

Forest Leaves

A quarterly newsletter about Pennsylvania's privately owned forestlands

Red Maple and Black Birch: Pennsylvania's New Dominant Species

By Jim Finley, Professor, Penn State School of Forest Resources

Go back in time 150 years and Pennsylvania's forests would have great numbers of American chestnut, white pine, and eastern hemlock. Heavy harvesting, fire, and disease ravaged the state's forests and changed, perhaps forever, our forest cover. We believe that the combination of these events started the oak invasion.

Today, we see a decline in oak, and an increase in red maple and black birch, which have become the first and second most common species. A short history of this succession may help you make informed decisions about managing your woodlot.

One hundred years ago, fire was more common in Pennsylvania forests, and species that could survive fire had an advantage. Such species sprout prolifically; they have dormant buds near or below the soil line that quickly shoot up and form multiple stems. How many of the oaks in your woodlot are doubles? Look closely and you might see evidence of the stump, long since rotted away.

Red maple also sprouts, yet it does not, especially on smaller trees, have dormant buds below the soil line. Rather, its dormant buds are higher on the stem and more susceptible to fire damage. Lacking fire, a cut maple will sprout prolifically and grow taller and faster than almost any other species in the forest, especially under favorable light conditions (such as those resulting from partial to heavy cutting). In the presence of fire, neither red maple nor black birch will sprout.

So, the lack of fire may be playing a role in the succession from oak to red maple and black birch in our forests today. What else is happening? Arguably, white-tailed deer are playing a role in the decline in oaks. Acorns are an important mast source for deer, providing fats, carbohydrates, and proteins. In fact, acorns are perhaps the number one hard mast for many wildlife species.

While red and white oak species use different strategies to ensure that their acorns develop into the next generation of trees, it appears they are meeting with little success. Walk through many oak forests and you'll see few oak seedlings, and those you do see are often multi-stemmed and stunted, showing evidence of repeated browsing.

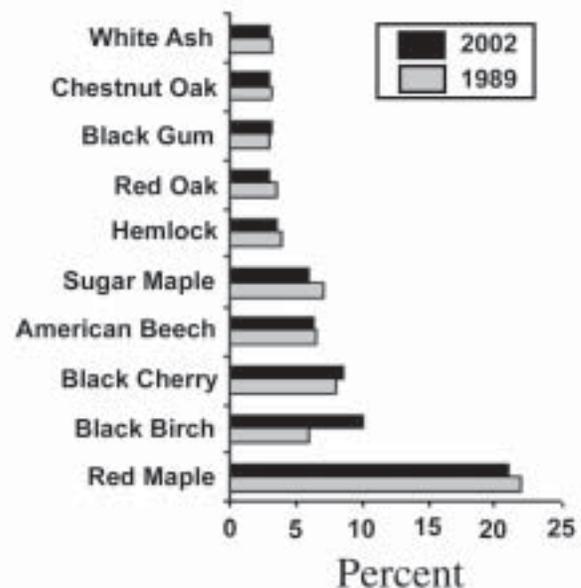
For the past four decades, oaks have experienced increased pressure from harvesting and insects. Many of us can recall the summers of gypsy moth explosions, when the

frass from the feeding larvae sounded like rain. Then too, there were the years of oak leaf rollers, which removed oak from untold acres in the central part of the state. The impacts of these insects, in addition to deer, have compromised oaks from fully taking advantage of the increased light filtering through the declining overstory. Cutting, too, has changed the state's forests. As the world demand for oak grew from the 1970s to today, pressures to find and harvest oak increased. Focusing on what to cut, rather than what to grow, forest owners and timber harvesters gave little thought to the seed source for the next generation of trees. Looking on the forest floor to see what species would comprise the next forest was an afterthought.

Insects, deer, and cutting affect more than just oaks. In recent years, we've seen major losses of sugar maple, eastern hemlock, and white ash. Competitive species rush in to fill the space left by these losses, taking advantage of

Continued on Page 5, See Common Trees

The Most Common Trees in Pennsylvania (2002 vs. 1989)



Land Management After FLEP

By Gary Gilmore, Pennsylvania Tree Farm Chair

"This is stupid," I thought as the mattock penetrated the ground and I planted another seedling. Two years ago I planted this same area with a thousand larch trees and only eight survived. Now I am replanting the area. This recently purchased land includes a strip-mined site now covered in heavy grass. My plan is to reforest this hilltop. What type of rational person would expend the energy, time, and money to plant trees when the fiscal pay off will be zero or less?

Herein lies the dilemma of forestry, especially in Pennsylvania. As Tree Farmers, we are dealing with a long-term crop with short-term ownership. My planting projects were partially paid for by money available through the Forestry Incentive Program (FIP) and most recently with the Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) program. This financial help enabled me to plant more acres than I would have on my own.

The FIP program was discontinued two years ago and replaced with the FLEP program. The FLEP program was to last five years and put 100 million dollars into helping family forest owners implement sustainable forestry practices. Due to the cost of Western fires and other budget issues, this program no longer has any money. The National Association of Conservation Districts' April 2004 issue of *Forestry Notes* summarized it well by saying: "No other program provides direct assistance to help landowners implement forest manage-

ment practices on family forest lands. Financial assistance typically results in a two- to four-fold increase in the implementation of sustainable forestry practices on private lands allowing landowners to better meet long-term public demand for timber and related forest resources while providing environmental benefits for the general public."

The American Tree Farm System is actively trying to get the funding restored for this important forestry program. Whether it happens or not is another matter, but at least we are trying. Tree Farming has been around for over 60 years, long before cost-share money was available. Tree Farming will continue, even when cost-share money is no longer available. Being a Tree Farmer means you have a love of the land and the forests that grow on it. It means learning more about your forests through talking to your inspecting forester, reading the interesting articles in *Tree Farmer* magazine, and talking about sustainable forestry with others. Finally, being a Tree Farmer means taking an active role in improving your woods because you want to. Cost-share money helps, but it is our passion for practicing forestry that really drives Tree Farmers. Next year, I will still be planting trees.

Editor's Note: *Forestry Notes* are available on-line: <http://forestry.nacdnet.org/forestrynotes> 7

Trying to Keep Up

By Ken Manno, Program Manager, PA SFI SIC

The Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI®) is currently updating our outreach materials to reflect a rather subtle, but nonetheless important name change. For over seven years, we have referred to ourselves as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative of Pennsylvania, or the SFI of PA. For uniformity sake, the American Forest & Paper Association, the national sponsor of SFI, instructed state programs to use state names consistently. So, we are now the Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative SIC. The SIC identifies the State Implementation Committee, the governing body of nearly 30 people who essentially serve as our board of directors, providing guidance to our ongoing program efforts.

Normally, actions like this would be taken in one fell swoop. However, we will ease into it. Some printed materials and our Web site will carry the change immediately. But, because we have a wide array and large volume of printed materials, some PA SFI materials will not bear the new name for quite some time. Financial prudence dictates that we take this approach. We hope this will not cause confusion. For now, if you see something with either the Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative (or PA SFI) SIC, or the Sustainable Forestry

Initiative of Pennsylvania (or SFI of PA), just know it's us.

Most of you who receive *Forest Leaves* also receive our *Pennsylvania SFI SIC* newsletter. If you have never done so, please look in the next issue for the names of those individuals who comprise our program's Implementation Committee. I am very proud of them. They are among the best of the best in our state when it comes to a diverse group of forestry experts. And yet, as knowledgeable as they are, they always look for opportunities to expand what they know. The committee meets every other month. For our June meeting, we will visit Dr. Susan Stout and her staff at the USDA's Forest Sciences Lab, and visit research sites on the Kane Experimental Forest. We will also accompany Jeff Kochel, the Forest Investment Associates (FIA) regional manager, on a tour of previously harvested FIA sites to see what harvest prescriptions they have followed and what the outcomes have been. Jeff Kochel and Susan Stout are both members of our committee.

All of us affiliated with the Pennsylvania SFI program are committed to trying to keep up with new forestry related information. Our northern hardwoods may grow slowly, but the information they provide in the process comes rapidly. 7

Forest Stewardship VIP Designs New Tree Shelters

By Elizabeth Webster, *Forest Leaves*

VIP Jim Walizer proves that big accomplishments often start in one's own backyard. Walizer's recent innovations with tree tubes have even convinced a few skeptics that his system can help hardwoods grow stronger and faster. Walizer has named his invention the Tree Incubation and Protection (TIP) system. He says, "It retains the advantages of the tree tube and eliminates many of the problems."

The TIP system includes a 16-inch plastic tube combined with a four-foot-high plastic fence with two-inch grids. The new shelters are not yet available on the market. According to Walizer, the TIP system retains the positive greenhouse effect created by the plastic tubing, yet by allowing ventilation, it prevents the seedling from overheating, and helps it to become stable against the wind. Like many common tree tubes, it also protects against animal browse.

Walizer began experimenting with tree tubes two years ago in an effort to grow chestnut seedlings in his backyard. After discovering a chestnut stand on his great-grandfather's farm, Walizer became fascinated with achieving optimal growth characteristics of the plant. Among other experiments, he tested different types of tree tubes. Last year, he presented his findings at The American Chestnut Foundation Annual Meeting and generated a lot of interest.

Penn State Extension Educator Dave Jackson is working with Walizer to compare the TIP system with other tree protection systems. In field trials with 75 red oak seedlings provided by the Bureau of Forestry, Jackson will use five types of tree shelters to observe how different shelter heights affect seedling growth and survival. Jackson says, "We're testing Jim's theory that we can maintain the positive greenhouse effect with a short tube and still protect the seedlings from browsing." Walizer is waiting to see if Jackson's experiment

confirms the results of his preliminary findings. In his own words, "We've had some luck with them, and we think they're going to be the next big thing." 7



Forest Leaves Online

- To receive the *Forest Leaves* newsletter by e-mail, send a message to RNRExt@psu.edu
- To access current and archived issues on the Internet, visit http://rnrext.cas.psu.edu/forest_leaves.htm

Three Service Foresters Retire This Summer

By Jim Stiehler, *Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry Stewardship Coordinator*

Craig Keeran of Adams and York Counties was the first to announce his retirement. Craig began his career with the Bureau of Forestry in 1969. Before moving to a satellite office at Codoris State Park, Craig's first work assignment was timber management forester in Renovo. Craig retired with 35 years of service.

Bruce Kile, who also began his career with the Bureau in 1969, has been the service forester in Franklin

and Cumberland Counties. Bruce retired with 35 years of service.

Paul Whipkey of Fayette County began his career with the Bureau in 1972 in Elk State Forest. In 1973, Paul transferred to District 4, Fayette County. Paul retired with 32 years of service. These three service foresters will be greatly missed. We wish them well in their retirements. 7

Tom Fitzgerald Named 2004 Service Forester of the Year

By Elizabeth Webster and Rance Scott Harmon, Penn State School of Forest Resources Extension

Pennsylvania State Forester James Grace recently presented Tom Fitzgerald with a plaque recognizing Fitzgerald as the Service Forester of the Year for 2004. The plaque reads, "In recognition of outstanding and dedicated service in the advancement of sound forest management on private woodlands in the Forbes Forest District. Your professional skills, ability to communicate the forestry message, and dedicated service over 40 years have earned you the admiration of your colleagues and clients." Fitzgerald has served as a service forester in Westmoreland and Allegheny counties since 1973. For nine years before becoming a service forester, he worked as a management forester in Potter County.

At the Forbes Forest District office where Fitzgerald has worked for 31 years, his colleagues know him affectionately as "Fitzzy." Donald Stiffler, assistant district forester says, "Tom's unique style and dedication to finding answers to even the most obscure forestry question puts him in a class of his own. When there's a question from the public that generates blank stares from the rest of us, a refrain will arise... 'That sounds like a Fitzzy question!' Sure enough, if Tom doesn't already know the answer, he'll spend the time to research the answer, or to find the expert who does know it." Supervisor Ed Callahan agrees, "He's got an encyclopedic memory; he can recall things from forestry texts he read 40 years ago. And he knows how things have changed over the years." Callahan nominated Fitzgerald for the award.

Private forest landowners have much to say about the helpful service Tom Fitzgerald has provided. Robert Ackerman, Forest Stewardship VIP and president of the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association says, "I have known Tom since 1984 when I came back to my family farm from overseas. I had no forestry background, and Tom has been very helpful to me. He helped me get enrolled in the Forest Stewardship Program, and



State Forester James Grace (left) and Tom Fitzgerald

Jim Stiehler photo

he helped me plant 15,000 seedlings. He deserves some recognition. He's done a lot of good for forestry in Westmoreland County."

Toni Rotondo, Allegheny County Forest Landowner, met Fitzgerald two years ago when he conducted a site survey of her property. "I've gone on many assessments with him," Rotondo says, "He taught me how to do a timber stand analysis and use a prism. He's very, very, good at what he does. He truly loves his job. He can see the forest through the trees, if you know what I mean. He can walk into the woods and tell you the life of the woods."

The Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry employs service foresters to provide information and technical assistance to promote the sound management of Pennsylvania's private forestlands. Service foresters work in all 67 counties of the Commonwealth. A directory is available by contacting the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, 1-800-235-WISE or RNRExt@psu.edu. 7

Free Software Illustrates Forest Management Options

By Paul A. Roth, Penn State School of Forest Resources Extension Associate

In the past, to visualize the effects of management activities such as thinning, harvesting, or planting, woodland owners had to make field trips to demonstration forests. Today, new technology enables viewers to observe forest changes generated from data they collect on their own forestland. This interactive program, called the Stand Visualization System (SVS), allows users to view changes in species composition, height, and the distribution of trees before and after a harvest or planting.

Examples of these simulations are available on the Penn State Natural Resource Extension Web site (<http://RNRExt.cas.psu.edu/>). The United States Forest Service developed the software used to generate the visualizations. Also available at the site are several PowerPoint®

presentations that include SVS images and charts depicting output for Pennsylvania stands.

In March 2004, a group of stewardship VIP-Coverts volunteers completed a one-day training at Penn State on how to collect and enter data and generate stand visualizations. SVS users may also train themselves using the step-by-step training manual on the Web site. We encourage you to investigate the site and try using the programs and simulations. Once at the Cooperative Extension Web site click on the "Publications" tab, then on "Forest Visualization Software." We hope you find the software and site useful. If you have any comments or questions about the images or software, please contact Paul Roth at par169@psu.edu or 1-800-235-WISE. 7



Brush Piles



Letter to the Editor:

A Challenge for Foresters

By Stephen E. Jaquith, CF, ACF

In "Signing Off," in the Spring 2004 issue of *Forest Leaves*, Ken Manno attempted to expand and improve upon a suggestion that I made to a gathering of foresters earlier this year. Ken erred a bit in his paraphrase of my words, as might be expected when selecting from an hour-long presentation. The difference between what I said and what Ken heard is important.

The title of my talk was "A Modest Proposal for the Forestry Profession." My comments were for foresters who find themselves working with landowners who want to maximize short-term income rather than manage their forest resources for long-term benefits. Despite our best efforts to persuade landowners to practice better forestry, some choose a different treatment. My focus was on how a forester can meet one's professional responsibility in such cases.

One option, of course, is for the forester to decline participation in any treatment that would result in resource depletion. Sometimes, this is the best choice. In other situations, it would be impractical, inadvisable, or both. Another option would be to continue working to improve the outcome. In my talk, I suggested that foresters have a professional responsibility to clearly inform such landowners about the expected results of ill-advised timber harvesting, and that this advice should be documented either in the service agreement (for consulting foresters) or

in the purchase contract (for procurement foresters). Simply stating later, "The landowner made me do it," is not satisfactory.

Ken wrote that I had suggested having a form for landowners to sign who have high-graded their timber stands in spite of being counseled against it. That was not quite right. I was speaking to foresters about the integrity of our profession, not promoting more paperwork.

As the program manager for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative of Pennsylvania, Ken is naturally interested in developing new tools for better forestry. In his article, Ken described a suggestion of his own: "a form that must be signed by all the parties associated with the harvest—the landowner, the forester, the wood buyer/sawmill, and the logger." I do not support this idea, for several reasons. Among these are privacy concerns and the desire to protect information about my clients' business affairs and personal circumstances.

A decision to high-grade may be just as disheartening for the landowner as it is for the forester, and it may reflect circumstances of overriding importance to the landowner's family. A forester's role includes making sure that the landowner's decision is based on adequate information, but ultimately, the landowner chooses how to proceed. My "modest proposal" is indeed modest, and it certainly is not meant to address the complex issue of reducing the degradation of Pennsylvania's forests. For that, we have various organizations, programs, and publications, as well as the daily work of many foresters and allied professionals. The forestry profession should stand for good forestry, and my suggestion is meant to help foresters reach that goal even when our advice is not followed. 7

Common Trees, Continued from Page 1

the newly available light on the forest floor. A number of factors can add to the competitors' success: the seeds are of low mast value, few wildlife species browse the seedlings, and/or they are prolific seed producers.

Red maple and black birch fit into the opening niches in our changing forest. Red maple produces lots of seed that matures in early summer when there are many other things to eat. Many of these seeds escape hungry wildlife. Black birch holds its seeds until winter, dispersing millions of them in the winter winds to drift across the snow-covered forest floor. You may have noticed the three-winged tiny pepper-like flakes on snow during your winter walks. The strategy of producing lots of seed that are either very small or abnormally timed is a good one. If you are a species that does reasonably well in partial shade (the type left by partial cutting or an insect outbreak) you can germinate and begin to grow, filling the spaces between higher crowns of your parents and other species.

Red maple and black birch are successful in part because few wildlife species seek out their seed, and because they have strategies for growing past browsing deer. When deer browse through a forest, they nibble, first this plant, and then the next. Black birch, because of its taste and perhaps other reasons, is not high on the deer brows-

ing preference list. So, it survives. Red maple is not high on the list either. Moreover, it grows rapidly as a sprout, often extending past the deer's reach in only a few years. In addition to these advantages both species seed at a young age, fire seldom occurs in our forests today, and harvesting often focuses on other species. It is easy to see why red maple and black birch are the two most common tree species in the state.

When you are in your woods, think about what species are starting to grow. If you are planning to cut your woods, think about what species you are leaving for a seed source, and take some time to see what is growing in the understory. The decisions we make today leave a legacy for tomorrow.

Editor's Note:

To receive a copy of the *Annual Inventory Report for Pennsylvania's Forests: Results from the First Three Years* on which the graph and data in this article are based, contact USDA Forest Service Publications Distribution: 359 Main Road, Delaware, OH 43015-8640 (740-368-0127), e-mail ne_pubs@fs.fed.us, or visit the "Publications and Products" link at www.fs.fed.us/ne 7



Forest Leaves Calendar



Saturday, July 17. Managing Wooded Riparian Buffers along Lakes, Ponds, and Streams. Mt. Pisgah State Park. 10 a.m. **2**

Saturday, July 17. North Central Forest Landowners Association Picnic. Contact Larry Shultz, 717-484-2239.

Saturday, July 17. Herbicide Workshop. Coaldale, (Bedford County). 10 a.m. **3**

Thursday, July 22. Wildflowers of Pennsylvania. United Church of Christ, Ebensburg. 7 p.m. Contact Mike Wolf, 814-472-7986 or mtw107@psu.edu

Thursday through Sunday, July 29 to August 1. Ruffed Grouse Summer Youth Camp. For ages 12 to 16. Stone Valley Recreation Area, (Huntingdon County). Contact Mark Banker, 814-867-7946 or rgsbank@lazerlink.com

Saturday, July 31. Using a Map and Compass. Riverside Park, Loyalsock Township, (Northumberland Co.) 10 a.m. to noon. **4**

Saturday, July 31. Fire Prevention for Homes in Wooded Lots. Laurel Highlands Forest Landowners' Association. Somerset County. Contact Carl Campbell, 724-593-9441.

Saturday through Wednesday, August 7 to 11. International Society of Arboriculture International Conference and Trade Show. Pittsburgh Westin Hotel and Convention Center. Contact Bill Elmendorf, 814-863-7941 or wfe1@psu.edu

Saturday, August 14. Summer Tour. Pawlosky's Lumber and Milling Plant in Washington County. **5**

Tuesday through Thursday, August 17 to 19. Ag Progress Days. Rock Springs (Centre County). Free admission and parking. <http://apd.cas.psu.edu>. Contact 814-865-2081.

Saturday, August 21. Wild Turkey Woodlands. Dave Schreffler's property, Everett (Bedford County). **3**

Wednesday and Thursday, August 25 and 26. Ruffed Grouse Workshop. National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, WV. <http://www.training.fws.gov/> Contact Gary Norman, normang@dgif.state.va.us

Wednesday, September 8. Visualizing Your Forest: Simulating Forest Management Decisions and Their Impacts. 7 p.m. **5**

Saturday, September 11. Applied Forest Management Decisions. Arlyn Perkey's Tree Farm and Stewardship Forest in West Greene County. Meet at noon. **5**

Sunday, September 12. Developing a Management Plan for Your Woodlands. Central Susquehanna Woodland Owners Association. Contact Fred or Kathy Fries, 570-784-8490.

Monday, September 13. Game of Logging 1. Ricketts Glen State Park, Luzerne County. **6**

Tuesday, September 14. Game of Logging 2. Ricketts Glen State Park, Luzerne County. **6**

Wednesday, September 15. Game of Logging 3. Ricketts Glen State Park, Luzerne County. **6**

Thursday, September 16 Game of Logging 4. Ricketts Glen State Park, Luzerne County. **6**

Thursday, September 16. Business Management. Dwight Lewis Lumber Co., Sullivan County. **6**

Thursday, September 16. GPS For Forest Management. Craftmaster Manufacturing Inc., Towanda, Bradford County. **6**

Saturday, September 18. Annual Bus Trip. Sapsucker Woods, Cornell University. **2**

Saturday, September 25. Third Annual Central Pennsylvania Woodlot Management Workshop: Managing for Woodland Birds. Scotia Range, State Game Lands #176 (Centre County). Contact Dave Jackson, Penn State Cooperative Extension-Centre County, 814-355-4897.

Saturday, September 25. Woods Walk. Dick Thorr's woods near Edinboro, (Erie County). 9 a.m. **1**

Saturday, September 25. Forest Soils and Identifying Stands Mini-Conference. World's End State Park, Forksville. 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. **4**

Thursday, September 30. Game of Logging 1. Pine Creek Lumber, Mill Hall, Clinton County. **6**

Thursday, September 30. GPS For Forest Management. Cabela's Restaurant, Hamburg, Berks County. **6**

Saturday, October 9. Picnic Pig Roast. Southwestern PA Woodland Owners Association. John Burnham's Tree Farm and Stewardship Forest in South Washington County. 3 p.m. **5**

Monday, October 11. History of the Northwest Pennsylvania Woods. Spartansburg Elementary School. 7 p.m. **1**

1 Northwest Pennsylvania Woodlands Association. Contact Pete Kost, 814-337-5678, or <http://nwpwa.Allegheny.edu>

2 Bradford-Sullivan Forest Landowners' Association. Contact Bruce Chase, 570-363-2388 or thebsfla@yahoo.com

3 Woodland Owners of the Southern Alleghenies. Contact Dave Scamardella, Service Forester, 717-485-3148.

4 Contact Robert Hansen, 570-265-2896 or rsh7@psu.edu

5 Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association. Free and open to the public. Contact Bill Wentzel, 724-627-6624. Meet at Building 10, Greene County Fairgrounds in Waynesburg.

6 TRAINING COURSES sponsored by the Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative SIC: 814-867-9299, 1-888-734-9366, or sfi@penn.com (SAF CFE credit available for most courses.)

Next deadline: Sept. 1 for events between Oct. 12 and Jan. 15

PFA President's Message

By Lloyd R. Casey

During this past year, there has been a lot of discussion about amending the laws that pertain to threatened and endangered species. We all have heard stories about the spotted owl out West, and the snail darter in Tennessee. To date, the Endangered Species Act has had very little impact on timber harvesting here in Pennsylvania. But, times may change. If we are not active, others whose agendas include restricting legitimate timber harvesting will be.

Some landowners are under the impression that they cannot be prosecuted as long as they are ignorant of endangered species residing on their property. Ignorance of the law is no defense. It is better to be informed and prepared to deal with the situation. Most regulators are reasonable in their approach, however, once damage to the habitat is done, the courts may be hard to deal with. PFA is monitoring the situation and is in contact with our legislators, but the name of the game is numbers. Every member is an additional voice for the reasonable approach in protecting our endangered species.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission currently reports 14 endangered birds and mammals, and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission reports 31 endangered fish and 6 endangered reptiles and amphibians. Many other Pennsylvania species are listed as threatened. To learn about these species and their habitat requirements visit http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/PGC/endangered

and, <http://www.fish.state.pa.us>

On another front, the Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) is in trouble. We are about to lose the only program that provides direct assistance to private forest landowners for forest management practices. Two years ago, Congress established the program from non-appropriated funds, non-tax dollars, for the purpose of assistance to forest owners in the establishment of forest practices on their land to ensure future supplies of forest resources.

Because of some in-house disagreements, the program has been scrapped by the administration. However, it will be taken up in the congressional budget discussions. E-mail seems to be the fastest way to contact your congressional members as all mail to Washington is slowed down by the long screening process. If you want to see FLEP continue, please contact the following U.S. Congressional delegates for Pennsylvania:

- The Honorable Don Sherwood, john.enright@mail.house.gov
- The Honorable John E. Peterson, available through his Web site, <http://www.house.gov/johnpeterson>
- The Honorable John P. Murtha, murtha@mail.house.gov
- The Honorable Arlen Specter, senator_specter@specter.senate.gov
- The Honorable Rick Santorum, senator@santorum.senate.gov

It would also be appropriate to contact your own local representatives about this issue. 7

Book Review, Continued from Page 8

Morsbach told *Forest Leaves*, "It has always appeared strange to me that with 10 million small woodland owners, the market for a book on forestry is so small." Most publishers are not eager to take on such books; however, there are a couple of comparable texts that bear mentioning: *Woodlot Management Handbook: Making the Most of Your Wooded Property for Conservation, Income, or Both* by Stewart

Hilts, et al; and *Working with your Woodland: A Landowners Guide* by Mollie Beattie, et al.

Signed copies of *Common Sense Forestry* are available from the author at 5745 S. Harper Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637. Send a check for \$24 payable to Hans Morsbach. Find out more about the author and the book at <http://www.woodlandmanagement.com> 7

FOREST LEAVES—Summer 2004

Editor: Rance Scott Harmon

Associate Editor: Elizabeth Webster

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Calendar contributions and news items are welcome. Submissions for the next issue of *Forest Leaves* are due:

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- **The Pennsylvania Tree Farm® Program** (www.treefarmssystem.org) Administered nationally by the American Tree Farm System® under the guidance of the American Forest Foundation.
- **The Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative® SIC** (www.sfiopfpa.org) Initiated nationally by the American Forest and Paper Association.
- **The Pennsylvania Forestry Association** (<http://pfa.cas.psu.edu/>).

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This Publication is available in alternate format upon request.

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NEXT DEADLINE:
September 1, 2004



Summer 2004

Building Your Library

By Elizabeth Webster, Associate Editor

Common Sense Forestry, By Hans Morsbach. 2002. Illustrations by Robert W. Hutchison. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing Company (www.chelseagreen.com). ISBN 1-93149-821-0 (pbk.) 256 pages.

Small woodland owners searching for a definitive guide to woodlot management may be out of luck. Forestry textbooks are often too technical for readers outside the field, and how-to guides for the layperson tend to dabble in subjects like tree planting, pruning, or harvesting, without addressing all of the issues important to woodland owners: buying and financing land, paying taxes, working with foresters, and more. Hans Morsbach, a small woodland owner in Richland County, Wisconsin, decided to write his own book, *Common Sense Forestry*, to help fellow landowners avoid making the same mistakes he made. Morsbach, who calls himself "just a city dude from Chicago," does not intend for his book to stand alone as the definitive guide to forestry. But, it's a good place to start.

Morsbach tells his story in a funny, candid style. After buying his land in 1972 on a whim, he first attempted to raise cattle, then bees, and finally, on the recommendation of a county forester, decided to plant a tree farm of 50,000 walnut seedlings. The failure of this last project sent him searching for his own answers. He began experimenting

with planting trees, reading books about forestry, and talking with other woodland owners. As a result, Morsbach's ideas about land management have developed with little influence from academic and governmental agencies. He offers readers specific suggestions, while advocating a "do-it-yourself" approach. One of Morsbach's "Ten Commandments for Small Woodland Owners," reads "Consult Experts in Your Forestry Practices—But Remember Who's Boss." Other commandments include "Be Kind to the Environment," "Do Not Expect to Make Money," and number one on the list: "Enjoy your Woodland." Readers have particularly praised his techniques for direct seeding and financing a sustainable forest.

While Morsbach encourages woodland owners to consider the benefits of all forestry practices, he remains clear about which practices he prefers. Some readers may think his views controversial. He does not favor clear-cutting practices or monocultural forests, and he doesn't believe that small woodland owners stand much of a chance of making a profit from their trees. Regarding the financial advice he offers in the book, Morsbach says, "I suggest to landowners to convert pastureland to woodland because they'll get more money for it when it's time to sell." Readers who are interested in cultivating and managing a mixed-species forest will get the most out of the book.

According to Morsbach, guides to woodland management are rare in part because they are so difficult to sell.

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