

# Women and Their Woods

Information for Women Forest Landowners  
Issue 15 Spring 2015

---

## Pure Joy

By Elizabeth Geitz

I had the pure joy today of learning how to fly fish, or I should say, of attempting to learn the rudimentary skills of fly fishing. Pike County is known for its beautiful rivers, streams and lakes, all preserved for our enjoyment by the generations which have come before us.

In my view, Shohola Creek is one of the best. Now I may be a bit prejudiced since I live on it and have friends who fish on sections of it regularly. Its rushing waters carry fish and fauna and the stuff of life straight into the more majestic and better known Delaware. River In generations past, it carried logs cut from our forests downstream to sawmills to supply wood for use in commerce, much needed as our country grew. It provided transportation and food and yes, enjoyment for those lucky enough to live on or near it.

What I learned today is as much about fishing as it is about life. Yes, water and fish and food and commerce are the stuff of life, but that's not what I'm talking about. As my friend carefully instructed me in the art of casting, I found myself reflecting on how much my casting resembled my life – some good and some habits I'd rather change.

When you do a roll cast, which is best when one is surrounded by trees, you have to stop the fly in its backward trajectory before moving forward with the 'snap' of the line that takes it securely and swiftly to just the right spot on the stream.

"Elizabeth, what are you doing?" my mentor asked.  
"You can't go backward and forward at the same time! Stop! Let the fly rest a second, and then go forward."

"My problem in life," I said with a chuckle. "So often I go straight from one thing to the next without stopping, giving things a chance to slow down and catch up before I bolt off in another direction." Yep, that's me, I thought as I patiently tried it again and again.



Photo by Elizabeth Geitz

The Women and Their Woods program is administered by the Delaware Highlands Conservancy and Penn State Forest Resources Extension with support from the US Forest Service at Grey Towers, Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, and PA DCNR Department of Conservation and Recreation.

For additional information, please contact:

Amanda Subjin  
Delaware Highlands  
Conservancy  
(570) 226-3164  
conserve  
@delawarehighlands.org

Allyson Muth  
Penn State Natural  
Resources Extension  
(814) 865-3208  
abm173@psu.edu



DELAWARE  
HIGHLANDS  
CONSERVANCY



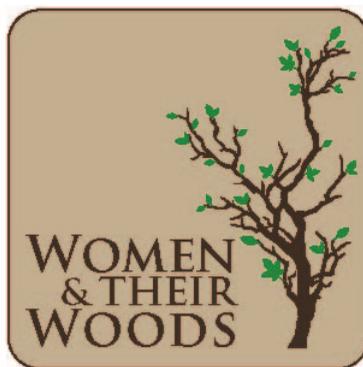
PENN STATE



College of  
Agricultural  
Sciences



GREY TOWERS  
National Historic Site



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

**Women and Their Woods** is a dynamic, fun, and informative program that teaches women to effectively care for their lands. **Women and Their Woods** emphasizes conservation stewardship and the value of intact forestlands and instills in women landowners a sense of confidence in their abilities to meet the challenges of forestland ownership.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful. Please contact us for further information on how to be involved.

## 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 [conserve@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:conserve@delawarehighlands.org) and specify if you would like to receive our mailings electronically or continue to receive hard copies in the mail.

*...Continued from page 1*

While the maxim, “Only dead fish go with the flow,” is somewhat humorous and may have something to teach us, it is also true that one cannot fish for trout against the flow. There is no way to make a fly go upstream. To catch a trout, you carefully place the fly in the moving stream and let it float down just as a real bug would do. As I watched my fly gently, effortlessly float time and time again down the creek, I began to sense how I need to do that more often in my own life.

“Go with the flow” is a way to peace, a way to be in harmony with nature, a way to relax into what is meant to be. Doing things the hard way, swimming upstream as it were all the time, is just not necessary. While some of us have visions of changing our little part of the world thereby going against the flow, to do so continually can be exhausting, wearing and counter-productive.

As my friend and I stood on the banks of the Shohola I felt the presence of those many generations before us who had stood on that same land, gazed at that same creek, and fished it. The connectivity to the past was palpable, connecting souls long gone with those still here and those yet to come in a timeless appreciation of nature which envelops, nurtures, and instructs us all.

May it still be here for many generations to come for their pure joy and to teach them the time-honored lessons of life.

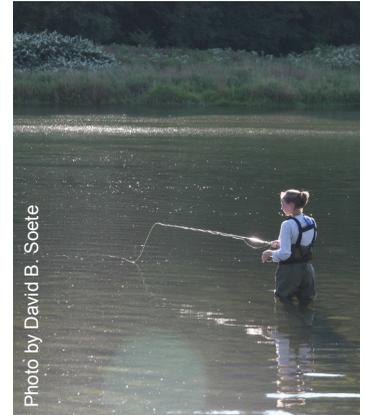


Photo by David B. Soete

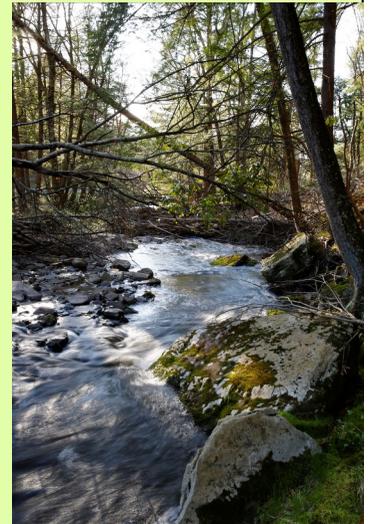
## A Final Affection

By Paul Zimmer

I love the accomplishments of trees,  
How they try to restrain great storms  
And pacify the very worms that eat them.  
Even their deaths seem to be considered.

I fear for trees, loving them so much.  
I am nervous about each scar on bark,  
Each leaf that browns. I want to  
Lie in their crotches and sigh,  
Whisper of sun and rains to come.

Sometimes on summer evenings I step  
Out of my house to look at trees  
Propping darkness up to the silence.



*...Continued on back cover* **3**

# Foresters scrambling to save state's hemlock trees from insect invaders

By Don Hopey

State and federal foresters are looking for an eastern hemlock version of Superman. Their search for a “bulletproof” genetic strain of Pennsylvania’s state tree is an important part of a new, multi-branched plan to save as many of the stream-shading evergreens as possible from an invasive and voracious Asian insect, the hemlock woolly adelgid.

“Pennsylvania’s state tree is under deadly attack by the hemlock woolly adelgid,” said DCNR Secretary Ellen Ferretti, “and our Bureau of Forestry has mounted a comprehensive and science-based battle plan that addresses both the non-native, invasive insect and the invaluable forest species it is killing.” The state agency has allocated almost \$500,000 for hemlock preservation this year, compared with just \$17,000 in 2013.

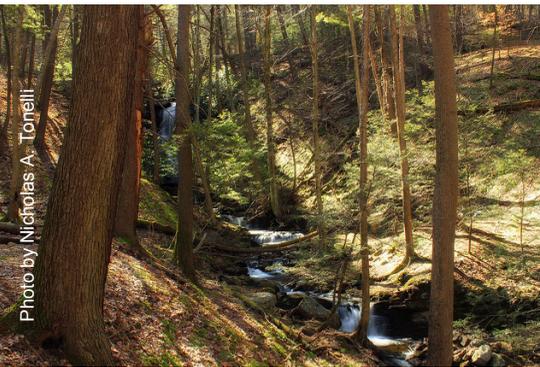


Photo by Nicholas A. Tonelli

Donald Eggen, chief of the agency’s forest pest management division, said pesticides, which have been used since 2004, provide a short-term response to adelgid infestations. The introduction of the predatory beetles and research targeting pest-resistant hemlocks are promising, long-term approaches.

He said scientists are already studying the genetics of a less-than-2-acre hemlock grove in New Jersey that has survived multiple waves of adelgid infestation.

“Maybe those pest-resistant trees might make up 1 percent of all the hemlocks. We call them bulletproof,” Mr.

Eggen said. “And they may be our best bet, long term, to preserve select hemlock habitats.”

Hemlocks are a slow-growing tree species that can eventually reach great heights. They grow to 175 feet tall and can live up to 900 years. According to the U.S. Forest Service **they fill an important ecological role, providing shade to cool streams where native brook trout live, wildlife cover, forest aesthetics and recreational opportunities.**

While hemlocks make up less than 10 percent of the Appalachian forest, Mr. Eggen said that where they do exist they are a “foundation species,” meaning that everything

*...Continued on next page*

## WomenOwningWoodlands.net

You told us your favorite part is reading stories from other landowners...check it out...there are new stories! (And we are looking for stories from you!) Please send them to Amanda at [conserve@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:conserve@delawarehighlands.org).



You’ll also find information applicable to your forest landownership and connect through nearby events for women landowners. [www.WomenOwningWoodlands.net](http://www.WomenOwningWoodlands.net)

...Continued from page 4 else that lives near those trees, plant or animal, exists because of the hemlock.

The hemlock woolly adelgid — or HWA for short — has been munching its way through the Appalachian's hemlock habitats since the 1950s when, according to the Forest Service, it was accidentally brought into the country from Asia, most likely in a shipment of plants. Adelgids don't fly but their sticky egg sacks move from tree to tree by attaching to humans or animals and especially birds.

The sap-sucking insects feed on new growth branches, draining the life out of the trees. They lay their eggs on the underside of the flat hemlock needles, and their name comes from a white waxy egg coating that resembles a tiny tuft of wool.

The bugs, which have moved in waves from the southern Appalachians toward the north and west, already have wiped out all of the hemlock in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, and 95 percent of those in Shenandoah National Park in Virginia. In Pennsylvania, infestations have been found in 58 of the state's 67 counties.

"The scale of the problem is pretty big," said Rick Turcotte, a U.S. Forest Service entomologist in Morgantown, W.Va., who has worked with state officials on the hemlock conservation plan. "They have to decide where in the state the trees are most important for ecological or historical reasons. Due to cost, we're looking at targeting those trees."

Ground zero in the state's battle to preserve the hemlock is Cook Forest State Park, on the borders of Clarion, Jefferson and Forest counties.

The adelgid was first discovered in the park in March 2013, and park manager Ryan Borcz said park employees and volunteers, along with the Forest Service and the Nature Conservancy, have been working feverishly to keep the adelgid from infesting the "Forest Cathedral" and 10 other old growth areas covering more than a quarter of the park's 8,500 acres.

The hemlocks in those areas are among the oldest and largest in the eastern U.S. and include the famous Seneca Hemlock, which stands 147 feet tall, has a 4-foot-diameter trunk and is approximately 350 years old.

Mr. Eggen said he's optimistic that a state strategy focusing on high-value hemlock stands will succeed, unless freezing temperatures are eliminated by a warming climate. "We will be able to preserve the eastern hemlock," he said. "Will they be as abundant everywhere 10 or 15 or 20 years from now? No, they will be highly impacted. But they will survive as much as cold winters will allow.

"The worst-case scenario is climate change causes our winters to warm up and the winters don't kill off the adelgids. Then we'll look like the Blue Ridge in Virginia where there's not one hemlock — where there's 100 percent mortality."

*Reprinted and edited for length from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, December 8, 2014.*



# Women and Their Woods Spring Retreat Weekend

On April 25-26 in Milford, PA, the birthplace of the American conservation movement, Women and Their Woods graduates, friends, and professionals gathered to share experiences, learn new skills and get their hands in the dirt to plant American chestnut seedlings on this historic property.

Saturday began with a guided tour of the Grey Towers mansion and a history of Gifford and Cornelia Pinchot's work in conservation. Participant introductions led to discoveries between new friends about otters, beavers, apple orchards, as well as the insects and diseases each of us are facing on our forests.



Lively discussions about family dynamics, timber management, invasive species and a true love of nature filled the mansion as the group enjoyed a catered lunch. During the afternoon, the group wandered the grounds of Grey Towers with Dr. Beth Brantley of Penn State - Mont Alto and learned tree identification and saw firsthand some of the insect and diseases common in Penn's Woods.

The following day, Women and Their Woods participants, American Chestnut Foundation volunteers, members of the Schocopee Hunt Club, the Yale School of Forestry Society of American Foresters chapter, and local landowners joined together at the nearby Milford Experimental Forest. Leila Pinchot introduced folks to her family's 1,119 acre property, protected with a conservation easement through the Forest Legacy Program, and provided an overview of the numerous forest stewardship projects taking place on the land, including the American chestnut plantation. After a trek into the forest to the planting location, Sara Fitzsimmons of the American Chestnut Foundation provided a demonstration on proper chestnut seedling planting techniques



and instructions on the proper data inventory necessary to track which seedling was planted with each numbered stake; a process necessary for tracking progeny of the seedlings planted at the sight. **Folks then got to work planting 465 American chestnut seedlings on the property!**



Throughout the weekend, attendees also had the opportunity to network with other forest landowners and professionals, and to share stories.

For more information about the American Chestnut Foundation and their work to reintroduce the American Chestnut to our forests, visit [www.acf.org](http://www.acf.org).

## Chestnut Carrot Bisque Recipe

*Special thanks to Linda Harding, a participant during the weekend's events, for sharing the below recipe.*

- |                                      |                          |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 carrots diced                      | 1/2 cup sweet red wine   |
| 2 celery stalks diced                | 1/2 cup parsley          |
| 1 onion diced                        | 1/2 tsp tarragon         |
| 1 parsnip diced                      | 1/4 tsp allspice         |
| 2 Tbls butter or oil                 | 1/2 tsp kosher salt      |
| 1 1/2 pounds thawed frozen chestnuts | 1/2 tsp cinnamon         |
| 6 cups chicken broth                 | 1/8 tsp nutmeg           |
| 1/4 cup apple juice concentrate      | Plain yogurt for garnish |

Sauté carrots, onion, celery and parsnips in butter or oil until soft (~8 mins). Add chestnuts and cook 5 minutes. Add broth, bring to a boil and reduce heat to low. Add apple juice concentrate, wine, parsley, tarragon, allspice, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg.

Stir and simmer 15 minutes until vegetables are fork tender. Puree 2/3 of the soup and return to pot. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Garnish each bowl with a teaspoon of plain yogurt and serve hot.

Makes approximately 4-6 servings.

...Continued from page 7

When I die I want to slant up  
Through those trunks so slowly

I will see each rib of bark, each whorl;  
Up through the canopy, the subtle veins  
And lobes touching me with final affection;  
Then to hover above and look down  
One last time on the rich upliftings,  
The circle that loves the sun and moon,  
To see at last what held the darkness up.



## Forest Landowner Perspective

**This newsletter is YOUR space!** Share your connections to the forest with other WaTW newsletter readers. Send Amanda an email at [conserve@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:conserve@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!



- **INSIDE**
- Pure Joy
- Scrambling to save hemlocks
- Weekend retreat recap
- Poem: A Final Affection

Women and Their Woods Newsletter



Delaware Highlands Conservancy  
serving New York and Pennsylvania  
P.O. Box 218 Hawley, PA 18428-0218

**DELAWARE HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY**

Non-Profit Org.  
Hawley, PA  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 42