

# BRANCHING OUT

*Maryland's Woodland Stewardship Educator*



University of Maryland Extension – Woodland Stewardship Education  
<http://extension.umd.edu/woodland>



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## Spring is a Time to Assess Your Woodland

Spring is here. And with the warming temperatures and the new growth in the environment comes inspiration to get outdoors and to get to work on your property. Whether you have a few trees in a suburban lot or several acres of established woodlands, Spring offers a great time to assess your property's conditions.

Take a walk around and assess your trees' conditions. The winter's snow, ice and winds may have brought down limbs or wreaked other damage that require your attention. Full trees may have come down as well. Consider what to do with the downed trees or limbs by assessing their impact on the surrounding plant life. Are the limbs completely down, or do they need to be pruned off the tree? Are they tangled up in the canopy where they can affect other trees? Did the tree suffer considerable damage when the limbs were lost?

Each property owner's situation will be different, and the [Woodland Stewardship Education program Publications Library](#) has a wide variety of fact sheets that can assist your efforts. For example, downed limbs can provide the basis for wildlife brush piles. Learn more about building these important habitat elements by reading the University of Maryland Extension fact sheet, "Wildlife Management: Brush Piles," at [this link](#). Best practices for dealing with trees that may need to be removed can be found in the fact sheet "Forest Thinning; A Landowner's Tool for Healthy Woods," which can be [found here](#).

Additionally, if you discover that the projects on your property are beyond your expertise, you may want to consult two other publications. If you have a small-acreage property (less than 10 acres) in Maryland, consult our "[Small Acreage Professional Foresters Directory](#)" for individuals and companies that provide important services, such as forest appraisals, wildlife habitat improvement, reforestation and tree planting, and cost-share program coordination. If you have a larger property, consult the "[Maryland Consulting & Industrial Foresters Directory](#)." The professionals listed serve the state with a wide variety of expertise.

As you walk through your woodlands, take time to assess the presence of invasive plant species. Learn about Oriental bittersweet in this issue on page 5. If you are lucky to have a stand of old oaks or hickories, you may see the subject of this issue's

"Woodland Wildlife Spotlight," the Red-bellied woodpecker. Read more about it on page 4.

We also invite you to welcome two new staff members to the Woodland Stewardship Education program. Read about Agnes Kedmenecz and Stephanie Jackson on page 2. Among her many duties, Agnes will be coordinating the upcoming Maryland Woodland Stewards workshop, which is announced on page 2 as well. There's also this issue's Brain Tickler to ponder, and the Events Calendar to peruse. So now's the time to shake off the winter's blahs and enjoy Spring in your woodlands.



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## Welcome Agnes Kedmenecz & Stephanie Jacks to the Woodland Stewardship Education team

Hello, Branching Out Readers!

My name is Agnes Kedmenecz and I am pleased to be the new Woodland Stewardship Educator for the University of Maryland Extension at the Wye Research and Education Center on the Eastern Shore. I'm looking forward to coordinating the Maryland-Delaware Master Logger program and the Maryland Woodland Stewards program.

I moved to Maryland from West Virginia as a recent graduate from West Virginia University (WVU) with a Masters in Forestry. My focus was on woodland outreach, education and stewardship. This enhanced my skills for providing educational programs, and informed me of silvicultural practices. Before coming to WVU, I earned my Bachelor's degree in Biology focusing on Ecology, Conservation and Geography at Trent University in Ontario, Canada. I also acquired a degree in Education from the same university. Now, I'm eager to explore the woodlands and coastal plains of Maryland while providing landowners and loggers with forestry knowledge.

I would also like to introduce Stephanie Jackson ([sjacks@umd.edu](mailto:sjacks@umd.edu)), also a new team member to the Woodland Stewardship Program. She will be on the administrative end to assist with the organization of the program.



Stephanie Jackson (left) & Agnes Kedmenecz

If you're interested in becoming a Maryland Woodland Steward or hosting a logging demo/walk, or maybe you just want to say 'Hi,' feel free to reach me at [akedmen@umd.edu](mailto:akedmen@umd.edu) or at 410-827-8056.

### Now Open! Nominations for the next Maryland Woodland Stewards Workshop!



The Maryland Woodland Stewards (MWS) program teaches enthusiastic individuals how to be good stewards of natural land, and good advocates for forest and wildlife stewardship in their community.

The next MWS workshop will be held October 4-7 at the Shepherd's Spring Retreat in Washington County. Nominate yourself or someone you know for the program; go to the MWS website at <http://extension.umd.edu/woodland/maryland-woodland-stewards> for more information and the application materials.

### This Issue's Brain Tickler ...

This small bird likes damp woods as well as early successional habitats to stage its display flights and to build its nests. But as Maryland's woodlands have



matured, its populations have been threatened. Fortunately, concerned groups are working to create suitable habitat for this species. What bird is this?



The photos in last issue's Brain Tickler showed leaves and nuts from shagbark hickory trees found at the Western Maryland Research & Education Center. Congratulations to Rob Meier for being the first to answer correctly the tree's species.

## Woodland Wildlife Spotlight: Red-Bellied Woodpecker

The first time you see one of these birds — perhaps as you walk in the woods, or perhaps as you watch your backyard feeder — you might be inclined to label them as “red-headed” woodpeckers. That name actually belongs to another species, which has red feathers covering its head. Instead, the red-bellied woodpecker is named for the adult male’s red belly, which is often difficult to see. Its other distinguishing features are barred wing, back, and tail feathers, and a stripe of red feathers across the bird’s head and neck. In the male, the stripe is uninterrupted; the female has a patch of grey feathers above her eyes.

The red-bellied woodpecker is common throughout Maryland, although it is less common in Garrett County. They are non-migratory, year-round residents throughout the majority of its range. They average 9 inches in length,

beak to create a cavity. During this time, he will try to attract a mate by calling and tapping on the wood around the cavity. When a female accepts, she will tap as well and helps him finish the cavity.

The same pair may nest in the same tree year after year, but will create a new cavity each year, often placing the new one beneath the one from the previous year. These holes can be up to 12 inches deep, with a cylindrical living space of 3 by 5 inches. The female lays her eggs atop the wood chips at the bottom of the cavity. The clutch usually consists of 2 to 6 eggs. In the bird’s northern range (southern New England to central Minnesota) they will raise one brood a year. In the south (southern Florida to eastern Texas), they can have up to three.



Left: Adult female Red-bellied woodpecker. Photo © Scott Martin, Macaulay Library/Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Center: The adult male’s rose-colored belly is often obscured by other feathers. Photo © mark kraus, Macaulay Library/Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Right: Adult male Red-bellied woodpecker. Photo © Carl Giometti, Macaulay Library/Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

which makes them larger than a robin but smaller than a crow. They weigh up to 3 ounces and have a wingspan from 13 to 16.5 inches.

Their natural habitat includes old stands of oak and hickory, but are also found at suburban backyard bird feeders. Their preferred diet includes insects and spiders as well as acorns, seeds, nuts and fruits; some nuts or seeds they find in the fall may be stored in tree bark crevices for consumption during the winter. They will climb along tree trunks in search of food, picking at the surface of the bark rather than drilling into it.

While red-bellied woodpeckers may not create the tell-tale holes in trees that other woodpeckers make, they are prodigious excavators for nesting. After selecting a dead tree (it doesn’t matter if it’s a hardwood or a softwood), the male will begin to dig away at its bark and inner layers with his

The pair shares the duties of incubating the eggs, with the male sitting on the nest during the night. The eggs hatch after 12 to 14 days; the young are fed by both parents both before they leave the nest after about a month and afterwards for up to 6 weeks.

The mature red-bellied woodpecker has the distinctive undulating flight of other North American species, as well as the distinctive arrangement of toes. Instead of three toes facing forward and one backward, like most birds, they have two facing backward, which assists their climbs up trees and other vertical surfaces. One unique aspect of their anatomy is the ability to extend their tongue up to 2 inches beyond the end of its bill.

The red-bellied woodpecker had been in decline in some northern areas during the first half of the 20th century, but since then, populations have stabilized and may be increasing slightly, while extending its range to the north.

## News and Notes

### Wood Stove Design Challenge Update



The finalists have been chosen for the Wood Stove Design Challenge, to be held on Washington DC's National Mall in November. The challenge is sponsored by the Alliance for Green Heat in partnership with the US Dept. of Energy Brookhaven National Lab, the US Forest Service, and others. The event will be free and open to the public, as the teams compete for up to \$50,000 in prizes.

This is the fourth Design Challenge competition. There will be two events for the competitors: one is to automate the stove with new technology to improve combustion and other factors, and the other will focus on designs that promote wood stoves that generate electricity to power household items.

For more information, [click here](#).

### Be On the Lookout for the Spotted Lanternfly

There is another invasive insect poised to invade Maryland for the first time this spring. It's called the Spotted Lanternfly, and similar to other invasive pests, this insect is native to Asia. [According to an article in the Baltimore Sun](#), experts believe it arrived in the United States three years ago; lanternfly eggs hitched a ride on a shipment of stone from Asia that entered the US in Berks County, PA.



Adult spotted lanternfly. Photo courtesy Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture

Since that time, the pest has spread to more than a dozen counties in Pennsylvania,

affecting crops and fruit trees. So far, the infestation has been confined to that state, although one live adult was sighted in Delaware and a dead one in New York, and a few live ones in a Virginia county. Now, Maryland entomologists and other natural resources professionals are trying to prepare for its arrival.

### Woodland Tract in Harford County Slated for Protection



Otter Creek Preserve. Photo courtesy Harford Land Trust/*Baltimore Sun*

The Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) partnered with the Harford Land Trust in February to permanently protect a 100-plus-acre tract of

woodland in the town of Edgewood. According to *The Baltimore Sun*, the property, known as Otter Creek Preserve, "comprises deciduous woodlands and associated vernal pools in a natural community known as flatwoods." The preserve, according to the trust, is the largest known intact woodland of its kind in Harford County.

Learn more about this new preserve at [this link](#).

### Old Growth Forest Network

Vaneesa Goold, MWS 2016, shared some information about a relatively-new program called the *Old-Growth Forest Network*: "The mission of the Old-Growth Forest Network (OGFN) is to connect people with nature by creating a national network of protected, mature, publicly-accessible, native forests. The goal is to preserve at least one forest in every county in the United States that can sustain a forest, estimated to be 2,370 out of a total of 3,140 counties. OGFN's program works to identify forests for the Network, ensure their protection from logging, and inform people of the forest locations. Founded in 2012 by Joan Maloof, PhD in ecology and professor emeritus, OGFN currently has 70 forests dedicated into the Network in 18 states. OGFN also recognizes exceptional forest advocates, works with volunteers nationwide, educates about the extraordinary ecological benefits of old-growth forests, and speaks out regarding immediate threats to specific ancient forests. Learn more at: [www.oldgrowthforest.net](http://www.oldgrowthforest.net) .

## Invasives in Your Woodland: Oriental Bittersweet

Like many invasive plants in North American woodlands, Oriental bittersweet is a strong competitor for light and nutrients in a variety of disturbed landscapes. It can be found along roadsides, in fallow fields, and in woodlands that have been recently harvested. Also called Asian bittersweet, climbing spindle berry, and round-leaved bittersweet, it grows as a vine that has significant impacts on plants and trees in the landscape.

### *What is it?*

Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus* Thunb.) is a native of Korea, China and Japan, and was introduced in the United States around 1860. It was planted for both erosion control and ornamental purposes, but spread into the environment in the succeeding decades. It was first reported wild in Connecticut in 1916; by 1938, it had spread to New Hampshire. Since then, its range has expanded widely and is still a popular ornamental vine. Today, it is reported as far north as Québec, as far south as Louisiana, and as far west as Kansas. In Maryland, it is reported in all counties except Garrett.

It is a deciduous, climbing, woody vine that can grow up to 60 feet in length and up to four inches in diameter. As it grows in spirals around a tree, the vine is able to girdle and kill the tree or break off its branches under its weight. If it reaches the tree canopy, it can shade out native species.

### *How does it spread?*

Oriental bittersweet has both male (non-fruit-bearing) and female (fruit-bearing) plants. Pollination can occur through bees and other insects. Birds and other wildlife consume the large number of berries the vine produces and spread the seeds far and wide. The seeds can survive in the soil for up to two years without germination. Humans also spread the seeds by using the vines for decorations and for craft projects. Additionally, the plant spreads vegetatively through suckers and rhizomes.

### *How can I identify it?*

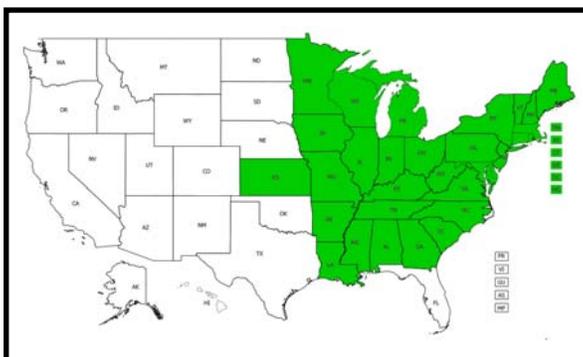
This invasive has alternate, elliptical leaves that are light green in color, finely-toothed and two to five inches in

length. Oriental bittersweet's fruits are round and yellow which split to reveal bright red berries through the fall and winter months.

This invasive vine can be distinguished from the native American bittersweet by the placement of the flowers and fruits. American bittersweet has flowers and fruits at the ends of its branches. Oriental bittersweet's flowers and fruits are located in the angle between the leaf shoot and the leaf itself. See the photo gallery on the next page.



Oriental bittersweet foliage. Photo by Richard Gardner, UMES, Bugwood.org



Oriental bittersweet US distribution, 2014. Courtesy eddmaps.org.

### *How can I control it?*

Once established, Oriental bittersweet is difficult to control. It will be a long-term process. There are three methods of control: manual, mechanical, and chemical. Usually a combination of all three is most effective.

Manual removal is best when an infestation is detected early. Hand-pulling must remove the vine and all roots, to be bagged and disposed of in the trash. The area must be observed for several years to ensure re-sprouting does not occur. Continued mowing or heavy grazing by goats can also be effective.

Mechanical and chemical methods are often effective when used in combination. Brush hogs or similar equipment can be used to pull up thick infestations. Individual vines can be cut at ground level; foliar

herbicide treatments can then be applied directly to the rooted section. Basal application and stem injection methods can also be effective. These are preferred when there are desirable species present in the area. Foliar application is common in large areas when no other desirable species exist.

### *For more information:*

Learn more about Oriental bittersweet:

[Forest Pests: Invasive Plants and Insects of Maryland \(Maryland DNR Forest Service\)](#)

[Invasive Plants in Pennsylvania: Oriental Bittersweet \(Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources\)](#)

[Oriental bittersweet \(invasive.org\)](#)

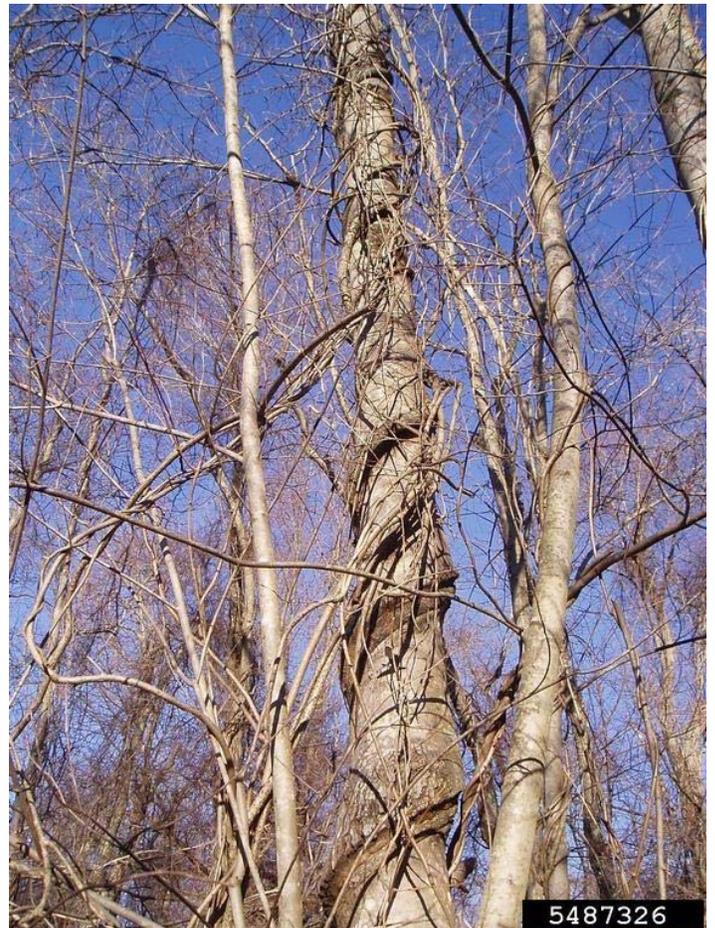
## Image Gallery: Oriental bittersweet

Oriental bittersweet flowers in vine axils. Photo by Leslie Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org



Oriental bittersweet in canopy. Photo by Richard Rowley, Glastonbury Partners in Planting, Bugwood.org

Oriental bittersweet. Photo by Richard Gardner, UMES, Bugwood.org



Oriental bittersweet girdling tree. Photo by Leslie Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

## Help Find Surviving American Chestnuts

The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) is launching a wide-ranging search for surviving American chestnuts in the wild. The original range stretched from Maine to Alabama, and chapters across the region are hoping to find those trees that survived the blight that wiped out so many across the country. These trees will serve as “mother trees” for genetic breeding with blight-resistant seedlings for planting and restoration. TACF Southern Regional Science Coordinator Ben Jarrett calls this effort “no small task,” but invites the public to join the effort. Learn more at [this link](#).



Wild American chestnut tree. Photo by Kelsey Bonifay, TACF

## Have You Ever Wondered ...?



Have you ever wondered how trees are grown in a tree nursery? Virginia Dept. of Forestry forester Manji Ubadyay visited the Garland Gray Forestry Center to find out. In an edition of “Field Notes,” Ubadyay describes the process, including using equipment called full bed belt lifters (pictured above) and seedling transporters.

Read the blog entry at <https://myvaforest.org/2018/03/09/how-do-trees-grow-in-the-nursery/>

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## CONSIDERING A TIMBER HARVEST?

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FREE information packet for  
woodland owner go to:

**[callb4ucut.com/Maryland](http://callb4ucut.com/Maryland)**  
or call 301-432-2767 x315

Partners: Forests For the Bay, MD Association of Forest Conservancy District Boards, MD Association of Soil Conservation Districts, MD/DE Master Logger, MD/DE Society of American Foresters, MD DNR Forest Service, MD Farm Bureau, MD Forestry Foundation, MD Forests Association, MD Tree Farm Committee, The Nature Conservancy, Western MD Resource, Conservation and Development.

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## Events Calendar

For more events and information, go to  
<http://extension.umd.edu/woodland/events>

April 30 & May 1, 2018

### Opportunities for Underutilized Wood: Energy and Products

West Virginia University Erickson Alumni Center, Morgantown WV

Hosted By Penn State Extension, West Virginia University Division of Forestry and Natural Resources, West Virginia University Appalachian Hardwood Center, Maryland State Wood Energy Team, and other partners. This symposium provides an opportunity to network and learn about opportunities and strategies for utilizing undervalued wood materials as a basis for producing energy and other products. The event will feature presentations, panels, and discussion sessions that include leading researchers, agency representatives, and industry professionals in the field. For more information, go [here](#).

May 8, 2018

Online at 12 noon– 1 PM & 7:00 PM—8:00 PM

### Woodland Enterprise Development Webinars

Presented by Penn State Forest Stewardship Program Associate Leslie Horner, this webinar addresses the ways that woodland owners can think about getting things done on their property, focusing on small business development dealing with restorative forestry services and value-added

products. To learn more about the noon webinar, go [here](#):  
for the evening webinar, go [here](#).

July 22– 28, 2018

### Natural Resources Careers Camp

Applications are now being accepted for this summer's Natural Resources Career Camp through the Maryland Association of Forest Conservation Boards. High school students from across the state venture to Garrett County to explore careers and college studies in natural resources. The Board works in partnership with Allegany College of Maryland and the state Dept. of Natural Resources Forest Service to provide hands-on experiences in a wide range of careers. For more information, [click here](#).

October 4 - 7, 2018

### Maryland Woodland Stewards training

Shepherd's Spring Retreat Center, Sharpsburg MD

The next session of the Maryland Woodland Stewards training will be held at the Shepherd's Spring Retreat center in Washington County, MD. This program teaches enthusiastic individuals to be good stewards of natural land, and to be good advocates for forest and wildlife stewardship in their community. For more information, see our [website](#).



# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

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All information, including links to external sources, was accurate and current at the time of publication. Please send any corrections, including updated links to Andrew A. Kling at [akling1@umd.edu](mailto:akling1@umd.edu).

**Send news items to Andrew A. Kling at [akling1@umd.edu](mailto:akling1@umd.edu) or 301-432-2767 ext. 307.**



### WSE on Social Media

Visit the Woodland Stewardship Education program on Facebook. We invite you to read about news and notes related to woodland management from across the region and the nation. We'll also share information about upcoming events and articles we think you'd find interesting.

Find our page at <https://www.facebook.com/UMDWSE>, or search for "Woodland Stewardship Education program" on Facebook.

We also have a channel on YouTube. There you can watch recordings of past webinars, workshops, and relevant meetings. More than 90 videos cover topics including wild turkey biology and management, creating a wildlife-friendly landscape, and invasive insect management. Topics are organized by subject into playlists for ease of viewing.



Find our channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/UMdFSE>.