

# Greenleaves

*Newsletter of the Bruce Grey Woodlands Association*

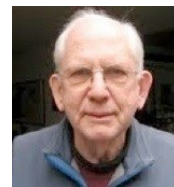
**WINTER 2017**



**[www.bgwa.ca](http://www.bgwa.ca)**

## Introduction

Malcolm Silver, Newsletter Editor



In this edition you will learn about tree-o-caching, one of the projects for the coming year; some birds you may see during the winter; means of dealing with a property in life or death; the second whammy threatening European ash as the EAB also spreads east there; about some of our new Directors and the usual News/New Science snippets .

This has been a strange winter. The unusual cycles of freezing and thawing could have adverse effects on our trees. We will have to watch them closely in coming months.

The 25<sup>th</sup> presentation of the Elmwood conference is an exciting prospect. Hope to see you there.

Soon after this reaches you I shall board a liner to cross the Atlantic from Ft Lauderdale to Southampton. Long on my bucket list this segment will complete a circumnavigation of the globe done in dribs & drabs since 1958. I don't expect to see lumber passing by on its way to the Sargasso Sea but ports visited may have some interesting trees. If so you may read about them in a future *Greenleaves* .

**Annual Woodlot Conference Weekend - Mar 25+26**

**Now in its 25th Year!**

**And still the best bargain to be found for learning about woodlands! This year sessions include:**

**Death & Rebirth of a Forest • Unconventional Woodlot Management in Agroforestry & Plantations  
Eco-Friendly Woodlot Tools • Forest Biofuel • Ancient Cliffside Cedars • Wood Products New Innovations**

**\$25 in advance or \$35 at the door register online at [bgwa.ca](http://bgwa.ca) or call 519-367-3040 x233**

**SAT conference in Elmwood 9:00-3:30 SUN woodlot tour in Southampton 1:00-3:00**

**Next Board Meeting**

Thu April 20th

7PM-GSCA

Members Welcome!

**GREENLEAVES**

is the member newsletter of the Bruce Grey Woodlands Association, published quarterly and distributed to current BGWA members. Submissions are always welcomed on any topic related to BGWA's vision:

*Promoting healthy forests and ecosystems in Bruce and Grey Counties through education, recreation and sustainable management practices.*

Information, opinions, and directions in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect BGWA advice or policy.

bgwa@naturemail.ca

Mailing address: BGWA c/o Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, 237897 Inglis Falls Rd, RR4, Owen Sound, N4K 5N6

**President's Message****Chris VanderHout**

Members,

I'm jumping right in here and feeling pretty charged about the year ahead!

We recently held our annual general meeting, and it was great to see so many members. I didn't get an exact count, but we nearly filled the 75 seat theatre at the Grey Roots Museum. A special thanks to Kevin Predon who brought the educational documentary film- *A Working Forest* for us to watch. It was enjoyable and gave a good glimpse into the activities undertaken in US privately-owned forests and how active landowners can engage in stewardship to maintain healthy forests while generating products for use by our communities. The objectives are similar to what our organization stands for.

The Grey Roots Museum was a comfortable and high quality facility that gave members a chance to socialize and enjoy refreshments, as well as allowing access to its exhibits.

At the meeting, we announced our directors for this year as well as some directors who are stepping-down for a well-earned break. I extend warm thanks to Lee Thurston, Harvey Weppler, Jim Cullen and Malcolm Silver for all their work done as directors in attending meetings and volunteering at events, plus all the other miscellaneous activities that happen in the background.



Fortunately Malcolm agreed to continue as editor of our quarterly newsletter.

Stepping- up, we have had four new directors this coming year. I extend a warm welcome to Alison Stewart, Sean Lipere, Sandy Bunker and Gord Edwards. I look forward to working with you all and am excited about the possibilities that your fresh outlooks will offer. Continuing as directors are Neil Baldwin, Larry Cluchey, Cam Bennet, Ron Stewart, Kevin Predon, Donna Lacey and me. Of course, a special thanks to all of these folks for again volunteering to be active on the Board. By the time you read this newsletter, we will have had our first meeting and set-up the new executive and our various committees.

Since our last Newsletter we also had the pleasure of our weekend advance-screen preview of the *Call of the Forest* movie at the Grey Roots Museum. With a capacity crowd of members, their guests and some members from allied local associations, the film was really enjoyed. Attendees could share their experiences on the kind of Stewardship activities they have employed and hear how others were making a difference in the same way.

We received special thanks from Treespeak Films for our \$500 contribution to assist in officially launching their film this coming spring. We feel this film represents a good initiative in helping educate about maintaining healthy forests, the objectives of our own organization.

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(President's Message, from page 2)*

The Board has reinstated recognition of a person's outstanding contributions towards the objectives of the BGWA through an Award of Merit. We received nominations prior to the AGM and will select a recipient who will be given the award at the upcoming Elmwood Woodlot Conference. The recipient's name will be added to a large plaque that will be displayed

at the GSCA or SVCA office and personally receive a similarly inscribed separate plaque.

There will be many good things during this coming year. I wish you all a prosperous and productive spring, full of enjoyment in the natural world that we all are engaged in keeping healthy.

Sincerely, Chris

## Come Tree-o-Caching!

By Neil Baldwin & Donna Lacey

As a pilot project, BGWA is getting ready to roll out a new activity which combines GeoCaching with visits to significant trees around Grey and Bruce counties.

**What is GeoCaching?** Geocaching is a perpetually growing, worldwide activity which began over 15 years ago. The basic idea is that someone hides a "cache" – usually a physical container, often camouflaged, size may vary from micro to large – somewhere and posts the GPS coordinates plus a description on geocaching.com. "Cachers" download that information, use the coordinates to get as close as possible, then use the description, their intuition and searching skills to find the actual cache.

Once found, they leave a note in the log book found in the cache container. The cache will sometimes contain trading items. Cachers subsequently log their finds on geocaching.com, where they can leave comments on the experience or area the search took them to, and accumulate "find" statistics. Most geocaches are one-offs, while others are part of a series which require the Cacher to find a number of caches to gather information or evidence which allows them to claim completion of the series.

**How will Tree-o-Caching work?** It will be a cache series, with a total of 7 hides. We have identified 6 significant trees, located in interesting spots scattered around Grey and Bruce, 3 in each. We will set up geocaches at, near, or within sight of, these trees and on publicly accessible lands. The cache containers will have log books, and each will contain a clue. Having found all 6 clues will enable the Cacher to determine the coordinates of the final, 7<sup>th</sup>, geocache. The final cache will contain a small prize for each cache-finder, such as swag from the local conservation authorities.

**When will Tree-o-Caching start?** When it begins will depend on two factors: (a) when spring thaw conditions are past such that the hiker traffic it will generate to and near the cache site will not degrade the environment, and (b) when geocaching.com approves the postings to go live.

*We anticipate a start date in late April or early May. It will be announced on bgwa.ca as soon as it is live.*

**When will Tree-o-Caching end?** If this pilot project is successful and popular, we may create a new series for next year. The first series may be closed off in late fall, or it may remain active over the winter and run alongside the new series the following year. We also have the capacity to temporarily suspend one or more geocache listings if site conditions warrant.

**What are the intended outcomes for this activity?**

For members, we want to provide an enjoyable activity that will introduce them to some significant and interesting trees in Grey and Bruce. We may also include a special members-only prize draw, at the end of the season, for all current members who complete the series. For members without a GPS unit, we may attempt to set-up a loaner program.

For non-members, in addition to the trees it will also introduce them to BGWA since we will leave leaflets or cards in each Cache plus a link on our geocaching.com listings. We will also connect with the regional tourism organizations, and our local partner associations, to let them know about it.





## Snow Birds

By Malcolm Silver

Winter can be a poor time for birdwatchers in Bruce/Grey due to a paucity of species. What I call *toughies* that spend the winter with us and are found at feeders, in the field or urban areas are a pleasure to see. They include American goldfinch; blue jays; cardinals; chickadees; house finch; house sparrow; mourning dove; nuthatches; raven; rock doves; ruffed grouse; starlings; turkeys and woodpeckers. But then there are *snowbirds*. Some use this term to designate Canadians who flee south to escape our winter but here I mean birds that visit us during that season from their summer habitat in boreal regions or further north. They fall into two groups, regular winter migrants and those who appear irregularly as an incursion.



Amongst the first group are flocks of sparrow-sized snow buntings, horned larks and Lapland longspurs often disturbed from feeding on seeds at the verge as one drives along a country road. They fly-up, perhaps in hundreds, to wheel across fields or return to the site once a vehicle passes. These are called snowbirds colloquially. The three species may occur in one flock but often snow buntings and horned larks are together while longspurs occur in isolated groups. Their flights help differentiate the birds. Buntings and larks fly in tight formation turning and tipping as one (illustrated). Each longspur moves on its own undulating path so that a flock seems to bounce along in

looser formation. Other migrants include dark eyed juncos, usually appearing in small groups at feeders, and American tree sparrows likely found in hedgerows or rock fences.

Bird incursions occur when their food in the far north is in short supply, due to failure of seed or fruit crops or very few lemmings. These species excite winter birdwatchers. Common redpolls move south on average every other year, a pattern that makes them more reliable than other irruptive winter finches. Evening grosbeaks visit frequently and pine grosbeaks infrequently. Red and white-winged crossbills prise seeds from pine cones with their twisted bills. Bohemian waxwings visit occasionally and roam large distances searching for berries, other fruit, and insects. Snowy Owls irrupt roughly every 3 to 5 years. But even in off years, a few may be found. And then there is the holy grail of irruptors the goshawk. Adults are dis-

tinctive, with heavily barred chests, steel grey back and wings, and deep red eyes. But, juvenile goshawks look similar to Coopers and Sharp-Shinned hawks.

Sadly space forbids illustrating these species but you can find them in bird guides or on the net.

I found the following interesting. People living in neighborhoods with more birds, shrubs and trees are less likely to suffer depression, anxiety and stress, according to new research. Academics found a relationship between the number of birds seen from windows, in the garden or in the neighborhood and mental health. For most people it was interacting with birds, not specific birds that provided well-being.

Birds around the home and nature in general, show great promise in preventative health care, making cities healthier, happier places to live.

### References

Watching birds near your home is good for your mental health: People living in neighborhoods with more birds, shrubs and trees are less likely to suffer from depression, anxiety and stress.. ScienceDaily, 25 February 2017. < [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170225102113.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170225102113.htm)>.  
<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/snowbird-season-an-irruption-of-boreal-songbirds/>  
<http://blog.nature.org/science/2016/01/18/snow-birds-10-birds-to-look-for-in-winter/>

## New Science

Compiled by Malcolm Silver, Newsletter Editor

### Grow, mow, mulch: finding lawn's value; Management techniques affect soil carbon, nitrogen

Can grassy lawns affect carbon and nitrogen in the soil? Researchers found grass species and mowing habits can make a difference.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170208150146.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170208150146.htm)>

### Roads are driving rapid evolutionary change in our environment

Roads are causing rapid evolutionary change in wild populations of plants and animals according to a new paper. The study looks at the evolutionary changes being caused by the way roads slice and dice our planet.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170217012459.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170217012459.htm)>

### Too many deer are bad for the forest

Overabundant deer can spell trouble for people, including frequent car collisions and the spread of zoonotic diseases. But deer also disrupt wildlife communities -- such as forest songbirds -- by eating away their habitat. Research shows that areas in the eastern US with high deer numbers tend to have fewer birds that need forest shrubs.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/01/170130224740.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/01/170130224740.htm)>

### Reactive lignin for reducing the environmental impacts of wood products

Technology known as "CatLignin" has been created to produce reactive lignin from pulp industry side streams to be used as a replacement for toxic phenol compounds in wood adhesives that are widely used in wood products and furniture.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170214094032.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170214094032.htm)>

### Mighty American chestnut poised for return to America's forests

Scores of American chestnut seedlings growing in upstate New York are the vanguard in the restoration of what was once the most dominant tree in the eastern forests. The trees carry one gene, added by scientists, that makes them capable of withstanding the invasive blight that wiped out billions of their ancestors a century ago.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/03/170306092247.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/03/170306092247.htm)>

### 'Gloom' and doom when these insects are on hot, dry red maple trees

*Melanaspis tenebricosa*, or gloomy scale insects can make a red maple tree's life downright dreary. This is because the arthropods feed and thrive on them, especially in warm and dry urban landscapes.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/03/170310092921.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/03/170310092921.htm)>

### Invasive, native marsh grasses may provide similar benefits to protected wetlands

Phragmites; an invasive species of marsh grass that spreads, kudzu-like, throughout North American wetlands, may provide similar benefits to protected wetlands as native marsh grasses. According to new research, the invasive marsh grass's effects on carbon storage, erosion prevention and plant diversity in protected wetlands are neutral.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170227150331.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170227150331.htm)>

### Is spring getting longer?

#### Lengthening "vernal window"

When spring arrives, temperatures begin to rise, ice is melts, and the world around us starts to blossom. Scientists sometimes refer to this transition from winter to the growing season as the 'vernal window,' and a new study shows this window may be opening earlier and possibly for longer.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/03/170316125628.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/03/170316125628.htm)>.



## Chalara dieback of Ash

By Susan McGowan

In 2016 we in Grey Bruce were made aware of the newest threat to Ash trees, Chalara dieback of ash, which was first discovered in dying ash in Poland in 1992. The disease was detected at a nursery in Britain in 2012.

According to the European Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia and Sweden have confirmed its presence. Disease symptoms have also been observed in Denmark, Estonia, Latvia and Switzerland.

Chalara ash dieback, is caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*. The disease causes leaf loss, crown dieback and bark cankers in affected trees. Once a tree is infected the disease is usually fatal, either directly, or by weakening the tree making it more susceptible to attacks by other pests or pathogens such as Armillaria root rot.

PicAsh makes up less than 5 % of the forest cover in England and losses to this disease will have a major impact on wildlife and biodiversity. European ash, (*Fraxinus excelsior*) is very susceptible to the pathogen. Young trees are killed quickly while older trees seem to be able to resist for several years.

The fungal spores are produced from fallen infected dead leaves from June to September of the year following leaf drop. Moist conditions favour production of the fruiting bodies. Spores are then dispersed by

wind and land on fresh leaves, infecting new hosts. Dieback and stem cankers are not visible until the next year. The disease is also spread through movement of plant material and seeds. A quarantine is in effect in Britain to limit the spread of ash material.

Surveys carried out across a 10 km grid network in the UK have revealed that the disease has increased from 89 positive sites in 2012 mostly in the south east of Britain, to now having 41% of survey grids containing affected ash in 2017. The greatest spread appears to have occurred in 2016 where infections were detected right across to the west on the island. Surveys were carried out in Ireland by no positive trees have been found at this date.

Research is being carried out by Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to determine management tools such as chemical application of fungicides to control Chalara dieback.

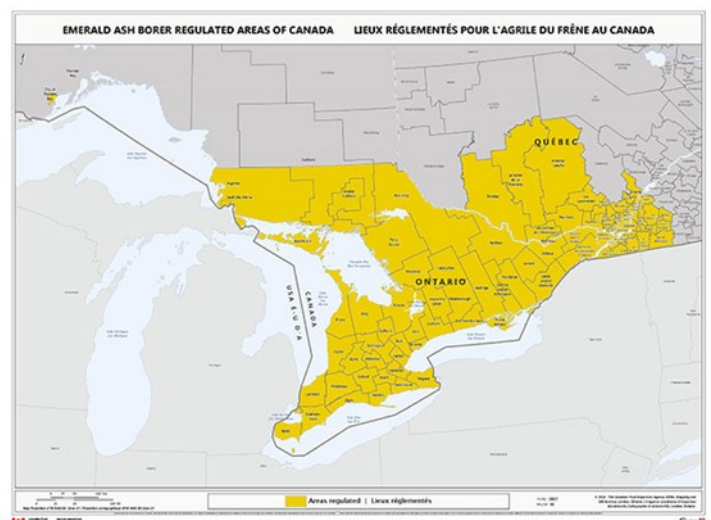
Further research is required to find out if all ash species are affected, especially since it is widely used in urban plantings. Chalara is not on the DFIA watch list at present. For more info on this disease please visit the Forest Commission England website at <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/ashdieback>



Picture of leaf dieback of ash affected by Chalara dieback

## Emerald Ash Borer Update

The map shows the regulated area for this invasive species. On January 27th 2017 Canada's Food Inspection Agency expanded the area to include the city of Thunder Bay and the Municipalités Régionales de Comtés de Joliette and D'Autray in PQ. It is prohibited to move firewood of all species, as well as ash trees, ash nursery stock or ash wood (including wood chips, wood packaging or dunnage), out of this area without written permission from the CFIA. Moving these materials from the regulated area without permission could lead to fines and/or prosecution.





## Private Woodlands Estate Planning

by Malcolm Silver

What to do with the family farm/woodlot in life or death? I am 83 so this question looms large. Thus, I have been investigating the matter and here's what I learned.

This article is for information only. I stress I am not an expert in this area; whatever you choose to do, consult an accountant and lawyer practiced in these spheres, to assure your wishes are both clearly defined and met.

### Sell it.

This would generate capital gains taxes.

See: **The Ten Top Tax Questions on the Capital Gains Ontario:**

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/beef/news/vbn0210a3.htm>

### Qualified Farm Property - TaxTips.ca

<http://www.taxtips.ca/smallbusiness/qualifiedfarmproperty.htm>

### Conserve it

Many are perturbed by the disappearance of Ontario lands due to housing or other developments (one only has to approach Shelburne, Orangeville or the outskirts of Toronto to appreciate the gravity of this situation) and seek to conserve their property from such changes in perpetuity.

This can be achieved by:

- (1) land donation to a favorite conservation group.
- (2) Life interest; donate the property and continue living on it for a specified term or lifetime. The conservation organization serves as land steward

(3) Conservation severance; part of a property is severed and donated for conservation. This can establish a nature preserve about a home that is professionally managed in bequest.

(4) Conservation Agreement; here you keep ownership and land use while protecting specific natural or cultural features. These are legal documents that bind future owners to those conditions.

Land donation, partial donations or donation of an interest in land through a conservation agreement can provide significant tax advantages.

See: **The Canadian ecological gifts program handbook**

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/pde-egp/default.asp?lang=en&n=CF436970-1>

Long-term options need a conservation partner. There are many such organizations in Ontario. However each has its own criteria, programs and resources that dictate its interest in any specific property. Some are better suited to deal with specialized situations.

See: **The list of Ontario land trusts is available at Land Trusts in Ontario, Ontario Land Trust Alliance (OLTA)**

<https://ontariolandtrusts.ca/>

### Bequeath it to a family member.

This can be done with careful estate planning. The following article can provide helpful information.

See: **The family farm and Will planning - RBC Royal Bank**

[http://www.rbcroyalbank.com/commercial/agriculture/\\_assets-custom/pdf/Family\\_farm\\_will\\_planning\\_EN.pdf](http://www.rbcroyalbank.com/commercial/agriculture/_assets-custom/pdf/Family_farm_will_planning_EN.pdf)



## EAB predators released

The first batch of Made in Canada *Tetrastichus* wasps, parasitic on the EAB grub, began to emerge at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre in Sault Ste. Marie this week. The 12,000 insects will be enough to establish at least six new release sites across Ontario and Quebec. They will join other parasitic wasps, both American and Chinese, released in 2016 to combat the borer.

<http://saultonline.com/2017/03/first-ever-made-in-canada-wasps-grown-at-great-lakes-forestry>

Board - Executive**President/Chair**

Chris Vander Hout  
chris@evolvebuilders.ca  
519-665-7414

**Vice-President**

Neil Baldwin  
bgwa@naturemail.ca  
519-794-0129

**Treasurer/Registrar**

Larry Cluchey  
lcluchey@wightman.ca  
519-799-5304

**Secretary**

Ron Stewart  
rm.stewart@bmts.com  
519-832-5548

Board - Directors

Cam Bennett  
c.bennett@greysauble.on.ca  
519-376-3076

Sandy Bunker  
sbunks@gmail.com  
519-367-2617

Gord Edwards  
edwardsgle@gmail.com  
519-794-2315

Donna Lacey  
d.lacey@svca.on.ca  
519-367-3040 x231

Sean Liipere  
sean\_liipere@hotmail.com  
519-373-9788

Kevin Predon  
kpredon@brucecounty.on.ca  
519-270-0748

Alison Stewart  
alisoninlife@gmail.com  
604-809-5283

Board - Resource Contacts

Anne Lennox  
Grey-Sauble Cons Auth  
a.lennox@greysauble.on.ca  
519-376-3076

Jim Penner  
Saugeen Conservation  
j.penner@svca.on.ca  
519-367-3040 Ext. 233

Craig Todd  
Ontario MNRF  
craig.todd@ontario.ca  
519-371-8465

Board Committees**Communications**

Neil Baldwin  
Alison Stewart

**Membership**

Larry Cluchey  
Ron Stewart

**Events & Education**

Cam Bennett  
Sandy Bunker  
Gord Edwards  
Sean Liipere  
Kevin Predon  
Ron Stewart

*You don't have to be a Board member to get involved. Contact any member of a committee you might like to help with or learn about!*

## Meet Your Board: NEIL BALDWIN

Eight years ago I sold my conventional suburban house (and conventional suburban life!!) in favour of an off-grid homestead surrounded by 50 acres of woodlands to care for, including conifer plantations, mixed forest, cedar groves, hardwood bush, and some wetland areas. I joined Grey County Woodlot Association, predecessor to BGWA, soon after. It was an tremendous resource. I wanted to contribute something back so got involved by creating and maintaining a new GCWA web site.

Living 95% solar-powered, I have particular interests in sustainability and looking for innovative ways we can lessen our ecological and carbon footprints while still effectively managing a private forest and its wildlife habitat. Ask me about my "solar powered" chain saw and log splitter!

I am awestruck by the natural world and this spring will up my understanding of how it all works, taking the *Master Naturalist* certificate through Lakehead University. And to add a little twist to this intro, I am also half way through taking yoga teacher training ☺.



## Meet Your Board: ALISON STEWART

My partner and I moved to the area 4½ years ago from Vancouver, BC. We inherited a 100 acre farm which has a mixture of old growth, new tree plantings, 4 ponds/wetland areas & 3 fields for pasture/fodder.

Needless to say it has been a huge learning curve. I have thrown myself into many courses & organizations learning as much as I can about woodlots, forest management, wetlands, farming, agriculture & how they all co-exist.

We have participated in the tree planting program with Trees Ontario which now brings the total trees planted to 38,000, and are looking to add a nut/fruit tree legacy orchard into the fold next.

I love being outdoors in nature, traveling the world and taking photographs. I am also an entrepreneur running 9 businesses globally from our farm.

