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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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Virginia Begins Master Naturalist Program Emphasizing Volunteer Training

By: Michelle Prysby and Lynn Davis, *Virginia Tech Dept. of Forestry, Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources*

A new partnership in the state, the Virginia Master Naturalist Program, is a grass-roots effort to train a cadre of volunteers who will work in their local communities to improve the environment. Virginia is basing the program on a model that is proving highly successful in other states and that is similar to the Master Gardener Program.

Partners include Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Department of Forestry, and the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

"The Master Naturalist Program is all about citizen participation, and we are honored to serve as the home for such a program," said Harold Burkhart, head of the forestry department at Virginia Tech's College of Natural Resources. Virginia Tech's forestry department serves as the host department for the program.

State Forester Carl E. Garrison III added, "Master Naturalist volunteers not only educate the public, they actually get involved with hands-on stewardship activities, such as creating wildlife habitat. By improving the state of our natural resources, all of our citizens reap the benefits of a better and healthier Virginia."

Program participants become Certified Virginia Master Naturalists by first completing a 40 hour training course and then completing 40 hours of volunteer service.

Virginia's Department of Game and Inland Fisheries anticipates that Master Naturalist volunteers will provide valuable assistance to the agency on a wide range of projects ranging from population censuses and habitat restoration to interpretive programs and site enhancements along its Birding and Wildlife Trail. "Most importantly," added David Whitehurst, DGIF's Wildlife Diversity Division director, "Master Naturalists will become better-informed citizens who will promote the value of conserving the Commonwealth's wildlife and the natural resources on which they and all Virginians depend."

This year, the program is starting chapters in ten communities across Virginia. Additional chapters will form in 2007. Each chapter recruits participants and trains them in natural history and natural resource management. The chapters work with local partners needing volunteers to assist with conserving, managing, and educating about natural resources.

Persons interested in becoming a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer should visit the program's Web site at www.virginiamasternaturalist.org, or contact Michelle Prysby, program coordinator, at 434-872-4580.

Michelle Prysby is an Extension Associate in the Virginia Tech Dept. of Forestry and Coordinator of the Virginia Master Naturalist Program; Lynn Davis is the College Communications Manager, Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources.

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 this 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. Thanks to all of you who have already done this.

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!
Jennifer



Events Calendar			For the most complete listing of natural resource education events, visit the on-line events calendar at www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate ; See Page 6 for Forestry & Wildlife Field Tour Dates		
Contact	Date	Location	Event	Time	Fee
DCR	Aug., Sept., & Oct.	Virginia State Parks	A Variety of Events and Activities. For a Complete Listing, Visit: www.dcr.virginia.gov/parks	Varies	Varies
CD	Aug. 2	Richmond	Flat Out Catfishing (18 and over only, please)	8:00 am - 3:00 pm	\$35.00
AHPO	Aug. 5	Warm Springs Mtn. Preserve	Natural History Guided Hike **Please Pre-Register**	Call	Free
MY	Aug. 8-31	Winchester	Farming 101	Varies	\$90 pp/\$110 couple
JF	Aug. 11	Halifax County	Management for Cutover Lands	9:00 am - 3:30 pm	\$20 (includes lunch)
AD	Aug. 14	Madison	**Forest Stewardship, What's in it for You?	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	\$5.00
JM	Aug. 18-20	Appomattox	Mothers & Daughters Outdoors	Varies	\$85.00
AD	Aug. 19	Orange County	**Forest Stewardship Field Trip	9:00am - 12:00 pm	\$5.00
VCTGA	Aug. 24-26	Blacksburg	Christmas Tree Growers Association Annual Meeting	TBA	TBA
JF	Aug. 25	Henry County	Wildlife Response to Logging; please pre-register by August 11**	9:00 am - 4:00 pm	Free
WW/CS	Sept. 1	Front Royal	Managing Risks of Equine Businesses & Enterprises	TBA	\$15.00
RC&D/KC	Sept. 2	Northumberland County	10th Annual Down on the Farm Tour	9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Free
MY	Sept. 2	Bath County	Invasive Species: Problems and Solutions	TBA	TBA
JF	Sept. 8	Prince Edward County	Management Options for Cutover Lands	9:00 am - 3:30 pm	\$20 (includes lunch)
MY	Sept. 8-9	Dabney Lancaster CC	Alternative Income Sources for Landowners	TBA	TBA
AD	Sept. 11	Madison	**Managing & Selling Timber for Profit & Ecosystem Health	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	\$5.00
TM	Sept. 15-17	Saltville	Clinch Mountain Trails Fall Migratory Bird Festival	9:00 am - 5:00 pm	\$20.00
AD	Sept. 16	TBA	**Managing & Selling Timber Field Trip	9:00am - 12:00 pm	\$5.00
AHPO	Sept. 16	Warm Spring Mtn. Preserve	Forest Ecology Guided Hike **Please Pre-Register**	Call	Free
AD	Sept. 21	Madison	Working the Small Woodlot	9:00am - 12:00 pm	TBA
AD	Sept. 21-22	Madison	Portable Sawmilling and Drying Workshop	1:00 - 4:30 pm; 8:30 am - 4:30 pm	TBA
JF/SB	Sept. 22,29 & Oct. 8	Lynchburg	SHARP Logger Core Training	TBA	Free
SF	Sept. 28-Oct.8	Richmond	State Fair of Virginia	All Day	
CD	Sept. 30	Harrisonburg	Fly Fishing Workshop	9:00 am - 4:00 pm	\$30
CC	Oct. 6-8	Northampton	Eastern Shore Birding Festival	All Day	\$20.00/day
CD	Oct. 14	Cumberland County	Family Fishing Workshop	10:00 am - 4:00 pm	\$10
AD	Oct. 16	Madison	**Forest Landowner Association "Town Meeting"	6:00 pm - 8:30 pm	\$5.00
JF	Oct. 20	TBA	Log Grading & Merchandising	TBA	TBA
AHPO	Oct. 21	Warm Springs Mtn. Preserve	Fall Colors Guided Hike **Please Pre-Register**	Call	Free
SA	Nov. 4	Winchester	Shenandoah Audubon's Annual Birding Festival	10:00am - 3:00 pm	TBA

Items marked with ** are part of a series; registration for individual classes is \$5; registration for the series of 5 is \$20.

Event Contacts			
Contact	Name/Affiliation	Phone	e-mail/website
DCR	Department of Conservation & Recreation	804/786-1712	www.dcr.virginia.gov
CD	Chris Dunnivant	804/367-6778	chris.dunnivant@dgif.virginia.gov ; www.dgif.virginia.gov
AHPO	Alleghany Highlands Programs Office/TNC	540/839-3599	www.nature.org
MY	Matt Yancey/Forestry & Natural Resource Agent NW	540/564-3080	mayancey@vt.edu
JF	Jason Fisher/Forestry & Natural Resource Agent Central	434/476-2147	jasonf@vt.edu
AD	Adam Downing/Forestry & Natural Resource Agent Northern	540/948-6881	adowning@vt.edu
JM	Jimmy Mootz/Virginia Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries	804/367-0656	jimmy.mootz@dgif.virginia.gov
VCTGA	Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association	NA	www.virginiachristmastrees.org
WW	Bill Whittle/Virginia Cooperative Extension	540/778-5794	wwhittle@vt.edu
CS	Crystal Smith /Virginia Cooperative Extension	540/635-4549	csmith06@vt.edu
RC&D	Tidewater RC&D Council	804/443-1118	NA
KC	Karen Cox/Forestry & Natural Resource Agent NE	804/785-5979	kgecox@vt.edu
TM	Tracey Mitchell	276/496-5342 ext 24	economicdevelopment@saltville.org
SB	Scott Barrett/SHARP Logger Program Coordinator	540/231-6494	sbarrett@vt.edu / www.sharpplogger.vt.edu
CC	Eastern Shore of VA Chamber of Commerce	757/787-2460	http://esvachamber.org/festivals/birding
SF	State Fair of Virginia	804/569-3200	www.vastatefair.com
SA	Shenandoah Audubon	NA	www.audubon-nsvas.org/

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
Fall 2006	Nov., Dec., Jan.	Sept. 9, 2006	Spring 2007	May, June, July	Mar. 8, 2007
Winter 2007	Feb., Mar., April	Dec. 3, 2006	Summer 2007	Aug., Sept., Oct.	June 9, 2007

You Ain't From Around Here

Exotic Species of the Quarter: Gypsy Moth (*Lymantria dispar*)

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.

The European gypsy moth is a critter that, unfortunately, is familiar to the majority folks in Virginia. As with most exotic species, the gypsy moth was brought to the United States in the 1860's with good intentions – to breed them with native silk worms to increase silk production. Although the breeding experiment failed, the species didn't. Imported to Massachusetts, the gypsy moth is now well-established in all the other northeastern states and is munching its way into North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Since 1971, the gypsy moth has defoliated over 74 million acres of forestland, resulting in \$22 million annually in damage and management costs!! Generally, a single defoliation event will not kill a tree; however, two to three continuous years of defoliation, in conjunction with other stresses (e.g., drought) usually result in tree death. Gypsy moth populations are cyclical and may be affected by weather, abundance of natural predators, and extent of control operations. For example, in 2001, 440,000 acres were defoliated; in 2005, only 3,500 acres were. With no control measures at all, up to 15,600 square miles of forest can be invaded in a single year.

There are four stages in the life cycle of the gypsy moth: egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (cocoon), and moth, and only one generation per year. The egg and larval stages are the most important, in terms of control and damage. Egg masses (each of which contain up to 1000 eggs!) are present from August through March. Gypsy moths are NOT tent caterpillars – their eggs are laid in flat, velvety-feeling yellow-brown masses, which, in forested areas, can usually be found on tree stems. Adult female gypsy moths are not able to fly (too heavily burdened with eggs) and don't move more than 50 feet during their entire lifetime, so they will lay their eggs wherever they can – this includes: trees, outdoor furniture, vehicles, boats, toys, gardening tools, firewood and plants. Humans moving these objects also move the eggs – and are the cause of most of the spread!

The larvae hatch out in April/May. The caterpillars emit a single strand of silk from which they dangle until the wind disperses them. Dispersal is generally close to the egg mass, but can be up to a mile away. Gypsy moth larvae are insatiable hardwood leaf eaters (their favorite flavor? oak); in extreme cases, when populations are very high, they will even resort to eating grass and pine needles. They spend the next four to six weeks eating and growing, reaching lengths of 1.5 to 2.5 inches before they form cocoons and enter the pupal stage, which lasts 10-14 days.

The final life stage is the moth. The moths do not cause any direct damage, as they only live long enough to mate and lay eggs. The females release a pheromone to attract the males, who fertilize the eggs. After mating, the adult moths die. Eggs over-winter and larvae hatch out in the spring, and the life cycle begins again.

How to Identify Gypsy Moth

Always be on the lookout for the four life stages of the gypsy moth!

Look for: Egg Masses
August through March

- Yellow-brown
- Velvety
- 1.5 x 0.75 inches
- Can be attached to ANY outdoor item

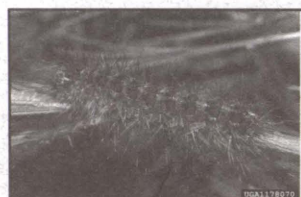


Look for: Pupae (cocoons) mid-June through mid-July

- Dark brown/black
- Larger pupae will be female moths; smaller pupae will be males

Look for: Larvae (caterpillars) April through June

- Five blue followed by 6 red sets of dots on back
- 1.5 to 2.5 inches long



Look for: Moths June through July

- Females are white with dark brown markings
- Males are dark brown, smaller, with markings similar to females
- Males have feather-like antennae



Photo credits (clockwise): Jim Occi, BugPics; USDA APHIS PPQ Archives, USDA APHIS PPQ; CT Agricultural Extension Station Archives, CT Agricultural Extension Station; Jim Occi, BugPics

Moth Continued on Page 4

Moth Continued From Page 3

How to SLOW THE SPREAD

Since early attempts at gypsy moth eradication proved to be costly, detrimental to other species, and ineffective, efforts have been redirected to slowing the spread of the critters into new territory.

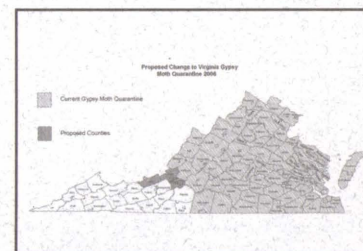
As a private landowner, the main thing you can do to prevent the spread is to check for egg masses before you move any and all items from an infected area to a non-infected area (see quarantine map). Egg masses can be difficult to find – on tire axles, undersides of vehicles, etc. If you do find egg masses, coat them with soapy water or biodegradable oils (to kill the larvae in the eggs), then scrape them into a disposable container.



Aerial spraying to slow the spread. Photo by: Gerald Lenhard

If you notice signs of extensive gypsy moth infestation on your property, contact your county agriculture agent (www.ext.vt.edu/offices), VDACS (www.vdacs.virginia.gov), Virginia Department of Forestry (www.dof.virginia.gov), or U.S. Department of Agriculture (www.aphis.usda.gov). These agencies are equipped to chemically treat large areas. Treatments include: Disrupt® II, which is a synthetic pheromone, similar to the one emitted by the female moths to attract males. Releasing this synthetic pheromone confuses the males and prevents them from finding the females, thus disrupting mating; *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), a natural soil bacteria, is toxic to gypsy moth larvae; Gypchek®, is a naturally occurring virus which is toxic to the larvae; and Dimilin, an insect growth inhibitor, which is used for moderate and high larval populations.

In addition to chemical treatments, regulations and quarantines are also effective in slowing the spread. Forest products, such as logs, posts, wood chips and firewood, nursery stock, outdoor household articles, and mobile homes and offices are all regulated items, meaning that they must be inspected before they can be moved from a quarantined area to a non-quarantined area. A quarantined area has a well-established and reproducing population, and includes all or portions of 19 mostly northeastern states, including portions of Virginia.



Quarantined and proposed quarantine areas in Virginia

References & Additional Information

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. www.vdacs.virginia.gov

United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. www.aphis.usda.gov

USDA Forest Service. www.fs.fed.us

Virginia Cooperative Extension Service www.ext.vt.edu

Gypsy moth in Virginia. www.gypsymoth.ento.vt.edu/vagm/index.html

The Bugwood Network. www.bugwood.org

Slow the Spread Gypsy Moth Project. <http://www.gmsts.org/operations/>

Jennifer Gagnon is an Extension Associate in the Virginia Tech Dept. of Forestry.

Special thanks go out to Jim Zinck with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for providing information and reviewing this article.

Resource Review: Forest Landowner Guide to Internet Resources: States of the Northeast

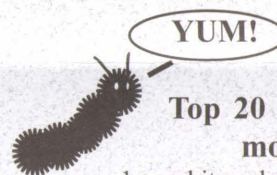
Site developed by: USDA Forest Service Northeast Area and the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF)

Reviewed by: Jennifer Gagnon, *Virginia Tech Dept. of Forestry*

Ok, so Virginia is not a northeastern state, but it's close. And much of the information listed on the Forest Landowner Guide to Internet Resources web site pertains to management of non-industrial private forests in general and is useful regardless of where you live. There are links to on-line publications, documents, brochures and fact sheets for 21 different natural resource topics, ranging from biodiversity to recreation to timber sales. In addition, there are links to the National Timber Tax website, the Forest Legacy Program homepage, and a printable (and useful) Reference Handbook for Foresters. You can also search for Internet resources by state (for 20 northeastern states) which provides links to natural resource agencies and services. There is a feature which allows users to submit new links which may be useful to other landowners.

This site is easy to navigate and abundant information is offered. Just be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to explore all the different topics and resources! The Forest Landowner Guide to Internet Resources: States of the Northeast can be found at: <http://na.fs.fed.us/pubs/misc/flg/>.

Jennifer Gagnon is an Extension Associate in the Virginia Tech Dept. of Forestry.



Top 20 Faves (from a gypsy moth perspective!)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. white oak | 11. black oak |
| 2. California red oak | 12. paper birch |
| 3. scarlet oak | 13. bigtooth aspen |
| 4. sweet gum | 14. chestnut oak |
| 5. American basswood | 15. tan-oak |
| 6. southern red oak | 16. canyon live oak |
| 7. quaking aspen | 17. post oak |
| 8. western larch | 18. willow oak |
| 9. northern red oak | 19. water oak |
| 10. laurel oak | 20. eastern hophornbeam. |

2006 Virginia Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year Named: John and Bernice Hoffman

By: John Matel, *Virginia Tree Farm Committee Communications Director*

"For 25 years, ATFS has honored those members who show an outstanding commitment to responsible forest management through the National Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year award. These awardees are recognized for their remarkable efforts to enhance and sustain their forests, and for spreading the practice of sustainable forestry."

The detailed process begins with inspecting foresters nominating Tree Farmers whose conservation efforts, outreach efforts in the community, and advocacy for sustainable forest management exceed expectations. ATFS State Committee select a state honoree to compete on the regional level. Regional judges select four regional winners who attend the annual National Tree Farmer Convention where they detail their sustainable forestry work during a panel discussion. At the convention, a national panel of judges selects the National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. Stihl, Inc. is the exclusive sponsor for this award and the sole lightweight outdoor power equipment provider for ATFS." (From the American Tree Farm System website: www.treefarmsystem.org).

John and Bernice Hoffman, winners of the 2006 Virginia Tree Farmer of the Year award, bought their first land in Shenandoah County in 1950 and eventually acquired nearly 800 acres near Star Tannery west of Strasburg. The Hoffmans manage for timber, conservation, hunting and recreation.

Local land cost only a \$2 an acre when John bought his first 447-acre tract with bonus money from the Navy. The hillsides were mostly bare. Hoffman planted loblolly pine, encouraged native hardwood regeneration and worked to re-establish the American chestnut. He worked with many consulting foresters. Frank Sherwood, the most recent, nominated him for the tree farm honor. John has followed a written management plan for more than three decades and his property has been a certified tree farm for 23 years.



State Forester Carl Garrison (left) and Shenandoah County Forester Joe Lehnan (right) present the Hoffmans (center) with a sign dedicating 650 acres of their property as the Devil's Backbone State Forest.

Hoffman's Virginia roots reach back to the middle 1700's when his ancestors arrived from Pennsylvania along a wagon road that became Route 11 and then Interstate 81. He is looking to the future. In 1995, John and Bernice began to grant land to the State of Virginia as state forest. Approximately 650 acres will become the Devil's Backbone State Forest.

One piece of land that will stay in the family is 53 acres with a little spring and pool overlooking the new state forest. The pool feeds Cedar Creek and then the Shenandoah River.

John has been a good steward of all his land. Forest owners, hikers, nature lovers and just plain folks can learn from his example.

Please visit the Virginia Tree Farm Committee website at : www.vaforestry.org/virginia_tree_farm.htm

For more on the Hoffmans, please see the Summer 2006 issue of the Virginia Forests Magazine (go to www.vaforestry.org)

John Matel is the Communications Director for the Virginia Tree Farm Committee.



John Hoffman examines chestnuts on his American chestnut research plot, which was established with the Virginia Department of Forestry.

30th Annual Fall Forestry and Wildlife Tours Schedule

Virginia Cooperative Extension, in association with Virginia's natural resource companies, agencies and associations, cordially invite you to attend one or more of the five Fall Forestry and Wildlife Field Tours planned throughout Virginia. These programs are designed to (1) demonstrate forestry and wildlife management opportunities, (2) acquaint you with public and private sources of technical and financial management assistance, and (3) demonstrate multiple-use, sustainable forest management practices. They are also a great way to network with other private forest landowners and natural resource professionals.

Space is limited and is on a first-come, first-served basis, so please pre-register. Registration is \$40 in advance, \$45 on the day of the program. This fee includes transportation and lunch. Dates and contact information for each tour are listed below. Fliers with more detailed information/registration forms will be mailed later this summer. We hope to see you on one of these tours!

Location	Date	Contact	Phone	e-mail
King William & Westmoreland	Oct. 13	Karen Cox	804/785-5979	kgcox@vt.edu
Brunswick, Greenville & Dinwiddie	Oct. 17	Neil Clark or Jason Fisher	757/657-6450 434/476-2147	southeast@vt.edu jasonf@vt.edu
King George	Oct. 19	Regina Prunty	540/775-3062	rprunty@vt.edu
Alleghany, Bath & Highland	Oct. 21	Matt Yancey	540/564-3080	mayancey@vt.edu
Southwest	TBA	Bill Worrell	276/889-8056	bworrell@vt.edu

www.ext.vt.edu

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CONTACT OUR SPONSORS AND STATE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES:



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FORESTRY



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www.dof.virginia.gov

Virginia Tech Department of Forestry & Virginia Cooperative Extension

228 Cheatham Hall 0324
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540/231-6391
www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate

Virginia Forestry Association

3808 Augusta Ave
Richmond, VA 23230
804/278-8733
www.veforestry.org

Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries

4010 West Broad St
Richmond, VA 23230
804/367-1000
www.dgif.virginia.gov

Virginia Tree Farm Committee

117 Creekside Lane
Winchester, VA 22602
540/662-4756
www.veforestry.org/virginia_tree_farm.htm

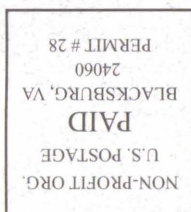
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