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# *The Cutting Edge*



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**Timpro June 5 Workshop and Annual Meeting**

The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc. (TIMPRO CT) is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)6 non-profit corporation. Our mission is to enhance the image and understanding of the forest products industry throughout the state through public outreach programs, education, and a commitment to professionalism among our members.

## TIMPRO CT NEWS

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### TIMPRO JUNE 5<sup>TH</sup> PROGRAM & LOG A LOAD FOR KIDS DONATIONS

By Kit Serafini

On Friday, June 5th, TIMPRO held an all-day program at E.R. Hinman & Sons in Burlington, CT on "Merchandising, Grading & Bucking Hardwood Logs & More!" followed by the TIMPRO annual meeting. The event was a tremendous success, with over 90 attendees. What was the main draw? Participants had the opportunity to witness the entire process a tree-length log undergoes to become lumber. This highly sought-after program would not have been possible without the exceptional presenters in attendance.

The day began with JF Caron from Mercier Wood Flooring and Larry Watson from B&B Forest Products who spoke about their respective businesses and the log procurement process, including what they look for in logs. After their presentations, participants ventured outside to learn about log grading with JF and Larry followed by Justin Gundlach's demonstration of log bucking.

Back inside, the audience heard from: Henry Gundlach, Timpro Acting President; Nick Zito, CT-DEEP; and Joan Nichols, Timpro Legislative Committee. Henry provided updates on recent federal, regional, and state industry developments. Nick discussed forestry and wetlands permits. A Q&A session followed. Then Joan delivered a passionate speech about current legislation and the importance of industry participation in Connecticut.

After a lunch break, everyone returned outside, where temperatures had risen to 90 degrees, to watch an active sawing demonstration by Corey Ridel, Ridel Portable Sawmill, of the logs that JF and Larry had graded and Justin had bucked. Then Mike Hinman, a retired sawyer, graded the freshly sawn lumber. The day ended with closing remarks from Henry and a surprise speaker, Steve McMenamin, also known as "Steve the Mushroom Guy". He talked about growing mushrooms in Connecticut and how he uses white oak for cultivation.

In addition to the full day, there was great fundraising for Log A Load for Kids! Participants had the option to donate \$25 when they registered for the program online, and many chose to do so. Stanley Burr and Peter Marlowe Sr. generously donated the cost of a load of logs that they brought with them. E.R. Hinman & Sons purchased the logs and even rounded up the total amount. Participants were then encouraged to consider donating the cost of one log from the load.

Furthermore, Bob Thurber Jr. donated a limited-edition bottle of Society of American Foresters bourbon, which was auctioned before the end of the program. In fact, that bottle was auctioned twice!

This event raised a total of \$4016.40 for Log A Load for Kids!

On behalf of TIMPRO, I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the 2026 Connecticut Log A Load for Kids Campaign so far this year. All of the funds raised will be donated to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center right here in Hartford. Thank you for your support!

### Membership in the Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association

Membership is open to sawmills, loggers, foresters, landowners, supporting businesses and anyone else interested in supporting the forest products industry in Connecticut. Benefits include educational programs, a voice in the Connecticut Legislature, a listing on the TIMPRO CT website, current information on issues affecting the forest products industry, a free subscription to *The Cutting Edge* and more.

Dues are \$150/year. \$25.00 for student memberships.

Applications are available by calling TIMPRO CT at 860-948-0432 or visiting the website at [www.timproct.org](http://www.timproct.org).





Right: Justin Gundlach bucks a log with an assist from his father Henry



Left: Corey Ridel demonstrates his portable sawmill. Below: Mike Hinman, Hinman & Sons, LLC, grades newly sawn planks.



Left to right, examining planks:

Stanley Burr, Tom Anderson, Joan Nichols, Peter Marlowe.

Photos this page courtesy Samantha Burr



## MEET OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS:

**Faith Kalisz** won't be heading to St. Anselm College till the end of August, so until then, she is busy as a tour guide at Gillette Castle. "It's a fun summer job," she said in a recent phone interview. "The actor William Gillette," she explained, "is fun to talk about. He made a fortune playing 'Sherlock Holmes.'" But towards the end of his life, he started burning his correspondence, so there is much we don't know.

This summer job is quite different from experiences in her chosen fields of biology/environmental science. A graduate of Nathan Hale-Ray High School, she has shadowed Roger Wolfe, a Mosquito Management Coordinator/Restoration Biologist, who oversees the Wetland Habitat and Mosquito Management, (WHAMM) , CT-DEEP. She learned from that experience how big a part of the environment mosquitoes are and now wants to work in this ecosystem. She has even ended up caring about mosquitoes working with her mentor Harry Yamalis, Environmental Analyst #3, Land & Water Resources, Division Bureau of Water Protection & Land Reuse, CT-DEEP. "My mentors got me interested in mosquitoes. I would research soil pH, breeding habits, and more."

"Climate change is bringing more species into places where they are not native. Native species are declining," she explained. In a course with Patricia Young, she volunteered to do stream riffle bioassessment with volunteers from Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed.



Insight has also come from her work with Emily Watling, Conservation Science Coordinator for the Roger Tory Peterson Estuary Center (Audubon Society). "When I volunteered with her, I got a flash USB drive with animal 'trail camera videos. I tabulated animals and attributes of weather, temp, time, and put it all on a spread sheet. They'll use it for more conservation efforts." The tabulations help researchers gain more insight on species and their habits.

Personally influential are the trips she's taken up north to Maine where the woods really impressed her. "Acadia National Park changed my perspective," she said. "I didn't realize how extensive the forest is. But the defining moment for me came at Grandfather Mountain in North Carolina watching wildlife management specialists rehabilitate injured black bears."

"Their dedication demonstrated that informed, responsible involvement can restore balance and protect both wildlife and the landscapes they depend on."

**Aaron Rich**, a graduate of Lyman Hall High School, first encountered marine ecosystems long ago at his grandparents' beach house in Narragansett, Rhode Island. "My family would go down there every summer," he said. "It's down the road from the University of Rhode Island (URI) so that familiarity was a factor in choosing URI for college."

More connections to the marine environment come from a volunteer community service project four years ago when he took a wildlife biology course that included aquaculture. He helped catch and band Canada geese for the CT-DEEP. Recreational fishing has also been a big influence. "In the Spring, my brothers and I go for striped bass in Rhode Island. I use a spinning rod with some type of lure or live bait – bunker or eel. We usually release the fish."

Aaron has a twin, Ethan, an older brother Owen at Binghamton, NY, and a younger brother, Gavin.



A four-year student in Lyman Hall's Agricultural Science and Technology Education Program (ASTE) Aaron also sees a connection between marine environments and timber. In addition, thanks to his father who teaches woodshop at Lyman Hall, he has hands-on experience. Working both at home and in class, Aaron has made Adirondack chairs, tables, chess boards, and cutting boards (below left). He starts by carefully measuring the project dimensions and creates a checklist "so we know what we have to do." Only then does he cut the pieces and make sure they'll assemble correctly. "We don't want to have any waste," he said.

This combination of academic and practical experience has given him perspective which he shared in his scholarship essay: "This hands-on curriculum taught me the delicate balance required to maintain healthy ecosystems, from forest ecology to water protection. Plus growing up with a father who is a woodshop teacher, I developed a profound respect for wood as a versatile, beautiful, renewable resource.

These dual influences have shaped my long-term career goal: to bridge the gap between resource conservation and the timber industry."



Photos this page courtesy of Aaron Rich



## TIMPRO AND TOWN WORK TOGETHER



When Certified Forester Joan Nichols (left) was hired by the town of Killingly to manage the 300+ acre Chase Reservoir in Killingly, her initial treatment was an ash salvage sale and the felling of dead and dying oak that had been killed by spongy moth along the recreational trails. Robert Thurber, a Timpro member and Master Logger, recommended Nichols to the town of Killingly when they were seeking the services of a logger and Certified Forester to address forest health issues they were experiencing. Thurber executed the ash salvage sale and felling hazardous trees. Following completion of these two treatments, Nichols and Thurber identified an opportunity to conduct a forest stand improvement by thinning in an adjacent eastern white pine/mixed hardwood stand.

That led Nichols to coordinate a site visit with: J.P Barsky and Dr. Eli Ward from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES); Frank Cervo, the CT DEEP service forester for Eastern CT who had been consulted by the town after the devastating spongy moth defoliation; and Allison Brady, the Natural Resources Administrator for the town of Killingly. Dr. Ward brought along Donna Coutu, a forest health entomologist who works with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.

The team identified two diseases to be addressed associated with the dead and dying white pine. Nathaniel Westrick, a plant pathologist at the CAES, could not make the site visit but is analyzing the samples Dr. Ward and Barsky brought back to the New Haven lab. It seems the pines were affected by the 2024 needle cast and more recently by Caliciopsis Canker. Increasingly, West has found, Canker is found along with white pine bark scale (*Matsucoccus macrocetrices*). Another native pest, it causes relatively few problems on its own but opens wounds for Caliciopsis infection. The two may even be viewed as a true disease complex.

The field visit also determined the trees were stressed from overcrowding, not enough air circulation during wet springs, and then stress from the previous needle cast and drought. Thurber and Nichols are conducting appropriate operations to improve air circulation and white pine regeneration. According to Thurber, the stand was treated about 30 years ago. But that treatment was too conservative and actually did more harm than good.

"Forestry is as much an art as a science," noted Nichols.

The town of Killingly has since hired Ms. Nichols to develop a forest management plan for the entire 450-acre reservoir property. The town has set aside separate line items within the town budget for stewardship of their forestland. Revenue generated from the sale of timber and pulp is utilized to offset expenses associated with stewarding the land.

Left to right: Robert Thurber, Allison Brady, JP Barsky, Donna Coutu, Frank Cervo, and Eli Ward

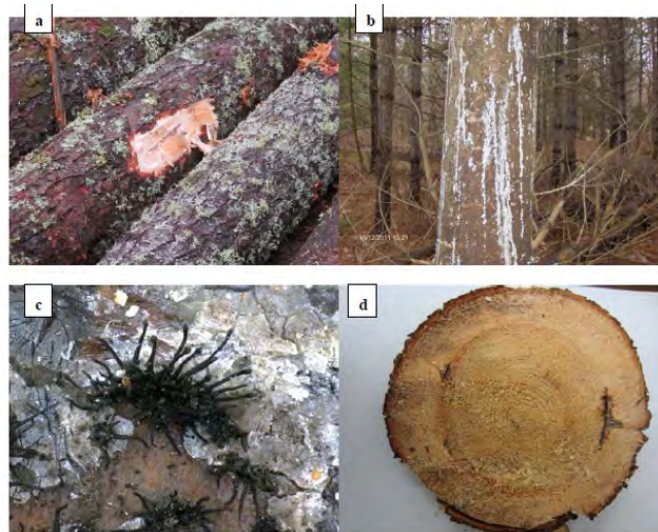


Photos courtesy of Joan Nichols



## Bits and Chokers

**Caliciopsis canker:** This is a newly emerging disease in northern grown Eastern white pine. Commonly referred to as black eyelash fungus indicating the fungal fruiting bodies that appear as black eyelashes. The disease manifests itself as a profuse amount of pitch released at the infected site of the stem of the tree, the emergence of the black eyelash fungal fruiting bodies, and eventually red needles, as the canker progresses. The canker causes an interior stain that makes the logs unsuitable for saw logs.



**Figure 1.** (a) *Caliciopsis* canker in the main stem of *Pinus strobus*; (b) Profuse pitching resulting from *Caliciopsis* canker; (c) Ascocarps of *Caliciopsis pinea*, each 1–3 mm in length; (d) saw timber damaged by *C. pinea*.

## ASIAN JUMPING WORMS

We've spent so much time looking for trouble up in the tree canopy that we may have neglected what's under our feet. That's where Dr. Annie Dobson comes in. As Yale School of the Environment Director of Research and Associate Research Scientist, she's been researching the slow but steady spread of Asian Jumping Worms.

About these invasives: Yes, they're from Asia and, yes, they do jump – kind of. When disturbed from the soil, they thrash around, then move in a peculiar snake-like way that may help them elude predators. And they do have natural predators, mostly in Asia but also here, such as parasites. What probably makes them such a successful invasive species, though, is food availability.

"We don't really know how long they've been here - probably since the 1940s – possibly longer," Dr. Dobson speculated. But unlike the fast-moving Beech Leaf Disease invasive, also from Asia, their spread has been slow. In fact, people have only begun noticing them in last 10-20 years, first in gardens, then in forests. The worms stay near the top of the soil where they eat the leaf litter and leave behind a gritty, crumbly soil that dries out very quickly and erodes easily. That makes it much harder for new seedlings to establish. There's less hospitable soil to root into, and the ground becomes dry and gravel-like. As the leaf litter disappears, the soil loses nutrients, which can slow the growth of saplings.



So, it's important to prevent the worms' further spread starting with how we handle mulch in landscaping and gardening. "Don't pile mulch in the open near the woods," Dr. Dobson warned. "Tree-truck-customer is safest. Worst is piling it in the shade near the woods and leaving it for a year." Worms and eggs are very heat-sensitive: "If you get heat up to 104° F for a few days or higher temp for less time, it could kill them. But they are not very sensitive to cold. If you're buying mulch, put it in a car in the hot sun or spread it thin between 2 layers of plastic. This can also kill other invasives such as seeds."

Dr. Dobson even sees an opportunity for safe mulch as a premium product if you can guarantee it's worm-free. Currently Connecticut has no laws preventing the spread of worms but Massachusetts and New York do. Keep in mind they'll eat anything. "They like pine bark, needles, newspaper - I am pretty sure I have seen them eat cement! I have planting barrels that they ate through. I had a pile of mulch 7' tall that over a couple of years they ate down flat," she warned.

Controlling mulch is one thing, woodlot management is more complex. Dr. Dobson advised focusing on sapling regeneration and putting the effort into bigger plantings if doing replanting. Using older trees favors an existing root system. "It's more about mitigation, especially sprouts coming from stumps – getting nourishment from a mature underground root system," she said.



And promoting regeneration safeguards overall forest health. It means fewer invasives, more natives. "The impacts go up the food chain from salamanders and birds to mites and spiders – all important to the food web." Dr. Dobson is now studying the impact of particular forest management but doesn't really have an answer yet. She says it's less about cutting style per se than about cutting that prevents deer from browsing regeneration. As for machinery, she urges us to ensure that treads are cleaned of mud between sites. That reduces the chance that seeds and worm eggs can hitch a ride in the treads from one site to another.

Eggs are visible to the naked eye. "They look like fertilizer pellets. The worms will be 6-10 centimeters in the Spring but can grow to 20-25 centimeters by early July when they reach maturity."

Dr. Dobson is especially concerned that forests are being stressed by so many different threats. "They can be resilient to one or two stressors, but when things pile up, it's a huge impact. Right now," Dr. Dobson said about the worms, "while they're widespread in Connecticut, they are small populations that might not have moved widely into the forest. They are patchy. So small actions to prevent their spread and overall forest management are critical."

Photo and poster courtesy of Dr. Annise Dobson





What if you could identify dangerous invasives before they ever reach our shores? New York Times journalist Sachi Kitajima Mulkey reported on a welcome trend – the creation of what are called ‘sentinel gardens’ in Asia planted with American tree species and crops. These act as lures for potential invasives that can then be proactively studied for prevention and/or treatment.

Thus, an American oak in one such garden revealed larva (below left) of what will metamorphose into the red coffee-borer moth that damages many plants. It hasn’t yet infested the United States — but here it was, on a cloudy morning in early 2023, burrowing into the trunk. “We send our trees overseas to see what bugs chew them up,” said Jiri Hulcr, a professor of entomology at the University of Florida, (below right) who is leading one of these projects.

As reported by Mulkey, “thousands of nonnative insects and plant diseases have found their way to the United States, often hitchhiking in on imported goods. As warming temperatures make it possible for species to survive in new places and global trade continues to expand, the spread of invasive species is expected to grow.”

While many will prove harmless, some most decidedly will not. And it takes just one to cause a huge problem, said Yiyi Dong, a researcher at the University of Florida. Native trees may have not evolved the defenses necessary to deal with foreign diseases and pests. For example, Dr. Dong spotted the red coffee-borer in China while she was a graduate student in Dr. Hulcr’s lab. She photographed the damage to the oak tree, dropped the grub into a sampling bag, and brought it back to a lab for DNA testing. Her findings went into a guide for U.S. regulators that deal with invasive species.

Similar sentinel garden projects have existed for years in Europe. Dr. Hulcr’s gardens, established eight years ago, are among the few run by a U.S. institution. The team also maintained a plot of Asian trees in Florida, to spot bug threats that might move in the other direction. But recently, his team’s work in China was halted after the Florida state legislature passed a law limiting research relationships with “countries of concern” and funding was not renewed. As a result, the sentinel gardens in China may now be abandoned. His team may have fewer gardens, Dr. Hulcr said, “But even those few are producing incredible data.”



Photo above left courtesy The New York Times. Above right: courtesy University of Florida, Gainesville



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**CT Professional Timber  
Producers Association**

Look for mailings or check the  
website for further details and  
any changes to the Calendar of  
Events.

Ideas for classes you would  
like offered?

Contact TIMPRO CT:  
1133 Litchfield Road  
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**860-948-0432**

**info@timproct.org**

Articles, ideas, pictures  
you'd like to see?

**hallie.metzger@gmail.com**

**Connecticut Agricultural Extension Station Plant Science Day  
Wednesday, August 5  
10-4  
Lockwood Fm  
890 Evergreen Avenue  
Hamden, CT**

**Get Involved**

The Board of Directors is seeking members who are interested in helping out with various activities throughout the year such as CEU programming, fairs, Ag Days at the State Capitol in March, Plant Science Day in August in Hamden, programs at the Agriscience Centers and more. The Board, made up of business owners, just like yourselves, is keenly aware of the demands on your time. Any amount of time, no matter how minimal, is greatly needed.

Contact TIMPRO CT for more information:

**860-948-0432 or e-mail: info@timproct.org.**