

Virginia Forest Landowner e-Update

October 2023

Featured Events

Fifteen Minutes in the Forest

- 12:15 every other Friday
- Watch new & archived videos on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube Premier](#)

VA Tree Farm Foundation TF Tours

- October 6 – Bland*
- October 11 – Essex and King & Queen*

*These tours will be combined with the Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tours

Generation NEXT Legacy Planning

- October 20 & 21 – Chatham
- November 9 – Richmond

Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tours

- October 6 – Bland*
- October 11 – Essex and King & Queen*
- October 12 – Mecklenburg
- October 20 – Warren

*These tours will be combined with the Virginia Tree Farm Foundation Tours

Visit the [Events Calendar](#) for details!
Social Media



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Good Morning Forest Update Subscribers,

Last month Peanut, the farmer we lease our fields to, completed his second cutting of hay, making many parts of our land more accessible. While exploring some of these less-visited areas with the dogs recently, I discovered a field full of dark circles of grass – some small, some large. I began to wonder if I was in an M. Night Shyamalan movie. But a quick Google search revealed that what I had on my hands was something not extraterrestrial but equally interesting – a fairy ring infestation.

Fairy rings are caused by up to 60 different species of fungi that feed on decaying organic matter such as tree stumps, logs, leaves, thatch, or roots. Growth of fairy ring fungi begins in the center of the ring and expands outward in a relatively uniform, circular pattern. There are three distinct types of fairy rings.

Type I produces dead grass in arcs, rings, or patches. The fungi live on soil organic matter produced by dead thatch. Over time, the soil and thatch harden and repel water, killing the grass. Some fungi release ammonium nitrogen that reaches toxic levels in the soil with the same result – dead grass. Type II fairy rings produce arcs or circles of fast-growing, dark green grass that look like too much fertilizer was applied to that area. The fungi release nutrients as they feed on thatch or other organic matter, such as an old tree trunk, tree roots or buried scrap wood. Type III fairy rings are circles of mushrooms that occur in wet seasons, particularly in the fall. Mushroom folklore says these rings occur after bands of fairies dance in the area.

While I love imaging unseen fairies dancing in my fields, the fairy rings I found fall into the Type II category. Fairy rings are harmless and temporary and should go away as environmental conditions change. And while some people may find them unsightly, I think they are beautiful. You can see photos of my fairy rings on the [VFLEP Facebook](#) page and learn more about them from [Wisconsin Horticulture Extension](#).

In other news, the [Fall 2023 edition of the Virginia Forest Landowner Update](#) is now available. In this edition:

[An Introduction to Mineral Rights in Virginia](#)

By: Michelle Nelson, Virginia Department of Energy

Mineral Rights In the United States, land ownership is sometimes separated into two distinct rights: surface rights and mineral rights. Surface rights grant the owner permission to use the land's surface for various purposes such as farming, construction, or recreational activities. Mineral rights grant legal authority to individuals or entities to explore for and extract geologic resources found beneath the land surface. These valuable resources can include industrial minerals, gemstones, oil, natural gas, coal, gold, silver, copper, and other metal ores, and aggregate. According to Virginia code § 55.1-1101: Conveyance, devise, or grant without words of limitation, when any real estate transaction is made without words of limitation, it will pass as a fee simple or other whole estate and free of any condition or restriction.

- [Forest Stewardship Program](#)
- [USDA Forest Service](#)

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This means that the property owner has control over the surface and subsurface rights unless otherwise noted. [Read more...](#)

[New Name, Same Pest - Spongy Moth in Virginia](#)

By: Katlin Mooneyham, Virginia Department of Forestry
 Shakespeare once wrote, "What's in a name?" In the case of the spongy moth, the insect formerly known as gypsy moth, the new name refers to the spongy texture of this insect's egg masses. The common name for *Lymantria dispar* was formally changed by The Entomological Society of America in February 2022. The name change also references the common name for this insect in other countries. In France the common name is "*spongieuse*" translating to squishy or spongy. The pest's common name in Germany and Turkey also references sponges in moth nomenclature. Now that we have mixed some etymology in with our entomology, let's talk about this pest in Virginia. [Read more...](#)

See below for featured events and find a full listing here: [Events Calendar](#).

Featured Events

[Fifteen Minutes in the Forest](#)

Fifteen Minutes in the Forest videos are shown every other Friday at 12:15 on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube Premier](#)

- Oct. 13 - Chiggers - Mites that Bite
- Oct. 27 - Virginia's Hardwood Initiative
- Nov. 10 - Hellbender Habitat Restoration
- [Watch archived on our YouTube Channel](#)

[Virginia Tree Farm Foundation Tree Farm Tours](#)

The Virginia Forest Landowner Education Program partners with the Virginia Tree Farm Foundation to offer an annual series of Tree Farm tours. These tours bring woodland owners together to visit an active Tree Farm, learn about the Virginia Tree Farm Foundation, and provide fellowship among those who care about healthy woods and active woodland management. You do not need to be a Tree Farmer to attend.

- October 6 - Bland County*
 - \$25/person, \$45/couple
 - Registration is closed
- October 11 - Essex County*
 - \$25/person, \$45/couple
 - Register [online](#)
 - Register [by mail](#)

*These tours will be held in conjunction with the Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tours

[Generation NEXT Legacy Planning Workshops](#)

Learn how to pass your land and your legacy on to the next generation while keeping it intact, in forest, and in family ownership.

- Chatham
 - October 20-21
 - Friday evening and all-day Saturday
 - \$90 for up to 2 people
 - [Agenda](#)
- Richmond
 - November 9
 - 6 - 9:00 PM

- \$40 for up to 2 people
- [Agenda](#)
- Register [by mail](#)
- Register [online](#)

Fall Forestry & Wildlife Field Tours

Join landowners, natural resource professionals, and other outdoor lovers for day-long tours that explore a variety of sustainable forestry and wildlife management practices. Tours visit private, public, and industry-owned lands. Past tours have visited seedling nurseries, timber harvesting operations, sawmills, elk habitat, Christmas tree farms, and more.

- October 6 - Bland County* - registration is closed
- October 11 - Essex County*
- October 12 - Mecklenburg County
- October 20 - Warren County
- [Itineraries and register by mail](#)
- Register [online](#)

*These tours will be combined with the Virginia Tree Farm Foundation Tours

SAVE THE DATES FOR THE [2024 WOODS & WILDLIFE CONFERENCES](#)

February 10 - Wytheville

February 24 - Culpeper

Agendas and registration available in December.

[Visit the Blue Ridge PRISM website for programs on nonnative invasives](#)

*All the best,
Jennifer*

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