

NORFOLK WOODLOT OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

www.norfolkwoodlots.com



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President's Message

Again, thanks to the members who filled in the NWOA survey. We would love to be able to conduct tours/workshops that address all the ideas gleaned from the survey. We have found that the best tours are conducted at a local woodlot. This allows members to compare notes on issues that they may have in common with the hosting woodlot owner. If any of you are interested in sharing something about your woodlot with fellow woodlot owners, please give us a call or email. Perhaps we could arrange a tour. The true value of the NWOA membership is the sharing of all the bits of knowledge that we own individually. All of us are unique and each of us has something valuable to contribute to the organization.

Perhaps you have an area of expertise that would be of interest to other woodlot owners. It would be great if you could conduct a workshop to show other members how to improve their woodlot. For example; suppose your biggest concern for your woodlot is proper logging techniques that minimizes damage to the remaining trees and you figured out one of many ways of making that happen. You could share that info at an NWOA tour or a workshop you could agree to help out with. Like-minded members would attend the workshop and they in turn could share their experiences; every member quadruples their knowledge by sharing their own on the subject. And perhaps a guest speaker could be asked to attend.

If you are really impassioned on a given woodlot topic the best way to learn more is to contact us and we can work together to organize a tour and/or workshop on the idea.

A very enjoyable interpretative walk, observing and learning about forest birds, was led by Bird Studies Canada in Port Rowan on May 28th. We have two upcoming tours planned. The first one is hosted by Dolf and Anne Wynia who are conservationists with forestry backgrounds. They are inviting you to tour their woodlot/chestnut property, bisected by a stream, during the evening of July 18th. The second tour will be hosted by Paul DeCloet. He has successfully managed his woodlot for decades and is welcoming you to tour his woodlot during the month of October. The exact date and time is still to be determined ... stay tuned.

A number of concerns were expressed by members about the requirement to access the website with a password. This requirement has been dropped. In addition, we are investigating other means of communication with members in addition to telephone, email, website and 'snail' mail (Canada Post). Is it true that a lot of NWOA members are twitter users? More about other means of communication amongst NWOA members in the Fall.

We welcome your comments, thoughts and ideas for our newsletter, workshops and Annual Meeting. You can post them on our website www.norfolkwoodlots.com or call me at 519-428-2615 or email me at john.dewitt@holliswealth.com

John de Witt

Trees Need Space, Owners need Patience

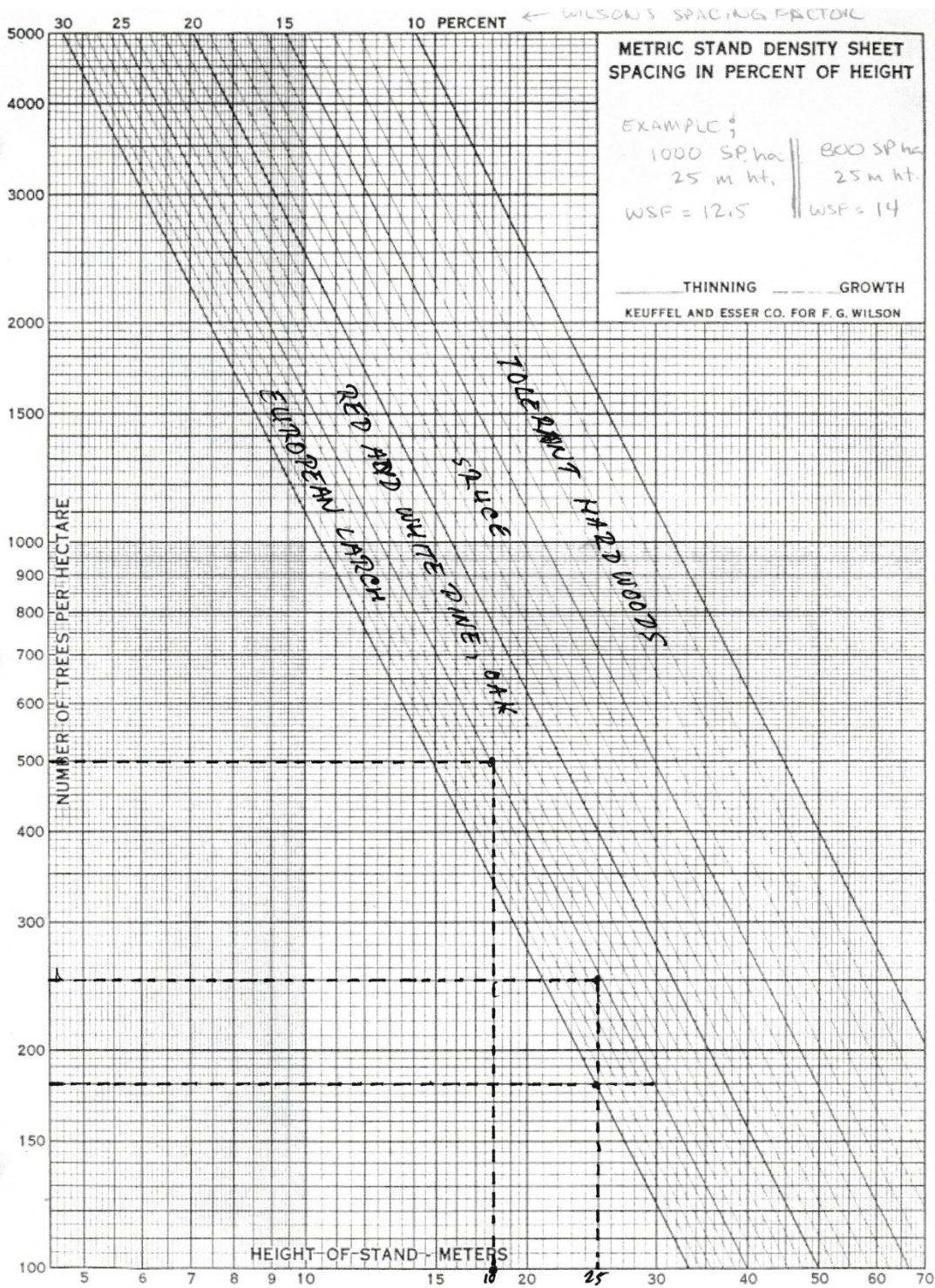
By Dolf Wynia – Past President of NWOA

It is now more than 20 years since the Provincial government effectively withdrew from its reforestation programs. Up to then, the annual tree planting program in Southern Ontario involved at least 10 million trees per year, about 200,000 of them in Norfolk. Land owners who had planted trees earlier could count on advice and guidance from Government staff on how to manage their plantations that they had invested in.

Many conifer plantation owners in our area were able to sell their early thinning products to the paper mill in Thorold. Since that mill switched to using recycled paper there really have been few opportunities for us to dispose of the small trees that must be removed from young plantations to make growing space for the remainder of the crop. As a result, many plantations are now suffocating and run a risk of being basically worthless, or worse, a liability, to the owners in the long run.

In their need for space to grow, trees are no different from any field or garden crop; plants need space and soil to survive and grow. Thousands of studies have been published on the relative merits of seeding density for agricultural crops. Forest trees, due to the extremely long period of growth, have not received as much attention. However, there are rules and maybe the following information and the chart may be of some help to our members who must make their own decisions from time to time. I use this chart to thin out my woodlots. It is based on higher mathematics, which I am not in a position to explain here, but it is field tested and the mathematics allow for the fact that some soils are better than others, some tree species grow faster than others and some species are more tolerant of competition than others. The current height of the trees, is the basic determinant of the desirable spacing.

Before you use any system of spacing out your trees, it is essential that there are pathways for the machinery to move. Even though the current harvesting machines are large, they can move gently, but should have at least a ten foot wide path. This means the first thinning nearly always has to be a 'row' thinning with every fourth or fifth row of trees to be cut. This would result in a 25 or 20% thinning respectively. In overly dense plantations, two adjacent rows may need to be sacrificed.



Once you have access through your plantation, you can determine your next thinning from the remaining trees by measuring their height and using the chart. In our geographical area, a thinning every 8 to 10 years is reasonable.

As an example: you have a red pine plantation that is on average 18 meters high. You locate, on the horizontal scale of the chart, the 18 meter vertical line. Where that line intersects the bottom of the angled Red and White Pine range is the 25% line. Reading the vertical scale at that point would give you a spacing of 500 trees per hectare which can be recalculated with $1 \text{ ha} = 10,000 \text{ square meters}$ divided by $500 = 20 \text{ square meters per tree}$. This amounts to an after thinning desirable distance between trees of the square root of $20 = 4.5 \text{ m}$. If the trees you want to thin are 25 meters high, you would thin down to 250 trees per hectare, which when you take the square root out of $(10,000/250=40)$ which is slightly over 6 meters apart. A 25 meter high larch plantation would be thinned down to 180 trees per hectare. This chart is in metric measurements and will not work in imperial measurements.

The more difficult question to answer: What do we do with the thinning products? Some members have found use for them as posts; unless pressure treated, these provide only temporary service. The ginseng farmers use a lot of treated posts but they seem to come from elsewhere. Shavings for chicken barns are a good use. Fuel pellets offer another good use. Recent research, some of it being done close to our county, is the production of bio diesel fuel and 'char', offers promise.

Our own 'Scotts' plant in Delhi uses large quantities of woodchips for their garden mulch. Scotts already source about 60% in our area from local slabs, edgings and repaired pallets. The rest is brought in from the U.S. Apparently, our operators cannot match the price and specifications at which the mulch is delivered to Delhi. Scotts management is anxious to use more locally sourced wood. We will try and keep our members informed about developments.

As I see it, most woods operations have become so specialized that it can be hard for operators to sort their products; especially when they are of low value in the first place. On the other hand, plantation owners will have to see their first thinning as an investment in future crops rather than an early source of revenue. Doing proper thinnings, at the right time, is more profitable, in the long run, than planting trees, even without receiving any revenue for the first one. Some of our best red pine plantations have had five or six progressively more profitable thinning's before their final harvest; by which time most have pretty well converted to young hardwood stands.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was once again well attended by NWOA Members.



There was a wide variety of displays that were of interest to attendees.



Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry



Phragmites Working Group leader Janice McCutcheon

Photos by Betty Chanyi – NWOA Director

Ongoing Site Visits and Workshops

Bird Studies Canada Guided Hike May 28

By Mark Bacro – NWOA Director

My wife Elizabeth and I were there for the walk and enjoyed it very much. One couple that came out were also members of the Brantford Woodlot Owners Association. About 15 members in the group.

Jody Allair did a fine job of teaching us the habitats of several of the birds he was studying. The Hooded Warbler, Norfolk County's bird on their emblem, nests 2 to 3 feet from the ground in upland forests. The Louisiana Waterthrush nests in swampy areas and along streams, usually in tree roots of a tree which has "tipped up" or fallen over. The Acadian flycatcher nests in deciduous mixed ravines near streams (this is the habitat we saw an individual in) and in swampy areas.

Birds the group heard and saw were Acadian Flycatcher, Indigo Bunting, Barn Swallow, Blue Jay, American Robin, Black-billed Cuckoo, Baltimore Oriole, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Birds we heard only were Red-bellied Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker and Hooded Warbler.

Jody also taught us about many of the tree species present and the relationship of birds to the trees. Every bird species has habitats in which it lives and can be found.

Letter submitted by Mary Fowler.

I had the pleasure of attending the Bird Studies Canada Guided Hike on Saturday morning, May 28th, in Backus Woods (south). There were about 15 enthusiastic members that joined the hike, all of us ready and

waiting for adventure...some experienced birders with binoculars in tow, others who were newbies to birding and wanting to learn more. We were not disappointed!

I want to thank the NWOA and Jody Allair, Biologist and Science Educator from Bird Studies Canada, for arranging such an informative and enjoyable event. The weather on Saturday was perfect; the mosquitoes left us alone (most the time!) and Jody was such an excellent guide. Jody provided binoculars to those who came without. He took us through various phases of the forest...from pine plantations to hemlock dunes and pointed out various Carolinian trees and plants native to Norfolk County and not found in many other parts of Canada. We are definitely blessed to live in this wonderful part of the country! He opened our eyes to some of the challenges and risks our beautiful song birds are facing and what we can do to help. He helped us identify birds in the forest by listening to their wonderful songs...don't test me Jody, there were too many to remember! He also spotted and pointed out the endangered Acadian Flycatcher, now only 50 pairs left in Canada.

It was a fantastic morning! Hopefully there will be future events such as this one. Thanks again.

Regards,
Mary Fowler

Site Visit – July 18, 2016. A 'Twilight' tour from 7 to 9pm at the property of Dolf & Anne Wynia - 1431 West Quarter Line, North Walsingham Township, just north of the 7th concession. This will be a walking tour. We will see wide range of tree species, young plantations, ravine forest, chestnut grove and the effects of changing agriculture on their cold water streams.

Website Information

WEBSITE UPDATE

No More Password!

The Directors took into consideration some of the comments received from our survey as well as feedback through our membership emails and contacts and have removed the requirement for members to have a password to log into the Members Section of the Website.

We have left the Members Section essentially the same as it was; there is just not a requirement to enter a username and password to access this section.

We would encourage all our Members to explore the various sections of the website. We welcome any feedback as to what could be added, changed, updated or removed.

For more information, and access to Newsletters, visit our Website norfolkwoodlots.com

Current Newsletters are posted in the 'Members Area' of the website.

Once logged-in, select "**Members Area**" go to "**Current Newsletter**" page. Once there you can select the latest or any newsletter you would like to read.