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## FIELD NOTES January 2020



## On the Move

After ten years, it's time for the WVLT to be moving on – from our current offices. But it's not far! We'll be moving from our present location (on the corner of North Front Street and Huguenot Street in New Paltz) to **40 Sunset Ridge, Suite 220, in New Paltz**. That's an 11-minute bike ride on the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail from our offices to the new location, according to Google Maps. **Stay tuned for more details, including an exact moving day!**

Learn more about how you can support WVLT today!

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## Spare Some Change?

The holiday season and New Year tends to bring out the best in people. **This year was no different.** Right before the holidays, a supporter called us asked if he could stop by with a donation. Of course! And when he came to our offices, we were delighted to accept his donation – which was all in quarters, pre-

counted, rolled and ready for the bank. The supporter said he starts collecting loose change at the start of each year and then in December, donates it to a non-profit. This year he chose the WVLT, and the total came to \$80 - **and for that, we are most grateful.**

*We'd be equally delighted if others in the community did the same with their loose change. It adds up quick and can help support the work we do in preserving nature for life!*

**Give later or give now- it all helps!**



*Jaimie Kaefer collects a Hemlock core sample. Image: Cara Gentry.*

## What the Rings Reveal

When SUNY New Paltz Geology Professor, Dr. John Rayburn, told us his student, Jaimie Kaefer, needed a mature hemlock stand for her senior project,

we knew just the location. Cara Gentry, our *Coordinator of Land Stewardship*, had recently performed the annual site visit to the WVLT conservation easement known as Hare East where she had observed a beautiful mature stand of Eastern Hemlocks and had made a mental note of the hemlock stand because the eastern hemlocks are under attack by a small aphid-like insect called the invasive Woolly Adelgid. **She thought it was impressive to see a stand of hemlocks with so many trees still alive.**

The Hare East conservation easement covers two properties, one owned by the original easement grantors, Rob Hare and Iza Trapani-Hare and the other is now owned by Jon and Denine Sherman. After an email exchange and a few phone calls, we got permission for the research project to proceed on the easement from both property owners and set up a time for Dr. Rayburn and Ms. Kaefer to meet with Rob Hare on the easement to core the hemlock trees.

The tree-ring data analyzed from the hemlock cores on the Hare East conservation easement was compared to wood samples collected from a demolished house and to hemlock tree-ring data compiled by previous researchers on Mohonk Preserve to determine the age of construction of the demolished house. The live tree samples also provided some surprising information. Ms. Kaefer and Dr. Rayburn wrote an article summarizing the research and findings, click on the link below for the article and more photos! **The WVLT hopes to connect more student researchers to preserved lands in the coming years.**

[Check out the full article.](#)

[Support more educational connections like this.](#)

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*Hemlock woolly adelgid* on an Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) twig. Image:  
Image: USDA Forest Service.

## Invasive Species Spotlight

The surprise finding in the research performed by Jaimie Kaefer on the hemlock trees on the Hare East conservation easement was that she was able to determine the exact year the trees were first infested with the Woolly Adelgid. (read her article in the link above). This aphid-like insect is an invasive species that is native to Japan and possibly parts of China. It was first observed in the United States in the 1920s and has been spreading slowly ever since.

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid was first found in New York State in 1985 and the current estimate is it spreads as a rate of about 10 miles a year. **You can read more about the Woolly Adelgid, how to identify it, and what measures people are taking to protect healthy trees on the NYSDEC webpage.**

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7250.html>

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*Eastern Hemlock cones.*

*Image from the Wasowski Collection of the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center.*

## Native Species Spotlight

The Eastern Hemlock, also called Canadian Hemlock, is native to Eastern U.S. and Canada ranging from northern Georgia in the south into Southern Quebec in the north and west into Minnesota. **Mature hemlock forests are an important habitat for several North American animal species as both a protective cover and a food source.** Humans use hemlock timber for building houses as in the one mentioned in Ms. Kaefer's article as well as for crates and other wood products. Traditional medicines were also made from the inner bark, needles, and roots of the hemlock tree.

People often mistake the names of poison hemlock to be the same as Eastern Hemlock. Poison hemlock is not even a tree, but an herbaceous plant that lives in marshy areas and is infamous for its role in the death sentence of Socrates. The two plants are in no way related. In fact, the young new needles of the Eastern Hemlock tree make a lovely tea rich in vitamin C. Due to the infestation of the wooly adelgid, the Eastern Hemlock is dying out. **You can find a few**

Eastern Hemlocks still alive on our very own Joppenbergh Mountain in Rosendale. Take a hike on our new northern red loop trail and see if you can find some of the surviving hemlock trees. If you need help finding them, check out this identification guide from Paul Smith's College.

<https://www.adirondackvic.org/Trees-of-the-Adirondacks-Eastern-Hemlock-Tsuga-canadensis.html>

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