



Serving Adams, Brown, Fayette, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence,
Pike, Ross, and Scioto Counties

Founded 1995
Our Mission . . .

To encourage through education and demonstration the sound management and appreciation of woodlands, wildlife, soil and water resources. To provide information and technical assistance to members interested in the planning, management, and the use of forestry resources for economic and recreational purposes.

May Outing with SOFA

It was a gorgeous day to head up to Camp Perry for some shopping and shooting on 16 May! I'm not certain that any of us went home with new weapons, but I know Brent has a new sweatshirt from last year's Civilian Marksmanship Program National Matches and I have a new Army green camo binder for my notes (look for the "in my defense, I was left unsupervised" patch . . . it's wholly accurate). Kate put on a delicious spread for lunch of sloppy joes, salads, cheeses, desserts, and drinks. Our hosts from the base joined us in the feed as well, so we made some new friends. We had about a dozen people, including two of Kate Roy's family, on the firing line after lunch. Most shot pellet rifles, some tried pellet pistols (I heard a few plinks of pellets meeting targets, including my own), and a few tried the simulator. Our range master and Kate's youngest were very impressive, but Rick Wright did some frighteningly accurate shooting too! As usual, a good time was had by all and I hope we can do it again soon.

We had a very brief meeting while the sloppy joes were settling. Some topics discussed included starting a Camp Canopy essay contest and developing a flyer to advertise scholarship opportunities; ways to encourage new memberships; developing a SOFA biography that highlights our members' experiences and accomplishments; and administrative topics for the August officers meeting. We do have a lot of experience in our group and many people who are very successful within the timber industry. The idea of coming up with stories of who we are and what we do seems like it would be a very powerful tool to attract people to SOFA. In your spare time, I'd encourage each of you to think about what you would want others to know about who we are and what we do. We can discuss this a little further at our next meeting which will be held at Tim Shoemaker's property where Roger Yost will be talking about chainsaw safety and demonstrating how to take down trees with different senerios. Details and directions are below.

Keep working on your name tags too. Bring them to the June meeting and show them off!

Cheers. Kellv

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Southern Ohio Forestland Association

A WILDLIFE RESPONSE TO FOREST THINNING

On a commercially thinned a 25-acre stand of 2nd growth forest on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington that was a mostly Douglas Fir stand. It was interesting to see the raptors move into the thinned stand almost immediately. By spacing the trees about 15 feet apart our local red tailed hawks were able now to fly through the property and utilize the forest for breeding. Because light could now reach the forest floor, understory trees appeared almost immediately in the form of Western Red Cedars, Hemlocks and Grand Firs. The stand took on an "old growth" look within about 5 years. It was really a lovely transition to witness.

There will be another commercially thin of 15 acres down the hill from this first site. These acres were previously pasture grass that we replanted into a Douglas Fir forest. This new thinning area includes a large pond so, working with biologists, planning to leave woody debris around that area to provide habitat for salamanders and frogs among other species. Also create some snags for wildlife and plant an occasional maple tree to provide habitat and food resources for squirrels and birds. With the pasture around the pond about 40 years ago a Marsh Owl arrived and happily utilized the trees as perches and cover to hunt for mice in the neighbor's adjacent pasture. The trees also provided cover for deer, elk and bear to approach the pond to drink without being exposed. It will be interesting to see what wildlife emerges once these 15 acres near the pond are thinned. Another thought is to leave some areas untouched in this plan to address wildlife needs in this area.

Spring Ramblings

I have been trying to think of something new to write about and I have not had a lot of success in that mental process. As most of you have learned I am a creature of reflection and reminiscing. Spring is when all creation wakes up from a doleful winter. It's a time of new life and the earth and all her inhabitants begin to dress for the grand ball of celebration in life. It's a time of blooms, courting, birthing and growing. In short it is a spectacular gala of God's greatness.

Spring finds me out and about and trying to find time to engage in way more activities than the day has time for. I enjoy most of the four seasons, except for the extreme heat and extreme cold. If I could choose a favorite, Spring would be my most likely choice. There are so many things happening and so much to garner my attention. As I sat here on a rainy dreary morning and filling my time at the laptop reading some forums, facebook pages and general web surfing a couple of topics spurred my interest. One was simply someone sharing an observation of wildlife while they were out turkey hunting. It fostered some thoughts of my spring to date, and I thought I'd share some diary type entries from my spring activities.

Early March, I have just finished up a marginal Maple syrup season and I'm cleaning up gear and disinfecting sap lines. I renew my disdain for squirrels as I find more and more damage from those devilish creatures chewing on my sap lines. I plot ways to defeat them in future seasons. I am very tired of Maple work by this time and sometimes wonder why I do it, but my heart knows that Maple syrup is a blessing that a lot of my friends enjoy. I believe that a meal with Maple syrup temporarily transcends life's struggles and is a soothing balm for our hearts, if only for a few moments. I think I'll still do it for a while. It's time in the woods and the woods are starting to get more lively.

March 2024 jump started spring with unseasonable warmth and rain. It was only a few days into March when I heard that first Gobble of a wild Turkey float down off the ridges by the house. Last fall I struggled to find the flocks of turkeys as I hunted, and my mind was distraught with thoughts of disaster for my prized game bird. Spring brought an easing to those fears as I heard those gobbles grow into a chorus off the hills. One evening as I went out to feed our dog, Jelly, I heard a very recognizable sound of wing beats as turkeys went to roost on the hillside above the house. Then next morning the choir was in full form as hens and gobblers both filled the air with their musical welcome to the day. I watched as fourteen turkeys descended to the forest floor and my heart was full and my concerns relieved. Another day I looked out to see two big gobblers strutting their stuff for a hen within 100 yards of the back door.

March started the mind turning towards the streams as I knew fish would begin to bite more as the water warmed. March also brings out another critter I am particularly fond of. The salamanders that use our vernal pools to lay their eggs in. They are just plain cool creatures. I saw spotted, tiger, spring and blue spotted this year.

I can't forget our other forest friends. All the mammals are preparing to have young and birds are nesting. This is time for maintenance of our bird boxes. Clean out and repair the bluebird boxes first and then the wood duck boxes. Wren boxes are next. Don't be too quick to stop feeding as they need a lot of energy now and food is the most scarce in March and early April. Eagles and hawks are early nesters and I enjoy watching them court in the air. I particularly enjoyed a day on Paint Creek fishing. I noticed the calls of an osprey cruising the creek for a meal. I was catching a lot of white bass (not one of my choices for eating) and I decided to see if the osprey would take one if I set it afloat. I dispatched one as quickly as possible and tossed it into the water to float down the creek. It didn't take more than a couple minutes and my aerial friend noticed it. The Osprey chattered and moment by moment circled lower to the water, building his/her comfort zone to take the free offering. Finally, when the fish had floated a safe distance the fish hawk tucked its wings and plummeted to the water to snatch up its meal. It flew away to enjoy the gift and that made me happy.

I don't believe I have enough room for all the things spring has shared with me in a short newsletter article, but I want to share a couple more.

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Spring puts me in the woods turkey hunting. I love engaging in a duel with a spring gobbler, trying to convince him to come into gun range. Yet, so much more is happening in the spring woods. This is migration season for songbirds and they are showing up in mass. Warblers are singing, residents are nesting and hummingbirds are humming. I often stop and listen. It takes concentration to pick out the individuals in the cacophony. One of my favorites is the Hooded Warbler and the Prothonotary Warbler. Wildflowers are new every day and the succession of beauty is amazing. It starts with trout lilies and spring beauties through trilliums, blue bells and thousands more.

One of my pet peeves is how people leave their trips into the woods. I believe we should leave as little evidence as possible that we have been there. That means treading lightly and avoiding stepping on plants, breaking things or any other destructive transgressions as possible. I know we're going to leave signs and tracks and in a dense forest floor you can't avoid every plant, but all I ask is to be conscious of how you leave your trek. One thing that does steam me and is 100% avoidable is trash. I fume over all the trash I see in the woods. Come on people, if you can pack it in you can pack it out....geesh. I also have a deep disdain for party balloons. I think I have seen thousands of balloons, that are not biodegradable, in the woods. I don't give a dam who got married, who had a birthday or anniversary, I don't want to find your party favor in the deep woods. I imagine I may offend someone with this statement, but I am firm in my feelings.

Another conversation I had on one of my hunting trips with a friend was about the state of our wildlife habitat. There's a lot we can do to make life better for our forest friends. I encourage all of us to look into projects we can do to enhance our environment. Well I am getting too long winded with these ramblings, so thank our Lord for such a beautiful world and love it like you mean it.

Dana

COLUMBUS, Ohio (Date) – Ohio's wild turkey hunting season has proven fruitful, with hunters across the state checking in a total of 12,934 birds as of Sunday, May 5, according to data released by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife.

This year's tally reflects the culmination of 16 days of hunting in the 83 counties constituting the south zone, along with nine days of hunting in the northeast zone. Additionally, the youth hunting weekend on April 13-14 saw the harvest of 1,785 turkeys. Comparatively, during the spring 2023 season over the same period, hunters harvested 12,755 turkeys. The current figure surpasses the three-year average for wild turkeys checked by this point in the season, which stands at 11,294 birds from 2021 to 2023.

The top 10 counties for wild turkey harvest in the 2024 season thus far are Belmont (382), Monroe (385), Tuscarawas (381), Washington (358), Gallia (349), Muskingum (346), Meigs (331), Jefferson (329), Guernsey (323), and Harrison (314).



A Note to all Members/ active and inactive

There are a lot of reasons that many members are not able to attend our monthly meetings. That being said, we miss you, and hope you are well. We would like to hear from you, to know that you still have an interest in our group, and what is going on in your world. There will be a place in the newsletter to publish your message (only if you give permission) to let everyone know about you. The weather is changing in southern Ohio, so sit down and drop a few lines to me. Email tshoe140@horizonview.net

FACEBOOK

Check often, there is timely information, that cannot make it into the newsletter!

It is a private group, so you may want to register. After registering you will be able to post entries. This will enable us to put out immediate information, such as cancellations, or other plan changes. In order to register, open Facebook search for "S.O.F.A." There you will be able to join the group.

Tentative SOFA Meetings 2024

June 13	Chain Saw Demonstration & cook-out @ the Shoemaker's
July	Farm Tour To be announced
August	Yearly Planning Meeting / No regular Meeting
September	Pike SWC Youth Day at Pike Lake
October	Farm Tour To be announced
November	Auction / fund raiser
December	Annual Meeting / Christmas Party

A DAY in the WOODS

We are proud to announce the lineup of events for the 2024 edition – our 13th season!

- June 14 – Getting a Handle on Invasive Species
- July 12 – Native Grasslands and Pollinator Habitat
- August 9 – Prescribed Fire: Ecology & Implementation (Smokey's Birthday!)
- September 13 – Night Flyers (5pm)
- October 11 – Critter Homes: Wildlife Habitat Improvements
- November 8 – Forest Stand Improvement

You can find our 2024 brochure on our [Facebook Page](#) and [Website](#) for any updates.

We look forward to seeing you in 2024!

Jessica

Jessica Burns

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SOFA DUES

Please note! We don't want to loose anyone as a member, If your dues have been forgotten for the past few years, **NO WORRIES!** If you simply pay the current years dues, you will be completely caught up! We value your involvement, and would love to see you at the next meeting! Our Officers try hard to put on informative programs, as well as fun things that we “Outdoors People” like to do! See you soon!

Pine And Spruce Blight

Diplodia Tip Blight, caused by the fungus *Diplodia pinea*, primarily affects coniferous trees such as pines and spruces. The fungus overwinters on infected cones and needles and releases spores during periods of rainfall or high humidity, often in spring or early summer. Pines like Austrian pine, Scots pine, and ponderosa pine, along with spruces like the Colorado blue spruce and Norway spruce, are particularly susceptible to this disease.

Early detection is crucial in combating Diplodia Tip Blight. Signs and symptoms typically appear in spring or early summer. Stressed trees, such as those experiencing drought, nutrient deficiencies, or hail damage, are even more susceptible to the disease. Here are some things to look for to help identify a potential outbreak:

Stunted Growth: Abnormal growth patterns, especially in new shoots or branch tips, which may appear stunted or deformed.

Brown Needles: Browning or reddish-brown discoloration of needles, usually starting at the tips and progressing towards the base. This discoloration may be accompanied by resin droplets on infected branches, particularly during periods of active growth.

Black Spots on Cones: Infected cones may develop black spots or streaks, serving as a telltale sign of Diplodia Tip Blight.

If you do in fact discover that Diplodia Tip Blight is impacting trees on your land, here are a few tips to help manage the issue:

Cultural Practices: Implement practices promoting tree health and vigor, such as proper irrigation, fertilization, and pruning. Prune trees during dry periods to minimize the risk of fungal spread and ensure good air circulation within the canopy.

Fungicide Applications: In severe cases or high-value stands, consider using fungicides to control Diplodia Tip Blight. Recommended fungicides include copper-based products or those containing propiconazole or thiophanate-methyl. Consult with local forestry experts or arborists for specific fungicide recommendations and application methods.

Sanitation: Remove and destroy infected branches and needles to reduce fungal inoculum within the forest environment. This helps prevent further spread of the disease to healthy trees.

Monitoring and Early Detection: Regularly inspect your trees for signs of Diplodia Tip Blight, particularly during spring and early summer. Prompt identification and action can help contain the disease and minimize its impact on your forest.

Two campers are walking through the woods when a huge brown bear suddenly appears in the clearing about 50 feet in front of them. The bear sees the campers and begins to head toward them. The first guy drops his backpack, digs out a pair of sneakers, and frantically begins to put them on. The second guy says, "What are you doing? Sneakers won't help you outrun that bear." "I don't need to outrun the bear", the first guy says. "I just need to outrun you."

Two crows were in a field when they noticed a figure that looked like a man in the distance. "See that over there? What is that?", says the first crow. The second crow takes a long look, "That's a scarecrow. Looks authentic, doesn't it." "How can you tell it's a scarecrow and not a person?", replies the first crow. "Look at it's hand. No cellphone", says the second crow.

A redneck's father passed away in his sleep. So in the morning, he calls 911 to come pick up the body. The 911 operator told him that she would send someone out right away. "Where do you live?" asked the operator. He replied, "At the end of Eucalyptus Drive." The operator asked, "Can you spell that for me?" There was a long pause and finally he said, "How 'bout if I drag him over to Oak Street and you pick him up there?"

If you can't Laugh once in a while, you just as well stay home!

CHAIN SAW



Demonstration

THURSDAY JUNE 13th

Chain Saw Demonstration

Shoemaker Tree Farm

3681 US Hwy 23

Chillicothe, Oh 45601

Covered dish

Brent will be fixing Hot Dogs and Burgers

5 PM til ?

(Tentative: Tree felling demonstration @ 4 PM)

S.O.F.A.

3681 US Highway 23

Chillicothe Oh 45601



Visit us on the web at www.ohiosofa.org

Meeting locations will vary from month to month, watch for announcements!

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____ STATE _____
EMAIL _____

If you own woodland, in which county? _____ Acres Owned? _____

New Member _____ Renewal _____ Scholarship Fund Donation \$ _____ Thank-You

Mail application / renewal & check to Jim Meacham, 4332 St Rt 776, Jackson Oh 45640

Make Check Payable to Southern Ohio Forestland Association (SOFA)

Individual \$15, Family \$25, Partnership, Association, or Corporation \$25