



Through The Knothole

a quarterly newsletter of the

HURONIA WOODLAND OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Issue # 81

www.huron Woodwardowners.ca

Summer 2019

Upcoming Event: MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FALL FIELD DAY

At John Cameron's property

1384 Line 10 North, in Oro Medonte

Saturday Oct. 5, 2019 at 9 am to 4 pm.

Registration is 9 to 9:30 with coffee. Lunch (donation to cover costs) will be at noon with something hot, probably chili. Property tour and speakers, door prizes, etc. Looking forward to see to see everyone there.

WHITE PINE AWARD NOMINATIONS

The White Pine Award meeting is quickly approaching on Nov. 9th 2019, 1 p.m., at the Elmvale Legion. Email your nominations to a member of the Board of Directors ASAP.

2019 FIREWOOD HARVESTING

(by Gerry Beauchamp)

TREE SELECTION:

Firewood harvesting is an annual event for me and usually starts in the dead of winter when I patrol the woodlot selecting candidates for next year's supply. Dead standing Oaks, as well as Beech that are either dead or in various stages of demise, are the prime selected species, since they are in abundant supply in my north Simcoe hardwood forest. The steep terrain and accessibility issues must be taken into consideration, as well as protecting healthy trees from damage during the felling and extraction process.



FELLING:

Tree felling is by far the most dangerous of the whole firewood gathering process and I will frequently attempt to get someone to assist, although that is not always possible. Felling usually begins in mid March, well before the leaves appear, and while the ground still has some snow cover that is preferably not too deep. The felling process is accompanied with an attempt to estimate the needs of the upcoming seasons and to get the required number of trees on the ground. Fully dropping the trees and cutting some of the largest limbs is the objective, leaving the site safe until I can return to get the wood skidded out.

SKIDDING:



In the spring, I begin moving logs from the fell sites to a nearby yarding location. This is done using a compact tractor or ATV and log arch. In some cases I may even block the tree at its fell site and use the ATV and small firewood trailer to extract. The trunk and branch wood is usually cut into eight or twelve foot lengths for the skidding process. Damaging nearby trees and compacting the forest floor are issues that I will always try to avoid during this procedure.

YARDING AND BLOCKING:

By late June I usually have the firewood logs skidded and piled at one location that is easily accessed with my truck. This is when choosing work days carefully comes into play. Excessive heat is avoided as well as trying to limit the impact of blackflies and mosquitoes by choosing cooler days with a light breeze blowing. This is not always possible however and the use of copious amount of bug repellent and the exhaust from the chainsaw is the only

relief one can hope for. It certainly makes for short lunch breaks. Blocking the logs into sixteen inch lengths, and either on-site splitting or loading directly onto the truck varies according to conditions. If the weather is too hot and the bugs are bad I load the blocks directly, haul them home and split and pile them at that time.



SPLITTING AND STACKING:

In my particular case, the woodlot is located about forty-five minutes from home so I try and maximize my loads without over taxing equipment. At home the unloading, splitting and piling begins. The stacking occurs on salvaged wood pallets making a platform measuring 16ft. by 4ft., surrounded by a frame support which holds a sloped roof made from corrugated plastic panels available at the big-box store. Each one of these structures holds two bush cords and I have several placed at the rear of my yard. They work very well ensuring good air movement throughout the stack and effectively shedding rain or snow. I try and stay a season ahead of the game by having a good supply of firewood banked for the future.



CONCLUSION:

I can probably guess what you're thinking. Is all this time, effort and expense worth it? In a word - No. Why then do I (or anyone else) do it? It is rather difficult to explain but the only answers I can present are these. Firstly I love being in the woods and working there is both rewarding physically and mentally. No need to join a gym or be preoccupied with a reason to get out of bed in the morning. Also there is a sense of independence in fostering a warm home each winter by adding another log to the fire as opposed to just turning up the thermostat. When offering these explanations I am often greeted by a perplexed look on the listeners face and it is then that I realize that you either love it or you don't.

CUTOUT FROM A DEAD WITE PINE TREE

Submitted by Jim Laking



The cut-out is from a tall dead White Pine tree on the Laking Woodland that had grown for over 100 years. A storm took the tree down. The bark was off, leaving an inch of rim vertical soft wood and all the interior was empty, with the exception of a series of horizontal tapered brittle pointed pieces. How interesting! Looked like cages, up inside this log, a series of annual growth branches, each group starting from the heart of the original little sapling. If the log had been harvested during its prime, the mill would have produced the familiar "knotty pine boards", caused by these internal side branches.

We all like to follow the Guide to Forest Management Basics. Therein one is encouraged to keep some standing dead trees (the bigger the better) and these usually evolve into cavity trees. Up to 50 birds and mammal species depend on these trees for food and shelter. When the pileated woodpecker has found this tree, one can see the rectangular hole that gets hammered out with a pile of chips below. They are going for the ants and grubs that are eating the sap wood under the bark. Eventually, aided by squirrels, chipmunks, coons and porcupines, a hollow tree is created and a storm will eventually lay it to the ground to compost away. Photo help from neighbours, Larry and Linda Gallagher

Through the Knothole Dates, Jim Marchand, editor

Submission deadlines: Spring: April 10 - Summer: Aug. 10 -
Fall: Oct 10 - and Winter: Jan 10

DIRECTORS (in alphabetical order)

President/Chairman: rotating among Directors

Craig, Neil: Forest Health (705-726-1334)
neil@greylands.ca

Crawford, John: Treasurer (705-487-3373)
line8jrcrawford@hotmail.com

Douglas, Cam: Secretary,
Jack O'Hara Forestry Scholarship
(705-487-7142) cameron.douglas100@gmail.com

Ellsmere, Chris: Fall Field Day (705-726-8479)
careholstien1945@gmail.com

Frost, Doug: Website (705-487-5723)
doug@forksinthetrail.com

Marchand, Jim: (705-835-0094) Communications,
"Through the Knothole" jimmarchand5@gmail.com
OWA Director, HWOA Rep.