

# Virginia Forest Landowner e-Update

## May 2025

### Featured Events

#### Fifteen Minutes in the Forest

1. Fourth Fridays at 12:15
2. May 23: Slash Piles
3. Watch archived videos on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube Premier](#)

#### Woodland Owner Retreats

1. May 30-31
  1. Southwest Virginia Beginning Retreat, Abingdon
2. September 5-6
  1. Southeast Virginia Advanced Retreat, New Kent

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

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Good morning, Forest Update Subscribers,

Picture this: Snowville Virginia, Easter Sunday, 2025. Family has just arrived at the farm. Kids and dogs are running wild. And I sneeze. My first official sneeze of the 2025 allergy season.

The symptoms of hay fever, although probably around as long as humanity, were first medically described in 1819 by John Bostock, an English physician. The term hay fever, however, wasn't coined until 1828. But of course, this term isn't quite correct. What we are allergic to is pollen, not hay itself. And pollen is made by most flowering seed-producing plants, including trees. This was quite obvious at an event in Yale Virginia in early April, where the air was hazy with longleaf pine pollen. Pollen dust contains pollen grains; pollen grains consist of one or more vegetative cells and a reproductive cell. Pollen is transported by wind, water, insects, and birds to the female structures of plants, where fertilization occurs (and for trivia lovers – the study of pollen is called palynology).

The immune systems of allergy sufferers mistakenly identify pollen as a harmful substance. To protect us, immune systems produce chemicals, such as histamines, to defend against the pollen. And these chemicals are what cause us to sneeze, wheeze, cough, itch, water, and in general, suffer.

Historically, pollen allergy treatments included opium, topical bleeding, purging, courses of mercury, isolation, seaside vacations, yacht voyages, densely populated towns, smoking tobacco, and inhaling ammonium chloride. While we should obviously steer clear of most of these treatments, the vacationing and yachting do sound more fun than the Zyrtec I'm taking.

Fortunately, allergy season for many of us is temporary!

4. [Virginia Tree Farm Foundation](#)
5. [Virginia Forestry Association](#)
6. [Forest Stewardship Program](#)
7. [USDA Forest Service](#)

#### **Contact**

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In the meantime, we have many educational events coming up. Please consider joining us to learn more about your woodlands.

#### **Full Events Calendar**

#### **Featured Events:**

##### **Fifteen Minutes in the Forest**

The award-winning Fifteen Minutes in the Forest video series features a wide-array of topics and are shown the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month at 12:15 PM on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube Premier](#)

1. May 23 – Brush Piles
2. June 27 – Before the Storm
3. [Watch 100+ Fifteen Minutes in the Forest videos on our YouTube Channel](#)

##### **Virginia Forestry Summit**

4. May 7-9
5. [Hotel Roanoke](#), Roanoke
6. Registration opens Spring 2025

##### **Protecting Family Land: Legacy Planning for Farm and Forest Owners**

Learn strategies for passing your forest and farmland on to your heirs in ways that save you money and keep the land intact and in rural use.

1. May 15 & 22
2. 6:30 – 9:00 PM
3. Abingdon
4. \$20/1 person, \$15 each additional family member - includes dinner and a copy of [Legacy Planning: A Guide for Virginia Landowners](#)
5. Register [online](#)

##### **Generation NEXT Deep Dive: The Family Factor**

Discussions about what happens to family forestland when mom and dad die are difficult. Our experts share tips on how to make these conversations go smoothly.

1. May 13
2. 6:30 – 8:30 PM
3. Webinar

4. \$10/family – includes a copy of [Legacy Planning: A Guide for Virginia Landowners](#)
5. Register [online](#)

### **Forest Carbon Science**

Raccoon Creek Pinelands is delighted to host a presentation on forest carbon science by Dr. Thomas O'Halloran of Clemson University. Dr O'Halloran is an expert in quantifying carbon storage in southern pine forest systems. His research is being used to inform carbon crediting projects which hold potential economic benefits for landowners. This is an outstanding opportunity for us to learn from a leader in the field – one who's not selling anything! For agency staff it will better equip you to talk knowledgeably to landowners, and for landowners it will be beneficial when speaking with a carbon broker. **Please RSVP to Bill Owen** at [fanofbyrd@gmail.com](mailto:fanofbyrd@gmail.com) **by May 8** if you plan to attend.

- May 16
- 9:30 – 2:00
- Raccoon Creek Pinelands, Yale
- Free – includes lunch

### **National Deer Association (NDA) Learn and Burn**

This course will provide students the opportunity to learn about the history, benefits, planning, preparation, and implementation of prescribed fire by participating in a live burn (weather permitting).

1. May 17
2. Spring Hill
3. \$250 (includes NDA membership)
4. Register [online](#)

### **16<sup>th</sup> Annual Vegetation Management Workshop**

This workshop for natural resource professionals and landowners covers land and weed management tips from a variety of professionals. Continuing education credits will be offered.

1. May 20
2. 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
3. Colonial Heights

4. \$75 (includes lunch)
5. Register [online](#)

### **Landowner Retreats**

Landowner Retreats are co-hosted by the Virginia Department of Forestry and Virginia Cooperative Extension. Retreats provide information on hardwood and pine forest management, legacy planning, management planning, and more. They combine classroom, field trip, and hands-on activities to teach concepts of sustainable woodland and wildlife management. Registration opens 8 weeks prior to events.

7. Southwest Virginia - Beginning Woodland Owner Retreat
  1. May 30-31
  2. [Southwest Virginia 4H Education Center](#), Abingdon
  3. \$60/person, \$120/couple - includes 5 meals
  4. On-site lodging available for an additional \$30/person/night
  5. Register [by mail](#)
  6. Register [online](#)
8. Southeast Virginia - Beyond the Basics: Advanced Woodland Owner Retreat
  1. September 5-6
  2. [New Kent Forestry Center](#), Providence Forge
  3. Registration opens this summer

### **Teaching Trees for Teachers**

A 2-day training for middle and high school teachers who wish to incorporate forestry into a science or agriculture curriculum. The workshop focuses on local forest ecology, management, and products, and includes real-world, field-based activities for students. Class includes 14 hours of instruction, two SOL-correlated Project Learning Tree modules and related supplies, and ideas for incorporating forestry field study into classes.

1. \$25 (lodging reimbursement is available to those travelling outside the area)
2. July 16-17, Raphine, register [online](#)

3. July 30-31, Providence Forge, registration coming soon
4. Contact Ellen Powell,  
[ellen.powell@dof.virginia.gov](mailto:ellen.powell@dof.virginia.gov)

**Visit the Blue Ridge PRISM website for programs on nonnative invasives**

*I look forward to seeing you in person this year!*

*Jennifer*

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