

President's Message Winter 2013

Through the spring and summer quite some work has been done to pursue Forest Stewardship Council Certification. SCOR has been facilitating in this process by applying for funding and organizing meetings for all partners. Eastern Ontario Model Forest, Norfolk County, NWOA, LPRCA, NCC, the forestry industry and representing local woodlot owners attended these meetings. At this time more work is in progress. Members looking into certified harvesting on fairly short term can get started on applying for certification. For all others a group process will get started. We will keep you informed as this unfolds.

Eastern Flowering Dogwood is listed as an endangered species. However in Norfolk County many of these native trees can be found. As NWOA we even want to encourage our members to assist in growing more of these Dogwoods of local seed sources. Therefore during our AGM members were offered a certificate for such a tree that could be picked up on April 27 from St Williams Forestry Interpretive Centre. When the trees were handed out they were still without leaves. However the trees were expected to bud soon. It turned out that more than half of the trees did not bud at all. After looking into this it was decided that all trees that died will be replaced next spring. During our next AGM you will be informed on a new pick up date.

As you all must have noticed this summer has seen quite some precipitation. As a consequence the grass has been green all summer. This concluded in more than average mowing. Most trees have developed enormous amount of fruits and seeds. One of our apple trees has been producing for the second time in 12 years (no late spring frost). We estimated 120 kg of ungraded apples from this one tree. Also flowers have been flowering abundant. At the end of the summer I see flowers that we rarely see due to drought such as Prairie Dock (Siphilium) and Tall Coreopsis. While September promised to keep warm till the end of the month – our fall has turned into a full blown winter wonderland.

If you have any suggestions or interests that you would like to learn about you can let me know by phone (519-428-1421) or by email (vankleef@kwic.com)

Angelle van Kleef

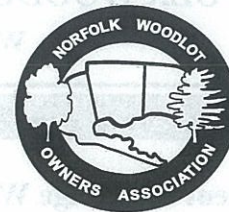
Season's Greetings from the Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association Executive.

Give a gift of a Woodlot Owners Membership this year.

Email your friends or neighbours name, address OR email to vankleef@kwic.com and we will get them signed up for the next January Newsletter and access to the new website that is being launched in 2014!!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association



Wednesday March 5th, 2014 7:00 PM
Delhi German Home - Delhi

Forestry Information Forum & Information Displays – open 5 pm

Over 36 Information Displays!

With membership access a chance at \$ 1000 in Door Prizes! A chance to win a chainsaw!

**SEND YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN TODAY!
& WIN A CHANCE AT A SPECIAL DRAW FOR A CHAINSAW!**

**DEADLINE – APPLICATION WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED AT
NORFOLK FORESTRY 95 CULVER ST. BY February 28th, 2014 NOON**

A little more information about the Annual General Meeting Topics to be Discussed;

Special Guest Speaker will speak about one of our local Species at Risk – The American Badger

Please report your sightings

Every sighting adds to our understanding of badgers, and **reports of burrows, road-kills or mounted badgers** are particularly useful. Recent reports are most important, but we would like to hear from you regardless of how long ago your sightings was.

Ontario Badger Hotline
1-877-715-9299
(toll-free)

info@ontariobadgers.org

Local Woodlot Owners with Badgers found on their property will also discuss how such - has impacted or not impacted - how they manage their lands.



A female badger with two kits near Simcoe, Ontario



WOODN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW.....

Q. What should I do to keep my REAL Christmas tree green over Christmas?

A. How To Care For Your Christmas Tree

Remember, a Christmas tree is a living thing, look after it as carefully as you would a cut flower. Once you select a Christmas tree, follow these suggestions to keep it fresh and safe:

1. If you buy your tree several days before you plan to set it up, store the tree outdoors or on a cool porch or patio until you are ready to decorate. An area that provides protection from the wind and sun will help the tree retain its moisture.
2. If you plan to store the tree for several days, make a straight cut across the butt end of the tree about one inch from the end. This opens the tree stem so it can take up water. Store the tree upright and place the butt end in a container of water.
3. When you bring the tree into the house for decorating, make another fresh cut across the trunk about an inch from the original cut. Use a tree stand that holds plenty of water.
4. Trees are thirsty. They may drink up to four litres of water per day, so be sure to check daily and supply fresh water as needed. A stand which holds at least four litres of water is recommended. If you allow the water level to drop below the bottom of the tree, a seal will form just as it does on a cut flower, and a new cut will be necessary.
5. Place your tree away from fireplaces, radiators, television sets and other sources of heat. Turn off the tree lights when you leave and before you retire at night.
6. Avoid the use of combustible decorations. Check all electric lights and connections. Do not use lights with worn or frayed cords and N-E-V-E-R use lighted candles on a Christmas tree.

Following these care and precaution measures should ensure an attractive tree that stays fresh indoors for two to three weeks.

After Christmas - Recycling Ideas

After the holidays, a real Christmas tree keeps on giving:

Environmentally friendly recycling ideas:

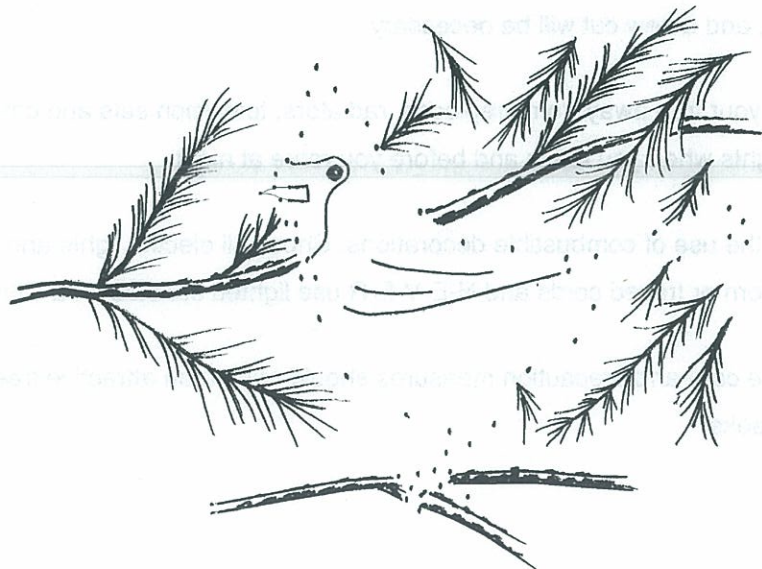
- Placed in the garden or backyard, the Christmas tree will provide winter shelter for small birds. Another good idea is to decorate the tree again. This time hang it with special treats for the birds: Orange slices will attract birds, as will peanut butter spread on tree seed cones; or hang suet balls stuffed with sunflower seeds. If you set your tree outside for the birds, remember to carefully remove all tinsel. Birds will try to eat the shiny stuff and it will make them sick.
- A Christmas tree is biodegradable. Its branches and needles make a good mulch in the garden, especially for plants like rhododendrons which like an acid soil. Many cities and municipalities gather Christmas trees on special collection days and put them through shredders which chop them up into small pieces. The resulting mulch is then used in the summer on the flower beds in city parks.
- Fir tree foliage can be stripped from the branches and snipped into small pieces for stuffing into aromatic fir needle pillows for the sofa or bedroom. Some people also use fir foliage in dresser drawers to give clothing and blankets a fragrant aroma.
- Large quantities of used trees make effective sand and soil erosion barriers, especially at beaches.
- Old Christmas trees stacked together in a forest provide shelter for rabbits and other small animals.
- Sunk into fish ponds, Christmas trees make excellent refuge and feeding areas.
- Woodworking hobbyists can make a multitude of items from the trunk of a used Christmas tree including buttons, gavels and candleholder.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Kids pick any dot and connect the rest in a clockwise direction.



Enjoy a real tradition



Few birds die due to forestry

Canadian Wildlife Service Studies of Bird Mortality in Canada

Nov. 20, 2013 - Don't let your cat out - the Canadian Wildlife Service studies on Bird Mortality have been published and the wagging fingers are pointed squarely at cat owners. The paper titled: A Synthesis of Human-related Avian Mortality in Canada is particularly useful.

The studies covered mortality attributed to 28 types of structures and fields of human activity and estimated total mortality at 186 million birds.

Cats, both domestic pets and feral cats play a "starring role" with about 70% of total mortality to their credit. Commercial Forestry operations are estimated to cause between 0.5% - 2% of bird mortality.

The report on bird mortality caused by Forestry operations, notes that the most serious source of uncertainty is the proportion of total area of forest that is harvested during the nesting and rearing period. The estimates used varied from 12% to 26%. There will be regional variations. A review of seasonal woodlands operations to narrow the spread would be a good idea.

Figures on mortality for most causes are dwarfed by the toll taken by cats, powerlines and buildings. From a public policy perspective governments should focus limited conservation dollars where they will have the greatest impact. The data suggest that cats, both feral and domestic, have the greatest impact followed by buildings, power generation & transmission and roads.

Forestry has a relatively small impact on bird mortality relative to other causes. However, there is an impact. Managers of forestry operations should continue to implement best practices for habitat management, retention of coarse woody debris, snags and maintenance of habitat in time and space. Forestry organizations, including certification systems, should continue to work with their conservation partners to conserve habitat to support populations of forest bird.

It is unlikely that many feral cats survive the harsh realities of life in the Canadian bush. There are few tracks or signs of feral cats in the forest. Predators (e.g., fox, coyote, marten, fisher, and birds of prey) as well as winter cold probably make life very difficult in the forest. In rural areas with barns and sheds for shelter and garbage cans to forage in, the survival rate is probably higher. Cats do very well indeed in cities. Birds - not so well.

Canada can have a significant positive effect on bird mortality by greater control of its feral and domestic cat populations. This is in keeping with the experience of other countries.

Those with influence in public policy might start an advertising campaign and outreach to local veterinarians - whom most cat owners will visit at least once a year. Cities and towns would do well to start enforcing cat bylaws. Environment Canada could show leadership, perhaps in partnership with bird conservation groups, to mount a public education program to encourage owners of domestic cats to keep them in the house and support feral or "non-owned" cat population control programs.

Tony Rotherham is the Executive Director of Canadian Association of Forest Owners.

For more information on this study – www.woodbusiness.ca

EMERALD ASH BORER

Announcing New Tools for Municipalities Battling the Emerald Ash Borer

Municipalities of all sizes in Ontario can now easily access a suite of new, free tools developed to assist in their current or pending battle against the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). This invasive pest kills ash trees and poses significant risks to people, property and the environment as it spreads its devastation throughout southern, central and eastern Ontario. Municipal governments need to have appropriate EAB management strategies in place that address the range of issues, threats and impacts that can affect their jurisdictions. These new tools will help raise awareness, and aid in the development or review of sound strategies:

- (1) An informative municipal-oriented overview video entitled “Emerald Ash Borer: Facts & Tactics for Urban Residents & Municipal Officials”
- (2) A concise slideshow designed to help in “Developing a Municipal Emerald Ash Borer Management Strategy: Operational Guidelines and Recommendations for Ontario Municipalities”
- (3) An informative rural-oriented overview video entitled “Emerald Ash Borer: Facts and Tactics for Woodlot Owners and Forest Managers”

The combination viewing of the urban video (1), and then the slideshow (2), will help municipal officials, and councillors, to get up-to-speed quickly on EAB and the related issues affecting municipalities. The point-form slideshow outlines General Recommendations and a Seven Step Strategy that serves as a valuable guideline for those who are tasked with developing or reviewing a relevant strategy for their jurisdiction. The rural video (3) will benefit those jurisdictions that also have community forests, conservation areas, or private woodlot owners with tracts of ash. Both videos feature expert interviews. To view and download these new tools please visit: www.eomf.on.ca/eab .

These tools were produced by the Eastern Ontario Model Forest in collaboration with partners from the Regional Forest Health Network and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Funding was provided by the Ontario Invasive Species Centre.

EMERALD ASH BORER LANDOWNER WORKSHOP

Monday February 10th, 2014 ~ 7 PM

Upstairs Meeting Room Delhi Arena

Open to Public

- Emerald Ash Borer: Facts and Tactics for Woodlot Owners and Forest Managers
– Video Presentation
- Identification, Options for Landowners with Urban / Yard Trees





NEWS FROM THE WOODS

Britain's 80 million ash trees provides shelter and food for a wide range of wildlife.

Norfolk researchers hope a "citizen science" project will help identify trees resistant to ash dieback.

Last year, the team at the University of East Anglia (UEA), Norwich launched a smartphone "AshTag" app to allow people to report the disease.

More than 12,000 people have downloaded the app since its launch in October.

Now the scientists are asking people to physically tag ash trees and submit images using an updated app so they can monitor the trees' long-term health.

The university said it hoped the scheme would become "one of the country's biggest citizen science projects".

More than 1,000 suspected dieback sightings have been reported using the app.

Chris Blincoe, from the Adapt Group at UEA, said: "With new phase of AshTag, people can play a more active part in helping to fight back against ash dieback."

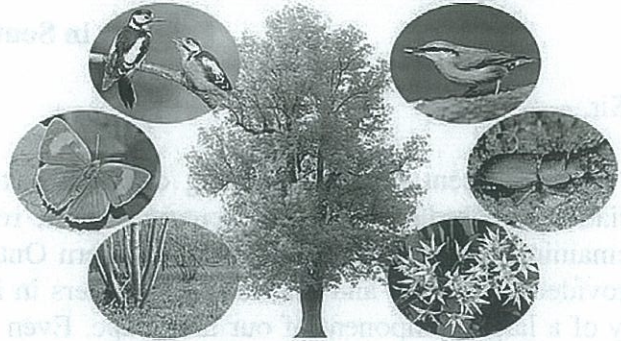
UEA scientists are asking people to seek landowners' permission to put aluminium tags on ash trees and upload details of them to the app.

Mr Blincoe said he hoped the public would "become stewards for the nation's ash population" and submit photographs of them over the years.

Using the information, the scientists "can begin to understand how the disease progresses through trees at different stages of maturity and investigate why some trees remain uninfected for no clear reason," he added.

The results will be shared with other researchers, including those at the John Innes Centre in Norwich which launched a computer game to fight the disease earlier this month.

In March, the government said it would plant a quarter of a million ash trees in an attempt to find strains that are resistant to the fungus responsible for ash dieback.



POTENTIAL FOREST HEALTH MONITORING ???

WITH RECENT FURTHER CUTBACKS TO THE Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources THIS MAY BE A PROGRAM LOCAL COMMUNITIES MAY WANT TO FURTHER INVESTIGATE TO MONITOR EMERGING AND EXISTING FOREST HEALTH THREATS.

CONCERNS WITH CUTBACKS IN THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES THE FOLLOWING LETTER WAS SENT IN RESPONSE TO THE RECENT LAYOFF OF ALL FORESTERS, BIOLOGISTS AND LAND STEWARDSHIP COUNCILLORS.

Forestry in Southern Ontario

Dear Sir,

At the recent monthly meeting of the directors of the Norfolk County Woodlot Owners Association, much discussion was centered on the recent decision of your ministry to dismiss the last remaining professional foresters in Southern Ontario. For more than 100 years, the profession has provided leadership and assisted land owners in improving the productivity and environmental quality of a large component of our landscape. Even though superficially we seem to have made a lot of progress, new generations of landowners and administrators need to have available professional advice in order to maintain the momentum, which already has been impaired by the severe reductions of available field staff over the last 20 years. "Fee for Service" solutions may be effective in specific situations but not when multi partner long term commitments are called for as they are in forest and land management programs.

As a summary of our discussion the following resolution was passed unanimously by our board of directors who represent approximately 300 local landowners and about 50% of the forest land in our County of Norfolk:

"Be it resolved that the Directors, on behalf of the members of the Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association are severely distressed by the withdrawal in recent years of professional stewardship responsibilities of the Ministry of Natural Resources for Provincial forestry and wildlife services as mandated by the British North America Act with respect to crown land and privately owned land in Southern Ontario, culminating in the recent dismissal of the few remaining professional foresters."

Our directors are anxiously awaiting announcements from your Ministry regarding how you will meet Provincial responsibilities relative to the questions raised above.

Yours in Conservation,

Angelle Van Kleef

President, Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association

C.c. President, Ontario Professional Foresters Association
C.c. President Ontario Forestry Association,
C.c. Chair Long Point Region Conservation Authority

American badger (*Taxidea taxus*)

The American badger is a short, sturdy member of the weasel (or mustelid) family. It is the only type of badger that lives in North America. Badgers have the long body, short legs, and scent glands characteristic of the weasel family.

The American badger is gray, with dark legs and bold black and white stripes on its head and face.

Badgers are built for digging. Their dens can be up to 3 metres underground and contain up to 10 metres of tunnels, with an enlarged chamber for sleeping. Badgers have long strong claws and a streamlined skull enabling them to create these dens and dig prey out of burrows. Badgers also have a second (transparent) eyelid which can be closed to protect the badger's eye from dirt. This eyelid is called the "nictitating membrane." Diving birds such as the kingfisher also have this second eyelid.

Different subspecies of badgers have slight differences in appearance. The subspecies in Ontario is *jacksoni*, which tends to be darker, tawnier and slightly smaller than other subspecies.

Habitat

In Ontario, badgers are found in a variety of habitats, such as tall grass prairie, sand barrens and farmland. These habitats provide badgers with small prey, including groundhogs, rabbits and small rodents. Since badgers are primarily nocturnal and quite wary of people, not many people are fortunate enough to spot one in the wild.

Range

The American badger ranges from California and Texas to the Great Lakes region. In Canada, the badger is found in southern British Columbia, all the prairie provinces and Ontario.

In Ontario, the badger is found primarily in the southwestern part of the province, close to Lake Erie in Haldimand-Norfolk County. There are also badgers in northwestern Ontario in the Thunder Bay and Rainy River Districts. Badgers can travel sizeable distances and occupy large home ranges of many square kilometres. There are thought to be fewer than 200 in Ontario.



Did you know?

Badgers love to dig. They dig burrows for sleeping, hunting and giving birth. They may even change burrows every day!

Digging burrows lends itself to an interesting hunting strategy. Badgers will check on their old burrows to see if any small animals have taken up residence since their last visit.

Threats

American badgers have few natural enemies in Ontario. The main threat to badgers is habitat loss. Badger numbers likely declined as open grassland was converted to farmland and today urban development is a threat to this and many other species. Badgers are also at risk of being hit by cars, as they often cross roads in search of prey.

Protection

The American badger is an endangered species, and receives protection under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act*.

Nearly all the sites in Ontario where the badger lives are on private land. Voluntary stewardship efforts play an important role in badger conservation.

Status: endangered provincially and nationally

What you can do to help the American badger

- If you spot an American badger, you can report your sighting to the Natural Heritage Information Centre, which tracks and maintains a database of many of Ontario's wild species.
http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nhic/species/species_report.cfm

Did you know?

When threatened, badgers release a foul smelling musk to drive off enemies. In the face of danger, badgers also become very vocal; hissing and snarling.

Badgers are solitary (live alone) for most of the year. Adult males and females only get together to mate in late summer.

- Badgers depend on healthy grassland habitat such as tallgrass prairie. In fact, many of Ontario's Species at Risk rely on this type of habitat. Unfortunately, tallgrass prairie is increasingly rare throughout the province. Visit Tallgrass Ontario's website to learn more about these habitats, the species that depend on them, and what you can do to help.
<http://www.tallgrassontario.org/AboutUs.htm>
- Private landowners have a very important role to play in badger recovery. If you find a badger den on your property, you may qualify for stewardship assistance. Contact the MNR for information on programs to help make your property badger friendly.
Call Toll free: 1-800-667-1940
<http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca>
- There is also a new program geared to eligible farms registered under the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan to encourage greater protection and conservation of habitat for species at risk.



Ontario American badger distribution

For additional information:

Visit www.ontario.ca/speciesatrisk;
Contact your local MNR District office; or
Contact the Natural Resources Information Centre
1-800-667-1940
TTY 1-866-686-6072
www.ontario.ca/mnr
E-mail inquiries: mnr.nric.mnr@ontario.ca