

# Greenleaves

*Newsletter of the Bruce Grey Woodlands Association*

**WINTER 2022**



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

## President's Message

Jim White



Dear BGWA members

Longer hours of sunshine and gradual warming temperatures are a welcome sign of the new season ahead of us. For those of you making maple syrup I hope you have sunny days and frosty nights! Personally, I have had a terrific winter of cross-country skiing including another season of teaching kids in the Jack Rabbit Program at the Monora Ski Club. I checked my beehives on Sunday, 100% survival and I got my first of the season bee venom injection from a protective guard bee. There is a lot of snow to melt before 'the girls' find the first snow drops and dandelions.

BGWA held our AGM the last week of February. Our guest presenter, Jim Eccles shared with us an approach that is new for him in assembling small acreage conifer plantations for improved sustainable forestry practices. Jim's presentation generated lots of questions and discussion for our attending members. As a result, your new board of directors have formed a working group comprised primarily of forestry professionals to develop recommendations for BGWA's role and ensuing actions in the Bruce Grey counties.

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We acknowledge the Territory of the Anishinabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations. We further give thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash, known collectively as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land. We also acknowledge the Métis Nation of Ontario, whose history and people are well represented in what we now call Bruce and Grey Counties.



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

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

### Upcoming Board Meetings:

April 12, 2022

June 14

Aug 9

Oct 11

Dec 13

Jan 10 2023

7:00-8:30PM Members Welcome!

Contact secretary@bgwa.ca to confirm format (virtual/in-person/hybrid) and location or zoom link.

### 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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The 2022 board of directors held their first meeting last night. First, my sincere thank you to Sandy Bunker who volunteered to efficiently lead us through nominations and elections again this year. Volunteers truly make it happen in our organization. It is my pleasure to introduce you to the BGWA Executive for 2022-23 who are listed, along with Directors and committees, on the last page.

I am not going to discuss the pandemic's impact other than to indicate we have new ways of conducting our board meetings – hybrid, some directors can join face to face and others will join virtually. Saves fuel costs, carbon contribution and travel time.

With the start of a new fiscal year and new board I like to remind myself what the BGWA stands for. I feel passionately that we have a clear focus. We have finite resources and respect volunteer's energy and experiences to keep us focused and on track. Last year a sub-committee worked on reviewing our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and developed a Strategic Objective that intertwines with our Vision. Essentially, what is our Purpose. In addition, we conducted market research, of which approximately 50% of you who provided us with input on topics that you find of interest and would like to learn more about.

Below is the summary of our Vision Statement, Strategic Objectives and subject areas you told were of interest.

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

Our objective (how we aim to achieve our Vision):

1. Promote sustainable forest management by increasing awareness of the forest's inherent social, economic and environmental values.
2. Provide networking and sharing opportunities regarding forests and natural ecosystems.
3. Promote enjoyment of woodlands and natural areas through education and recreational activities.
4. Serve as a voice for the membership with respect to legislation, taxation and regulations as they effect forest property and associated business interests.
5. Encourage non-typical forest management practices such as farm windbreaks, orchards, permaculture, riparian restoration, etc.

BGWA's Strategic objective: Be recognized in Bruce and Grey Counties by private and public owners of forests and forest industry professionals as the 'local' trusted reference source of sustainable forest management knowledge, inherent social, economic and environmental values by 2025.

Our membership told us their priority interests and need for more knowledge are: 1) Forest Health, 2) Forest Pests, 3) Sustainable Management Practices, 4) Invasive Species, 5) Tree ID, 6) New/Novel Forest Tools/Equipment, 7) Woodlot Ownership.

So you might be asking what sort of events and different initiatives will the BGWA be doing this year.

With the easing of social distancing and travel restrictions we have three field trips planned for the early spring. Mark your calendars and come on out to see and learn.

March 19 10:00-12:00 Sulphur Springs Conservation Area SUBJECT: Tree and shrub twig and bud Tree ID

March 26 10:00-12:00 Fisher Maple Syrup operation. We are planning to make this a family-friendly event as they have lots of room for guests. Watch your email and the BGWA website, FB page for registration details

April TBD Moggie Valley Mill Tour. Watch your email and the BGWA website, FB page for pre-registration details

Mike Fry has a listing of virtual events posted on our website for your home office viewing pleasure. All forest learning focus!

Another initiative we are considering is establishing a Hand Tool Loaning Library. We are at the very early stages of planning. You will be invited to participate in a Survey Monkey questionnaire to determine whether this is a BGWA service that you would find valuable and useful. Conceptually we are thinking about hand tools that would be used in dealing with invasive species like American Buckthorn or Phragmites. Stay tuned and please give us your input. Of course, there are some issues like liability that we must consider.

By the way did you know that BGWA has a book loaning library? If you are exhausted from online searching maybe a book will be a welcome change. Please contact [communications@bgwa.ca](mailto:communications@bgwa.ca) for more information.

I truly hope that you enjoy reading this edition of Greenleaves. All of this production hinges on the skills and capabilities of volunteers. The number of articles and variety of topics relies on our local members contributing articles and pictures. The larger the newsletter reflects the more contributions you provide. We had several new contributors join the 'authors' list last year. A heart felt thank you. We hope you find time to contribute again this year. Our regular contributors – simply thank you for taking the time and energy to share your insights and perspectives with us. For new and future contributors to stimulate your creativity here are a few suggestions. You might consider writing an article about why you purchased your property or some management practices you tried last year or as a new member why you joined the BGWA. We encourage families to add a child's perspective of a woodland experience they may have had with parents or grandparents. Share your ideas about how you control an invasive species. A few pictures and a paragraph or two is all it takes!! We added a word search this issue for a brain teaser.

We have an even bigger challenge with the newsletter. Malcolm Silver, our editor and Neil Baldwin, our production manager have given us notice that they plan to retire in 2023. *Very clearly, we need volunteers to step up.* Ideally, we would like (to be able to provide a long transition period for the new person(s) to learn the skills and routines. Neil and Malcolm suggest that the roles can continue as present with separate people with different skills contributing from their respective strength and knowledge. If we have someone that can handle all of the editing and production that is also a viable solution. If you have questions about the details and want to learn more or simply want to volunteer, please contact: [newsletter@bgwa.ca](mailto:newsletter@bgwa.ca).

You will notice on the footer of Greenleaves a new addition, a Land Acknowledgment. A working group of directors contacted respective First Nations and Metis to update our previous Territorial Acknowledgement. Gary Kenny has authored an article in this issue to provide context to the new TA.

Lastly, as much as I avoid political topics. I am shocked at the travesty we witness on the news of the plight of the Ukrainian citizens and the escalating threats to society as we know it.

I hope to see many of you out celebrating spring and enjoying the learning experiences offered in our workshops.

Warm regards,

Jim

## BGWA Adopts Land Acknowledgement

By Gary Kenny, BGWA Director

In January, and in the context of the general call for reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, the BGWA adopted a land, or territory, acknowledgment. It will be spoken at the outset of Board and Annual General Meetings and included in the Association's newsletter, website and Facebook page.

The land acknowledgement, recommended to the Board by local Saugeen Ojibwe Nation, is as follows:

*We acknowledge the Territory of the Anishinabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations. We further give thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash, known collectively as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land. We also acknowledge the Métis Nation of Ontario, whose history and people are well represented in what we now call Bruce and Grey Counties.*

A land acknowledgement is explicit recognition that, as non-Indigenous people – as settlers – we live on land that was inhabited by Indigenous peoples for thousands of years before the arrival of our European ancestors.

Owing to the colonial enterprise, Indigenous peoples were systematically dispossessed of their traditional territories. In some instances, land was stolen outright and in others lost through dishonoured treaties. This means that as owners of forested property, of woodlands and woodlots, we have unwittingly benefitted from the unjust exploitation of First Nations peoples.

With these historical facts in mind, a land acknowledgment is an expression of respect and gratitude for the original caretakers of the land called Canada. But it's only a first step on the path to the comprehensive reconciliation Indigenous peoples say most matters to them.

As Métis lawyer and writer Chelsey Vowel says, land acknowledgements should be about more than just the routinized recitation of words. They should "disrupt" or unsettle non-Indigenous people. Real reconciliation, which must include recognition of the full sovereign rights of Indigenous peoples, will be uncomfortable and difficult at times, she adds.

When spoken, the words of a land acknowledgment should remind us of the many impacts of colonialism, staggering in their totality – the unjustly appropriated land and broken treaties, the notorious Indian residential school system, the "sixties scoop" where children were removed from their communities and placed with non-Indigenous families, the socially debilitating effects of inter-generational trauma, the on-reserve boil water advisories that continue, and so on. Not for the purpose of inducing guilt, but to foster accountability, elicit compassion and generate action for meaningful reconciliation.

Land acknowledgements need to lead to action to address past wrongs. Lynn Gehl, an Algonquin-Anicinaabe-kwe from the Ottawa River Valley and expert on land acknowledgements, says that saying the words "is really important but if there is no action following it up, there is no integrity there, it's not genuine, and it's not reconciliation."

An increasing number of volunteer and other organizations in Ontario and across Canada are answering the general call for reconciliation – by adopting land acknowledgements, but as the first step in learning how to support First Nations peoples in their efforts to exercise their inherent rights.

Last September 30th, for example, on the occasion of Canada's first ever National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Ontario's farm organizations (Ontario Federation of Agriculture, National Farmers Union-Ontario, and Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario) issued statements of solidarity with Indigenous peoples and pledged to walk the path of reconciliation. The day was also marked by the Canadian Institute of Forestry and the Ontario Woodlot Association.

As action-oriented follow up to its own adoption of a land acknowledgement, the BGWA Board has formed a small committee to explore what the Association might do in future to further demonstrate its commitment to reconciliation. Anyone interested in contributing to the conversation can contact Gary Kenny at [rivercroft16@hotmail.ca](mailto:rivercroft16@hotmail.ca)



## Emerald Ash Borer in 2022

An informal look at the progression of emerald ash borer over 20 years.

By Susan McGowan, BGWA Director

The emerald ash borer (EAB), *Agrilus planipennis* (Coleoptera: Buprestidae), is an invasive beetle from Asia, specifically China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Mongolia, Russia and Taiwan and was discovered in both the U.S. and Ontario, near Windsor in 2002. This beetle is host specific and feeds exclusively on ash (*Fraxinus* spp.).

Adults emerge from ash trees in spring, mate and lay eggs in the bark crevices of ash. The larvae hatch and begin to feed on the inner bark and outer sapwood of the tree throughout the summer, creating distinctive "S-shaped" galleries. At full size of approximately 30 mm long the larvae will pupate in the spring, developing into a beetle, and exit the tree by creating a characteristic "D" shaped hole. Signs and symptoms of attack include a thinning crown; epicormic shoots and vertical cracks on the stem; dying or dead trees and woodpecker activity. For details and photos of the biology please see A Visual Guide to Emerald Ash Borer Damage on our BGWA website.

The progression through southern Ontario beginning in Windsor in 2002 advanced easterly along the Hwy 401 corridor and northerly along the shores of Lake Huron. A question often asked at information sessions was, "How long will it take to spread?" By 2012 - in ten years from the first sighting, the insect was discovered in Lucknow, on the Bruce - Huron County line. It was known that the beetle was transported through firewood deliveries. Being a rural community and in cottage country, firewood is a significant industry and therefore would hasten the spread. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), the federal agency responsible for alien invasive pests, established quarantine zones, which were intended to slow the progression. But 20 years on, our entire two counties and beyond throughout southern Ontario are infested with emerald ash borer.

From that first discovery in 2002, incredible efforts have been put into research to understand the biology of the insect, and hence a control. And each lesson learned help to manage the spread, giving us time to prepare for the ash mortality that we are beginning to see now.

One of the earliest efforts at containment was the removal of a wide swath of ash trees from Lake St Clair to Lake Erie, west of Chatham, to prevent the beetle from moving east. Unfortunately, EAB had already spread beyond the Windsor area possibly on a truck load of firewood, as one of the next places the infestation was located was at a truck stop along Hwy 401. Early detection was the key and detailed field surveys were carried-out. In the beginning one small bark window in the tree was created to check for galleries. With more research it was determined that the insect began to attack a tree from the top first. A branch sampling protocol was created to check several branches from the mid crown. The branches were cut using pole saws and the first section of the branch was examined to check for galleries. Soon traps to hang in the tree crowns were developed including coloured funnel traps and green prism traps with pheromone lures.

As EAB advanced closer to Grey and Bruce counties, a monitoring program was established by a local EAB working group, which consisted of members from Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, Saugeen Conservation, Grey and Bruce counties, City of Owen Sound, Bruce Peninsula National Park, and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Trapping materials were purchased through grants from Bruce Power Corporation and distributed to the municipalities, to deploy in high-risk areas such as camp grounds, dumps, compost sites, and firewood operations. The progression was tracked over several years until the beetle was uniformly distributed in the two counties. Several workshops were held as well, to keep the public aware of the biology, early detection methods, insecticide applications, forest management and cultural significance of ash to First Nations.

Insecticides were also used to protect trees from infestation, not always to save the tree long term, but to manage the impact of tree mortality, especially in cities where every street tree for blocks could be ash. The borrowed time would allow for new trees of varied species to be planted and become established before the ash would be removed. As well budgets could be managed to accommodate tree removals. It can cost thousands of dollars to safely take down large ash near buildings. Also, injecting seed trees could help to maintain the gene pool of ash for reestablishment. Local companies still inject trees, most commonly with

(Continued on page 6)

(Emerald Ash Borer, from page 5)

TreeAzin, which is taken-up by the tree to the tissues where the larva feed. TreeAzin is a natural insecticide based on extracts from the neem tree and was developed by the Canadian Forest Service (CSF) and Bio-Forest Technologies. Contractors must receive training in pesticide use to use the TreeAzin.

Several management manuals have been written to advise property owners and land managers on silvicultural methods to best address the approaching infestation. Selective removal of some mature ash, and encouragement and preservation of other stand species has been promoted. Diversity in a woodlot is key when preventing the impact of any disease or insect event. These documents can be found on our BGWA website for reference.

Removal of partially dead ash trees is a hazardous procedure, as the tree has been slowly girdled, and therefore can break up unexpectedly in the crown and along the bole. Removals should be carried out by trained Arborists. We have many in our area, look for them online or in the Yellow Pages. There is no harm in always getting three quotes.

Perhaps the most important effort has been the use of classical biological control or the introduction of the natural insect enemies from the country of origin of the invasive pest. After exhaustive investigation it was determined which parasitoids would be useful and safe in controlling EAB here in North America.

In 2007, the United States began to release parasitoids into the breadth of EAB infested territory there. In 2013 after years of monitoring the releases in the U.S., the CFIA, and CFS made the decision to begin to release the parasitic wasps in Ontario and Quebec.

Three different parasitoids have been used in the effort. All are stingless, and a few millimeters long. They all hail from China and Russia. 1. *Tetrastichus planipennisi* Yang (Hymenoptera: Eulophidae); 2. *Spathius agrili* Yang (Hymenoptera: Braconidae); and 3. *Oobius agrili* Zhang and Huang (Hymenoptera: Encyrtidae). There are no common names associated with these insects.

*Tetrastichus*: a larval parasitoid – up to 57 wasps produced per EAB larva

*Oobius*: an egg parasitoid – up to 80 EAB eggs at-

tacked by one female.

*Spathius*: a larval parasitoid – causes high levels of parasitism to EAB on green ash

Wasps were first reared by the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) facility. Since 2016 two of the wasps have been reared at the state of the art Insect Production and Quarantine Laboratory (IPQL) at the Great Lakes Forest Centre (GLFC) in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

*Tetrastichus* wasps are reared in small diameter ash bolts, infested with EAB. *Oobius* wasps come ready to emerge from a small plastic container, and the *Spathius* wasp arrive live in plastic cups.



**FIGURE 1. *Tetrastichus* wasps to emerge from ash bolts and *Oobius* wasps to emerge from container.**

(Continued on page 7)



(Emerald Ash Borer, from page 6)



**FIGURE 2. Spathius wasps in plastic cup.**

Distribution of the parasitic wasps began in south western Ontario. As more wasps were available for release, more sites were evaluated and in 2019, it was determined that Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) land at the West Rocks was suitable for a release site. The tract was over 40 acres of natural forest, with a high percentage of ash. The area was lightly infested with emerald ash borer. The population of the beetle needs to be in the early stage, so that parasitoids have enough time to become established with several generations, before all the ash trees in the area have died. The theory is that these releases will not save this wave of ash mortality; this is for the long haul. If successful, these parasitoids will be here when EAB attacks the next generation of ash.

A technician from the CFS met with GSCA staff, our own Mike Fry, and established the plot. Information such as level of infestation, tree diameter, and location was collected. The trees were tagged and screws were installed to attach the mini bolts, or containers that would hold the parasitic wasps.

Overnight shipments from the lab were sent to the "plot keepers" and deployed the following day.

In Ontario, over the span of the project so far, approximately 274,000 stingless parasitic wasps have been released. At the West Rocks site, around 10,000 were released in 2019 and approximately 4,050 in 2021. Due to Covid 19, no releases were made in 2020.

Following the project protocol, no further releases will take place. Other sites will be established in newer areas of infestation in northern Ontario. Survival sampling may take place to determine whether the wasps have become successfully established at the West Rocks site, and potentially moving into EAB infested ash in the other areas in Grey Bruce counties.

Interestingly all wasp releases are documented at the following website: [www.mapbiocontrol.org](http://www.mapbiocontrol.org)

More information can be accessed at the Natural Resources Canada website: <https://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications?id=38554>

The following publications were referenced for this report and can be found on our BGWA website:

A Visual Guide to Emerald Ash Borer Damage

SERG Report EAB parasitoids 2021-2022

Frontline, CFS Branch Sampling Protocol

Ash Regeneration Capacity 36233

Managing Ash in Farm Woodlots; some suggested prescriptions

Woodlot Owner Fact Sheet on Emerald Ash Borer

### THANK YOU

To the Board Members and 3 BGWA Members who contributed content which allowed this issue to come to you our members with 14 interesting and varied pages!

Can YOU contribute something for the next one? Stories, experiences, photos, advice, a favourite tree or inspiring woodland place, projects gone well or bad, or anything else related to trees in Grey-Bruce! [newsletter@bgwa.ca](mailto:newsletter@bgwa.ca)

## Spring, such a magical time

By Marshall Byle, BGWA Member

Winter seemed to drag-on this year for some reason. Along with all the covid restrictions, spring this year seems especially a long time coming.

If you're lucky enough to live here in Bruce & Grey Counties, spring is certainly a magical time. Keep your feeders stocked and almost every day a new first-of-year species can show up. For me it's like meeting an old friend you haven't seen for a long time.

The first Red-winged Blackbird singing that konk-la-ree announcing that spring is soon here. Oh, look, there are 5 Robins on the lawn. I just heard the first Song Sparrow today. Oh my gosh, the Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are so beautiful. Got to get out and buy some oranges for the Baltimore Orioles, hope an Orchard may show up. Quick, hang the hummingbird feeders, I think I just saw one.

For those of you that visit this area each spring, you have a lot to look forward to. The 2022 Huron Fringe Birding Festival is going to actually happen in person this year, May 27-30 & June 2-5. And, it's going to be bigger and better than ever. Some of the top birders in the land will be there. Two of our local hot-shots, Kiah Jasper & Ezra Campanelli, who are on a BIG YEAR trying to set a new Ontario record will be there. If you want to bird with the hot-shots you better book early.

Oh, about that. Because of covid unpredictability the schedule will be released March 1st, and registration won't happen until April 15, 6:am this year. Set your alarm early that day to sign up for your favourite outings. There are 97 different outings to choose from, with sessions for beginners to experts.

Outings for the mobility challenged, Big Sits, half days, and all-day birding marathons. You can build your own scientifically designed bluebird house, or learn about banding. You can even learn about the birds & the bees, the stuff your mother didn't tell you. For you forest lovers, there is an outing to Kinghurst and a ramble through the Greenock swamp.

In case you didn't know, birding the Bruce is one of the best kept birding secrets. It's not Pelee; it's different, better in some respects, and no crowds. Hope to see you at the festival. Check out the Festival offerings at <https://huronfringebirdingfestival.ca/page/huron-fringe-birding-festival>

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### From Jim Coles: **An Addendum to Marshall Byle's Birds & Bees Turtle Story in the previous newsletter**

We had a similar situation last year - a painted turtle laying eggs on the property (see my photo, at right).

Our female was not the brightest however. She chose about the most compacted area on the farm - note the very shallow nest - and the spot she chose is at least 75 meters from the closest water. I didn't see how the young, when/if they hatched, could make it to water through the very dense grasses.

Like Marshall, I have protected the nest from predators. The young did not emerge last fall but have been left in place. Apparently, if the eggs hatch late in the fall, the young may dig deeper to assist winter survival rather than move to water. Hopefully the eggs or young will be able to survive this very cold winter and we'll see young emerge this spring.





# One Woodlot Experience of Mine

By Lloyd Holbrook, BGWA Member

I currently farm in Bruce County and have 2 woodlots there. But I was raised in Lambton and learned a lot of wood and wood lot information from my grandfather, who was born on that farm around the year 1870. Everyone knows of all the white pine going from Canada to the British navy. However, my grandfather told me stories from his ancestors, (who were in the logging business) of all the oak and rock elm (and maybe more?) taken from the unsettled areas of Grey/Bruce, Huron/Perth and Wellington County areas, before it was homesteaded for farming.

It sounded to me like it was widespread and they took a lot and it was illegal (so not so many records of it), but it still went on, and I think on a large scale. It was all sold to the British Navy. It matters because some have no seed trees left for oak or rock elm to reseed. (Rock Elm may have been scarce anyway) When the farmers settled it was not really virgin forests. One of my woodlots has a huge old oak—that I think is over 300 years old. On that woodlot and area, there is a healthy scattered oak population. Because of that seed tree the loggers (and settlers?) left, the oak has reseeded and diversified that woodlot very well.

In my other woodlot there were only a couple of bur oak trees, less than a foot in diameter and ash trees were starting to overtop them. I cut a few of the ash to keep the oak healthy and growing and now they both produce a lot of seed, which the blue jays and squirrels spread. It is amazing to see how many oak seedlings are growing here and there now—all over that 20 acre woodlot. A huge difference. It is important with oak to have a seed tree close (maybe on every 5-10 acres minimum) So I trim the ash and soft maple a bit to let a few more oak thrive (as oak needs more sun) The hard maple/beech sections of both my woodlots are mostly too competitive for oak to survive.

I have lots of ash, no ash borer yet, but it may come. There are diseases spreading for so many types of trees, it is very important to have a diverse woodlot. Oak is valuable wood but also produces acorns for birds and animals. (Bur Oak is best for alkaline clay soil but red oak also grows)

I tried some shagbark hickory and they grow in Bruce but are very, very, slow, maybe not a good tree for this area? I will try rock elm if I can get some seed or seedlings.

That is a story of my woodlot, to try to keep some diversity.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Do you value the continuance of this newsletter?

After many years doing the BGWA (and before that GCWA) newsletter, your Editor & Producer are finally retiring from their positions at the end of this year. BGWA needs one or two members to step up to help out with our quarterly publication.

The **Editor** reviews & tweaks text content (which is solicited by the Communications Director), and the **Producer** arranges reviewed text & graphic content into layout (currently using Microsoft Publisher, but it could also be done simply in Word). These can be separate positions or by one person.

Ideally, we would like an overlap period between new and old staff so if you are interested to help please contact [newsletter@bgwa.ca](mailto:newsletter@bgwa.ca) asap.

## GREY BRUCE WOODLOT CONFERENCE

*Virtual by Zoom*

**Tue MAR 22**

**7-8PM: Wild Boars in Ontario**

**8-9PM: Forest Health Update**

**Thu MAR 24**

**7-8PM: Forestry-related Apps**

**8-9PM: Climate Change & Impacts on Forestry**

**Additional Conference Details:**

**[www.gbwc.blog](http://www.gbwc.blog)**

**Registration is FREE! Email [info@gbwc.blog](mailto:info@gbwc.blog)**

## Future Housing Tract or Sustainable Forest?

By Rob Shave, BGWA Member

The "woodlot" is 23 acres at the edge of a small town. It includes a 1-acre former homestead parcel treed mostly with poplar and ash, 12 acres of former cropland with a 70/30 mix of 5-year old softwood and hardwood seedlings, 6 acres of dense even-age cedar bush about 40 years old, and 4 acres of natural meadow. But what began as a small-scale future sustainable logging venture could become an alternative model for urban land-use.

for woodlots that combines both sustainable forestry and urban activity is a possibility.

Urban dwellers love the idea of safe forests close to home (and so do I as I get older). With that in mind, the management plan this year includes: cutting several woodchip trails for walking, slow fat-biking, and x-country skiing; installing interpretive signage along the trails for children and adults; and building a few shelters with bench seats so walkers and birders can have a place to rest, out of the sun or rain. The intent of these projects is to invite urban engagement in the property so that it becomes appreciated for its natural values, not solely its commercial value.



Rural Ontario has seen almost a 100% increase in property values in the last 4 years. Farms and woodlands are being sold and converted to housing developments. Baby boomers and others are moving out of the cities in droves and looking for smaller towns and rural areas to move into. Land prices and land taxes go up, woodlot owners get tired and want to cash-in. No foul there. However, is there a way to maintain wooded areas as natural environments even when there is economic pressure for development? A model

Many woodlot owners already have an appreciation of these values and have found logging concerns that are willing to operate sustainably. Ideally, the woodlots of today can become the old-growth forests of tomorrow, but that only happens if they have enough time. Increasing the hardwood proportion can be accomplished by planting shade-tolerant species introduced slowly and strategically to take advantage of gaps left by logging, fire, or windfall. Fruit and nut

*(Continued on page 11)*



*(Sustainable Forest, from page 10)*

bearing trees take time to mature, and snags, cavity trees, and nurse logs take even longer. The rugged, uneven floor of an old growth forest only occurs with the uprooting and decay of mature giants. In short, no woodlot owner alive today will see the eventual old growth forest it could become, and indeed, no one will unless the woodlot is managed well and protected from development during the next few hundred years.

My hope is that mixed usage of woodlots today will invite participation and learning opportunities of nearby population centres may help create the long-

term protection that is needed to restore some of Southern Ontario's lost old growth forests. I'd like to believe that my children, grandchildren, and their descendants will keep our woodlot in the family for generations to come, but that is a lot to ask. A stronger plan is to create long-term community interest hand-in-hand with sustainable forest practices. That approach could potentially result in generations of good memories, educational opportunities, and ongoing employment.





## The Wonders of a Decaying Log: A Visual Essay with Complementary Notes

Introductory text by Gary Kenny.

Photos and complementary notes by John Lamey.

As forest enthusiasts know, decaying wood is a critical constituent part of a healthy woodland. It provides food and shelter for numerous beneficial fauna – insects, slugs, centipedes, worms, woodpeckers and more. It returns nutrients to soil that are needed for forest regeneration. Without decaying wood there would be no fungi, an organism essential in breaking down wood tissues, and some species of which are symbiotic with the roots of trees, shrubs, and plants in the exchange of nutrients for sugar acquired through photosynthesis.

Each tree species decays in a different way serving a diverse purpose. For example, a birch tree rots quickly and the decaying wood is enclosed within the tree's bark. When a dead and decaying Birch is still standing, it is easily excavated by woodpecker's for nestbuilding purposes. Oak has a very hard heartwood that provides habitat for myriad creatures over the decades it takes to decay.

In the following compilation, John Lamey, a member of the Field Botanists of Ontario, provides a visual essay (with complementary notes) exploring the wonders of the world of decaying wood on the floor of Norfolk County's Backus Woods.

As John writes of this forest floor world of wonders, "This is the world that you will find if you allow yourself to become immersed in the life that is found on the surfaces of and within the crevices and interior of a decaying log. It is an amazing world, astonishing in its intricacy, strange-







ness and beauty. The photos (in this visual essay)...will, I hope, give you a glimpse into this ancient world."

The photos and notes below, mostly of fungal action on decaying logs, were first posted to Facebook in November 2021 and are used with John's permission.

\*\*\*\*\*

"Imagine a world in which tiny, blind creatures creep over moist surfaces in search of food and each other, a world in which they may at times coalesce into large groups for the purposes of assisting one another and of reproducing.

"Imagine a world in which there are no flowers, as the development of flowers will occur, gradually, many tens of millions of years in the future, but in which there are chlorophyll containing plants, which have developed an incredible mechanism that allows them to harness the energy of the sun and use it to enable them to produce glucose.

"Imagine a world in which many species of organisms live an essentially invisible existence within the soil or in decaying wood but occasionally burst into a glorious inflorescence from which millions of spores are dispersed by the breezes to parts unknown.

"This is the world from which our present world has evolved. At a time when the Human species was only a faint and distant possibility, this world existed and it is still here with us. These were our precursors, our ancestors, if you will, and they are here with us in the present and will continue on with us into the unforeseeable future. They will be here long after we are gone, I have no doubt, and this gives me great hope for the future of the planet."



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## 2022 Woodland Word Search© created by Jim White

b	g	a	m	e	w	i	t	c	h	h	a	z	e	l	s	p	e	l	b	j
l	d	b	c	h	y	s	b	a	l	s	a	m	f	i	r	b	n	p	l	u
a	e	e	o	w	e	y	k	i	e	l	i	m	s	e	e	h	o	a	a	d
c	c	w	n	t	l	c	b	i	f	u	r	c	a	l	d	a	c	m	c	n
k	i	n	i	d	a	a	o	g	u	u	b	t	a	m	a	r	a	c	k	a
a	d	r	f	i	r	m	u	n	n	l	r	r	d	g	b	d	u	h	o	l
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h	o	h	r	o	h	r	l	c	d	y	c	k	a	c	g	a	a	r	k	o
n	u	t	s	p	r	e	k	o	d	r	o	c	s	t	e	p	s	r	c	o
k	s	e	b	o	l	s	a	l	g	p	l	h	p	e	e	l	s	y	a	w
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g	p	y	f	h	a	m	e	r	i	c	a	n	c	h	e	s	t	n	a	t
r	i	b	u	t	t	e	r	n	u	t	u	b	t	r	i	c	k	y	w	e
e	n	m	h	g	u	a	l	w	h	i	t	e	s	p	r	u	c	e	b	o
y	e	l	l	o	w	b	i	r	c	h	i	a	v	o	l	u	t	e	e	a
n	o	i	t	a	i	c	o	s	s	a	l	m	w	i	l	l	o	w	r	k

black spruce

deciduous

yellow birch

sassafras

cherry

red oak

black oak

white oak

dendrology

lobes

yew

butternut

juniper

sycamore

bifurcate

aspen

hophornbeam

ironwood

elm

tulip

conifer

willow

thorn

association

black ash

witchhazel

balsam fir

woodland

hemlock

american chestnut

hard maple

hickory

larch

Grey

ginko

white spruce

white pine

walnut

tamarack

Bruce