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# VIRGINIA FOREST LANDOWNER UPDATE

Events, news, and information promoting the stewardship of Virginia's forest resources.

## VIRGINIA FOREST LANDOWNER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Dylan Jenkins, *Publisher*

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## Exotic Species Pose Threat to U.S. Ecosystems

Jim Parkhurst, *Virginia Tech Dept. of Fisheries & Wildlife Sciences*

Today, we are facing a serious, yet elusive, invasion that few realize is happening. The entire consequences of this invasion have yet to play out, but by all accounts we're looking at some potentially significant and, for the most part, negative effects. What is this invasion? I'm speaking about the introduction of exotic or non-native species to our North American ecosystems, whether by accident or through purposeful releases. For anyone who is facing the challenge of trying to keep a patch of kudzu (*Pueraria lobata*) under control or dealing with the European Gypsy Moth (*Lymantria dispar*) for the first time, you know what I am referring to. This invasion spans many different phyla (e.g., plants, animals, insect) and can involve many taxonomic groups.

In fact, the threats from this invasion have become so serious that a Presidential Executive Order (No. 13112) was signed in 1999 to create an interagency task force to find ways to try to halt this assault.

Restricting our discussion only to plants for the moment, there are thousands of plant species present in this country that are not native to this continent, but not all of them pose the immediate threat that some do. According to the Federal Interagency Committee on Noxious and Exotic Weeds, approximately 1,400 exotic plants currently are classified as pest species and, of these, 94 officially are recognized as Federal Noxious Weeds. By conservative estimates, approximately 100 million acres of the U.S. landscape have been infested with these weeds and officials expect that total to climb by 8–20% per year in the immediate future. By some estimates, about 4,600 acres per day nationwide fall victim to the effects of non-native species.

In addition to threatening biodiversity, reducing habitat quality, and impairing ecosystem functioning, these invasives exact a substantial economic price, one that until only recently was unknown. Federal agencies now estimate that the loss in productivity among our primary agricultural commodities due to competition with exotic plants totals about \$7.4 billion annually and an additional \$3.6–\$5.4 billion is spent trying to control these pest species. These figures do not include efforts to reduce or eliminate exotics outside of agricultural endeavors, in areas such as our lakes, ponds, water supply systems, and other aquatic environments or on our rangelands, forests, and recreational lands. Clearly, these aliens are causing significant ecological and economic problems.

The Federal Interagency Committee has developed a national initiative that consists of a three-pronged approach to deal with exotics (prevent, control, and restore), and each of these goals has a specific set of objectives that target a piece of the larger problem. Many of these objectives provide a strategy that landowners can follow and who collectively represent an important frontline defense against the proliferation of these non-natives. Specific objectives and actions land owners and land managers can take include: using only native species in land management activities, implementing integrated pest management; developing methods to restore native ecosystems; and promoting good stewardship on private and public lands to keep exotics away.

So, what is the average landowner supposed to do in this war against the exotics? Below are a number of challenges that, if you truly are concerned about the exotics invasion, you can accept and try to fulfill. This is only a partial list of potential activities—see if you can think of any others that you could undertake.

Begin the task of recognizing or distinguishing exotics from native species—get a few good field identification guides and spend some quality time on your land getting to know the plants, animals, insects, and other organisms that are present. As you become more skilled in identification and familiar with the multitude of species that live on your property, you will come to know which ones are native and which are trying to wedge their way in. The first step in fighting any battle lies in knowing your enemy.

If you are about to undertake any type of planting project, whether for aesthetic gardening or habitat improvement purposes, always try to use native materials. Granted, in many areas, it is more difficult to find native species at commercial nurseries or wholesale retailers, or where available, natives are often more expensive than most of the non-native stock. However, consider the increased cost a part of the price of being a good land steward and ensuring the protection of our biodiversity and ecosystem health. Over time, as the demand for native stock increases, some nurseries will respond to that market niche and begin providing a greater supply and diversity of materials. Also, become familiar with the many laws that regulate the importation and purposeful release of exotic species - Virginia is 1 of 40 states that currently has noxious weed and seed laws on the books and there are at least 7 pieces of federal legislation that regulate exotic species.

### For More Information on Controlling Invasive Exotic Species:

#### Texts and publications

Westbrooks, R. G. 1998. *Invasive Plants, Changing the Landscape of America: Fact Book*. Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds. Washington, DC. 109 pp.

US Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. 1993. *Harmful Non-Indigenous Species in the United States*. OTA-F-565. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC.

Laycock, G. 1966. *The Alien Animals*. Natural History Press, Garden City, NY.

#### Internet

US Fish and Wildlife Service Invasives Program: <http://invasives.fws.gov/>

Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds: <http://refuges.fws.gov/FICMNEWFiles/FICMNEWHomePage.html>

**INVASIVES continues on page 6**

# EVENTS CALENDAR



For the most complete listing of natural resource education events, visit the online events calendar at: [www.cnr.vt.edu/foreupdate](http://www.cnr.vt.edu/foreupdate). See also: [www.conted.vt.edu/forestry](http://www.conted.vt.edu/forestry).

event contact	date/location	event/description (preregistration requested unless noted otherwise; TBA = to be announced)	time	fee
TB	August 23 Woodstock, VA	<b>Predator Management as a Tool for Increasing Small Game</b> Learn more about the effects of predation on small game and how to minimize these effects through adding the right kinds of protective cover and through trapping. Field trip with a discussion of cover and trapping demonstration. Sponsored by the VA Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries.	9:30am-3pm	no fee <a href="http://www.dgif.state.va.us">www.dgif.state.va.us</a>
DC	Sept. 5-7 Virginia Tech's Kentland Farm	<b>Virginia Tech Farm and Family Showcase</b> Three-day event filled with exhibits, demonstrations, seminars and a trade show. More than 12,000 people enjoyed last year's inaugural event. Designed for all ages - something for everyone: agricultural producers, homeowners, gardeners, forest industry, outdoor enthusiasts, families and children. Showcase will be held at Kentland Farm, about 8 miles west of the Virginia Tech campus.	all day each day	no fee <a href="http://www.farmandfamily.vt.edu">www.farmandfamily.vt.edu</a>
EC	Sept. 10-11 Laurel, MD	<b>Stream Restoration Course</b> Two-day course provides a thorough introduction to stream restoration using natural channel design strategies. Course material focuses on river mechanics, stream classification schemes, hydraulic geometry, bank discharge, and channel evolution. Focus on design and construction process and the application of cost effective stream restoration and stream bank stabilization techniques. Case studies will include projects throughout the East and Midwest.	9am-5:30pm	\$375.00 <a href="http://www.wetland.org">www.wetland.org</a>
LS	Sept. 13-15 Wintergreen Resort Nelson Co.	<b>Virginia's Natural History Retreat Weekend</b> Workshop includes guided hikes, lectures and workshops surrounding the fields of natural history. From stars to spiders, botany to birds - explore natural history with some of the state's finest field scientists. Participants build their schedule from over 50 programs like Habits and Habitats: Mammals in the Forest, The Bear Facts: Virginia's Black Bear Population, Use It or Lose It: Community Based Conservation, and Arrowheads and Beyond: Writing History from Artifacts.	9/13: 3pm-10pm 9/14: 7am-10pm 9/15: 7am-3pm	\$115.00 <a href="http://www.twnf.org">www.twnf.org</a>
TRCD	September 14 Middle Peninsula	<b>Middle Peninsula Down on the Farm Tour</b> Celebrate the bounty of the land and the waters of King & Queen, King William and Essex counties. Tour at your own pace in your own vehicle; host stops include: John Mason Hundley Farm - traditional family grain farm plus sheep and goats; King & Queen Fish Hatchery; The W. T. Henley Farm - organic grain and natural cattle; timber management site; Royster Clark Fertilizer; Riverside Farm; and H. Barnes Townsend dairy farm.	9am-4pm	no fee
SM	Sept. 17-19 Wrightsville Beach, NC	<b>Silvicultural and Genetic Impacts on Productivity of Southern Forests</b> Productivity increases in southern pine forests have been dramatic the past 25 years. Plantations of today grow more than twice as fast as plantations of decades ago. This conference will assemble experts of silviculture, biometrics, and tree improvement to discuss state-of-the-art management of southern pine plantations - what do we know, and what can we expect in plantations of the future?	9/17: 8am-6pm 9/18: 8am-5pm 9/19: 8am-3pm	\$210.00 (\$110.00 students) <a href="http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest">www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest</a>
DJ1	September 19 Waynesboro	<b>7th Annual Waynesboro Plant Health Workshop</b> Participants can choose between "Making Trees Your Business," a workshop offered by nationally renowned tree-care experts, and the ArborMaster training seminar "Rig it Right."	8am-5pm	\$85.00
EC	Sept. 19-21 St. Michaels, MD	<b>Wetland Field Botany Course</b> Three-day course designed for beginning professionals and individuals wishing to identify wetland species and review basic wetland botany. Key field characteristics of a select number of vascular plant families are emphasized. Participants will practice keying plants and will identify and discuss numerous species of vascular plants in the field. The course is field oriented, prepare to get wet and muddy. Background in botany not a prerequisite.	9am-5pm	\$545.00 <a href="http://www.wetland.org">www.wetland.org</a>
DB	Sept. 20-21 Ft. Payne, AL	<b>11th Annual Conference - American Paulownia Association, Inc.</b> Annual conference will include lectures, presentations, expert panel, two field trips, and product/vendor displays focused on paulownia production and marketing. Lecture topics include: Alabama forestry, history of paulownia in Alabama, and growing paulownia internationally.	all day each day	\$55.00 <a href="http://www.paulowniatrees.org">www.paulowniatrees.org</a>
HK	Sept. 24-26 Baltimore, MD	<b>Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Conference: Riparian &amp; Wetland Stewardship</b> In the Chesapeake Bay region vital efforts are underway to work at a watershed scale to protect and restore wetland and riparian systems. Designed for professionals, landowners, and volunteers this conference will highlight the state of art on riparian buffer and wetland protection and restoration. Speakers and topics will cover information on a variety of issues affecting restoration success.	all day each day	\$200.00 (\$100.00 students) <a href="http://www.potomac.org">www.potomac.org</a>
EC	Sept. 26-27 Laurel, MD	<b>Wetland Assessment Course</b> Course reviews wetland assessment procedures most widely employed throughout U.S. Class exercises emphasize how these procedures are used to illustrate different approaches. Participants practice the decision process for selecting appropriate functional assessment procedures.	9:30am-5:30pm	\$375.00 <a href="http://www.wetland.org">www.wetland.org</a>
WVFA	Sept. 28-29 Flatwoods, WV	<b>7th Annual West Virginia Timber and Wood Products Show</b> For the entire family, show features forestry, logging and sawmill equipment displays and demonstrations, along with educational exhibits, lumberjack competitions, Game of Logging Finals, horse logging demonstrations, souvenirs, youth logging contests, wood-related crafts, chain saw carving.	all day each day	no fee

## USING THE CALENDAR

For more information or to register for a specific event, identify the event contact (whose initials are to the left of the event), and refer to the *Event Contacts* information box (for example VT = Virginia Tech).

event contact	date/location	event/description (preregistration required unless noted otherwise; TBA = to be announced)	time	fee
RC	October 12 Potomac & Chesapeake Watersheds	<b>Growing Native 2002</b> Participate in the largest native hardwood tree seed collection event in the Potomac and Chesapeake Bay region and help support efforts to restore riverside forests and protect water quality. Volunteers and groups are needed to support this project to replenish the stock of native trees used for forest restoration projects in these watersheds.	9am-12pm <a href="http://www.growingnative.org">www.growingnative.org</a>	no fee
NWOA	Oct. 31-Nov. 3 Morgantown, WV	<b>The 3rd National Circle of Stewards Conference: Landowner Options and Opportunities</b> For new and veteran forest landowners - this conference will expand your knowledge of forest stewardship. Concurrent sessions on a broad variety of topics including: sustainable forestry, forest taxes, regulations, wildlife management, timber and non-timber forest products, and certification. Includes field trips and a "Taste of West Virginia" barbeque.	all day each day <a href="http://www.circleofstewards.com">www.circleofstewards.com</a>	\$125.00
	<i>Six dates and locations:</i>	<b>26th Annual Fall Forestry and Wildlife Bus Tour Series</b> Tour private, industry, and public woodlands. Resource professionals and veteran landowners will show practical techniques applying to private forest land management. Programs focus on multiple-use management opportunities and how landowners can achieve specific objectives. Dress comfortably for weather and woods walk. Lunch included.		
BJ1	October 1	Charlotte County	8am-5pm	\$30.00
MH	October 3	Burkes Garden (Tazewell County)	8am-5pm	\$30.00
JU	October 10	Alleghany County	8am-5pm	\$30.00
BJ2	October 15	Madison County	8am-5pm	\$30.00
DM	October 17	Middle Peninsula (Middlesex County)	8am-5pm	\$30.00
WA	October 22	Western Tidewater (Southampton County)	8am-5pm	\$30.00
DG	November (TBA) Southside VA	<b>Forest Management Options for Cutover Land</b> Have you purchased cutover timberland and don't know what to do with it? Did you harvest timber without considering forest regeneration? This workshop is designed for landowners that own cutover timberland and need help with their management options. Topics covered will include hardwood management, pine reforestation, wildlife management, and others.	8am-5pm	no fee
DJ2	Jan. 31-Apr. 15 anyplace! (with internet connection)	<b>Web-Based Woodland Options for Landowners</b> The nation's first and only web-based course for forest landowners will be offered for the second time in January 2003. Designed for southeastern forest landowners, the course is conducted entirely online and is appropriate for new and veteran landowners alike. This six-module, 10-week course teaches landowners how to "read their land" to assess and manage their property. Topics include: family resource inventory; basic dendrology; sustainable forestry concepts; property deeds and boundary lines; maps, photos, and soil surveys; forest ecology and management; and assistance, planning, and options. Course includes optional advanced field assignments. Participants will interact online with a "mentor team" made up of a professional forester and veteran landowner from their region. Students will also receive additional resources including <i>Virginia Trees</i> tree ID guide and the <i>Virginia Virtual Forest Tour</i> CD-ROM. Online registration begins October 31. To view the course syllabus or to register, visit <a href="http://www.vto.vt.edu">www.vto.vt.edu</a> or <a href="http://www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate">www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate</a> (and click on "Courses"). More details in the next <i>Update</i> .	anytime! <a href="http://www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate">www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate</a> -or- <a href="http://www.vto.vt.edu">www.vto.vt.edu</a>	\$60.00

## EVENT CONTACTS

for more information or to register for a specific event, please contact:

event contact	name/affiliation	phone	e-mail
BJ1	Bob Jones, Charlotte County Cooperative Extension	434/542-5884	rojones2@vt.edu
BJ2	Brad Jarvis, Madison County Cooperative Extension	540/948-6881	bjarvis@vt.edu
DB	Dan Blickenstaff, American Paulownia Association	301/790-3075	paulownia@erols.com
DC	Debora Cooper, Virginia Tech Farm and Family Showcase	540/731-3112	decooper@vt.edu
DG	Dan Goerlich, Halifax County Cooperative Extension	434/476-2147	dalego@vt.edu
DJ1	Dwayne Jones, Waynesboro Parks and Recreation	540/942-6735	cdjones@cfw.com
DJ2	Dylan Jenkins, Virginia Tech Forestry Extension	540/231-6391	dylan@vt.edu
DM	David Moore, Middlesex County Cooperative Extension	804/758-4120	damoore3@vt.edu
EC	Environmental Concern, Inc.	410/745-9620	Dir.Educate@wetland.org
HK	Hannah Kirchner, The Potomac Conservancy		
JU	Jennifer Unroe, Alleghany County Cooperative Extension	540/862-0369	junroe@vt.edu
LS	Liz Salas, Wintergreen Nature Foundation	434/325-7451	info@tnwf.org
MH	Mike Harris, Tazewell County Cooperative Extension	276/988-0405	jaharris@vt.edu
NWOA	National Woodland Owners Association	800/476-8733	info@woodlandowners.org
RC	Rob Carey, The Potomac Conservancy	703/276-2777	coordinator@potomac.org
SM	Susan Moore, NC Forestry Education and Outreach Program	919/515-3184	susan_moore@ncsu.edu
TB	Tricia Butcher, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries	804/598-3706	tbutcher@dgif.state.va.us
TRCD	Tidewater Resource Conservation & Development	804/443-1118	
WA	Wes Alexander, Southampton County Cooperative Extension	757/653-2572	walexand@vt.edu
WVFA	West Virginia Forestry Association	304/372-1955	wvfa@wvadventures.net

## The Virginia Fish and Wildlife Information Service

Amy Martin, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), in conjunction with the Conservation Management Institute (CMI) at Virginia Tech, has developed an online database system that makes the most current data on Virginia's wildlife readily available to the public. This system, the Virginia Fish and Wildlife Information Service (VAFWIS) contains information on over 2,000 of Virginia's wildlife species. The VAFWIS can be accessed by pointing your browser to [www.dgif.state.va.us](http://www.dgif.state.va.us), clicking on "Wildlife" and then on "Wildlife Information Online."

The databases associated with the VAFWIS contain information from numerous sources including VDGIF monitoring efforts, collections by researchers permitted through the scientific collection process, peer-reviewed journal articles and museum collections. There are numerous databases associated with the VAFWIS. Of those, the following are the most widely used:

### 1. The Biota of Virginia Database (BOVA):

An information system developed in 1981 as a cooperative research project between VDGIF and Virginia Tech that contains information from peer reviewed literature on over 2,000 of Virginia's wildlife species. The BOVA (Biota of Virginia) database provides life history, distribution, environmental associations, management, and food habit information for the wildlife species that occur in Virginia.

### 2. The Breeding Bird Atlas Database (BBA):

Five-year cooperative project between the VDGIF and the Virginia Society of Ornithologists that evaluated the status and distribution of breeding birds in the Commonwealth.

### 3. The Breeding Bird Survey Database (BBS):

Ongoing cooperative project sponsored by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service. The purpose of this survey is to estimate the population trends of birds that nest in North America north of Mexico and migrate across international boundaries.

### 4. The Christmas Bird Count Survey Database (CBC):

An annual survey sponsored by the National Audubon Society that contains bird observation data collected on a single day within two weeks of December 25<sup>th</sup> of every year for over 30 years. This database provides valuable information about the winter distribution of birds.

### 5. The Cold Water Stream Survey Database (CWSS):

Created in 1981 by VDGIF staff in cooperation with Virginia Tech, it is a trout stream survey containing biological and physiochemical data about each classified stream reach or specific collection location.

**6. Collections Database:** Originally developed in 1991 for storing annual reporting information provided by researchers under the scientific col-

lections permitting process. It was expanded to include data from a variety of sources, including databases maintained by researchers such as Dr. Robert Jenkins (fishes) and Dr. Joseph Mitchell (reptiles and amphibians), as well as data from peer-reviewed journal articles, museum records, and ongoing Agency research efforts.

### 7. The Colonial Waterbirds Database

**(CWB):** Information on Virginia's breeding waterbird species. Developed in 1989 to continue data compilation activities previously discontinued by the Cornell Ornithological Laboratory. All Virginia-specific data compiled by Cornell were read into this application and all subsequent state-collected colonial bird monitoring data are entered annually or as received.

Other databases that are associated with the VAFWIS but are not listed above include: Springs, Warm Water Stream Survey, and Fish Impediments Structures. While these databases are not accessed as frequently by users, the data within in them are available through the VAFWIS and continue to be maintained by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Users of the system fall into two categories: visitors and subscribers. Visitors, who are usually interested landowners, outdoorsmen and women, and students and educators, are able to perform general geographical searches, generate species lists for a particular geographic area, and gain access to the species information database (BOVA). Visitor-level access to the information presented by the VAFWIS is comprehensive and helpful to the user.

In addition to obtaining species information and species lists by county or hydrologic unit or quadrangle, subscribers can also use the geographic search feature to perform detailed project reviews. The geographic search feature is frequently used by planners, environmental consultants and biologists. This feature provides information on the locations of threatened and endangered, other wildlife species, trout streams, anadromous fish waters, and colonial waterbird rookeries documented in the selected area. If a species has been documented in the vicinity of the site, the user can view a map that displays the buffered locations. Depending on the database that confirms the location, the data may be displayed as polygons, points or lines.

Subscribers to the VAFWIS have numerous options for querying individual databases through the "Database" menu option. Users can answer questions such as "Where are bald eagles found in Floyd County?", "Which 7.5' quadrangles are in Albemarle County?", and "What threatened or endangered species are associated with Loudoun County?" The database feature allows the user to query the databases individually and allows the user to define the query parameters.

## RESOURCE REVIEW

### American Wildlife & Plants: A Guide to Wildlife Food Habits



Designed for the landowner as well as the professional natural resource manager, the classic *American Wildlife and Plants* by Martin, Zim, and Nelson (Dover), provides a thorough review of foods, habits, and ranges for over 1,000 species of American birds (divided into five major units: water, marsh and shore, upland game, song, and prey), fur and game mammals, small mammals, hoofed browsers, fish, amphibians, and reptiles. The guide also reviews important plant-animal relationships and the value of specific wild and cultivated trees, plants, and herbs to wildlife. An excellent reference for any landowner, the 500-page fully-illustrated guide includes hundreds of tables and range maps. Available through bookstores and online retailers, \$11.95; ISBN 0-486-20793-5. **U**

The VAFWIS is a valuable tool that is provided free of charge to government agencies, non-profit organizations and public educational institutions. For private engineering firms, consultants and private universities, there is a nominal annual subscription fee. This tool is extremely useful to those making decisions about land management, planning, and environmental impacts of projects. The VAFWIS provides instant access to wildlife information and therefore a rapid around on projects. In addition, the VAFWIS helps to facilitate coordination with VDGIF on projects involving potential impacts to wildlife.

Over the coming year, VDGIF and the CMI are working to re-engineer the VAFWIS system. This re-engineering will allow for increased GIS capabilities, an updated look and feel, and improved functionality. We plan to increase mapping options, provide new query and reporting options, include species images and add new databases and spatial data layers. The recently-created Threatened and Endangered Species Waters and Anadromous Fish Use Areas databases and associated spatial coverages will be available through the VAFWIS. We encourage input from our users, whether at the visitor or subscriber level, throughout this process to ensure that user needs are met by the re-engineered system.

As the agency with regulatory authority over threatened and endangered species and all wildlife on the state level, VDGIF is committed to maintaining current data on wildlife resources and their habitats and providing this information to natural resource managers. If you would like more information regarding the Virginia Fish and Wildlife Information Service, would like to become a subscriber, or have suggestions for future enhancements to the system, please contact Amy Martin, VDGIF, at 804/367-2211, or by email at: [amartin@dgif.state.va.us](mailto:amartin@dgif.state.va.us). **U**

Just watchin' 'em grow....



## Meet Johnny and Sharon Angell

Dan Goerlich

Virginia Cooperative Extension - Central District

When Johnny Angell starts a sentence with "I'm just an ol' country boy, but it seems to me...", listen close. You are about to hear the observations of a man who has spent his life managing the land, and studying how nature works. Last June, Johnny and I traveled the roads of the



Johnny and Sharon Angell take a break on their Franklin County Farm.

Angells' Franklin County farm, navigating a route similar to one we had followed 27 months earlier. Although tobacco still pays the bills, Johnny and Sharon also manage cropland, loblolly pine, eastern white pine, and hardwood timber.

The Angell land ethic is one of stewardship, conservation, and common sense. "It just somehow occurred to me that, since I was the owner and overseer of this land for what time I was here, perhaps I could do somethin' that would actually help my bottom line down the road and also be somethin' that I enjoy watchin' happen," Johnny mused. "So, our property is managed for a timber crop, but also the beauty of watchin' the trees and the wildlife grow. Perhaps you are old enough that you'll never harvest a tree yourself. But somebody will, or somebody will at least enjoy the benefit of them. To me, it just seems like the right thing to do."

Johnny and Sharon Angell graduated from high school in 1972 and were married the following year. Shortly after, Johnny took over his father's sawmilling operation in Callaway. Although he enjoyed the sawmill, Johnny and Sharon soon assumed responsibility for her father's tobacco farm. That was nearly 30 years ago, and the Angells have worked these hills together ever since. "I'd be completely lost without Sharon," Johnny said. "I take all the credit and Sharon does all the work. That's about the size of it." Case in point: while Johnny and I were cruising the farm roads in his battered GMC pickup, Sharon was plowing tobacco fields in a 75 horsepower John Deere tractor. "I've been here all my life and I don't look to go anywhere else," Sharon said. "I don't feel at home anywhere else."

The Angells' forest stands receive lot's of hands-on treatment, including both chemical and me-

chanical release. "That ailanthus, I suppose, would take over the country if you gave it half a chance," Johnny noted, indicating a clump of the invasive plant in a newly regenerating stand. We pass another site where a Virginia pine stand was badly damaged by ice three years before. The stand was subsequently clearcut, and the Angells' crew sprayed the remaining maple and ailanthus with herbicide, leaving oak and yellow-poplar free to grow. "There's no reason that you can't have a better crop of timber down the road than what you harvested today," Johnny said. "A lot of this timber that's bein' harvested today has not received the proper management in the past."

The Angells manage for wildlife as well. They maintain early successional habitat, planted an odd-shaped parcel to sawtooth and water oak, cultivate sunflowers, and intend to plant shrub lespedeza underneath the powerlines. "I've seen all sorts of wildlife here," Johnny observed. "You hear quail over on this farm all the time. Over the course of the summer I'll see a bear or two, an' a bobcat. I've seen about everything here that is native to this part of Virginia and some things that are not. Over there in the middle of nowhere one day—I'd say I was three miles from anybody's house—I looked and here comes a Vietnamese pot-bellied pig. I don't know what he was doin' over there. I asked him but he didn't have too much to say."



The Angells clearcut Atkins Farm in the fall of 1999 (top photo) and planted loblolly pine the following spring. In June 2002, the same site (bottom photo) exhibits good growth, and will receive an aerial spray treatment this fall.

Before Johnny and I parted at midday, he confided that he often thinks of the farmers who scratched out a living in the hills and hollows of northeastern Franklin County; an area where expensive power boats now roam the waters of Smith Mountain Lake. "Somehow, a big fancy place is not important to me," Johnny reflected. "A fancy automobile is not important to me. What is important are these old hills and holler's, what's growin' on them, and me bein' here. When I was younger, my idea was to see what I could take off of the land; what I could consume. Now it's to see what I can conserve. It's strange. I'm not too interested in what it's worth, not too interested in how much money I can make off it."

If I was, I'd be choppin' off lots and sellin' it."

Johnny paused while an indigo bunting careened past the pickup, alighting on the terminal leader of a nearby pine. "I often ponder how I came to love this old land as much as I did," he added. "When my time here is done, I hope this land

## Nation's First Web-Based Course Successfully Implemented

In conjunction with the Virginia Department of Forestry, Virginia Tech Forestry Extension implemented the nation's first web-based course for forest landowners this past January. 62 landowners participated in the course. Feedback from course evaluations was very positive and the course will be repeated January 2003. Numerous refinements will be made to the course based on participant input.

VIRGINIA'S  
**Woodland  
options**  
FOR LANDOWNERS

Virginia  
Tech  
Department of Forestry



A detailed article will appear in the Sept./Oct. issue of *Forest Landowner* magazine. Registration details will appear in the next *Update*. For more information, contact Dylan Jenkins at: 540/231-6391; dylan@vt.edu. 

ends up with someone who loves it as much as I did."

While Johnny returned to the fields to rejoin Sharon and the workers, I headed over to a tract he calls "Atkins Farm." The majority of the tract was clearcut about 2-1/2 years ago, and reforested with 125 acres of loblolly pine. The pines are two years old now, and look good considering two very dry growing seasons. Johnny and Franklin County VDOF forester Jim Ebbert have arranged for an aerial herbicide application this fall to release the pines from competing vegetation.

I traveled a woods road that made a loop around Atkins Farm and brought me out past an old farmhouse, tobacco barn, and something I hadn't noticed on my first trip two years ago: a small cemetery. I climbed out of the truck and walked among the gravestones, observing that the cemetery was well-kept. The inscriptions implied that this was the Atkins family cemetery, and I read the writing on each stone, trying to piece together the family history. I straightened and looked out over the surrounding hills, at the old stick barns dotting the landscape, and the elderly farmhouse reclining beside me. I pictured the Atkins as a hard-working family, one that endured hardship but loved the land and these Franklin County hills. I imagined that the Atkins patriarch would have wanted the land to pass on to someone who would love it as much as his family had.

And I thought of Johnny and Sharon Angell...and I thought the Atkins would be pleased.

**Dan Goerlich** is the Central District (Southside) Extension Forester with Virginia Cooperative Extension. He designs and implements natural resource education programs for forest landowners, loggers, youth, and the general public. Dan may be contacted at 434/476-2147; dalego@vt.edu. 

**INVASIVES from page 1**

If you do any boating or fishing, be sure to thoroughly scrub and wash down your boat/canoe, rinse off your tow vehicle, and flush your motor, if you were using one. Some of the most noxious problem species are those that inhabit aquatic systems and these species can be transported from one system to another by the simple act of moving a water craft from pond to pond or dumping the remains from your bait bucket overboard. Even if you don't see the adult stage of the organism, you very likely could have collected seed, eggs, or some other reproductive part from that organism that will thrive in the new environment.

When an opportunity arises, take a class or attend a workshop where integrated pest management (IPM) will be described and demonstrated. There are many control strategies that do not rely entirely on chemical treatment. Learn about biological control strategies and good husbandry around the property and be careful of options that promote introducing another exotic to control the first introduced species.

**Jim Parkhurst** is Associate Professor of Wildlife Science and Extension Wildlife Specialist Department of Fisheries & Wildlife Sciences. Dr. Parkhurst specializes in wildlife damage control and is the Virginia Coverts Program coordinator. Jim may be contacted at 540/231-9283; jparkhur@vt.edu. 

**UPDATE PUBLISHING CHANGE**

The *Virginia Forest Landowner Update* will be reduced from four to three issues per year and will be distributed in April, August, and December. Between issues, we encourage you to visit the online version of the *Update* at: [www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate](http://www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate). In addition to other online resources at the *Update* website, all articles are archived and the most current and complete listing of natural resource education events is listed. 

**CONTACT OUR SPONSORS AND STATE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES:**



**Virginia Department of Forestry**

900 Natural Resources Dr., Suite 800  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
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[www.dof.state.va.us](http://www.dof.state.va.us)



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**Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries**

P.O. Box 11104  
Richmond, VA 23230-1104  
804/367-1000  
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**Virginia Forestry Association**

8810-B Patterson Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23229-6322  
804/741-0836  
[www.vaforestry.org](http://www.vaforestry.org)



For a complete listing of the natural resource management agencies in your county, visit the *Assistance Finder* at: [www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate](http://www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate) and click on "Assistance."



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**Managing Wildlife and Invasive Exotic Species**

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