



# The Voice for Illinois Forests

To act on issues that impact rural and community forests and to promote forestry in Illinois

**\*\*IFA Officers\*\***

**President**

Bill Gradle  
sallygradle@comcast.net

**Vice President**

Dick Little  
dlittle@mwii.net

**Secretary**

Dave Gillespie  
dandgisp@aol.com

**Treasurer**

Susan Romano  
old\_farmstead@yahoo.com

**Immediate Past President**

Stephanie Brown  
sbrown63@shawneelink.net



**Message from the President**

*Bill Gradle*

Hello Illinois Forestry Association Members:

I hope this finds you well and warm. This has been a winter that has kept us and the Weather Channel busy!

I first want to recognize and congratulate three of our members for attaining the Society of American Foresters (SAF) rank of Fellow. Stephanie Brown, Past President; Susan Romano, Treasurer; and Paul Deizman, Technical Team Member, have all attained this status. To be named an SAF Fellow is a prestigious honor that recognizes an SAF member for his or her outstanding contributions and service to the Society and the profession through direct SAF volunteer activities; exemplary action and sustained leadership; and advancement of the forestry profession in at least one of the following areas: application of forestry, education, public policy, research, or technology transfer. Our congratulations to our three IFA members for this earned and very deserved recognition!

Our Illinois Department of Natural Resources announced this past December that Mike Mason, State Forester, was being promoted to the position of Chief of Parks in the office of Land Management. A couple weeks later, Tom Wilson was named as interim State Forester. We are currently, along with a number of other groups in the State, encouraging Director Miller to fill the position with a qualified candidate having an expertise in forestry and a working knowledge of natural resource issues in Illinois.

We have, since 2009, been collecting funds towards student scholarships in the Bob Sloan Memorial Forestry Scholarship Fund. We are currently working with Southern Illinois University at Carbondale to enter into an agreement to award a \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving forestry student this coming fall. Bob Sloan dedicated his life to promoting forestry. He "walked the talk" and was an IFA Charter Member, our first treasurer, and a director in IFA's Region One. Bob is greatly missed, but not forgotten. I encourage all members to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Fund.

IFA's Technical Committee has planned six webinars this coming year. The topics are set and schedules are being setup. These will be posted on the web site shortly.

As I discussed in the last newsletter, we need to build our membership. I challenged the Board of Directors at our January meeting to each recruit 10 new members. Past-President Ray Herman told me he would recruit 15 new members! If each member would recruit 1 new member, we would be set!!

We currently are beginning to search for a new Executive Director (ED). What we learned from our experience with our first ED was that we could use one more than half time. Increased membership will make that happen.

Please share your natural resource concerns with your elected officials and candidates during this election season. Your vote is important.

Spring will be here before you know it!!

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...and more!

**IFA Web site**

[www.ilforestry.org](http://www.ilforestry.org)

The following is a recent letter from IFA President Bill Gradle addressed to IDOA Director Marc Miller.



Marc Miller, Director  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
One Natural Resources Way  
Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271

January 21, 2014

Dear Director Miller:

I have recently been informed that the position of the State Forester in the IDNR Division of Forestry has become vacant due to the promotion of Mike Mason to the Chief of Parks in the office of Land Management. We wish Mr. Mason well in his new position. I want to request and encourage you to fill this vacancy in a timely manner, with a person possessing a working knowledge of forestry and someone well versed in the natural resources issues in Illinois.

I have the utmost confidence that you will select a highly qualified, well-motivated, person for the position. And I'm sure you have a process that you follow to search for and obtain a pool of applicants to interview and select a candidate. I would suggest that you might possibly advertise and/or contact two groups; the National Association of State Foresters and the Society of American Foresters. These two entities might be able to direct some very good people to apply that would fit the criteria that you seek, to enable you to develop a strong pool of applicants from which to interview and ultimately make your selection.

I offer this suggestion in the hope that it will enable the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to place the best-qualified candidate available in this critical vacancy. The Illinois Forestry Association appreciates the work you and your staff do for the natural resources in Illinois and we value our partnership.

Let me know if we can be of assistance in this or any other issue.

Sincerely,

Bill Gradle  
President  
Illinois Forestry Association

## Secretary Comments

by Dave Gillespie

I recently read forestry news from the NRCS and the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) regarding the passage of the Farm Bill. I am quite pleased that Congress finally passed the Farm Bill. When passed it was almost two years past due. We who have an interest in forestry should be pleased with the new Farm Bill. In summary, the bill contains new market opportunities, protection from unnecessary permit requirements on your forest roads, protection from the threat of forest invasive pests, and improved access to tools and resources for forest stewardship. If you are interested in more details, go to the ATFS's web site and click on their report on the Farm Bill as it relates to the forestry provisions.

If you are interested in the latest information about the emerald ash borer (EAB), there is a webinar scheduled on April 24, 2014 on the subject. A U. S. Forest Service expert and conservation districts engaged in EAB planning and cleanup efforts will make presentations. The webinar is limited to the first 100 people to sign up. Contact [mike-beacom@nacdnet.org](mailto:mike-beacom@nacdnet.org) to reserve a place for you.

If you have any questions or concerns that I might answer or assist you, please contact me.

**Do you have a passion for trees and forestry?**

**Are you interested in serving on a regional committee?**

**Contact an IFA officer today to find out how you can help!**

## Increasing Acorn Productivity for Wildlife

By Tom Vorac

An oak forest acorn crop can vary from nearly zero to well over 200,000 acorns per acre in any given year. Acorns are an important wildlife food and are consumed by deer, rodents, birds, insects and microorganisms. The largest destruction of acorns, resulting in failed germination, is caused by the nut weevil and gall insects.

Oaks fall into two groups:

White Oak and Red Oak.

The most common oaks

in the Red Oak group in

Illinois are; Northern Red

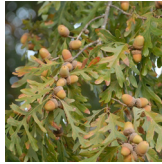
Oak and Black Oak. The

most common White Oak group species

is the White Oak. The difference in the

two groups is evident in their leaves,

wood pores, and acorn germination.



White Oak



Red Oak

All species of oak produce both male and female flowers on the same tree. All oak groups produce flowers every year. Although the trees flower every year the size

of the acorn crop is significantly affected by climatic factors such as; wind, frost, prolonged rain, relative humidity and temperature. These climatic conditions affect the opening and closing of the anthers and the dissemination of pollen.

Acorn production variation from individual trees can occur due to; anatomy, physiology and growth. It is this genetic difference that makes some trees better seed producers than other trees. Leaving only the biggest and/or oldest dominate trees in an even-aged forest may not assure the best acorn production. Removing all the dominate trees could affect the genetic quality, growth and rate of return of the remaining and future forest. Genetics are important and selecting the right oaks to leave, preferably dominants of different diameters can help assure genetic variability. Also, tree age and vigor, as a physiological factor can affect acorn production.

There are differences in acorn development between the White Oak and Red Oak group. The White Oak group acorns mature in one growing season and germinate that fall. The Red Oak group requires two growing seasons to produce acorns and then over-winter on the ground before germinating in the spring. The number of seedlings produced from the White Oak group is normally five times greater than the Red Oak group. In order to germinate, the moisture content of the acorns for the White Oak group must not drop below 30 to 50 percent and for the Red Oak group 20 to 30 percent. It is the moisture content of the acorns that is an important factor when implementing the proper steps and forest management techniques to favor the natural regeneration of oak.

Many times the White Oak group will produce heavily in a particular year and the Red Oak group will have practically no yield and vice versa. For consistent wildlife benefits having oaks in the White Oak and Red Oak group on different sites (soils, elevation and orientation) can assure a more uniform production of acorns. Open grown oaks do not produce any more acorns than trees with the same crown surface in closed stands.

Overstocked oak stands with small crown ratios can be thinned properly to expand crown ratios, root expansion and free up nutrients and moisture to the remaining oaks in order to increase acorn production. The objective is to keep the oaks health, vigorous and with the proper crown ratio. Expanding the crown improperly could expend energy, shock the tree and ruin the value of the sawlogs.

If you have questions contact your Regional Directors or your local IDNR District Forester.

## Who Are Illinois Foresters?

By Tom Vorac

A common recommendation to woodland/forest owners is to seek the advice of a professional forester to assist with developing a management plan, conducting a timber sale, learn about cost share and other incentive programs, as well as general forestry questions - but who is a forester? What can a forester do for you? What kind of forester do you need? And how do you select one?

### Public Foresters

The first forester many Illinois landowners contact is the public or service forester (District Forester) with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. District foresters are state employees, who can visit your property and provide basic information on your forest and its potential, management alternatives, financial incentive programs, and programs to reduce your property taxes. They can write a forest development plan or a forest stewardship management plan and provide other services such as marking timber for sale but will not conduct timber sales. Due to resource limitations they focus their efforts with landowners with 10 acres or more of woodlands. Also, since the number of such foresters is limited, their waiting list is long and it could be months before an appointment can be made. However, they can guide you in the right



Tom Gargrave is a IDNR Regional Forester

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direction and are a great place to start.

The Extension Forester is a public forester with the University of Illinois Extension (UIE) who provides research - based educational assistance through programs accessed at the local UIE county office.

### Private Foresters

There are two types of private foresters: consulting and industrial.

Consulting foresters are recommended for most landowners to conduct a timber sale. They are independent, working alone or in small businesses. Because they are contracted and paid by you, they are your agent, representing you and your interests. They are usually compensated through a percentage of timber sale revenues, hourly or on flat rate basis. If you are contemplating a timber sale, hire a consulting forester who will mark the timber, send it out to many buyers for competitive bids, and work with the logger to ensure the job is done correctly. Studies have shown that the fee you pay for a consulting forester easily is recovered in the increased price you receive for the timber.

Consulting foresters also provide information and professional services dealing with all aspects of forest stewardship, not just timber sales. These services include writing stewardship management plans, marking boundaries, inventorying timber, designing timber stand improvement, invasive species control, establishing a cost basis, providing tax and estate planning guidance, enhancing wildlife habitat, and planting trees. Illinois does not require private consulting foresters to be licensed.

There are national organizations with which foresters can affiliate. Members of the Association of Consulting Foresters (<http://www.acf-foresters.org>) must fulfill requirements of education, experience, continuing education, and ethics. All foresters who fulfill educational requirements can join the Society of American Foresters (SAF), a national

organization of professional foresters. SAF also has a Certified Forester program that ensures a high level of competency (<http://www.safnet.org/certifiedforester/index.cfm>). You can ask your local IDNR District Forester for a list of Consultant foresters in your area.

The other type of private forester in Illinois is the industrial forester (who are also Illinois License Timber Buyers) who represents a sawmill or other forest products industry and has a responsibility to the employer to supply raw wood products. Some forest industry companies provide free management services as part of their own programs and have developed long - term relationships with private woodland owners. (Note: most licensed Timber Buyers are not professional trained forester.)

Managing your forest land is a long-term endeavor with legal, financial, environmental, and personal considerations. A list of state, private consulting and industrial foresters is available at the Links page on the Illinois Forestry Association (IFA) website (<http://www.ilforestry.org>). The page includes a link to a directory of Illinois consulting foresters and industrial foresters who are members of IFA.

### Before selecting a private forester:

- Talk with other landowners who have used a private forester. Contact your local IDNR District Forester or other natural resources professionals for their suggestions.
- Select several consulting foresters from the list and talk with them about your woodland stewardship objectives. Ask for references, experiences, and a prior job site to inspect. Determine if the forester is paid per diem, per job, or on a percentage basis, as for a timber sale (typically 10-15 percent). As with most professions, consulting foresters have a variety of expertise and fees.
- Have one or more of the foresters with

whom you feel comfortable visit with you on the property. Many, including those from outside your immediate area, will make a brief initial visit at no charge.

- Select a forester who understands and can fulfill your goals, provides a reasonable return on the cost of services, has good references, and has a personality compatible with yours.
- **Sign a written contract** with the forester regarding the services and fees. Communicate regularly. The forester becomes a partner in the stewardship of your land.

### A Third Partner

For forest landowners who have income from timber sales as an objective, the stewardship partnership with a forester expands to include a third party: the timber buyer/ logger. Landowners may confuse foresters and timber buyer/ loggers. To understand the difference, consider architects and builders. An architect works with a client to design the kind of building the client would like and specify how it should be built. A builder implements the architect's plan. The best architectural plan doesn't work if it's not in the hands of a good builder. Likewise, the best builder cannot construct a good building if the architectural plan is not sound.

Foresters are "forest architects," helping landowners realize their goals. Loggers are the "builders" that make the plans a reality. The private forester and the logger can work together to help you realize your goals. In dealing with the timber buyer/logger **always have a signed written contract.**

Your forest land is a valuable asset. With other assets of comparable value you probably seek advice from a professional. You should do no less for your property. Consult with a professional forester. A forester can provide the information and guidance to make stewardship of your forest a rewarding, enjoyable experience.



## Opinions & Commentary Walnuts & Acorns

by Lee M. Rife



This winter has been the harshest that I can remember in several years. We had bad winters in the late '70's and early 80's, but as I recall, Spring arrived on time and all was right with the world, except for an ice storm on Good Friday of 1978 that left us without electricity for 10 days.

This year much (if not all) of Illinois has suffered ice storm and wind storms in addition to heavy snow. The ice and wind have really played havoc with trees in a lot of towns and along fencerows. I have a large pile of limbs from my silver Maple and White Pine trees which will have to be cut up and sent to landscape recycling in a few short weeks. A couple of these, large enough to be classified as "widow makers" just missed a large picture window overlooking the backyard. Looking around the neighborhood, I am surprised at how many squirrel nests have survived this winter.

As I write this, we have a frost line of approximately 36" according to some people on the local radio. My cousin, who looks after the farm in Union County, told me that the frost line there was some 30". Now this does have some benefits.

I don't expect much overwintering of insects this year. However, the severe cold, coupled with snow/ice cover may also take a toll on wildlife, particularly in rural areas. In addition, I wonder if the several days of freezing weather have caused some damage to tree roots and bark, especially if these trees had not gone completely dormant. At this time, any damage probably has not shown itself. I have seen damage to fruit trees in the past when there was a severe winter. Certainly, production was set back a year or two due to bud loss.

On the other hand, those people who enjoy making maple syrup will have an excellent season, considering the freeze/ thaw cycle that seems to have started. This will cause the trees to pump extra sap, which means more syrup for pancake breakfast fund raisers. Hey, I always want to end these columns on a positive note. Spring will be here in another 24 days and baseball's Spring Training is going on. Winter's bleak landscape will soon be green. What more can one ask?

### Funding is currently available for forestry plan development and implementation:

1. IDNR has \$80,000 available now, but the practices need to be completed before June 30<sup>th</sup> of this year. Contact your DNR District Forester
2. The US Fish & Wildlife Service has a program available for plan implementation. Partners for Fish & Wildlife is administered by Gwen Kolb. She can be reached at 217-557-4474.
3. Congress passed and the President signed the new Farm Bill a little over two weeks ago. There was a major realignment in the Conservation Title. A number of programs have been combined. New rules are being drafted as we prepare the newsletter. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is still able to accept applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program for forest plan development and implementation of those plans. Contact your local District Conservationist.



#### **IFA Technical Advisors**

##### **Kurt Bobsin**

IDNR -Forestry Regions III-IV  
217-935-6860 (office)  
[kurt.bobsin@illinois.gov](mailto:kurt.bobsin@illinois.gov)

##### **Jay Hayek**

University of Illinois  
217-244-0534 (office)  
[jhayek@illinois.edu](mailto:jhayek@illinois.edu)

##### **Wade Conn**

State Forester, USDA-NRCS  
217-353-6647 (office)  
[wade.conn@il.usda.gov](mailto:wade.conn@il.usda.gov)

##### **Paul Deizman**

IDNR  
217-782-3376 (office)  
[paul.deizman@illinois.gov](mailto:paul.deizman@illinois.gov)

##### **John Groninger**

Southern Illinois University  
[groninge@siu.edu](mailto:groninge@siu.edu)

##### **Stan Sipp**

Forestry Info. Spec. - NRCS  
[sklipp@uiuc.edu](mailto:sklipp@uiuc.edu)

##### **Dan Schmoker**

IDNR-Div. Forestry (retired)  
[schmoker3@aol.com](mailto:schmoker3@aol.com)

##### **John Edgington,**

Researcher,  
University of Illinois (retired)  
[johnedg@illinois.edu](mailto:johnedg@illinois.edu)

## "The History of Conservation in Illinois"

(Installment # 7)

By: Dave Gillespie, Secretary

This account of the history of conservation in Illinois was written by Joseph P. Schavilje in 1941. This installment begins where the sixth installment ended.

(This continues notes from the journal of Andre Michaux, a botanist from France) Benzoin Benzoin – Spice Bush. 'I had supped the previous evening (Wednesday, February 10, 1796) on tea made from the bush called Spice wood. A handful of young twigs or branches is set to boil and after it has boiled at least a quarter of an hour, sugar is added and it is drunk like real tea. This beverage restores strength and it had that effect for I was very tired when I arrived. This shrub is the Laurus Benzoin (Linn.). The Illinois French call it Poivrier and the hunters season their meat with pieces of its wood.' (Miller, 1925.)

During the early years of territorial government the growth of population was very slow. By 1800, there were probably not more than 2,000 to 3,000 peopling within the limits of Illinois. In 1800, a land office was established at Kaskaskia, and in 1813 Congress passed a pre-emption law, giving the preference in land sales to actual settlers. Under these more favorable conditions, immigrants began coming in more rapidly, especially from the southern border states and from Pennsylvania. (Ill. Blue Book, 1903)

(To be continued in the next issue of "The IFA Newsletter".)

### Illinois Forestry Association

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## New Webinar Series Invasive Plants – Issues, Challenges, and Discoveries

The USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station is pleased to announce a new webinar series, Invasive Plants – Issues, Challenges, and Discoveries. This free interactive series, which includes seven webinars, will provide attendees with cutting-edge information about invasive plants and their management.

You still have an opportunity to attend the final five one-hour webinars on the following dates. All webinars are from 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

### Merging Chemical Ecology and Bio-Control

March 13, 2014

### Hybridization in Weedy Species

March 27, 2014

### Biogeography of Plant Invasions

April 10, 2014

### Pathogen-based Biological Control of Grassy Weeds

April 24, 2014

### Classical Biological Control of Weeds

May 08, 2014



## Be sure to tune in!

## Regional Directors

### Region 1

Tom Vorac  
Geneseo, IL

(309) 944-3678

[tom\\_vorac@live.com](mailto:tom_vorac@live.com)

Alan Wolfgang

Hinsdale, IL

[alan\\_wolfgang@parade.com](mailto:alan_wolfgang@parade.com)

Todd Stone,  
Davis Junction, IL

(815) 393-3639

[tstone@qpsemployment.com](mailto:tstone@qpsemployment.com)

### Region 2

Carol Bryant  
Mt. Olive, IL

618-444-3864

[cabryant2@gmail.com](mailto:cabryant2@gmail.com)

Jake Hendee

Springfield, IL

(913) 547-2541

[jhendee@lc.edu](mailto:jhendee@lc.edu)

Jim Hynes  
Pleasant Plains, IL

217-502-4528

[hynesfarm@gmail.com](mailto:hynesfarm@gmail.com)

Dan Schmoker

Springfield, IL 62443

217-529-0061 – Home

[schmoker3@aol.com](mailto:schmoker3@aol.com)

Edward Eppy

Metamora, IL

(309) 256-3430

### Region 3

John Edgington  
Mansfield, IL

(217) 489-9075

[johnedg@illinois.edu](mailto:johnedg@illinois.edu)

Anthony Kreke

Effingham, IL

(217) 536-5601

[tonynjill@frontiernet.net](mailto:tonynjill@frontiernet.net)

Stan Sipp  
Mansfield, IL

217-489-9003

[sksipp@uiuc.edu](mailto:sksipp@uiuc.edu)

Bob Wagoner

Charleston, IL

(217) 345-6628

[rwagoner@consolidated.net](mailto:rwagoner@consolidated.net)

### Region 4

Mike McMahan  
Vienna, IL

(618) 977-3415

[mcmahan3465@hotmail.com](mailto:mcmahan3465@hotmail.com)

Roger Smith

Benton, IL

(618) 927-2057

[smithtreefarmllc@hotmail.com](mailto:smithtreefarmllc@hotmail.com)

Jim Kirkland  
Stonefort, IL

618-695-3383

[1984kirk@gmail.com](mailto:1984kirk@gmail.com)

John Dickson,

Makanda, IL

(618) 457-4871

[jwd4a@frontier.com](mailto:jwd4a@frontier.com)

## Pruning?

by Dick Little, IFA Vice President

A hot and dry summer and a winter with ice, heavy snow and high winds has made this a hard year, not only for us, but also for our trees, shrubs and wildlife. Routine pruning is a vital function if you want healthy trees. However, the effects of extreme weather make it especially important.

Pruning has several functions and will depend on location and your management goals and purposes:

- To keep trees from outgrowing their locations and landowners' purpose,
- To help maintain the health of the trees by removing diseased, dead, damaged and excess branches,
- To reshape plants which have been battered by storms,
- To make trees more shapely, attractive and marketable, and
- To promote production of fruit (seeds).



It is important to understand what is the right time to properly prune a tree. Proper timing to prune will help ensure healthy and productive trees. The best time to prune deciduous (hardwood) trees is late winter or early spring (February, March, and early April) before they begin to leaf out. Some trees, such as maples may bleed when pruned.

This will not harm the tree. Please note, to prevent the spread of oak wilt, avoid pruning oaks from April to July 1. Pruning oaks during this period may attract sap beetles that may carry the oak wilt fungus to your trees. Therefore, the ideal time to prune oaks is February and March.

If at all possible, avoid pruning deciduous trees in the spring when they are leafing out. During this period the trees are weak and the bark tears easily.

As for pines and other evergreen trees, you can prune unwanted lower branches in late winter.

Fruit trees should be pruned in late February to early April. Please note, fruit trees pruned in fall or early winter may be susceptible to winter injury. Of course, pruning may be required at other than ideal times due to safety and emergency conditions.

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## Planting seedlings this spring? Some tips on your seedling care

by Dick Little, IFA Vice President



Once you receive the seedlings from the nursery whether you pick them up or have them shipped, proper care is important before and during planting.

During Transportation of Seedlings:

- Cover seedling bundles with a tarp to avoid exposure to the sun and wind.
- Stack seedling bundles with adequate ventilation to prevent overheating.
- Unload seedlings upon arrival and store in a cool location.

During Seedling Storage:

- Place seedlings in a cool and shady place, and protect them from freezing.
- Close damaged packaging material to prevent drying of roots.

- Keep the roots moist but not wet by pouring cold water into the bundles as needed. Make sure one end of the bundle is higher than the other to permit drainage as necessary.
- Stack the bundles to insure adequate ventilation to prevent overheating.
- If you store the seedlings more than two weeks, heel-in seedlings in a trench located in a shaded and protected area.
- Do not store trees with their roots in a bucket of water.

During Seedling Planting:

- Avoid planting seedlings when the ground is frozen, extremely dry or wet.
- Never leave bundles open with the root systems exposed to the sun and wind.
- Carry seedlings in a bucket or bag with wet moss and /or water to prevent drying out.
- Remove only one seedling at a time to plant.
- After planting, check the firmness of soil packing by pulling gently on the seedling. If it is easily pulled out it is not firmly packed.

Protecting Seedling after Planting:

- Prevent livestock from grazing planted area and your forest.
- Protect the area from wild fires.
- For the first few years control the weeds and grasses around your seedlings.

If you have other concerns or questions contact your local IDNR forester or a consultant forester.



Illinois Forestry Association  
P.O. 224  
Chatham, IL 62629-0224



IFA - To act on issues that impact rural and community forests and to promote forestry in Illinois

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## Upcoming Events

You can find more information on our website, [www.ilforestry.org/Events](http://www.ilforestry.org/Events)

### March

- Sinsinawa, WI: Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference; 03/08/2014, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Sinsinawa, WI. To register, visit <http://extension.illinois.edu/go/forestconference>.
- Greene County: Forestry Field Day; 03/08/2014, 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM, Greene Tree Farm, contact Dan Schmoker 217-416-1587
- Cumberland County: Prescribed Burn Workshop; 03/12/2014, 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM, Toledo Village Hall. Call the Cumberland County SWCD at 217-849-2201, extension 3

### April

- Sangamon County: 2014 Conservation Congress; 04/11-12/2014, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, IDNR Headquarters, Springfield. Check the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov), or contact Elizabeth Norden by email at [Elizabeth.Norden@Illinois.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Norden@Illinois.gov).
- Webinar: Pathogen-based Biological Control of Grassy Weeds; 04/24/2014, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM, internet. Go to IFA's event page for connection information.

### May

- Webinar: Classical Biological Control of Weeds; 05/08/2014, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM, internet. Go to IFA's event page for connection information.