
All in a Nutshell

Volume 16, Issue 2

Spring 2011



Spring is finally here! After an extended winter, the sounds of a bubbling woodland stream, the melody of the forest warblers and the smell of wildflowers give us the joy of life renewed. Those neglected chores can wait.

President's Message

SPRING AT LAST!

Mow the grass! Plant the garden! Plant trees! Mow the grass! Clear the brush! When it stops raining, mow the grass! Does that look like your "to do" list?

Most of us have very similar objectives about this time of year. The weatherman has been the biggest obstacle because of all the rainy days. I recorded 10 inches of rain in April and 6+ in May. This is the wettest spring that I can remember. The Christmas trees that I have planted on ridges are smiling. The others are questionably yellow, and some have completely lost their needles. DEAD!

I have found baby deer, baby bluebirds, baby robins, baby geese, baby bunnies, and even baby fishers. Everyone has found some forms of new life around home and in the woods. Isn't that why we are forest landowners, in the first place?

The seasons, in Northeastern Pa. are each so different and new. And each forest is different, with its own challenges and benefits. Many of us are also involved with other organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, a nature preserve, or even Salt Springs State park. Our woods walks, picnics, and bus tours, give us a chance to appreciate how different each woods is.

There is no "RIGHT WAY" to manage our woods, but there is always something that we can do to make it better for our personal objectives. The main thing is that we do something; even it is just take the kids for a walk and look for tracks and poke in the dirt, or flip over some rocks.

Our woods are always showing something new and interesting, and we can always share it with others. And just like a smile, when we share it, we still have it all.

What a life!!! Now GET OUT! and enjoy it!!!

-Jim Kessler

Annual Summer Picnic

The Susquehanna County Forest Landowner's Association will be holding its summer picnic in the pavilion at Salt Springs State Park on June 26, 2011. Lunch begins at 12:00 noon. The Association will be providing burgers, sausages, rolls and beverages. Attendees should bring a covered dish to pass.

Following the picnic lunch, Rebecca Lesko will enlighten us regarding the history of the Native American Indians of northeast Pennsylvania. Rebecca is the Executive Director of the Endless Mountains Nature Center located near Tunkhannock. Upon conclusion of the presentation, President, and retired forester, Jim Kessler will be leading a nature walk to facilitate our further enjoyment of the splendid views, hiking trails and natural ambience of the park.

While the picnic lunch is for members and guests of SCFLOA and Wayne-Lackawanna Forest Landowners, the presentation and nature walk is open to the public.

Big Tree Contest

SCFLOA will be taking part in a statewide search for the biggest trees in Pennsylvania. The SCFLOA board of directors has decided to conduct a search in Susquehanna County for the largest specimens of 24 different native/naturalized trees. The SCFLOA board of directors has established a "Big Tree" committee, chaired by Rob Albert and Bob Wagner, to facilitate the location, identification, and measuring of our big trees. They will be working in cooperation with our DCNR service forester, Dave Cole, to obtain the necessary data. More information for participation will be forthcoming.

The size of a big tree is not only determined by its circumference, but also by its height and crown spread. Points are given for the following criteria:

-1 point for each inch of trunk circumference at the height of 4.5 feet above the base

-1 point for each foot of height in a straight line from the ground to the highest point of the tree

-1 point for every 4 feet of average crown spread [(widest spread + narrowest spread)/ 2]

The sum of all points determines the tree's size.

Rebecca Lesko



Rebecca Lesko, founder and naturalist of the Endless Mountains Nature Center has twenty years of experience educating people outdoors. She's the primary environmental education specialist at the Nature Center, providing indoor and outdoor programs for toddlers, school-aged children, families, and adults, on topics ranging from arthropods to wetlands.

Ms. Lesko earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York, after attending Keystone College for two years. At Keystone she studied fine arts and environmental studies. She has taught programs internationally and nationally for the National Wildlife Federation and the Pocono Environmental Education Center, and regionally for the Peace Valley Nature Center and the Tenafly Nature Center. Lesko has also presented workshops for classroom teachers about including environmental education in the curriculum and to pre-service teachers. In 2006 she was awarded a regional Jefferson Award for community service in northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Susquehannock

When the area now known as Susquehanna County was first discovered by the white man, it did not contain any Indian settlements, but was a wilderness temporarily visited by hunting parties of the Six Nations of the Iroquois to the north and the Lenni Lenape to the south.

The Susquehannock (Iriquois) tribes were located along the Susquehanna River and its branches from the north end of Chesapeake Bay in Maryland across Pennsylvania into southern New York. Although their original number is uncertain, it is believed their population was between 5,000 to 7,000 in 1600. By 1700 there were only 300 Susquehannock remaining. Susquehannock appears to have been an Algonquin name meaning the "people of the Muddy River" (Susquehanna). The Susquehannock were one of the most formidable tribes of the mid-Atlantic region at the time of European contact, noted for their size, deep voices, and the variety of weapons. The Susquehannock lived in a number of large, fortified villages that stretched along the Susquehanna River and its branches across Pennsylvania into southern New York

Clans were almost certainly matrilineal (descent traced through the mother). Like other Iroquoian tribes, the Susquehannock farmed extensively. In the spring, they planted maize, beans, and squash in the fields near their villages. After this was finished, many groups moved south for the summer to temporary sites on Chesapeake Bay to fish and gather shellfish, returning in the fall to harvest their crops and hunt.

News from Our Forester



Dave Cole
New service forester
for
Susquehanna &
Wyoming Counties

It seems that summer has finally arrived, and the emerald ash borer is on the minds of many people as we enter into the growing season. First detected in Michigan in 2002, it has spread to 13 states, two Canadian Provinces, and has been confirmed in 19 counties in PA. As you drive around northeastern PA, you may see clusters of Purple Panel Traps hanging in areas with ash trees. The PA Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the US Forest Service, is once again conducting a survey to try to track the movement of the Emerald Ash Borer. It has not yet been detected in this area, but we know it is not too terribly far away. Last summer it was confirmed just south of Williamsport in Union and Lycoming Counties, and also in New York State at numerous locations.

The pest experts still consider the transport of firewood to be the main way the EAB is moving around, but the movement of any untreated ash logs or products could potentially be assisting the insect. As of April 15th, the ash quarantine in PA has been expanded to cover the whole state. In practical terms, this means that ash can be moved freely **within** Pennsylvania's borders, but all applicable restrictions must be observed as far as moving ash across state lines, particularly the New York state line.

Folks often ask what can be done if the borer shows up here. On the scale of the forest, there really is nothing that can be done to save the trees. Research is being done on several parasitoids that may prove helpful to some extent in the future. If a person has only a few ash trees in their yard that they do not want to lose, a pesticide treatment is available that has shown good (but not 100%) success in saving the trees. The treatment is quite expensive, but may be a viable option in a landscape situation.

When the EAB first shows up in an area, there is really no obvious indication of its presence. Hence the use of the purple panel traps. Once the population is established for a few years, the first thing we usually see is ash trees with the top part of the branches dying back, coupled with a lot of woodpecker activity. This does not guarantee that the EAB is there, but if it is there, that is what we would expect to see.

Forester News (continued)

If anyone sees a dying ash tree with a lot of woodpecker activity, please contact me so I can check it out. You can email me anytime at davcole@state.pa.us or call 570-945-7133 and leave a message if I'm not in.

Very importantly, if you see what you think is an adult EAB (photos on the web site below), PLEASE try to capture and put it in a container with alcohol so we can examine it to be sure of its identity.

For complete information on the emerald ash borer, identification, tree treatment options, quarantine information and more, go to www.emeraldashborer.info. Note: The quarantine map on this web page has not yet been updated since April 15th, but the whole state is under quarantine. For further information on other forest pests, go to the Bureau of Forestry website, at www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry and the PA Department of Agriculture website at www.agriculture.state.pa.us.



Adult Emerald Ash Borer



EAB exit hole

2011 SCFLOA Board of Directors



Left to right: Bob Wagner, Franz Fearnley, Don Cole, James James, Doug Gunn, Carol Hartley, Rob Alfred, Curt Hepler, Jim Kessler. Photographer: Stuart Slocum

Board of Directors Meetings are open to all members. They are held the first Monday of every other month at the NRCS conference room, Montrose PA. They begin at 7:30 PM.

The next meeting is August 1, Your presence and ideas are always welcomed!



The Partridgeberry is currently in full bloom on forest floor. It is recognized by its twin, 4 petaled white or pink flowers. It has roundish, opposite evergreen leaves along a creeping stem. The bright red berries are seedy and tasteless, but are edible. Despite their name, the berries are of little importance to wildlife, with many remaining on the stem through the winter. Native American women made a tea from the leaves as an aid in childbirth.

Woodland "critter"



Juvenile red eft

One of the joys of owning forest land is its abundance of natural beauty and wildlife. With a record amount of rainfall this spring, there has been a profusion of those small, brightly colored orange salamanders, known as red efts. These are among the most common of Pennsylvania salamanders. These colorful amphibians are in the juvenile, terrestrial stage.

Red efts first come out of the water less than an inch long, but can grow over time to up to 4 inches long. They are often seen searching around in the leaf litter on the forest floor for food, including insects and small wetland animals, like snails. The red eft stage lasts at least 2 years, after which they return to the water where they transform into the adult stage known as red-spotted newts. The adults are aquatic and have an olive-green back with scattered red spots and a yellow belly with small black dots. Adults are usually found in permanent pools of water while the eft occurs in forest habitats. Eggs are attached singly to submerged vegetation in the spring and hatch in about 3 weeks into larvae that transform into the red efts in late summer. Upon transformation to the newt stage, the salamanders do not develop gills again, but must come to the surface to breathe through their lungs.

They have toxins in their skin that can make a predator sick. Their bright orange color warns predators that they taste bad! Predatory fish, such as largemouth bass quickly learn to avoid eating the newts. It is advisable for people to wash their hands after handling either the eft or newt. As with other amphibians, loss of habitat, particularly wet forested areas, is the greatest threat to their existence.



Adult red-spotted newt

2011 SCFLOA Calendar of Events

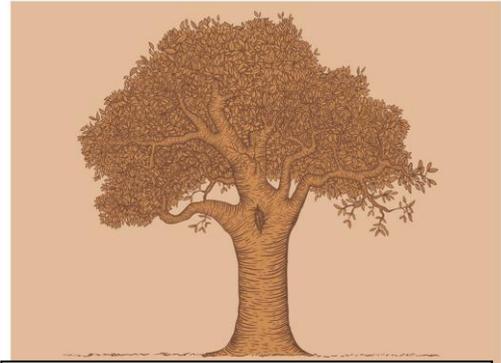
June 26: 12:00 Noon,
Annual SCFLOA picnic at Salt Springs State Park,
Rebecca Lesko from Endless Mountain Nature Center
Will talk about the Native American history of the
region

August 22-27: Harford Fair display-Tree pests and diseases

October 10: Columbus holiday fall foliage tour,
Willamsport area attractions

November 18: Annual membership business meeting and dinner
Speaker: Jim Kessler-Alaskan Adventures

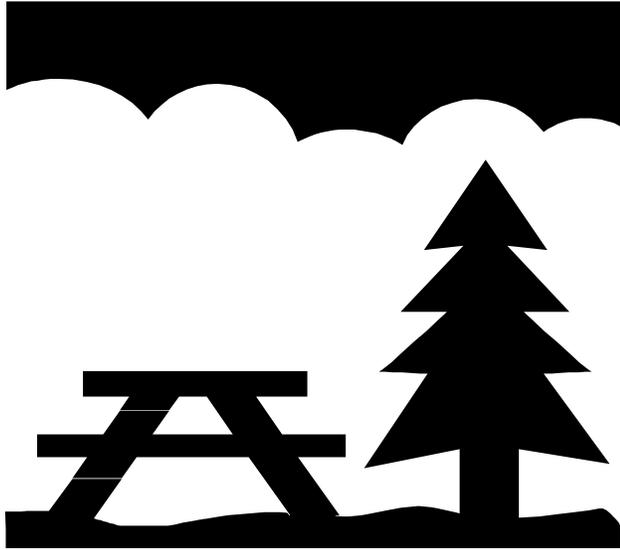
**THANK YOU FOR PAYING
YOUR 2011 SCFLOA dues**



**Do you have a Susquehanna County
“BIG TREE”?**

*Please send any suggestions, comments or other
ideas regarding this newsletter to:*

Stuart W. Slocum
slocumsw95@yahoo.com
1371 Slocum Rd
Thompson, PA 18465



SCFLOA picnic at Salt Springs State Park on 6/26/2011

1371 Slocum Rd, Thompson PA 18465

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED