



DELAWARE
HIGHLANDS
CONSERVANCY

Roots & Branches

WOMEN AND THEIR WOODS

Timber Harvesting Cautions

By Allyson Brownlee Muth, Ed.D.

Timber harvest represents the best time to make a positive change on your woodland, but it's also the time when the most damage can be done.

Unsolicited knocks on the door from someone offering to buy a landowner's trees always raise red flags. Yes, it may be an efficiency of scale – people are working in the area and wouldn't have to move equipment far – but it also means you have something of economic value. And if you've never thought of your trees with dollar symbols in your eyes, it can be a surprise. You must use care that any activities you undertake don't compromise the reasons you own and care for your land.

There are many myths associated with timber harvesting that can lead to bad outcomes. Let's address some in hopes of reaching a more positive outcome.

Those trees need to be cut. Unless they present a risk to life or infrastructure, or insect or disease is in the area, no tree ever needs to be immediately cut. Trees have economic and biological maturity, but in a resource



For a positive outcome following a timber harvest, we recommend working with a consulting forester to develop a forest management plan.

with a lifespan many decades beyond our own, the time frame for decision-making is correspondingly longer. You have time to make decisions that do well by your land.

Get those big trees out of the way and the little trees will grow up to replace them.

Unless you've taken action to get the next generation of young trees growing in the forest, or you're the lucky inheritor of a two-aged stand, for the most part across PA, those big trees and little trees are the same age. They may be different species, which would account for different growth rates. By the same rules that a farmer keeps his

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DelawareHighlands.org/watw

The Women and Their Woods program is administered by the Delaware Highlands Conservancy and the Center for Private Forests at Penn State with support from the US Forest Service at Grey Towers, Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, and the William Penn Foundation.

For additional information, please contact:

Amanda Subjin

Delaware Highlands Conservancy

(570) 226-3164 x2

amanda@delawarehighlands.org

Allyson Muth

Center for Private Forests

at Penn State

(814) 865-3208

abm173@psu.edu



Women and Their Woods

Throughout our region, women are increasingly responsible for the stewardship of private forestlands. To be good forest stewards, landowners require accurate information and relevant knowledge about available options for managing their properties.

The Women and Their Woods initiative provides landowners with the support, knowledge, and confidence to effectively care for their lands with an emphasis on conservation and the value of intact forestlands. In addition to receiving resources such as this newsletter, participants are invited to become a part of this peer-learning network by attending field tours, hands-on workshops and the popular biennial Educational Retreat.

We encourage you to share this newsletter with other landowners. If you have a story to share about your forest, a resource that has helped you or suggestions for future information or workshops, please let us know!

Learn more and join the mailing list at DelawareHighlands.org/watw.



We Need Your Email Address!

As conservation-centered organizations, we want to conserve resources by communicating with you through email.

Please send your email to amanda@delawarehighlands.org and specify if you would like to receive our mailings electronically or continue to receive hard copies in the mail.

Eat the Invasives!

By Heather Housekeeper

Chances are that your parcel of land, home to towering native trees and delicate indigenous wildflowers, also fosters an incredible edible plant that outcompetes our native plants and thrives amidst all odds...yet makes one heck of a pesto! This particular naturalized invasive goes by a number of names: hedge mustard, penny hedge, poor man's mustard, but most know it as garlic mustard (*Alliaria*). Crush a leaf and you'll know why - it smells undeniably of garlic.

Garlic mustard is a member of the *Brassica* family, which also includes broccoli and kale. It begins its first year as a basal rosette of heart-shaped scallop-edged leaves. In its second year, it sends up a flowering branching stalk up to 3 feet in height, with alternate leaves. The green flower buds, which resemble broccoli florets, will blossom into tiny white flowers with four petals. Flowers give way to slender pods containing tiny black seeds. You may find two species residing on your land: *Alliaria officinalis* which bears a rounded leaf tip and *Alliaria petiolata* which bears a pointed leaf tip. But it matters not which species you have when mixed up with some olive oil and parmesan cheese - each are equally tasty!

Normally I do not speak so coarsely about turning any living thing into food...but garlic mustard is one hardy invasive that you can run over with the lawn mower, splatter to bits with the weed whacker, or uproot with your bare hands and its offspring will sprout their green leaves come spring. Plants can self-pollinate and one plant can produce hundreds of seeds. It grows particularly well along the grassy boundary of a forest or the perimeter of your lawn or home; it may even make a home deep in the woods. I

have even seen green garlic mustard leaves in the dead of winter beneath the snow.

Our ancestors transported it from Europe and cultivated it in their gardens for culinary purposes. Archeological digs have uncovered garlic mustard fragments in pots and bowls dating back to B.C.E., and history tells us it was well appreciated throughout many cultures until the last century. In its native region, garlic mustard battles a host of insect and fungal predators; however, here in North America, it faces none of these dangers. Even our hungry deer prefer the vegetation surrounding garlic mustard, in turn eliminating the competition and inadvertently trampling its seeds into the fertile soil. There is simply nothing keeping garlic mustard's population in balance.

That's where we come in. Don those gardening gloves and get out your kitchen shears and food processors! Pull garlic mustard up by its roots - an easy task given its pencil-thin weak taproots - gathering as much as you please.



Women and Their Woods Educational Retreat

SEPTEMBER 6-9, 2018

Highlights Workshop Facility

392 Boyds Mills Road, Milanville, PA 18443

The Women and Their Woods Educational Retreat is an in-depth, fun, engaging, and thought-provoking workshop on caring for your woodlands now and into the future. No matter the size of your woodlands or if you're not yet an owner, **join us for four days and three nights of learning, networking, and applying new knowledge about good forest stewardship.**



The retreat will take place at the Highlights Foundation conference center campus, located in the wooded hills near Honesdale, PA. Cabins and lodge rooms have modern facilities and wireless internet access. Farm-style meals are prepared by a top-notch chef and are a time for lively discussion, while snacks are always available for late-night or early morning sessions. The intimate and inspiring setting in the Pocono Mountains features serene walking trails, a 1,300 acre forest, and a creek that runs to the nearby Delaware River. Learn more about the Highlights Foundation Workshop Facility at www.highlightsfoundation.org/facility/.

THURSDAY

Welcome
Retreat begins at 4:00pm

- Meet your peers and enjoy a welcome dinner with retreat staff and presenters
- Connect with the property's history and its surrounding forest

FRIDAY

Connecting to your land and understanding what you have.

- Setting goals and articulating values
- Understanding forest stewardship
- Tree identification practice
- Forest measurements
- Creating wildlife habitat
- Bird walk
- Forest legacy planning





Retreat applications and more information about the event can be found online at DelawareHighlands.org/watw. Invite your friends, family and register by August 1 to secure your space!

Retreat sessions are presented by professionals from a variety of organizations, including:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension • National Audubon Society
- Northern Tier Hardwood Association • Land trust professionals • Private consulting foresters
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Pennsylvania Forest Stewards • Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences
- Penn State Mont Alto, Associate Forest Technology Program • RHP Law Group LLC
- Tioga County Planning • United States Department of Agriculture

SATURDAY

Identifying your forest values and planning goals in a changing landscape.

- Creating a dynamic plan
- Forests and water
- Forest health
- Understanding and responding to change in your forest
- Land protection roundtable
- Off-site field tour

SUNDAY

Planning the next steps for your forest, your legacy, and ways to stay connected to the Women and Their Woods network.

Retreat ends at 2:00pm

- Forest financials
- Practicing what you learned
- Skill sharing and networking
- Graduation



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prize bull around for breeding, why would you want to take the best growing trees out of your stand, without ensuring that their progeny are there to replace them? Most of Pennsylvania's trees are an average age from 80 to 120 years old, at which time many trees lose their ability to respond well to increased light, which can cause stress--and you'll lose more trees in the process.

We'll just do a "select cut." As with the knock on the door, anytime the phrase "select cut" enters the conversation, red flags and warning lights go off. A forester's job is to use management techniques to mimic natural events in the forest to help the forest improve in health and functionality, and to help it meet the owner's values.



In the manner in which it has come to be used, a "select cut" means the best trees are removed - take the best and leave the rest. Diameter limit cuts fall in the same red flag area - cutting all trees above a certain diameter. Within a species, this could remove the best-growing trees of that group. Across species, because different tree species have different light requirements and rates of growth, this could remove an entire species from your forest.

Forestry's not complicated. I can do this on my own. It's been said that forestry is not rocket science; it's a lot harder (I will admit,

some forester probably said this). The reality is that a forest is a very complex system.

As you engage with your woods, you recognize the diversity of species, the diversity of sizes, the things that are there that shouldn't be, and things that aren't there that should be. All of these variables, plus your values and goals for the property, and an expectation of land stewardship beyond the current tenure, should go into the decisions that are being made about the woods.

There are professional service providers who can help - consulting foresters. Consulting foresters can prescribe management activities that will best mesh with your woods and your values. They can mark timber to carry out that activity. They can bid out the sale. And they can, at times, monitor the harvest to ensure good work is done.

There is always time to make well-informed decisions about the long-term care of your woods. Purchase of standing timber may be picking up right now, but make sure you understand the actions and potential outcomes before you make the decision to sell trees. Ask for help. Educate yourself. The trees and forest will be better for it.

A great resource to get you started is a Penn State publication titled, "Forestry with Confidence." You can find it online and review or download a copy. The publication is also available for purchase - shipping and handling fees are based on your location.

Reprinted with permission and edited for length from The Center for Private Forests at the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences. Complete article is available online at <http://ecosystems.psu.edu/research/centers/private-forests/news/2018/timber-harvesting-cautions>.

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Snip the leaves from where they meet the root and/or from their flowering stalk. Then substitute garlic mustard for basil in your favorite pesto recipe. Its garlicky tasting leaves may also be eaten raw in salads, steamed, sauteed, or baked in a casserole. But it's not just leaves that lend themselves to the plate; garlic mustard is edible from its roots to its seeds. The unopened flowerbuds may be used like broccoli florets and are both garlicky and sweet. The seedpods may be added whole to soups and stews or diced and added to salads for a mustardy kick. Lastly, be sure to reserve those roots that taste just like horseradish and make an excellent infusion in olive oil or vinegar.

Next time you are seeking a garlicky kick for a special dish or perhaps walking the edges of your property bemoaning the abundant garlic mustard...get to picking! Garlic mustard is a wild edible that we can fortunately pick with wild abandon!

Garlic Mustard Pesto

3 cups of garlic mustard leaves, packed
3/4 cup olive oil
1/4 c grated parmesan cheese
3/4 c walnuts
3 cloves of garlic
a squeeze of lemon
salt and pepper to taste

Yield: roughly 1-2 c pesto

Place leaves in a blender and add remaining ingredients. Blend on high speed until smooth, add more olive oil if needed to thin finished product. Add salt and pepper to taste. Spread garlic mustard pesto on crackers with a sliver of parmesan, toss with pasta and veggies, or spread on home-made pizza crust. Portion any leftover garlic mustard pesto into an ice cube tray and thaw cubes individually as needed.

Sourced from www.TheBotanicalHiker.blogspot.com. For more recipes like this, check out Heather's book, ***A Guide to the Edible and Medicinal Plants of the Finger Lakes Trail***.



WomenOwningWoodlands.net



You told us your favorite part is reading stories from other landowners... Check it out... there are new stories!

You'll also find information applicable to your forest landownership and connect through nearby events for women landowners.



Save the Dates!

September 6-9: Women and Their Woods Educational Retreat

Highlights Foundation Workshop Facility, Milanville, PA

The Educational Retreat is an in-depth, fun, engaging, and thought-provoking workshop on caring for your woodlands now and into the future. No matter the size of your woodlands or if you're not yet an owner, join us for four days and three nights of learning, networking, and applying new knowledge about good forest stewardship.

September 15: Firefly Picnic

Lemons Brook Farm, Bethel, Sullivan County, NY

Join the Delaware Highlands Conservancy for our annual free community picnic for our members and friends and enjoy a delicious catered dinner, craft beer selections, a guided trail walk, crafts, and much more! Fun for all ages.

FOREST LANDOWNER PERSPECTIVE

This newsletter is YOUR space!

Share your connections to the forest with other WaTW newsletter readers. Send an email to amanda@delawarehighlands.org with your photos, journal entries, drawings, other artwork, or stories, and we'll share it here. **We're looking forward to hearing from you!**

SERVING NEW YORK AND PENNSYLVANIA

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INSIDE

PO Box 218 Hawley, PA 18428-0218

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