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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

Jennifer L. Gagnon, Editor

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New Hunting Regulations Benefit Hunters and Landowners

By David Coffman, *Sportsman's Education Coordinator Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries*

If you haven't read the new *Virginia Hunting & Trapping Regulations Digest (Hunting Digest)* you are missing information on some new programs that benefit hunters and landowners alike. The *Hunting Digest* is published each July by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) to cover all the new and current hunting regulations. This edition also includes *The Hunting & Trapping Annual*, that provides 32 pages of detailed information on DGIF programs, wildlife management and research projects, harvest data, habitat improvement and related facts about Virginia's wildlife. For landowners, the new hunting regulations, in consideration with the wildlife management information, can be an effective combination to help them achieve management goals and reduce or eliminate wildlife related problems.

Studying a copy of the new *Hunting Digest* is a good first step in resolving many of your wildlife management and or hunting related concerns. The new hunting regulations for 2006-07 could help you better manage your wildlife resources (especially deer), and control hunter problems by permitting responsible sportsmen to hunt your property.



Photo by Lee Walker

Many landowners, especially absentee, if they do not hunt themselves, are aware of the benefits of having responsible hunters be an important part of wildlife management on their property. Information on locating responsible hunters can be found in several ways. On page 3 of the *Hunting Digest* is a list of 19 sportsman conservation organizations that are dedicated and reputable partners with DGIF in promoting scientific management, ethics, safety and opportunities for youth, women and other non-traditional participants in outdoor sports. Visit their listed web sites and contact statewide officers or local Chapters and representatives for leads on members who would welcome the opportunity to hunt.

There are many in-kind benefits of such relationships including road maintenance, habitat improvement, security and safety. Reputable hunt clubs are also helpful and lease fees can offset property taxes. Local civic groups like Ruritans, or 4-H Clubs, sporting goods shops and other landowners such as participants in Tree Farm or Stewardship can be sources for contacts.

In Virginia there is a law which exempts landowners who provide recreation opportunities to the public, from liability for injury or damages providing they do not charge a fee or there is no gross negligence (Virginia Code Section 29-130.2 amended 1982). In lease or fee situations, several organizations, including the Forest Landowners Association, provide affordable insurance for hunt clubs.

Trespass violations, posting property and access issues are all concerns affecting landowners' considerations for allowing hunting. Detailed information on leasing, liability and posting can be found in Extension Publication # 420-035 entitled *A Landowner's Guide to Working With Sportsmen in Virginia*. This information is also available on the web at: www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/forestry/420-035.html. Wildlife violations can be reported on the DGIF crime line by calling: 1-800-237-5712.

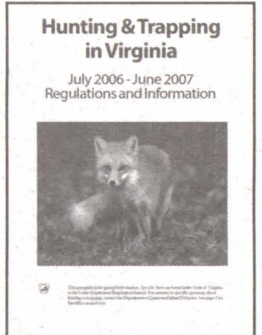


Photo by John White

Events Calendar			For the most complete listing of natural resource education events, visit the on-line events calendar at www.cnr.vt.edu/foreupdate		
Contact	Date	Location	Event	Time	Fee
DCR	Nov., Dec. & Jan.	Virginia State Parks	A variety of events and activities. For a complete listing visit: www.dcr.virginia.gov/parks	Varies	Varies
RC	Nov. & Dec.	Various	Wheelin' Sportsman Deer Hunts	Varies	Varies
DL	Nov. 2	Occoquan Bay	Generation Deer Hunting Workshop	9:30am-7pm	\$20.00
SA	Nov. 4	Winchester	Shenandoah Audubon's Annual Birding Festival	10 am-3pm	see website
FC	Nov. 8-11	Ferrum College	Environmental Symposium	All Day	\$50.00
FCE	Nov. 11	Ferrum College	Wildlife Response to Logging	9 am - 4 pm	Free *lunch included*
SB	Nov. 11	Snowville/Ottari Scout Camp	Sustainable Forestry Seminar	9 am	\$25.00 *lunch included*
AD	Nov. 17	Madison County	Forestry Hot Topics Luncheon (forest fragmentation & estate planning); UVT Extension Forester Thom McEvoy	11 am-3pm	\$5.00
AD	Jan. 27	Manassas	Landowner's Woods & Wildlife Conference	All day	\$40/70 couple
AD	Feb. 10	Charlottesville	Landowner's Woods & Wildlife Conference	All day	\$40/70 couple
MY	Feb. 20, 27, Mar. 6	Augusta County	Sustainable Timber Harvesting & Marketing Short Course	6-9 pm	\$45/60 couple

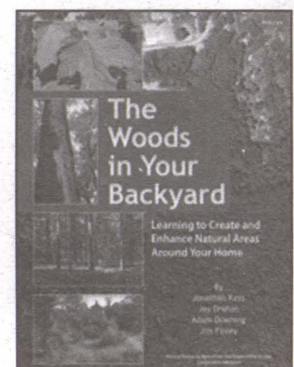
Event Contacts			
Contact	Name/Affiliation	Phone	e-mail/website
DCR	Department of Conservation & Recreation	804/786-1712	www.dcr.virginia.gov/parks
RC	Robin Clark	434/979-6154	weeeelz@aol.com
DL	Dan Lovelace	540/899-4169	Dan.Lovelace@dgif.virginia.gov
SA	Shenandoah Audubon	NA	www.audubon-nsvas.org
FC	Ferrum College	NA	www.ferrum.edu/es06
FCE	Franklin County Extension	540/483-5161	www.ext.vt.edu
SB	Steve Brooks	276/479-2176	shbrooks@mounet.com
AD	Adam Downing	540/948-6881	adowning@vt.edu
MY	Matt Yancey	540/564-3080	mayancey@vt.edu

If you have a natural resource education event you would like listed, please submit details to forester@vt.edu : Upcoming submission deadlines for printed calendar:					
Edition	Events Occurring	Submission Deadline	Edition	Events Occurring	Submission Deadline
Winter 2007	Feb., Mar., April	Dec. 3, 2006	Summer 2007	Aug., Sept., Oct.	June 9, 2007
Spring 2007	May, June, July	Mar. 8, 2007	Fall 2007	Nov., Dec., Jan.	Sept. 9, 2007

Resource Review:

The Woods in Your Backyard: Learning to Create and Enhance Natural Areas Around Your Home; Written by: Jonathan Kays, Joy Drohan, Adam Downing, and Jim Finley

This new book promotes the stewardship of small parcels of land for the personal enjoyment of the owners and improved environmental quality for society. It is geared towards owners of 1-10 acres of land that is forested or has unmowed natural areas and to owners interested in turning mowed lawn area into a forest. The first four parts (Introduction, Inventory Your Property, Ecological Principles, and Put Your Knowledge into Practice) describe concepts necessary to fulfill land management goals for your property. Part five is a workbook with blank activity sheets designed to apply the lessons in parts I-IV to your own land. Includes color photographs throughout. Also includes a list of resources, a glossary, and an index. Published in September 2006 by the Natural Resource, Agriculture, and Engineering Service.



For ordering information visit: <http://www.nraes.org/publications/nraes184.html>

You Ain't From Around Here! Exotic Invasive of the Quarter: Autumn-Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata* Thunb)

By: Jennifer Gagnon, Virginia Tech Dept. of Forestry

I will be featuring an invasive species in each newsletter. This section will provide resources to help you identify and control these plants and insects, hopefully before they become a problem!

Exotic invasives are non-native plants and insects that are able to thrive and spread aggressively outside their natural range. When spread is extensive, they can alter ecosystem function by replacing native species, changing forest structure, decreasing forest productivity and biodiversity. Some key characteristics include: prolific seeding or reproduction, efficient dissemination, adaptability to different environments, rapid growth, and lack of natural controls. Landowners can help stop invasives before they get out of control by 1. inspecting their property regularly, 2. maintaining a healthy forest with minimal disturbance, 3. treating invasives as soon as they are detected and 4. rehabilitating sites after eradication.

As with so many other invasive species, the tale of autumn-olive began with good intentions. Native to China, Japan, and Korea, autumn-olive was brought to the U.S. in the 1830's. In 1965, the Soil Conservation Service released a variety of the shrub, called Cardinal, for use in commercial propagation. The shrubs were used for wildlife food and cover, screens and barriers along roadways, stabilization and revegetation of road banks, and to reclaim mine soils. In fact, until 1975 the species was described as rarely escaping cultivation; by 1981, however, autumn-olive was described as being naturalized (adapted to local climates, soils, and able to successfully reproduce outside of cultivation). Currently, this species can be found from Maine through Florida, west into Nebraska, and in the Pacific northwest. In Virginia, autumn-olive has been identified in most counties.

Disturbed areas, successional fields, pastures, roadsides, prairies, open woodlands, and forest edges are most often invaded; autumn-olive is rarely found in dense forests or on extremely wet sites. Although not a legume, this species is able to fix nitrogen through nodules on its roots, allowing it to adapt to even poor soils and out-compete native plant species. Shrubs begin producing seed by age three; one plant can produce up to 8 pounds of seed! Seeds are dispersed either by gravity (fruit simply falling to the ground) or by birds, although raccoons, skunks and opossums also eat the fruit.

Autumn-olive is a medium to large deciduous shrub, reaching heights of 15 to 20 feet and forming dense dark thickets, which suppress the growth of other plant species, particularly those requiring bright sunlight. And, although it provides wildlife food, studies have shown that the berries are not as beneficial to wildlife as fruit from other plant species. In spite of its invasiveness, this species is sold by on-line nurseries, and does have some favorable qualities. For example, the fruits are edible to humans, and often used for jams and jellies. And word has it that a tasty white wine can be made from the berries. Additionally, research has also shown that the fruits contain up to 7 times more lycopene (a cancer-fighting nutrient) than tomatoes.

How to Control Autumn-Olive:

Mechanical: Young seedlings can be hand-pulled from the ground in early spring – just be certain to remove the roots, as these can sprout. Cutting, burning, or mowing larger autumn-olive shrubs, without herbicide follow-up, results in prolific sprouting and makes the problem even worse.

Chemical: The leaves of mature shrubs can be sprayed with Roundup herbicide (a glyphosate formulation). Or, if shrubs are cut, Roundup can be applied directly to the stumps either with a low pressure sprayer or a sponge applicator. Since Roundup is a non-specific herbicide, it will kill other plants it makes contact with. If there are desirable plant species in the area, sponge application is your best bet as it limits the herbicide to only the autumn-olive stumps. Herbicide application on the stumps is most effective in the growing season (July through September) but also works in the dormant season.

Biological: Although there's been no scientific data collected, goats appear to effectively browse autumn-olive down, and can be used to clear pasture-land that has been invaded. Just be careful not to let them over browse the desirable vegetation!



Autumn-olive form. Photo by: Chris Evans, University of Georgia

When you've successfully eradicated your autumn-olive problem, you may be left with some bare ground. Fortunately, there are many native species which are suitable replacements (also provide wildlife food and cover).

These include winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), blackhaw (*Viburnum prunifolium*), gray dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*), shining sumac (*Rhus copallinum*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier* sp.), American holly (*Ilex opaca*), bayberry (*Morella pensylvanica*) and wax myrtle (*Morella cerifera*).

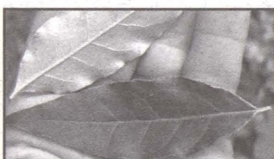
How to Identify Autumn-Olive

Flower: yellow, bell-shaped, borne along current year's twigs, appear in late April through May, after first leaves appear



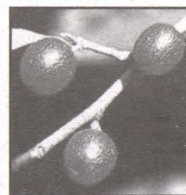
Small yellow flowers along branch. Photo by: John Seiler, Virginia Tech

Leaves: simple, alternately arranged, upper surface green to grayish-green and scaly; undersides covered with silvery-white scales



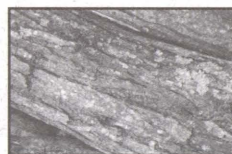
Silvery backside (top) and gray-green surface (bottom) of autumn-olive leaves. Photo by: John Seiler, Virginia Tech.

Fruit: borne along current year's twigs, 0.25 to 0.33 inches, pink to red and covered with silvery scales; sweet & juicy; mature in late summer



Close up of ripe berries on an autumn-olive branch. Photo by John Seiler, Virginia Tech.

Branches/bark: young covered with silvery-gray or golden brown hairs; older develop a scaly, split and furrowed gray-brown bark



Right: A young autumn-olive twig. Left: The bark of a mature shrub. Photos by John Seiler, Virginia



Log on to www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate to see the color version of this newsletter, including color photos of autumn-olive.

References:

- Miller, James H.** 2003. Nonnative invasive plants of southern forests: a field guide for identification and control. Gen. Tech. Rep. SRS-62. Asheville, NC, USDA Forest Service. 93 p. www.invasive.org
- Szafer, Bob.** 1990. Vegetation management guideline: Autumn-olive (*Eleagnus umbellata* Thunb.). Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, Illinois Department of Conservation. www.inhs.uiuc.edu
- Virginia Tech Dendrology Homepage.** www.cnr.vt.edu/dendro



Your management plan may vary depending on the species composition of your forest. Shown here is a yellow poplar plantation in SW Virginia. Photo by: Jennifer Gagnon.

What's in your Forest?

By: Bill Worrell, Forestry & Natural Resources Extension Agent

Do you really know what you have in your forest land? Forests provide us with many benefits that improve our quality of life. Forests help filter out air pollution, provide clean water, help reduce erosion, provide habitat for many animals, offer numerous recreational opportunities, and produce wood products for the many items that we need every day.

One of the first planning activities that a forest landowner should pursue is obtaining a written forest management plan from a professional forester. Professional foresters will be able to collect information on your property to determine what resources you have, the quality and quantity, and make management recommendations based on your goals for the property. Many landowner goals involve some type of timber harvest for a variety of goals including wildlife habitat management and/or economic returns. Before you consider a timber sale you need to know the type and values of your forest. The inventory that the forester provides in the management plan will help to select the most appropriate type of harvesting method in order to meet landowner objectives and to regenerate the desired species.

The type of harvest you conduct will impact the species of trees that will regenerate and grow into the new forest. Shade intolerant species (such as yellow poplar) will not regenerate in the shade and need complete sunlight on the forest floor in order to grow. Shade tolerant species (such as sugar maple) will regenerate and grow well in the shade. While some other species are considered intermediate in shade tolerance (such as red oak) and may regenerate and survive in the shade, they will not grow well until they get full sunlight.

As you can see, determining what species you want to grow in the next generation will be greatly impacted by the decisions you make regarding the timber harvest method. These decisions are complicated, but they can be simplified with the help of a professional forester. If you would like to have a professional forester develop a management plan for your property, contact your local Virginia Department of Forestry (VDof) office to request a visit from the Area Forester so that they can write a management plan for your property. Private consulting foresters are also available to help you develop a management plan and strategy for your forest land. To find your local VDof office or to obtain a list of private consultant foresters, visit the VDof website at www.dof.virginia.gov. The Virginia Cooperative Extension office also has information and publications on forest management and timber harvesting available through the local extension office and available on the extension website at www.ext.vt.edu.

Bill Worrell can be reached at bworrell@vt.edu; 276/889-8056.

DGIF Continued From Page 1

A partner that deserves special mention is Hunters for the Hungry. Since 1991 this volunteer organization has provided 2.6 million pounds or 10.5 million servings of protein-rich venison donated by hunters statewide to needy families. Consider a donation of the excess venison harvested from your property to combat hunger and demonstrate how sportsmen can benefit the less fortunate in their communities.

You may obtain a free copy of the *Hunting Digest* at any of the 600 Hunting & Fishing License agents, or by contacting DGIF Regional offices, or the Richmond office, phone 804-367-1000 or visit our web site at www.dgif.virginia.gov. We hope you will get a copy of the new *Hunting Digest* and read it whether you hunt or not. The information provides landowners and hunters with practical information for each to work together to wisely manage our wildlife and other natural resources that add to our quality of life here in the Old Dominion. Have a safe and rewarding hunting season.

For information on VDGIF programs, please visit our website: www.dgif.virginia.gov. Call the WILDLIFE CRIMELINE to report wildlife violations: 1-800-237-5712

David Coffman is the Sportsman's Education Coordinator for the Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries based in Richmond with responsibilities for developing and implementing hunter enhancement programs and materials in cooperation with numerous partner organizations.

Two New Faces: Virginia's RC&D Forestry Program Expands

By: Anna Cahoon, *Eastern RC&D (DOF) Forester* and David Richert, *Western RC&D (DOF) Forester*

This summer, the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) hired two foresters to assist Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Councils with forestry-related projects. For at least the past 20 years, RC&D foresters have been assisting with: tree-care workshops, logging safety and business management workshops, tree identification trails, environmental education projects, timber bridge workshops, and a quarterly newsletter. This personnel change marks an important milestone, however; it is the first time in recent years that VDOF has been able to secure funding for two, full-time foresters.

Located in Dinwiddie, ~~Anna Keyser~~ Anna Cahoon is the new RC&D Forester for Eastern Virginia. Anna Cahoon is a graduate of North Carolina State University with a B.S. in Forest Management (2003) and a B.S. in Fish and Wildlife Science (2003). Anna served as the VDOF area forester for Prince George and Surry Counties since 2004. Prior to that, Anna worked with the US Fish and Wildlife Service at Alligator River, NCSU Department of Natural Resources State Forests and Christmas Tree Genetics Program, and Squires Timber Company. Anna will serve the Eastern Shore, Old Dominion, South Centré Corridors, South Hampton Roads, and Tidewater RC&D Councils.



Located in Wytheville, David Richert is the new RC&D Forester for Western Virginia. David Richert is a graduate of Virginia Tech with a B.S. in Forestry (1998) and a M.S. in Forestry (2001). David served as the VDOF area forester for Bland, Buchanan, and Tazewell Counties since 2005. Prior to that, David worked for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation in Southwest Virginia as a natural areas steward since 2001. David will serve the Black Diamond, New River-Highlands, and Shenandoah RC&D Councils.

Readers familiar with the RC&D forestry program may wonder where the former RC&D foresters have gone. The most recent RC&D forester, Bill Worrell, accepted a position with Virginia Cooperative Extension last year as a Forestry and Natural Resources Agent. Another former RC&D forester, Anne Ulrey, is now managing US Department of Defense lands in Eastern Virginia. These RC&D foresters and others have formulated ideas, initiated projects, and set standards of achievement that Anna and David will continue.

Virginia's RC&D Forestry Program is successful because of its partnership with the VDOF. Area Foresters and Forest Technicians provide on-site technical assistance for RC&D forestry projects and VDOF Central Office staff coordinate statewide programs that fund RC&D projects. But perhaps the most important component in this partnership are the RC&D foresters—who spend nearly all their time working with Virginia's RC&D Councils. Anna and David will have a full work load this year—prioritizing forestry projects, coordinating forestry projects already underway, and assisting with RC&D Councils' community forestry outreach and education efforts.

Editor's Note: The RC&D Foresters' Column will be a regular feature of the *Update*. Anna Cahoon can be reached at anna.cahoon@dof.virginia.gov; 804/469-4781; David Richert can be reached at david.richert@dof.virginia.gov; 276/228-2879

Action required!

Editor's note: *Virginia Forest Landowner Update* is going electronic!

The date has been set – beginning with the spring 2007 issue, the *Virginia Forest Landowner Update* will go electronic. This will save the Virginia Forest Landowner Education Program a large amount of money – which can then be used to develop new landowner education programs and materials. If you want to continue receiving this newsletter, please contact me (contact information is in the top-left corner of the front page) with your e-mail address **before the end of 2006** so I can add you to the Forest Landowner ListServ. You can also add your e-mail address to the database from our website: www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate. We have corrected the problem with the on-line submission, so please try again if you had a problem previously.

I will be happy to continue sending out a limited number of print versions to those of you without e-mail access. Please either call or write me to request a print copy. I'd hate to lose any subscribers, so please contact me soon!

So far the response to this request has been overwhelming - thanks to all of you!
Jennifer

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www.vaforestry.org

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www.vaforestry.org/virginia_tree_farm.htm

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