putney area. If you are a sugarmaker who actively sugars

more than 10 acres of land, you can call Barbara Schultz from FPR at 777-2082 to request an egg mass survey. This will help predict the population that will emerge in the spring of 2018. Egg mass surveys can start as soon as the leaves are off the trees in the fall. The Department suggests sugarmakers call sooner rather than later to get on the list of survey sites.

A few other maple conditions are worth noting. So far, this summer has been wet. This can sometimes result in maple stands looking chlorotic, or producing insufficient chlorophyll. Chlorophyll is responsible for the green color of leaves so chlorotic leaves tend to be pale, yellow, or yellowish-white. The moist conditions we have been having have accompanied a post-drought. Many people forget that some of the state and parts of Windham County were in drought stage as recently as last March. Drought conditions are sometimes followed by heavy seed crops. This has been most noticeable on maple, basswood, and hophornbeam. When trees put energy into seed production, leaf production may suffer so crowns sometimes look thinner than normal.

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## ***Planning For Vermont's Natural Resources***

The **Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions** and the **Vermont Agency of Natural Resources** are joining forces to bring the second of two courses to Dummerston. These courses were created by the Agency of Natural Resources for those involved in natural resources planning.

*(This course is intended to be taken after "Vermont's Ecology and Environment," which was offered in Dummerston this spring. However, anyone is welcome to enroll.)*

### ***Caring for Natural Resources: Taking Action in Your Community***

Dates: Mondays, October 2 & 9 (a two-part series)

Time: 6:00-8:00pm

Location: The Learning Collaborative in Dummerston, Vt.

Cost: \$25

This course helps participants choose locally appropriate land use planning strategies for conserving natural resources. It uses case studies and exercises to show how taking action can work in real life. The overall goal is to build understanding of what you can do, how to work with different people in your community, how to choose ways to protect natural resources, and how to make it happen.

This course also includes a bit of "pre-work." Prior to beginning the first class, we will provide a link to several online videos. Watching these will ensure that everyone starts the course with a certain level of knowledge about planning in Vermont, so we can spend our time digging deeper into some of the common challenges that arise.

To register contact:

Monica Przyperhart

Community Wildlife Program

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

802-461-5118

[http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/get\\_involved/partner\\_in\\_conservation/community\\_wildlife\\_program/](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/get_involved/partner_in_conservation/community_wildlife_program/)

email: [Monica.Przyperhart@vermont.gov](mailto:Monica.Przyperhart@vermont.gov)



## **Forest Health Update**

*By Bill Guenther, Windham County Forester*

*(Some items excerpted by FP&R monthly Insect & Disease Observations)*

Weather conditions are one of the major factors that determine tree health, especially when those conditions are at the extreme end of normal. This year's weather is not normal in many respects.

What a difference a single year makes! Last year at this time, most of the state was at least at the first level of drought (there are five levels) and by fall, some of the state was even at the third highest level, a real rarity for Vermont. But our lack of H<sub>2</sub>O rapidly ended with this May's deluge. Past WRWA President Charlie Richardson, who judiciously measures rain throughout the year at his home near the Dummerston Covered Bridge, recorded a whopping 7.93 inches for the month of May. That broke the drought, but also later led to some tree disease problems. June continued to be a wet month and one of our weather stations in southern Vermont recorded 8.86 inches of rain. July also started out very wet, but the precipitation finally tapered off somewhat towards the end of the month. Windham County dodged the worst of the storms' rain and wind effects; however, many woodlots suffered washed-out trails, skid roads and truck roads, with some culvert and bridge damage. If you haven't taken a walk through your woodlot in a while, now would be a good time to do so. If you do have any major washouts, try to get them stabilized before winter sets in.

Having *too much* rain can be a stressor. Maple leaves especially can lose some of their dark green color and turn somewhat chlorotic. Tree roots need a certain amount of oxygen for good growth, so if the ground stays saturated for too long a period tree leaves do not work at peak efficiency and have a yellowish discoloration.

This spring a number of tree species flowered very heavily, with a resultant huge crop of seeds coming along. This is especially noticeable in the maples, basswoods, and hornbeams. Often when trees are under drought stress from the prior year, they respond with a heavy seed year, referred to as a "distress crop." Since the trees are putting lots of energy into seed production, the leaf (vegetative) production can be way down, leaving trees with very thin crowns. So far this year I've received a number of calls about this condition from land-

owners who are concerned that their trees have perhaps just half of the normal leaf cover. This could create some stress for next year as the trees will not be able to store as much starch for next year's growing season.

Last year, areas of the Northeast Kingdom saw some fairly major outbreaks of the native Forest Tent Caterpillar. This year, the damage expanded farther south, but still only caused minimal and scattered damage in Windham County. Most of this damage was observed in the Westminster area. This insect tends to have outbreaks roughly every ten years. We will perform some egg mass sampling this fall and winter in the hope of determining how severe an outbreak might be next year. Usually the outbreaks last three to four years, and then the population collapses. Trees can withstand one or two years without too much negative impact, but longer outbreaks can cause more tree damage.

Once again this spring we saw browning of white pine needles, although it happened a few weeks later this year. The damage occurs to the previous year's needles; with the heavy rains and winds most of these needles had been cast by late June. Some trees have now been afflicted for over five years by one or

more of the four needle blight diseases. Heavy rains in the spring can set the stage for more damage the following year. While we have not found a tree that we can say has been killed by the needle blights, many pines have extremely thin and weak crowns and are definitely in the stressed category.

I got several calls of concern about the sycamores, especially those along the West River between Newfane and Brattleboro. The trees looked leafless in about the middle of June. This species got hit quite hard by a foliar fungus called anthracnose that attacked the newly emerged leaves, causing the trees to go bare soon after they started their leafout. Slowly the trees started to re-foliate, first from the top and gradually throughout the entire crown. As of the early August they are almost back to looking normal. Refoliation is a helpful survival tactic of deciduous trees; however, it does

take a lot of stored energy to push out that second flush of leaves.

As this report shows, during this spring and summer we've seen some forest health issues, but

compared to the rest of the state we have fared pretty well in the Windham region. In our fall edition of *Woodlot Tips*, I'll provide some additional forest health information that concerns anyone owning woodlands.

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## ***Non-Timber Forest Products and the Next Generation.***

*By Marli Rabinowitz, President, WRWA*

I was lucky enough to be able to attend a symposium this summer entitled "The Future of Ginseng and Forest Botanicals" in Morgantown, West Virginia. This was a pretty serious academic conference with presentations by researchers from several universities, as well as USDA, Forest Service, and law enforcement personnel from several states. What I learned about ginseng wild populations, poaching, growing, selling, and using, would fill this whole newsletter.

The message I came away with is that mature hardwood forests create the architecture and soils for a long list of medicinal herbs. Because of their value, many have been harvested in the wild to the point that they are endangered or close to it. But each can also be cultivated. Some can be grown as agricultural crops under shade cloth that mimics the forest closed canopy. Some can be grown in the forest in tilled soil, and most can be "wild simulated" by planting them in likely locales and letting them fend for themselves.

The other message I got is that this is what is drawing a new generation to the forest. Many of the participants were younger than those we see at most forestry gatherings. For example, there is a ginseng "wild-simulated farm" on several hundred acres, both leased and owned, in upstate New York, represented by about 10 people all under 30.

If you live on land for several decades you can see so much growth and change in the trees and forest structure, but if you are young the forest can look very static. Mushrooms, medicines, and other edible forest products are much more immediate and thus exciting, and I think we all should remember this when trying to engage our children and grandchildren or other younger people in forest management. Even something as simple as making black birch twig tea can create memories that draw them back.

For a treat at this meeting we got to sample ginseng mead (it was great), and ginseng-infused honey. Other products I learned about were made from goldenseal, black cohosh, blue cohosh, black walnut hulls, chaga mushrooms, log-grown reishi and shiitake mushrooms (also lion's mane, oyster mushrooms, chicken of the woods), bloodroot, leeks, and more. There is a farm in Wisconsin that makes and sells a special mulch for these plants out of only sugar maple leaves. Vermonters should be able to do that! There is a longer list of forest plants that are medicinal but because they are already uncommon in the wild no one is encouraging their harvest or use.

Wild leeks (ramps) is a widespread species in Vermont that is suddenly popular in upscale restaurants and is being over-harvested compared to the time it takes to grow and reproduce. Foragers are now encouraged to take only one leaf from each plant and to leave the bulbs to grow and multiply. If you have a moist area in your woods you could consider propagating some. A timber cut would not bother them at all and over time you would have a crop to sell.

The best news I heard is that honeysuckle bush has some antiviral properties that are being investigated. It would be so great if that were true, and a young person came by eager to dig it up and sell it ... I can dream anyways!

The symposium ended with a practical training session for beginning forest farmers. If you have further interest, take a look at the website of the Appalachian Beginning Forest Farmers Coalition: Growing Opportunities Beneath the Canopy — [www.appalachianforestfarmers.org/](http://www.appalachianforestfarmers.org/). United Plant Savers (which began in Vermont) is the organization that created this event and will be posting the proceedings on its website, [www.unitedplantsavers.org](http://www.unitedplantsavers.org). The site has a lot of information on

preserving wild populations of medicinal herbs by separately cultivating them commercially.

I hope this doesn't seem too far off the topic of forest management, but I was so impressed by the enthusiasm and creativity at the symposium. If preserving and cultivating these botanicals can

provide a bridge and an enticement to the next generation of forest stewards, I feel we should take full advantage of that and start incorporating these opportunities in our view of the forest and forest products. Along the way we might have some fun and profit ourselves.

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***The Windham Regional Woodlands Association highly recommends that woodlot owners take the GOL series of hands-on courses. Many people use chain saws around their properties and may have old and/or unsafe saws or equipment and need to be brought up to date on safety techniques, even if contractors/loggers do major harvests. Check the NRCD website for the next dates the sessions are being offered. Your life may depend on it!***

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***Game of Logging  
Taught by Northeast  
Partnership with the  
Conservation District***

This program is designed for users who have never had for-safe and productive habits from saw users improve their skills and “unlearn” bad habits and unsafe techniques.



***Chainsaw Course  
Woodland Training in  
Windham County***

novice to advanced chain saw mal training. Novices develop the start, while experienced chain

The Game of Logging training is hands-on. One instructor works with a group of up to ten participants to ensure that each participant has time to practice the techniques and receive personal feedback. Participants receive individualized coaching at a series of in-the-woods practice stations. The instructor pays close attention to body positioning and other factors that can contribute to unsafe work habits.

By listening to explanations, watching demonstrations, and practicing techniques, participants come away with better work habits and greater confidence in their ability to safely fell trees and work in the woods.

**Each session runs from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. The cost per session is \$175.**

**To SIGN UP for the next GOL course, contact the  
Windham County Conservation District: (802) 689-3024 or  
Windhamcountynrcd@gmail.com**

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**Windham Regional Woodlands Association**  
130 Austine Drive, Suite 300  
Brattleboro, VT 05301-7040

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

***Upcoming Programs***  
***(See inside for details)***

<b>Saturday, September 9, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.</b>	<b>Windham Regional Woodlands Association Annual Meeting and Potluck Cookout at Molly Stark State Park, Wilmington, Vt.</b>
<b>Thursday, October 5, 5:00 –7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Tour of Cersosimo Lumber Company Facility in Vernon, Vt.</b>
<b>Saturday, October 7, 2:00–3:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Tour of a wildlife patch cut after three years of regrowth at Lee and Diana Todd’s woodlot in Halifax, Vt.</b>
<b>Saturday, Nov. 11, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.</b>	<b>Big Tree Tour: A Great Program!</b>
<b><i>Save the dates</i></b>	
<b>Saturday, February 17</b>	<b>Winter Tree Identification and Potluck, Ballou Mtn., Halifax</b>
<b>Saturday, March 24</b>	<b>Sugarhouse Tour, Dave Matt’s Sugarhouse, Marlboro</b>
<b>Late March</b>	<b>Hoped for expedition to Somerset, weather permitting.</b>

***Mission of Windham Regional Woodlands Association***

WRWA 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, WRWA 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.