



# Forestry Forum

*The Newsletter of the Eastern Ontario Model Forest*

Volume III Issue 57

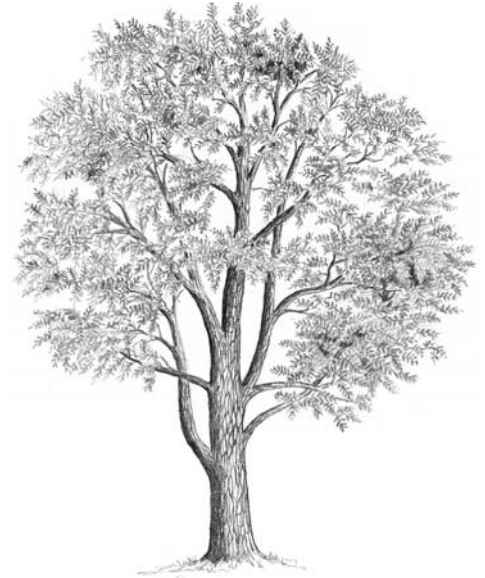
May-June 2005

## **Butternut - Another Tree in Trouble**

*Article by Barb Boysen, FGCA Coordinator*

We are lucky in eastern Ontario. We have a rich forest heritage that is largely intact. Sure, there are some areas that could use more forests, more windbreaks. There are forests that could be better managed – not grazed, not highgraded. And there are areas increasingly pressured by development. But our forests are largely appreciated for their environmental and social benefits. They are also used, if sometimes overused, for economic benefit—for recreation, maple products, wood products, and so on. And most of the forest species that were here 300 years ago are still here, and with wise management we can keep them here. Even the elm tree, that was hit so hard by the Dutch Elm Disease, is still on our eastern Ontario landscape – and there is reason to hope that it will always be, if to a lesser degree than before.

However, there is a tree that we may not always have around – one that is severely threatened and will need a concerted effort to save. And that's butternut. Butternut is dying all across its range in the U.S. and Canada from butternut canker – a virulent fungal disease. It is currently being assessed by Environment Canada for endangered status under the Species at Risk Act.



While the canker is the threat to the species; the threat to its recovery is early removal – the mindset that “every tree is doomed, so cut it now”. This same attitude saw too many elm removed from our landscape. Many may have had the resistance researchers have since found. And butternut is even more vulnerable than elm. The ‘cut it now’ attitude could greatly limit its chances for recovery. These vulnerabilities include naturally low numbers, short life span, shade intolerance, highly predated seed, wood that is valued for specialty products and all ages vulnerable to the canker.

However, there is hope. Butternut researchers expect that some butternut will demonstrate canker tolerance or resistance. U.S. conservation efforts have located about 200 possibly resistant trees, although true resistance remains to be demonstrated. It is therefore critical that we keep what live butternut we have to allow tolerance or resistance to be found.

If Environment Canada decides to list butternut as a nationally endangered species, a National Team will develop a National Recovery Strategy. In the meantime an Ontario Team is creating an Ontario Butternut Recovery Strategy, building on the work initiated by the Forest Gene Conservation Association (FGCA) over the last 12 years. Our long term goal is to restore butternut and its functions in our forests. A key strategy will likely be to re-introduce disease tolerant, climate-adapted butternut across southern Ontario. In support of this our activities will include:

- encouraging people to retain butternut, especially vigorously surviving trees
- encouraging people to report butternut
- establishing a butternut database
- educating landowners on how to increase butternut vigour and regeneration
- studying butternut's genetic diversity for a potential resistance breeding program and to set seed transfer guidelines for planting
- studying butternut's link to forest species such as ginseng
- working with seed collectors and growers to propagate butternut from vigorously surviving trees, and
- clonally propagating surviving trees in protected archives and assessing for genetic tolerance.

*... Continued on Page 2*

*Butternut . . . Continued from Page 1*



In this program we will also help people understand how a single species helps support the web of life in a forest. And hopefully this understanding will extend to how important healthy forests are to our quality of life. This understanding will help us maintain and improve our eastern Ontario forests.

The Forest Gene Conservation Association has been working on butternut for over 12 years. We work with partners all across butternut's range in southcentral Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and the U.S. But somehow butternut always means eastern Ontario to me.

Partly it's because my family is from eastern Ontario – my mother reminisces about cracking butternuts with her dad on the back porch of the farmhouse. And Eric and I have several butternut on our property in Lanark County. We've enjoyed it from many angles – nutmeats in buttertarts, beautiful wood cabinets and a butternut decoy carving from a dead, cankered tree. Butternut is also a marker that leads us to wild ginger in the spring woods. Richard David rounded out my butternut experience this spring with a taste of sweet, sweet butternut syrup from Akwesasne.

But it is also because of the sincere interest and help the FGCA has received from partners and landowners in eastern Ontario. The Eastern Chapter of the Society of Ontario Nut Growers first alerted us to the threat of the canker. Landowners sent in butternut reports by the hundreds. The Ferguson Forest Centre grew a small seed source trial for us that taught us to be especially careful of seed source in our recovery efforts. And finally the Eastern Ontario Model Forest from the start has provided much support that helped us undertake a literature review, landowner surveys, and a colour brochure. And just recently EOMF Web Developer Greg Moffatt, along with volunteer Algonquin College student Crispin Wood, put a new butternut web page on our FGCA website.

The EOMF is also helping us build capacity for future butternut conservation efforts. With its charitable status we now have a mechanism to establish a butternut fund to support long term recovery efforts. If you are interested in donating to the efforts to save butternut, please call **613 258-8241** or visit the EOMF website at [www.eomf.on.ca](http://www.eomf.on.ca). Sponsors will receive tax receipts for their donations.

Making connections to landowners and strong partnerships with other conservation, forest management and research groups are the keys to butternut recovery. If you have questions, or want to help with this program, please contact Barb Boysen, FGCA Coordinator at 705-755-3284, [barb.boysen@mnr.gov.on.ca](mailto:barb.boysen@mnr.gov.on.ca), or visit [www.fgca.net](http://www.fgca.net).



**Sally Hamilton Wins the  
2005 Heartwood Award**  
*Article by David MacNaughtan, EOMF*

Organizations rely on volunteers and the Eastern Ontario Model Forest is no exception. In order to recognize the effort and time expended by our volunteers, the Board of Directors in concert with the Communications Committee has created the Heartwood Award which recognizes the group or individual who has made an exceptional volunteer contribution to the Eastern Ontario Model Forest.

We are pleased to announce that Sally Hamilton of North Grenville was chosen to receive the Heartwood Award in 2005. The presentation was made at the EOMF annual general meeting held at Cooper Marsh on May 7th.

Sally, a geographer now retired from the Natural Resources Canada mining sector, worked in the environmental field and on Native land claims. Sally was born and raised in the Northwest Territories and received her Bachelor of Geography degree at the University of Western Ontario and her Master's Degree at the University of Alberta.

For the past five years Sally has worked frequently and regularly to further the communication and outreach efforts of the EOMF. She has assisted with plowing matches in Navan in 2001 and in Carleton Place in 2003. Each year, she organizes exhibitors for both the Kemptonville Winter Woodlot Conference and the Forest Fair of Eastern Ontario. When we need assistance to staff a display at the Ottawa Valley Farm Show or the Ottawa Wood Show Sally is always a willing helper.

Congratulations Sally! You are indeed a fitting recipient of the 2005 Heartwood Award.



## Hardly for the Birds!

### EOMF Annual Meeting a Great Day

Cooper Marsh was a veritable hub of activity on May 7<sup>th</sup>, with some 40 forest (and birding!) enthusiasts on hand for the EOMF's 13<sup>th</sup> annual spring gathering.

Following pancake breakfast, participants were brought up-to-speed on EOMF project developments, including activities underway following the announcement of the indefinite shutdown of Domtar's Cornwall pulp mill. Also under the business portion of the day, incumbent board member Karen Fraser was re-elected and former Domtar staffer Martin Streit was elected to his first term.

Participants also heard an informative update on activities and programs from Dorothy Hamilton of the Raisin Region Conservation Authority (RRCA), which manages the Cooper Marsh site.

The Ross Silversides Forestry Award went to Peter Murray who was instrumental in launching Gananoque's thriving urban forestry program and who is also a guiding force in the EOMF's urban forestry network. The new annual Heartwood Award for exceptional contribution by a volunteer went to Sally Hamilton who has consistently and enthusiastically helped with various EOMF projects and events.

Following lunch Dr. Brian Hickey, of the St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Sciences (SLRIES), conducted a tour through part of the marsh which is home to 130 bird species. Part of the larger Charlottenburgh Marsh, Cooper Marsh features a boardwalk and eight kilometers of hiking trails open to the public daily. Throughout the year, SLRIES offers day camps and interactive workshops for all ages.

"Raisin Region facilities along the St. Lawrence are a very important part of the inventory of natural attractions in eastern Ontario," said EOMF General Manager Brian Barkley. "It was a pleasure to hold our annual meeting there and to support the authority in its good work."



## The EOMF Brings a New Look to the Web

Article by Greg Moffatt, Web Developer for the EOMF

With the arrival of warmer temperatures in our part of the world, we often turn our thoughts to the subjects of renewal, rejuvenation, renewed vigour, and new growth after coming through another cold and grey winter. In keeping with the theme of spring, we at the Eastern Ontario Model Forest are proud to introduce our brand-new Web site.



The old one had served us well for several years, but the design of the new site enhances our ability to promote our vision of sustainable forestry and to serve our membership in many new ways. When you visit, we think you'll be struck by the bright new design and cutting-edge features found inside.

For example, we've kept the listing of upcoming events on the front page, but the list on the new Web site is special. It will never be out of date, and you'll never see last week's workshop on there. You'll only see events coming up in the next month, but don't worry; you can see what's happening well into the future on the News and Events page. You can also find details for every event, including what's happening, when, and where.

Another highlight is the online publications catalogue. Found under the Maps and Publications link, you can sort and search the catalogue for model forest publications on any topic. Once you've found one you're interested in, you can request a copy through the online request form, or in many cases you can download it for free.

As well, we've highlighted many model forest projects on the Projects and Initiatives page, with project descriptions and links to the project "mini-sites". You can also use the new Search page to find projects, publications, or upcoming events on topics that you're interested in.

Our new Web site is completely bilingual, very dynamic, and highly interactive, and we think you'll find something new every time you visit. So, jump online and swing by [www.eomf.on.ca](http://www.eomf.on.ca) to explore the new site and see what it has to offer.



# Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre Underway

Article by John P. Wilson, FFC Board Member

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, 75 to 80 people gathered to talk about starting a “Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre”. They listened to presentations on the history of the FFC and to Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) involvement in forest management and wildlife concerns. FFC leases the nursery lands from the Municipality of North Grenville and has a Memorandum of Understanding with the MNR to help manage the Crown lands known as the nursery forest. The Eastern Ontario Model Forest is helping the FFC and the MNR to create a management plan for the Crown lands.

Jack Henry, Stewardship Coordinator for Grenville County, facilitated the evening and also gave a presentation on the Friends of the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area, a very successful organization in Brockville. This led into the heart of the meeting: Why a Friends of the FFC, why now, and what help will the board of the FFC offer to the proposed new group?

The time is right for public input into the planning, creating and maintaining of recreational and conservation values of the FFC managed lands. The Friends will have to work within the existing agreements between the FFC and the municipality, and the FFC and the MNR. They will have a real role in assisting with the public use of these lands and in the scheduling of the ever-increasing user activities. FFC has promised some start-up money as well as some office assistance.

Crowd response was all in favour of creating the new “Friends”. Many spoke of their use and appreciation of the green space in the heart of their community and were prepared to work to make it better. The next meeting was scheduled to start on the actual organizing of the Friends group.

May 14<sup>th</sup> saw a keen group of folks gather at the FFC. A core group offered to serve as an interim executive and, with a bit of practice earlier in the morning, conducted the whole general meeting. Four smaller breakaway sessions got everyone involved in talking about his or her priorities and goals. Participants were also asked to list their skills, talents and willingness to work, as well as what, if any, organization they had ties to.

The response was overwhelming. What a collection of skills and talents, no to mention a real desire to work. A great number of user and interest groups were represented in one form or another. The ideas flew thick and fast. Everyone had a chance to contribute. Lists were put up for committees such as education, communications, membership, and trails, with many people signing up right then.

Now the interim executive has its work cut out to sort out all the suggestions, comments and existing ground rules. They will meet again on May 19<sup>th</sup> and plan on convening another general meeting on May 26<sup>th</sup>. The speed of this group is astounding.

The friends of the FFC is now underway and gathering momentum. They will be looking for more interested people to join them in helping to work towards a green future. If you would like more information, please contact the FFC office at (613) 258-0110 or email [info@seedlingnursery.com](mailto:info@seedlingnursery.com).



**Forestry Forum** is a publication of the Eastern Ontario Model Forest  
“a proud member of Canada’s Model Forest Network”

**Send Comments to:** Elizabeth Holmes, Editor, Forestry Forum,  
c/o Eastern Ontario Model Forest, P.O. Bag 2111, Kemptville, Ontario, K0G 1J0  
**Phone:** (613) 258-8241 **Fax:** (613) 258-8363 **Email:** [modelforest@eomf.on.ca](mailto:modelforest@eomf.on.ca)  
**Web Site:** [www.eomf.on.ca](http://www.eomf.on.ca)

Aussi disponible en français.  
ISSN 1201-3978

*Please note that the deadline for the  
submission of articles is the 1st of every month.*



Natural Resources  
Canada

Ressources naturelles  
Canada



Canada