In this issue we are celebrating “Woodlands Appreciation Week”. Some of our executive members describe how they enjoy their own woodlots, and Tony Bull reports on the presentations about invasive species that were made at our 2019 AGM.

We hope you are able to spend time in the woods, even if we can’t share walks together.

John Stuart
I grew up on a farm near Eganville in the 1940s and 50s when things were much different than they are today. I learned about binders, scythes, N9 tractors, jammers, pulp hooks with the occasional reminder that sharp tools are best handled carefully.

When I was 18 I moved to the big city and taught school for 35 years. About 20 years ago Helen-Ann and I moved back to the farm property, built a house and have been here since. By then we had planted 100 acres in red pine and white spruce on land cleared by my great grandfather and which had been farmed for 3 generations.

This plantation has been thinned twice, producing FSC certified wood. A 70 acre, mostly white pine bush, (the brûlée) has recently had a shelter wood cut. All trees harvested were marked by a certified tree marker.

I joined the Woodlot Association about 20 years ago and have found it a great way to meet like-minded people and get information about woodlot management. Recently I have been president of the local chapter.

These are unusual times; take care and many thanks for your OWA membership.

John Stuart and his grand-daughter with a harvested white pine
Tony and Ann Bull
What do we like? All the seasons for one. At this time of year, though, spring. At the end of April the woodlands and meadows explode into life. After a long winter of apparent lifelessness, it seems (to me) like an ever recurring miracle. Spring wildflowers, especially the trilliums, the sounds: spring peepers, wood frogs, song sparrows, and white-throated sparrows. Even the sound of woodpeckers making a racket on the tin roof of our shed as they attract mates (at 5 o'clock in the morning) is welcome. Walking in the woods, we notice the different rates of leaves coming out: aspen first with their early brilliant green, then the maples, followed by oaks, and lastly the ash trees with their lovely lacy compound leaves.

We have a large screened-in veranda which allows us the luxury of eating outside; really we almost live there in the warm weather. Enjoying the music of spring. Feeling the gentle breeze, free of mosquitoes. Reading a book. Enjoying the view of the old wagon shed framed by wild plums in flower. Most of our woodlots are a mixture of the natural and the cultural, whether in the form of historic buildings or stone fences.

So, at this time of year, go for a "walk in your woods". Glory in the peace and tranquility. It is a tonic.

Tony and Ann’s rustic barn
**Katalijn MacAfee** owns a small woodlot just outside of Renfrew with her husband and 6-yr old daughter. She tries to spend as much time as possible out in the woods, improving the forest quality and creating wildlife shelter. Given there's a large proportion of cedar, there is no shortage of animals to watch.

She'll be spending some of the Woodlands Appreciation Week planting seedlings to create a wind and dust break, while also making sure to take time to truly appreciate the forest around us.

![Seedlings](image1.jpg)

**Dave Stewart**
I own a 200 acre woodland property that has been in my family for 3 generations. It contains White Pine, Spruce, Cedar, Maple and a few Oak.

We have thinned this property twice during my life time and it continues to be a source of enjoyment for my family to hike in.

However this beautiful property is in the Province of Quebec and because of the coronavirus I am unable to take any pleasure in it this spring. The bridge is closed and the township has called and asked us not to visit.

Better days ahead.

![Wildflowers](image2.jpg)

**Hepatica and Wild Leek**
Robin Cunningham
Liz and I live on a 6 acre property on the Canadian Shield on the way to Algonquin Park. We are in a red oak stand (with red maple, large-tooth aspen, and other hardwoods).

I think about history--how people have affected this woods--it is not wilderness. The oak here is probably not more than 90 years old, often multi-stemmed--coppice from old stumps. I suspect that there were white pines here in the past that were logged out. I heard that in the 1930’s depression, locals set fires in order to create employment putting them out. Disturbances during our time here include a hailstorm (1987) that knocked every leaf off our trees, killing aspens but not oaks (and destroyed the new roof and many car windshields). We had an infestation of the alien gypsy moth around 1999, also leaving trees temporarily bare of leaves. But the forest is resilient.

Our own influence on the woods may be minor. We have cut a little firewood, but not much. We have added some diversity: we planted a few conifers for wildlife cover, a few southern tree species (experimenting in assisted migration in view of climate change), and a few native shrubs and wildflowers.

We are temporary stewards in the life of this woods. In our time we will enjoy birds, bugs, and botany, and we will ‘forest bathe’ for our well-being.
**Invasive species and their impact on our forest environments**
(from the OWA Renfrew Chapter Annual General Meeting held in Eganville on April 27, 2019)

**Jason Pollard**, a City of Ottawa forester and member of the Forest Health Network of Eastern Ontario, described the impact of invasive species and what more is on the horizon. He spoke of the looming problems of non-native species moving into our environment.

Agencies focusing on this issue include the Canadian Forest Service, providing research; the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, providing research and monitoring; the Canadian Food Inspection Agency implementing regulations to limit the spread of invasive species. But the “heavy lifting” in combating the problem is being done by local municipalities and landowners. They do removal of diseased and dead trees and engage in planting to create greater species diversity.

Jason outlined some history as an introduction to what is coming. We are familiar with emerald ash borer. Before invading Canada, it was in Michigan and appeared in the Windsor area in 2002. By 2009 it was in Toronto and Ottawa. Now it is in all of southern Ontario and in the southern part of Renfrew County. The speed of its advance has been due to movement of infected ash, mostly as firewood.

Another insect on the landscape is Asian long-horned beetle. This one will attack maple among other hardwoods. It is currently in the Toronto area and has been contained by means of tree removal of not only infected trees but also healthy trees in a wide surrounding area. The quarantine measures and quick response has seemingly been effective in keeping this beetle from spreading widely. Such vigorous response, early and strong, is a feature of effective strategy and tactics dealing with invasive species.

What is coming? Oak wilt, currently in NY State, attacks red oak primarily. It is spread by a beetle (not invasive) that carries a fungus (an invasive). Hemlock woolly adelgid is also in NY state. It is recognized by white woolly masses on the underside of hemlock twigs.

Are there reasons for optimism? There are a number. First, there are stronger regulations governing imports that could lead to transmission of invasives. Secondly, research is being initiated earlier, in advance of possible invasives, rather than after the fact. There is also the recognition that good forest management practice, especially the encouragement of diversity in woodlots, is effective in reducing the impact of invasives. Better communications about invasives and structures such as the Forest Health Network, which includes Cornell University in New York create networks of effective response.

**Lacey Rose**, forest manager for the Renfrew County Forest spoke of the situation in Renfrew County and how to manage woodlots and forest land in the face of invasives. First she recounted the advance of beech bark disease. It arrived in the 1890’s from Europe. She recounted, during her forestry studies in New Brunswick, the sad state of beech trees there, and the stark difference with ours here that were straight and free of any fungus.
It is now in Ontario. The first “wave”, insects, leave a scale like residue on the bark. The second “killing wave” is the nectria fungus that is carried by the insects. As with the rapid spread of the emerald ash borer, the spread of beech bark disease is aided by moving firewood. It is evident now in the Shaw Woods Outdoor Education Centre.

Beech are “mast trees”, providing, by their nuts, food for a number of wildlife species.

What can landowners do? A number of things. One is to retain healthy trees. Between 2% and 5% of trees are resistant. We need to find them and monitor these resistors. For damaged trees, they can be removed and used, locally, for firewood. Finally, encourage the regeneration of other tree species. Manage a healthy woodlot.

Lacey also spoke of butternut canker, which was first noticed in Ontario in 1991. Butternut is now classed an endangered species. The most innovative approach to fighting this disease is by Rose Fleugal of the Forest Seed Conservation Association. Her goal, working with willing landowners, was to identify healthy trees growing in association with infected trees. She then collected nuts from these resistant trees to be planted. Over time the objective was to develop a large number of resistant trees that could be re-established on the landscape.

Another approach is to find a natural predator of the insect causing the canker. A predatory wasp has now been introduced. This is similar to the approach for controlling (not eliminating) purple loosestrife, an introduced water loving plant that was starting to choke out natural wetlands and displace native species. The black-margined loosestrife beetle, one of four introduced, has been found to be most successful, in some cases reducing the density of purple loosestrife by 90%.

What can the landowner do about butternut? Protect healthy trees. Create group openings around butternut to provide better light conditions. Plant resistant seedlings.

Lacey then spoke of invasive plants which can alter habitat conditions for both wildlife and tree regeneration. A sampling; dog strangling vine, garlic mustard, buckthorn, Japanese knotweed, periwinkle. They spread via dirty boots, pets, tires, garden waste, fill.

General good practices are the following:
• Don’t move firewood
• Properly dispose of garden waste
• Manage woodlots to improve overall health
• Follow clean equipment protocols

As an aside, when my wife and I last visited New Zealand, at the airport we were asked if we had washed our foot wear before leaving Canada (we had). But I admitted that I had not done so with my cycling shoes. So we handed them over and they were returned 5 minutes later,
freshly cleaned. And, later, when we walked on a trail of native hardwoods, under threat from an introduced fungus, we had to walk through a trough of a fungicide at the trail head.

Back to Lacey. Her final remarks had to do with an introduced (native) species; the deer tick, which is a carrier of Lyme disease. It is now in Renfrew County and needs to be taken seriously. Here is what she does to protect herself while working in the bush:

- Wear gaiters or tuck pants into socks. Good to wear light coloured pants in order to better see ticks.
- Apply DEET to your pants and on exposed skin.
- Shake out or wash clothes. Some time in the dryer will kill ticks too.
- **Carefully** remove any embedded ticks. Using a good tick removal tool (better than tweezers) so as not to crush the tick.

Tony Bull, April 30, 2019

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Beech Bark Disease

[https://www.ontario.ca/page/beech-bark-disease](https://www.ontario.ca/page/beech-bark-disease)
Check out OWA Facebook sites:
https://m.facebook.com/OntarioWoodlotAssociation/

Ontario Woodlot Association Renfrew Chapter:

Lanark & District Chapter of the OWA:
https://www.facebook.com/LDCOWA/

Bancroft-Haliburton Chapter OWA:
https://www.facebook.com/BancroftHaliburtonOWA/

Lower Ottawa Valley Chapter OWA:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/lovc.owa/

We welcome John Pineau as the new Executive Director of the Ontario Woodlot Association.
Thanks to Interim Director Eleanor Reed.