Greenleaves

Newsletter of the Bruce Grey Woodlands Association

AUTUMN 2020

www.bgwa.ca

President's Message

Alison Stewart

It has been a lovely fall this year with exceptionally warm weather allowing farmers to get crops in and hunters to enjoy a great season. It was lovely to see the full spectrum of colours this year at our property and in the area. I was able to appreciate the various plantings we have made at the farm and to bear witness to the growth this year in both the new & old forests.

Hunter and I were busy cleaning-up all aspects of our farm this fall as we have sold the property. We plan on travelling the world. We will be heading out west to visit with family before going abroad.

Now onto Association business:

We had a full turnout for this year's BGWA Tree Marking Event. It was a pleasure to see everyone and be outdoors in a woodland together. The knowledge and experience given were exceptional. Let us know if you would like more events like this in the future.

We continue to hold virtual board meetings to discuss BGWA business. The various committees continue to work on events, membership initiatives, and communication. We have been doing surveys to get member feedback and ensure we continue to provide value and serve you our membership.

The board is looking into a virtual AGM meeting in the event that we cannot hold an in-person event due to lockdowns. We will have the dates and more details to you soon.

Sincerely,

Alison Stewart

Upcoming Board Meetings:

15 DEC @ 5PM

Via Skype/teleconference

Would you like to host a member tour of your woodland property??

Contact Jim Coles:
jcoles@gbtel.ca
519-934-0020

Have a question for a forestry professional?

Send questions to: **ask-forester@bgwa.ca** and watch the next newsletter. Please try to provide as much detail and context as necessary, but also be concise and clear in what your question is.

GREENLEAVES

is published by Bruce Grey Woodlands Association (BGWA) and distributed to members to provide information, guidance, instruction, ideas and opinions related to trees, woodland ecosystems, forest management, and recreation in forest settings in or relevant to Bruce and Grey counties.

Content of articles is the sole responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the views of BGWA. Images accompanying articles are provided by the author unless indicated otherwise.

BGWA's vision:

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

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Ask a Forestry Professional

Answers by BGWA Forestry Professional members, coordinated by Susan McGowan BGWA Director

Member Jim White asks: *I am having a reaction to gypsy moth egg masses. What can I do to continue removing them to control populations in 2021?*

BGWA Forestry Professionals answer:

The hairs of the gypsy moth and other hairy caterpillars are known to cause skin rashes. It only stands to reason that the hairs from the female gypsy moth's abdomen, used to coat the egg mass, could also cause skin irritation.

Best practice would include wearing a mask and gloves. Some sources mention spraying the mass with water prior to removing, this might reduce the spread of the hairs. Deposit the egg masses into a container with soapy water and let soak for a few days before discarding.

Related Resource: Some updates have been made to the Ontario.ca gypsy moth page to reflect 2020 provincial monitoring results. A brief description accompanied by a PDF defoliation map can be found here https://www.ontario.ca/page/gypsy-moth

As it is topical and relevant to our members, BGWA is including the following Media Release from Grey Sauble Conservation

Ontario Communities Put at Risk by Changes to Conservation Authorities Act

The Province has introduced changes to the Conservation Authorities Act, under the 2020 Provincial Budget Bill, Bill 229, that will limit the conservation authorities' ability to protect people, property, and the environment. Most of these changes have come with no warning or consultations and have raised concerns with Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA), who believes these actions by the Province lack transparency and will put communities across Ontario at risk. It is important for all Ontarians to understand how they may be impacted by these proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and know who they should contact to express their concern.

GSCA has identified several major issues related to these proposed changes that the public and municipalities in Ontario should be concerned about and prepared to act on.

Changes imposed by this Bill would allow the Province to determine which municipally or self-funded programs conservation authorities can undertake. This undermines the ability of local Boards and Councils to define the programs that are beneficial to their local watershed communities. This Provincial overreach may have significant impacts on public safety, the local environment and resilience to climate change.

Changes to the development permit process include permit appeals to be submitted directly to the Minister of Natural Resources & Forestry (Minister) and for power to be given to the Minister to issue their own permits. This has the potential for significant negative impacts on Ontarians as it lacks transparency and could add political motivation to permit decisions while removing the use of background information, local watershed knowledge, and scientific expertise on which conservation

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Don't Drain that Swamp

By Gary Kenny - BGWA Director

As I complete this piece for *Greenleaves* my partner, Deborah, and I have just returned from an invigorating morning hike on the trails of Bruce County's Greenock Swamp. Maintained by the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA), the network of trails is situated in the immediate vicinity of Schmidt Lake. It offers visually and refreshingly splendid walks through upland deciduous and lowland coniferous forests as well as along a floating boardwalk constructed over a bog at one end of the lake.

Our experience reminded us of how fortunate we and the citizens of Bruce-Grey are to have natural wonders like "The Greenock," as it is known locally, on our figurative doorstep. It deepened our appreciation of conservation authorities like the SVCA that are dedicated to watershed conservation and education. And it reinforced our knowledge of and gratitude for those historically much-maligned natural phenomena – swamps.

Swamps are essentially forested wetlands. Like marshes, they are often found near rivers or lakes and their mineral-rich soils drain very slowly. Unlike marshes, they are populated by trees and bushes. They may hold water for the entire year or only part of the year.

Swamps vary in size and type. Some have soil that is nutrient rich, others soil that is poor in nutrients. They are often classified by the types of trees that grow in them.

Ontario is home to three kinds of swamps. Conifer swamps feature such trees as eastern white cedar, eastern hemlock, eastern white pine, and black spruce. Trees that grow in deciduous swamps include red maple, black willow, aspen, ashes, elms, swamp white oak, pin oak, and birches. Most of these tree species are found in The Greenock. Shrub swamps grow buttonwood, willow, alders, and dogwood.

At approximately 8,094 hectares (20,000 acres), the Greenock Swamp is Southern Ontario's single largest existing swamp. It is a "Class 1 wetland" – an ephemeral wetland having free surface water for only a short period of time after snowmelt or storm events in early spring. Roughly half of The Greenock is owned by the SVCA.

As well as a rich biodiversity of native plants, animals and insects, The Greenock is also steeped in history and legend. The first people to visit the swamp were Indigenous people who for thousands of years harvested its plants and hunted its animals.

Anishnaabe called the area Yokassippi. In Anishnaabemowin, the language of the Anishnaabe, river is "zibbi." So Yokassippi was probably how European migrants pronounced the Anishnaabe place name.

In the late 1800s, after Europeans had settled the area, the small village of Cargill near the swamp was said to be one of the most prosperous communities in Ontario, due largely to lumber baron, Henry Cargill. For over 25 years Cargill logged massive amounts of The Greenock's towering old-growth white pines. He hired hundreds of men and built their houses, schools, stores and churches, and operated a total of five mills. A small train called the "Dinky Train" hauled logs from the swamp including across a stretch of wooden trestle.

Numerous legends are associated with swamps like The Greenock and are featured in a guided tour offered by the SVCA in summers. Another story-rich tour hosted by the conservation authority, entitled "Bootlegging Lore of the Great Swamp," speaks for itself.

Throughout history swamps (a name that has often been applied to all wetlands) have been cast as dark, malevolent places where evil lurks and death waits. Folklore, legends and mythology reinforce this depiction. A few examples:

In the old English epic poem, Beowulf, the monstrous creature Grendel lived in a marsh near King Hrothgar's mead hall.

In North American folklore, the will-o'-the-wisp is an eerie atmospheric ghost light seen by travelers at night, especially over bogs, swamps, or marshes.

In Australian Aboriginal mythology, the Bunyip is a large beast that lurks in swamps, billabongs, creeks, riverbeds, and waterholes.

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(Swamps, from page 3)

Wetlands have been equally disparaged in modern times. Witness the hybrid plant-human monster in the 1982 American superhero movie, "Swamp Thing." Or the swamp creature in Stephen King's 1986 horror novel, "It." Or sensationalist outdoor adventure TV shows with names like "River Monsters."

For its part, the English language is fraught with idioms that disparage swamps and other wetlands. He's a "stick in the mud." I'm just "swamped." Her name was "dragged through the mire." And sadly, wetlands are sometimes subject to self-serving political agendas. In 2016 the slogan "drain the swamp" helped vault Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency.

Environmental journalist Melissa Cronin wonders whether humans' aversion to swamps might be evolutionarily programmed, like our predisposition to fear snakes and spiders. But "swamp-hate," Cronin believes, is really a cultural construct born of a long list of cultural artifacts, such as the previously mentioned books, TV shows, and movies. All feature swamps as sinister places.

Yet swamps are inherently unworthy of their bad reputation. They and other wetlands have been called "biological supermarkets" because they produce great volumes of food that support a remarkable degree of biodiversity. According to the conservation organization, The Wetlands Initiative, "in terms of number and variety of species supported, wetlands are as rich as rainforests and coral reefs."

Ontario Nature, which advocates for stronger government policy to protect wetlands, says swamps are critical to water filtration, flood retention, erosion control, nutrient cycling, and groundwater recharge. They also make landscapes more resilient to many of the anticipated impacts of climate change, including flooding, drought, and the loss of biodiversity. And they possess a huge capacity to store carbon.

Acting as a form of natural infrastructure, swamps and other wetlands also contribute $14 billion annually in economic benefits for Ontarians, reports the Government of Ontario. Commercially important products include fish, shellfish, blueberries, cranberries, timber, and wild rice – all harvested from wetlands in general.

Thankfully, modern environmental science is working hard to change the narrative of swamps as unsavoury, menacing places.

Learning about swamps and other wetlands should begin at an early age. I made sure our two children were exposed to Nature's watery wonders from the get-go, albeit a tad over-zealously at times. One outing in particular lives in infamy within our family. I took our kids on a canoe excursion down a stretch of the Teeswater River, which meanders through a portion of The Greenock.

The day was hot and sultry, the mosquitoes and deer flies, thick. Not infrequently we had to de-canoe and pull our watercraft over trees that had fallen across the narrow river, a challenge I hadn't foreseen. Nor did I anticipate the numerous scratches and bites – and occasional child submersion. And I recall a leech or two.

At journey's end we were hot, sweaty, bitten and tired. "Mom" was less than impressed when she set eyes on the kids' bug-bitten and scratched arms and faces. But both children learned a lot that day. Imprinted on them forever was the wonder of hovering dragonflies, turtles swimming languidly in the easy flow of the river, and the occasional water snake stealthily stalking an unsuspecting frog.

Many Ontario organizations offer programs to deepen knowledge and appreciation of swamps and other wetlands, some for children. Good places to begin are the websites for regional conservation authorities like the SVCA, Ontario Nature, Ducks Unlimited, and the Sierra Club.

Children's books with titles like "Swamp Kids Yoga," "Deep in the Swamp," and "Swamp Chomp" have been published to help remove children's fears and apprehensions of wet woodsy or marshy places. They learn to appreciate swamps like The Greenock for the enchanted, awe-inspiring places they are.

A *BIG* Thank You!

To our authors, all of whom are BGWA members who graciously gave some time to contribute to this newsletter. Might you help with the next edition?? Write a little or write a lot. Maybe factual, maybe personal. Anything to do with woodlots & trees! Have an idea, let us know: newsletter@bgwa.ca

Burning wood to keep the house toasty warm?

By Gerald Guenkel - BGWA Member

'Tis the season! Once that nip is in the air, wood heating begins in earnest across Bruce & Grey counties and Ontario. This article will not be shocking news for anyone who burns wood, however, it is a reminder of the elements needed for efficient wood burning.

For 30 years, I lived in a square log home that I heated with an outside wood furnace. This furnace heated water in a non-boiler system, pumped it to my house and my shop. The furnace was able to heat up to 6000 sq ft., keep the hot water tank at the appropriate temperature all year round and provide 600 sq ft of radiant floor heating in the shop. All of this required I have a good supply of wood. What wood is 'good'?

The definition of 'good wood' needs to include: 1) the wood's moisture, 2) the BTU of the wood, 3) the wood burning device used as a heat source and 4) the availability of the wood supply.

1) Wood Moisture is critical for efficient wood burning. The moisture content of wood needs to be under 20%. If you're impatient and use 'wet' wood, you're essentially needing 30% more wood to get the equivalent heating value. More splitting wood, more heaving wood, less heat.

Wood needs to be air dried for at least a season or two. This requires planning. Remember: hissing wood is not efficient.

2) British Thermal Units (BTU) is a way of rating tree species for their heating value. The higher the number the more heat is provided. Basically, there is a direct relationship between BTU and tree density. The biggest misconception is that all hardwoods have a higher BTU than all softwoods in Ontario. We all know elm, oak and sugar maple are great firewood. Where it gets interesting is when comparing BTU values of the species at the mid to lower portion of the provided chart. Tamarack, black cherry and white birch have virtually the same BTU values. At the lower end of the chart, one can see the BTU values of aspen, basswood are practically equivalent to white pine and hemlock.

3) Currently, the wood burning devices available are open fireplaces, air tight stoves and wood furnaces. Wood pellet stoves are beyond this article. Low BTU woods (e.g., cedar) are great for quick heat and help ignite higher BTU woods (e.g., oak). These species, however, provide no long lasting coals/embers to allow the fire to re-ignite.

Fireplaces work best with well dried, split hardwood. For air-tight stoves softwoods (e.g., pines, spruce, balsam fir) should not be used as they release resins that can cause build up of creosote in the chimneys during slow burns (see table below).

If the air flow into the stove is not dampened down, dry softwoods can be used to a limited degree. (I once cooked a Christmas turkey in an old kitchen wood stove, controlling the fire by inserting small pieces of dried pine to accurately control the temperature. Lots of work!)

Outdoor furnaces provide some leeway as they are distant from the buildings and have very short chimneys, eliminating the concern for chimney fires. These devices are ideal for burning dried softwood. My experience was to load the furnace for the night with softwood and one piece of well dried, high BTU hardwood to ensure there were coals the next morning. Also, in the summer months, when I just needed to heat the hot water tank, I used softwoods exclusively.

Species	Gross Heating Value (million BTU) *
Rock Elm	32.0
Shagbark Hickory	30.6
White Oak	30.6
Sugar Maple	29.0
Beech	27.8
Red Oak	27.3
Yellow Birch	26.2
White Ash	25.0
White Elm	24.5
Red Maple	24.0
Tamarack	24.0
Black Cherry	23.5
White Birch	23.4
Hemlock	17.9
Trembling Aspen	17.7
White Pine	17.1
Basswood	17.0
White Cedar	16.3
White Spruce	16.2
Balsam Fir	15.5

* BTU value based on an air-dry cord of wood.

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(Burning Wood, continued from page 5)

4) Availability of wood. If you own your woodlot, you will naturally survey what is available as a source of wood on your property. People have always asked me, ' What is the best wood to burn?' My answer is always, ' The best wood to burn is free wood!' Not every woodlot is blessed with endless high BTU hardwoods. Some woodlots are mainly poplar stands, cedar patches or pine plantations. Yes, lower BTU woods burns more quickly, however, if you have a good next-to-free source, you may consider how to incorporate that into your future firewood inventory.

You'll find endless more detailed articles on all aspects of wood burning on the internet.

Happy and safe wood burning.

Gerald Guenkel RPF
gerald@ElmStreetSolutions.com

They Just Explode

By Gary Kenny - BGWA Director

(Originally published in Hanover's *The Post*)

Asked recently if climate change isn't behind the forest fires devastating vast swaths of California, President Donald Trump replied that "exploding trees" were the cause – fallen dead trees left on the forest floor.

"They just explode," Trump said.

It's ludicrous, obviously, to suggest that trees combust spontaneously of their own accord. But Trump and other Republicans, their denial of climate change notwithstanding, have a point when they claim that proper forest management is necessary to prevent catastrophic fires.

"Management," however, can mean different things to different people with different agendas.

As author Charles Eisenstein says, forests have always been "managed." In pre-human times megafauna – mammoths, mastodons, and other giant herbivores – were the greatest managers of the forests. They browsed tree seedlings, stripped tree bark, and bulldozed trees with their size.

In later eras beavers became the master managers. With their dam-building skills they created wetlands, enhanced biodiversity, and slowed water flow thereby mitigating floods and sustaining water tables.

Early human civilizations played a similar role. Controlled burns and other methods were used to ensure productive, resilient, biodiverse landscapes that were resistant to cataclysmic fires.

Each of these "ecosystem engineers," as Eisenstein calls them, created mosaic landscapes of forest and savanna, making forests less dense and prone to fire.

Enter modern humans. According to Eisenstein, a century or more of deforestation and other abuses of the land have lowered the resistance of forests to fires by creating conditions of enduring drought.

"It's commonplace to declare that climate change is harming forests, but it may be more accurate to say that harm to forests causes climate change, which then harms forests even more," Eisenstein says.

Modern humans have regarded forests for primarily utilitarian purposes: clearcutting, mining, and profiteering. Our regard for the forest as a mere "thing" facilitated these actions.

That basic mindset justified the exploitation of other people. Africans, for example, were conveniently viewed as non-human; as things. In the minds of their oppressors, their dehumanization made it morally acceptable to enslave them.

This mindset prevents us from entering into the intimacy of relationship necessary to properly steward Nature, Eisenstein says. It's "like the difference between a doctor who treats you impersonally, as a 'case,' and one who sees you as a full human being," he adds.

Eisenstein's term "intimacy of relationship" reminds me that Indigenous cultures lived in a world where "being" was everywhere and in everything. Humans were no more and no less sacred than trees, rocks, water, or mosquitos.

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Wise stewardship of the natural world requires us to live into this sacred relationship. But how can we do that, given our compulsion to dominate Nature?

Eisenstein believes we need to live into a new way of seeing, conceiving, and relating to Nature.

The key to this relationship, he says, is reverence. Not the reverence associated with idol worship. But the reverence of "the lover who looks into the eyes of the beloved and sees infinity."

But how to inspire such reverence? Merely exhorting people to "be more reverent" would be futile.

The gateway to reverence, Eisenstein believes, is to experience "enchantment," which he describes as "the fulcrum of the great turning of civilization toward reunion with nature."

To illustrate what I think he means, a brief story.

Early one misty summer morning, while canoeing on the South Saugeen River, my son came within a few feet of a deer drinking at the water's edge. Startled, the deer looked up, and hissed. For several long seconds they locked eyes.

My son described the moment as transcending his normal, daily experience. He saw the deer as profoundly precious. He couldn't fathom harming such a beautiful creature, for anything other than a sacred purpose.

Surely few people, dropped into such moments, could escape their enchantment, Eisenstein says. Yet, he adds, every day we participate in a system that treats Nature as a mere resource to be exploited.

We can't avoid this participation. We live in this system. And it lives in us.

But the good news is, more and more of us no longer feel at home within it. Because it can't easily accommodate our true purpose of service to the abundant life around us.

As Eisenstein says, we need to ground ourselves in experiencing the Earth as precious; to know her as a being. And we need to spread that knowledge.

Purpose, intelligence, maybe even consciousness, do not subsist in human beings alone. The burning of the world calls us to awaken from this delusion.

Gary W. Kenny is retired from a career in international human rights and development and is a writer residing in rural Grey County.

(Conservation Authorities Act changes, from page 2)

authority staff currently make these decisions. Further, this change would allow bypassing of the hearing process and could result in development in unsafe locations such as flood plains and the destruction of environmental features.

The Province has also introduced new fee appeal methods that may cause a significant administrative burden on staff and hearing boards, ultimately leading to delays in development reviews. Ontario's conservation authorities are tasked with keeping local communities safe from the impacts of natural hazards. Amendments to the Planning Act that remove the ability of conservation authorities to appeal planning decisions will dramatically reduce the ability of conservation authorities to provide this service.

Tim Lanthier, Chief Administrative Officer for Grey Sauble Conservation Authority states, "The changes being proposed by the Province will effectively undo decades of thoughtful planning to keep our communities safe." Further, Ontario's ability to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change will be hampered by these changes that undermine the work of conservation authorities to keep development out of high flood risk areas and for protecting natural infrastructure such as wetlands. These actions directly contradict the Made in Ontario Environment Plan that promotes building resilience for the costs and impacts of Climate Change.

The importance of safe and healthy communities, as well as access to nature for personal well-being has become extremely evident this year, which highlights the value that conservation authorities provide across Ontario. "If you value the work of conservation authorities to protect the environment and to protect our communities from the impacts of natural hazards, it is vital that you speak up now. Call your MPP, email your councilors, or go to GSCA's website to advocate for the removal of Schedule 6 from Bill 229" – Lanthier.

For more information on these changes and to find out how to take action, visit: www.greysauble.on.ca

Woodland Beekeeping, part 2

By Jim White - BGWA Director

(see Summer 2020 *Greenleaves* for part 1)

After a busy summer of collecting nectar and pollen from flowers the foraging bees have stocked the beehive with approximately 150 lb or 68kg of honey. The hive population has reached approximately 60,000 bees for the summer.

One pound of honey represents approximately 80,000 km of flights – twice around the globe and visits to 2 million flowers.

Each hive has one queen. She controls the genetics of the hive as she is the only one that can lay fertilized eggs which grow into worker bees. Without a healthy queen that is laying about 1000 eggs per day in the spring and summer the hive will perish. The queen bee lives about 2 years. When the queen begins to lose her ability to lay fertilized eggs the worker bees sense a change from their queen because she produces a unique set of chemical messengers (pheromones).

Honey flowing from the extractor thru the filter.

Worker bees can detect the pheromones secreted by the queen with specialized parts of their antenna. These pheromones regulate the behaviour of the bees. A decline or drop in the pheromones will trigger the worker bees to build new queen cells for a replacement queen to be raised to continue a healthy productive colony. If the queen dies or the beekeeper detects a decline in egg laying productivity the beekeeper will generally purchase a new queen from a bee breeder. Bee genetics are well defined, therefore, you can purchase a new queen that she and all of her daughters will exhibit the same behaviours. I select queens with a gentle – non aggressive behaviour, strong hygiene and good honey producing qualities.

Worker bee checking me out for my scent... hope I smell like a friend.!

Worker bees will live about 6 weeks in the summer. Essentially, they work themselves to death. In September, the queen will lay eggs that will grow into winter bees. These will survive from October until April/May the next spring. Their primary purpose is to keep the queen warm and healthy over the long winter. They shiver their wing muscles to create heat and maintain the core of the cluster of bees at body temperature. They will eat about 100 lb of honey over the winter.

The hives that we use have two chambers. One for the queen and workers to raise brood (nursery) and store pollen and honey. We place a special type of screen on top of the brood chambers that allow the workers to pass through the screen but not the queen. This box is called the 'honey super' which is where the honey that a beekeeper harvests is produced and stored. In September the honey chamber is removed and we extract the honey for our use.

You might ask how do the bees know where to go to find flowers for nectar and pollen? Entomologists (scientists that study insects) have long asked the question. Dr. Karl von Frisch and his colleagues in 1973 were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for identifying and interpreting what is called the bee's 'waggle dance'. Bees use the waggle dance on the surface of the honeycomb inside the hive to communicate with other bees which direction to fly and how far to fly to find a good source of flowers. The compound eye of the bee allows her to see polarized

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light to navigate. From the dance they share with each other they communicate the direction from the sun where to fly and the series of waggles tell how far to fly. If you are interested, I have included a couple of links, below, one to a National Geographic site that has embedded video clips of the waggle dance and a second link to learn more about Dr Frisch's research.

Honeybees are challenged by an invasive species insect, varroa mite, a parasite that feeds on the bee's blood. Varroa mites also carry several virus that attack and kill bees. Modern science has developed specialized chemistry to kill an insect (varroa) that lives on bees (insects). The products are registered by CFIA for safety, efficacy and when to apply the treatments to avoid contamination of honey. We only treat for varroa after the honey is removed and keep the honey chambers separate from brood chambers each year. If you do not treat for varroa the probability of the bees dying over the winter is almost certain.

American foulbrood is a highly contagious bacterial disease that effects bees. It is a reportable disease. All colonies of bees that contract this disease must be reported and burned. There are very effective prevention therapies beekeepers use to protect the health of their bees just like any livestock producer. As a sidebar comment regarding reportable disease OMAFRA has enacted a law, The Ontario Bees Act which regulates the health of honey bees and beekeeping in the province. Everyone who keeps bees must register their hives and are subject to the Act regarding health inspections of their apiary, sale of bees and sale of honey products. Shown is a picture of my honey label with the OMAFRA requirements for labelling honey for sale.

Beekeepers protect their hives from other pests such as Small Hive Beetle, Nosema, Wax moth and Chalk brood. Other notable pests in the Grey Bruce region are black bears. If you are considering keeping bees or have an existing apiary and you know that there are black bears in your neighbourhood then you need to invest in electric fencing. One of the nicest set-ups for bear prevention can be seen (picture below) at the cranberry bogs at Bala ON.

The leaves on the trees have fallen, frost is in the air. Then we wrap the hives in tar paper to help nature provide a little solar heating on the hives in the winter. Yes we get a few stings over the season!

Support your local beekeepers – eat more honey!

See also:

https://pmdvod.nationalgeographic.com/NG_Video_DEV/991/467/weirdest-bees-dance.mp4

https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/medicine/1973/frisch/facts

The Chickadee Factor

By Marshall Byle - BGWA Member

Most of our members have likely been to MacGregor Provincial Park and witnessed Black-capped Chickadees and Red-Breasted Nuthatches being hand fed to the joy of children and adults alike. You may wonder, how is it that these wild birds became so tame? Could this take place in your woodlot? The answer is yes!

Black-capped Chickadees are pretty much sedentary (they don't migrate), so the ones in your woodlot likely reside there, living out their entire lives. They are also naturally quite tame compared to other wild birds, and you will notice that while filling your feeder, they will often land very close to you and scold you. Red-breasted Nuthatches may be slightly more cyclical and migrate some years, but are equally tame. I think they copy what the Chickadees are doing.

To start training, you need to understand that it's you that needs training, the Chickadees just learn to associated you with food. Assuming that you have a well stocked and used bird feeder you need to go out on a winter morning and take the feeder down and put it out of sight, indoors if possible. Then stand where the feeder was, and hold out your open hand with food. With a little patience they will land on it and take food. After a few days of doing this, they may come to you even if you are anywhere nearby that location.

You will notice that if the bird feeder is nearby, they will usually opt for the feeder, so you need to offer something better than what's in the feeder. Peanuts, not in the shell, and, cracked in halves. The full nut is just a bit too large for their small bills to handle. Once I was holding out my hand when a bird landed on my finger with a sunflower seed in its bill that it just got from the feeder. It dropped the seed in my hand and took a peanut.

This is where your training takes place. You have to keep a small supply of peanuts in a pocket of every coat or jacket you own. Never be out in the woodlot without them. Eventually, as soon as you go out, a Chickadee will swoop near you or land on a nearby branch giving a call that is actually asking for a handout. You will habitually reach into you pocket and fulfill your duty. My Chickadees are so accustomed to me always carrying the peanuts in my left pocket, that they sometimes hover near that pocket. And yes, the odd handful of peanuts will get washed on occasion.

A peanut is a substantial amount of food for a small bird that only weighs about 11 grams, but they do eat a lot, or about 35% of their body weight per day. If you weigh 150 lbs that would be like eating 600 granola bars. When they fly away with a peanut they may land on a branch and eat some of it if they are really hungry but then they find a hiding spot, caching it away for a stormy winter day. If you stand there long enough a half dozen Chickadees will take a whole pocket full of peanuts from you and you can often observe where they hide them. Our birds often store food in sumac plumes.

They can get much tamer than what you see even in parks. Our birds will come right into our drive shed and land on the work bench where I'm working, or fly to an open car window and perch on the dash board waiting for a peanut.

Not only will your family and friends get continued enjoyment from having tame Chickadees around, there are other benefits, especially if you are a birder. Think about a Robin singing its heart out on a summer morning. It's either trying to attract a mate or announcing its territory to other Robins. Likely, birds from other species are not paying attention, unless it's a hawk that wants to eat the Robin. When a predator shows up, just about all bird species pay attention to the alarm calls of other species.

Most people know that when the crows are making a ruckus there is likely an owl or some large bird of prey they are harassing. Birds often pay attention to the movements of other birds as well. Chickadees are usually the first birds to use a feeder which attracts other species. If you are out birding and have tame Chickadees around you, other birds will come much closer than they usually would because they see the chickadees acting normally indicating that there is nothing to fear. Because of this phenomenon I coined the term "The Chickadee Factor" a number of years ago. Many times, with binoculars in one hand and peanuts in the other, I've had amazing looks at a number of wood warblers at close range. Once I had a Golden-winged Warbler land 5 ft. from me while feeding Chickadees.

Communications Committee: VIRTUAL EVENTS SURVEY RESULTS

By Melena McGregor - BGWA Director

Given the current pandemic situation, the Directors wanted to give Members an opportunity to provide feedback related to virtual events: Do you attend virtual events currently? Would you be willing to attend a virtual BGWA event? What is your comfort level with this type of event?

Members only were participants in the Survey

The study, conducted in September 2020, included six short questions with a seventh question allowing for open comment. Again, there was a remarkable 46% participation rate! The results presented here represent that segment of the membership who participated in the survey.

What is the current digital meeting usage by our members?

79% of the participants have participated in an audio-visual meeting since the pandemic began.

Members that plan on continuing to use a digital meeting platform will be participating in meetings (business and volunteer), connecting with family and friends, webinars, and many more reasons. The word tree summarizes those responses, larger the type = higher frequency of mention for the idea.

21% of participants have chosen not to, or prefer not to, use virtual technology for a variety of reasons – lack of secure Internet connections in rural areas, not fond of the format, lack of time, etc.

Members were asked, on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being not likely to pay and 5 being very likely to pay, how likely are they to pay a nominal fee for virtual events. The average score was 2.26 out of 5 points.

Topics of Interest

When asked what topics members were most interested in, it was quite clear that the majority of respondents were passionate about educational opportunities (see summary chart, next page).

In addition to those topics listed in the chart, other topics of interest included, in no particular order, the following:

Reasons why people find value in woodlands

Plantation management - pruning, thinning, disease id, etc.

Climate change updates in relation to forest health

Wildlife - wildlife information systems

Leaving property to conservation groups for tax purposes

Birds in our woodlots

Wild edibles

Woodlands appreciation

Current state of our forests

(Continued on page 12)

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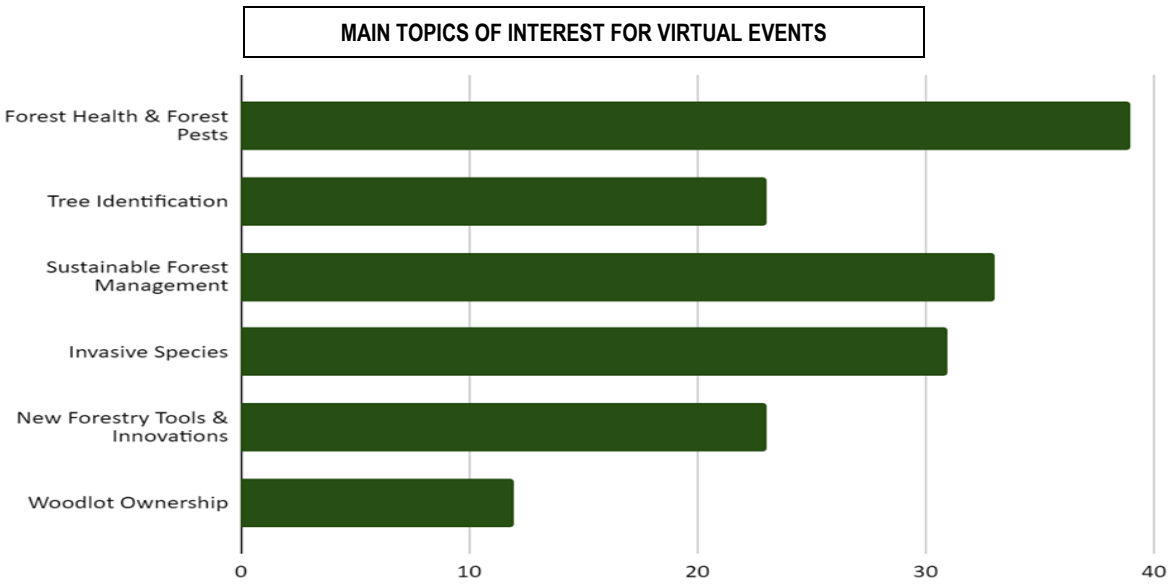
(Virtual Events Survey, from page 11)



Finally, will the membership participate in a virtual BGWA event?

60% of respondents answered they are likely to participate in a BGWA educational format virtual meeting.

Additional comments received provided great feedback and ideas on ways to use virtual technology to offer value, concerns around software security, and the clear strong interest in continuing outdoor small events such as property tours and hikes.

A sincere thank you to each of our members who took time to share their experiences and ideas with us.