

Year in Review continued from reverse



### Pond Management

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia/Greene Counties

Agroforestry Resource Center

August 24, 2012

Jim Ochterski, Progressive Pond Consulting

This workshop introduced the basics of pond management using best practices and included techniques for identifying appropriate plants depending on your primary use for the pond. If you are having issues with your pond, the first thing to do is purchase a pond test kit that will tell you the phosphorous, pH, and nitrate levels, as well as the turbidity. This information can help you determine the cause of your problem and doing the testing yourself can save you money. There are four simple tips to improve every pond: pay attention to the pond over the course of the year, check monthly for weed growth, aerate the pond from the bottom up, and if necessary, reduce nutrient concentrations biologically.

### Master Forest Owners Training

Arnot Teaching Forest

Cornell University

The Master Forest Owner (MFO) Program trains volunteers throughout New York State to work with their neighbors, organizations and agencies to encourage good forest stewardship on private lands. All MFOs participate in a 4-day training program, where they learn about saw timber, wildlife management, forest economics, and ecology. While participants don't need to own woods to take part in the program, they must be willing to be a resource for other forest owners. CLC's Nate Davis took part in the program this year. If you have questions about your woods, Nate can visit your woodlot to get a first-hand look and discuss sources of assistance or information to help meet your goals.

### Master Naturalist Training

Arnot Teaching Forest

Cornell University

The Master Naturalist Program is a high-quality, science-based training program designed to educate participants about New York's natural resources and empower them to educate others. CLC's Heidi Bock took part in this

training and gained valuable information about invasive species, wildlife habitat, tree identification, and more. If you have questions about something specific on your property, don't hesitate to contact Heidi for more information.

### You tell us what's next?

Do you have specific question about managing your land or understanding your easement? Do you have an idea for a workshop or event that you'd like us to consider? Would you like to host an event to demonstrate a good land management project on your property? We want to know how we can help you sustain or improve the health of your land. Call, email, or come into the office. We want to hear from you!

Resources for all the information included here, as well as other land management resources will be available on our website: [clctrust.org/landowner](http://clctrust.org/landowner).

## STRATEGIC PLANNING: WE NEED YOUR HELP

CLC is in the process of updating its strategic plan. We want to develop realistic and meaningful goals on which to focus our resources in the next three to five years. It is critically important to us that we receive feedback and ideas from members of the community. We have prepared a brief survey designed to solicit information from you, our easement landowners. You can access the survey on-line at [clctrust.org/landownersurvey](http://clctrust.org/landownersurvey) or, if you prefer, we will be happy to provide you with a printed copy. Please take a few minutes to help us ensure we're working as effectively as possible. Contact Tom Crowell at 518.392.5252, ext. 209 with any questions.

**If you have already filled out the online survey**, we have three landowner specific questions in this survey that we'd like you to answer. We would appreciate it if you could go to the above website and answer questions 10-12.



FOR OWNERS OF PROTECTED LAND

# CONSERVATION

# MINDEL

STRAGIC PLAN  
STEWARDSHIP RESOURCES  
INVASIVE SPECIES



COLUMBIA  
LAND CONSERVANCY

clctrust.org \* 518 392 5252

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW/A RESOURCE FOR YOU

At the Columbia Land Conservancy (CLC), we are committed to serve as a resource for our easement landowners to help you take good care of your land. This is just as important to us as our obligation to ensure that the terms of the conservation easements we hold are being upheld. As we wrap up this year's site visits, we'd like to remind you that we want to be your partner in stewardship. Having a problem with invasive species, stream erosion or maintenance of a pond? We hope you will think of CLC when you have these or any other questions or concerns about managing your property. Our knowledgeable staff will be able to respond to many of your inquiries, and if we don't know the answer, we know where to direct you to get the information you seek.

This year, in addition to our regular education offerings, CLC's stewardship team made a concerted effort to host, co-host, or attend informational sessions on topics that you have indicated are of interest. This edition of *Conservation Minded* presents a synopsis of some of those sessions. If you would like more information on any of these or other land management topics, please contact Heidi Bock at 518.392.5252 ext 207 or Nate Davis at 518.392.5252 ext 205.

## The Future of Your Woods and Wildlife

March 2012

Sponsored by Hudson River Estuary Program and Cornell Cooperative Extension Biodiversity Program

This workshop focused on the woodlands and wildlife of the Taconic Mountain region and provided participants with information and tools for actively managing their woods for future generations. New York's forests are mostly comprised of northern hardwoods of an even age, since much of the land was cleared for agriculture in the past and has since reverted back to woodlands. The Taconic Mountains are comprised of large areas of contiguous high quality, mixed-hardwood forest which, among other things, serves as a recharge area for the watershed and contains a diverse mix of upland and wetland communities. This environment supports habitat for a variety of resident and migratory bird species as well as mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. The region has been designated as a biodiversity hotspot due to the combination of high quality woodlands on the ridge and the wetlands in the adjacent valleys, including the Harlem Valley calcareous wetland in Ancram and the Shaker Swamp in New Lebanon.

Many landowners are reluctant to actively manage their woodlands. However, sustainable forest management encourages tree and wildlife health and diversity by creating multiple successional stages across the forest landscape, and also may provide a financial benefit for landowners. Most of CLC's conservation easements allow for sustainable forest management pursuant to a forest management plan prepared by a



Ed Denham displaying forestry techniques

certified forester. A forester can help you develop a plan that meets your objectives and includes management for wildlife habitat. If you're not sure where to start, the NYS DEC regional service forester can provide you with a forest stewardship plan free of charge that will help you develop goals for your property.

As part of the March 2012 workshop, Helen Burton and Tod Houghtlin hosted a woods walk on their property, which is protected with a CLC conservation easement. Their forester Ed Denham, showed us examples of forest succession, invasive species, wildlife habitat, and timber harvest techniques. Tod and Helen are enrolled in the NYS Real Property Tax Law, Section 480(a) program, which is an option for landowners who own 50 acres or more of woodlands and are willing to actively manage their woodlands for the production of forest crops for at least 10 years.

## The Dirty Dozen: An Introduction to Bad Weeds & Solving the Problem of Invasive Plants

April/May 2012

Jessica Toro, owner of Native Habitat Restorations  
Marilyn Wyman, Natural Resource Educator, Cornell Cooperative Extension

This two-part workshop focused on identifying the most common non-native invasive plant species in Columbia County and how to start managing these problem plants. Invasive species are defined as aggressive species that are non-native to an ecosystem. They often have advantages over native species by having few or no predators and high reproduction rates, due to effective seed dispersal and extended seed survival. Nearly half of the invasive species found in our area were brought in by horticulturalists as ornamentals and additional species were brought in by the United States Natural Resource Conservation Service for agricultural purposes. New York ranks third as the most "invaded" state after California and Florida because of the ports that bring in cargo from around the world. Invasive species have the ability to change plant community composition by out-competing native species. Some invasive species

change the soil chemistry, preventing native species from growing in the area. Studies have shown that the berries of some invasive species do not provide the same nutrition to wildlife as native plants.



Garlic mustard infestation

For example, Honeysuckle has been shown to change the color of neo-tropical migrating birds so they are not as well camouflaged when they arrive at their winter homes.

Prevention, early detection, and a rapid response are important strategies for keeping new invasive species from becoming established. Once established, control and management are essential. Regional groups called PRISMs (Partners in Regional Invasive Species Management) have been created over the past 10 years. These groups are coordinating partner efforts, recruiting and training citizen volunteers, identifying and delivering education and outreach, establishing early detection monitoring networks, and implementing direct eradication and control initiatives.

Management of invasive species can be difficult. There are a number of methods that can be used. Some methods require permits, while others just require persistence and strength. Manual removal is by far the least expensive, but the most time consuming. Mechanical removal can be more efficient, but may require specialized equipment. Fire management is an effective method, but should be done only after training and not during drought. Chemical management (i.e., herbicides) is effective on a number of species, however you must be sure to follow the label instructions or hire a certified herbicide applicator.



## Conservation Partners 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration

July 22, 2012

CLC staff, board, and easement landowners spent a beautiful afternoon together at Michael and Alexandra Shuman's property in Gallatin. Originally part of the 650 acres property protected by Coach Farm, the Shuman's 95-acre property is still in active agriculture. This event brought together fellow easement landowners and provided information and presentations on various land management topics. Marilyn Wyman, Natural Resource Educator for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene counties, provided information about invasive species and ways people can get involved in their removal.

Year in Review continued on reverse



## INVASIVE SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: JAPANESE BARBERRY

Japanese barberry is an invasive thorny shrub that was introduced into the U.S. in the late 1800's for landscaping projects. It was popular as a natural fence and also attractive, with colorful foliage and red berries. Once established, however, barberry can form dense thickets, displacing native plants and reducing wildlife habitat. In New Jersey, Japanese barberry has been found to raise soil pH - making it hard for native plants to grow. As other plants in the area are displaced, there is a reduction in the depth of the leaf litter layer in forests. Japanese barberry produces large numbers of seeds which have a high germination rate. Branches touching the ground can root to form new plants, and new plants can also grow from root fragments in the soil.

An ongoing study at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station's Department of Forestry and Agriculture shows there is a relationship between ticks, deer, and barberry. Deer serve as the hosts for adult ticks, while barberry functions as a nursery for ticks in their juvenile stages, and since deer do not eat barberry, it has a competitive advantage over native plants the deer will eat. Tick abundance in barberry infested areas is 67% higher than those where native plants are predominant. Additionally, the percentage of ticks that carry the Lyme bacteria is much higher - 126 infected ticks per acre where barberry has taken hold versus 10 ticks per acre in barberry-free areas. After barberry removal, tick populations drop as much as 80%. Removing barberry is often a two-step process. It begins with cutting with a saw or tearing down dense clusters with a small bulldozer, followed by direct application of herbicides or burning, both of which require care, planning, and in some cases certification depending on the area to be dealt with.