The Maine Forester
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Each year of publication, *The Maine Forester* is dedicated to an individual or two that have influenced the Forest Resource Programs here at the University of Maine, or just in the everyday life that happens in Nutting Hall. In the past, *The Maine Forester* has been dedicated to many people, most recently to everyone who has made the last 100 years of UMaine forestry possible. This year there are no two people that deserve this dedication more than the two professors who will be retiring this year, Dr. Robert Shepard and Dr. Wilbur LaPage.

Dr. Shepard started off his long and productive academic career at no other place than at the University of Maine in 1959. He transferred to the University of Michigan, where he graduated with a B.S. in Forestry. He went on to earn an M.F. in Forest Entomology from Duke University, and in 1970 he completed a PhD. at the University of Michigan.

Dr. Shepard began his teaching career with an Assistant Professorship at Louisiana State University from 1970 to 1974. Next he made a move to the University of Maine in 1975, also as an Assistant Professor. While being a major part of the forestry program, Dr. Shepard moved up through the ranks of academia, becoming an Associate Professor in 1981, and a full tenured Professor in 1993.

Dr. LaPage started his successful career with a B.S. in Forestry from the University of New Hampshire in 1960. He continued his academic career at UNH and earned his M.S. in Forest Recreation. In 1975, he earned his PhD. in Public Administration and Natural Resource Policy from Syracuse University & N.Y. State College of Forestry.

Between 1983 and 1984, Dr. LaPage was an Associate Professor at UNH in Tourism, Park Management, and Commercial Recreation. Dr. LaPage then worked as the Director of the New Hampshire State Park Administration from 1984 to 1994. From 1994 to 1997, Dr. LaPage was an Assistant Professor and Guest Lecturer at the University of Wyoming and Colorado State University. In 1998, Dr. LaPage came to the University of Maine to teach tourism and environmental interpretation in UMaine's Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Program.

Both Dr. LaPage and Dr. Shepard have been cornerstones in the Nutting Hall community for many years. Countless students have passed through their classes, been their advisees, and most importantly guided by their wisdom. The entire Nutting community owes a great deal of thanks to these men, both having helped develop students into professionals in the forestry and parks, recreation, and tourism fields. On behalf of all the students, faculty and alumni, *The Maine Forester* would like to officially thank Dr. Robert Shepard and Dr. Wil LaPage for their many years of service.
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"Natural variability", "natural disturbance regimes", "historic range of variation", and "pre-European-settlement vegetation patterns" all refer to the development of goals for forest management based on vegetative patterns that existed prior to European settlement. During the last decade the concept has gained widespread support and been extensively proposed as a template for future forest management throughout North America. The appeal of this approach lies in the theory that if pre-European settlement conditions supported native flora and fauna in the past, forest management that promotes development and maintenance of those same conditions should allow native species to persist into the future.

While the "natural variability" concept is alluring on a theoretical level, there are many obstacles that make practical implementation difficult and potentially flawed. Examples of obstacles to implementation include: Disagreement or uncertainty about what vegetative conditions existed prior to pre-European settlement; The influence of aboriginal societies on past conditions; Climate dynamics or dramatic one-time disturbance events that make past variation an obsolete target for the future; Large-scale disturbance patterns that would be impossible or counter productive to mimic; and high costs for human communities and species that have benefited from current post-European settlement dynamics.

These types of obstacles arise when considering how to manage the forests of Maine based on "natural variability". The southern portion of the Maine was
extensively cleared for agriculture and the rest of the state has experienced multiple harvests of varying intensity over the last two centuries, leaving few examples of pre-European settlement forest. The very persistence of remnant patches in an extensively modified landscape suggests they may not be broadly representative of past conditions in the region. Further complicating this effort, historical records are prone to sometimes conflicting and always subjective interpretation. Longer-term records from paleoecology studies suggest that spruce only became a dominant tree species across Maine during the last millennium. The success of spruce coincides with the “little ice age”, a period of cooling recorded in the northern hemisphere that ended in the mid 19th century. Does the spruce dominance recorded in early accounts of Maine forests represent “natural variation” or is it just an archaic reflection of vegetation dynamics driven by a relatively colder climatic period? Natural disturbances, such as spruce budworm infestations can impact enormous areas of forest simultaneously. Attempting to match these large-scale forest patterns would be difficult and counter productive in an increasing fragmented forest area. In Maine, as in every region, humans and other species respond to changes in vegetative pattern. Some species have benefited from past human manipulations and others have not. Adjusting management to fall within an “historic range” will negatively impact certain human communities and species while benefiting others. How do we weigh the importance or value of one group of species or human communities compared to another?

The obstacles associated with the practical implementation of the “natural variability” approach to management do not make understanding past patterns of vegetative dynamics any less important. In fact, increasing our knowledge about past trends and responses is essential to understanding implications of historic manipulations and predicting responses to future actions. We should use this knowledge to make forest management decisions that purposefully cultivate desired attributes across forests and regions rather than aimlessly attempt to mimic accepted interpretations of past conditions.
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For those who don’t believe it, yes there are wildlife jobs available after graduation! Perhaps you’d like to hear about what Ol’ Swampdonkey Dave did. . . . just follow what that little voice inside says. Not sure whether ‘twas merely the wildlife gods smiling upon me or my rather fullish red beard that got me the jobs . . . well just give a listen.

I spent a month and a half trapping black bears for Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in the brand new Downeast study area in Beddington under Randy Cross. Payment was grub and a warm, dry place to lay my head at night. Well, the grub was good if you could stomach it after a day of shoveling bait, which basically consisted of some combination of skinned beaver carcasses that had been sitting in Rubbermaid tubs for days on end in the back of a pickup, road kill moose, past due shellfish, fat and meat scraps green from decay, chicken and/or fryalator grease, stale granoli bars, and the Cadillac of bear baits, doughnuts. Yup, if you only knew the half of it. . . . believe me when I tell you it was maggot central at the bait sites. As for sleeping arrangements, “bed” was a University-donated mattress (can’t imagine why they’d get rid of those sweet mattresses) on the floor of a camp that must have been run by an overzealous landlady because our room was double-booked all through May and June with half the mosquito population of Washington County. But as Randy put it, “Ain’t nothin’ better’n slin’g’ bait and hookin’ up bears. That’s the life.” Enough said. Learning the tricks to the placement and setting of foothold snares was challenging but rewarding. If walking up to the edge of the rototilled circle with an eight-foot syringe pole in your sweaty hands and an angry, scared bear staring back at you doesn’t get your blood pumping then you must be dead. Nothing like a barrel-chested bruin coming across the ring running “flat out, like a lizard drinking” with a look in its eye of wanting to pick its teeth with your ulna and scratch its back with your femur. All bears look twice as big standing up as they do lying on the ground under anesthesia. If ya try hard enough you may begin to imagine the adrenaline high. If none of this appeals to you, perhaps you’d enjoy the lighter side of bear trapping: group sing-along to Gretchen Wilson’s Redneck Woman interspersed with frequent quoting of Super Troopers, Dead River Rough Cut, and Larry the Cable Guy while trying to get six folks up a hillside on a wheeler, eating an oatmeal cream pie, and catching buckets full of alewives with bare hands for stink bait.

If those first couple months after graduation weren’t enough of a whirlwind, the following three months were even more of a blur. Before I get into it, try to picture deep, mysterious emerald pools filled with salmon who are waiting for the next rain to get upstream to spawn, black bears moseying up and down river banks looking for spawned-out salmon carcasses, wading river after river in Carhartts and sandals hell-bent on catching just one more fish before bedtime, trail running in the shadow of a glacier, cool air billowing off of it, passing acres of blossoming fireweed, ancient moss-covered trees, the aroma of decomposing fish wafting to your nostrils. This is Alaska pure and simple. Wild. Just three days after finishing trapping bears I was Alaska-bound. I had an appointment with the Juneau Forestry Sciences Lab (USFS). I got to skip most of the formal training because I had been through all of that hoo-hah at the King Salmon Fisheries Resource Office (USFWS) the previous summer. After being introduced to the Mendenhall Glacier and some local fishing holes I got to watch a safety video on how not to get your head chopped off by helicopter rotors. And just like that our small four-man crew was whisked off to Trap Bay on Tenakee Inlet, Chichagof Island. There we were. Aaron, our large crew leader from Montana; Scotty B., a 32-year-old fairly newlywed who loved coffee; Michaela, a hippyish girl from California, who managed to become more attractive as the field season waned; and me, a greenhorn fresh off the proverbial farm that we know as UMaine. Our mission: sample fish (coho salmon were the primary concern) with minnow traps that had taken residence in select streams and survey pre-established 100m stretches in said streams. The ultimate goal of the work was to create a protocol to use coho salmon as an indicator species to test the effectiveness of forest.
management practices in southeast Alaska at maintaining anadromous salmon habitat as required by the Tongass Land Management Plan. Sampling followed on Kuiu, Kupreanof, and Prince of Wales Islands. The swath of land known as Tongass National Forest and the Inside Passage is a magical place that pushes the limits of the imagination. It is home to jagged, snowy peaks, retreating glaciers, Sitka spruce and Western hemlock with outlandish DBH, black and brown bears, mountain goats, Sitka deer, gray wolf, moose, sea otters, Stellar sea lions, orcas, humpback whales, Dungeness and king crab, bald eagles, and ravens that are smarter than your younger brother. Salmonberries, nagoonberries, cloudberries, thimbleberries, huckleberries, blueberries, all five species of Pacific salmon, slugs the size of bananas, hella thick clouds of mosquitoes and whitesocks, and the dreaded DEVIL'S CLUB. Take my advice and stick to marked trails if you ever venture to southeast Alaska. 'Twas a summer of cribbage between minnow trap soakings, drinking beer at 6:45AM while cleaning up the bunk house because you didn't have room for it on the plane, sleeping in the back of an old rusty Forest Service Chevy Suburban with evening temperatures hovering in the 30s, and traveling to coastal communities who shared the same motto “A quaint little drinking village with a fishing problem.” Most often this was an accurate depiction of local character.

And here it is February of the new year and I am back in Maine doing black bear den work with Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Being the smallest member on the crew, I fill the position of the mole. My job consists of crawling into the den, head first and upside-down if necessary, to anesthetize and pull out the bears. I'm also the box man. I work the telemetry gear to put the wingmen, the ones carrying dart rifles, onto the den. Even get my very own snow machine. It's name is Phat Boy. Feels some special to be a part of this on-going 30-year monitoring project.

I'll be trapping bears again this spring for Randy. Haven't signed up for summer work yet, but Alaska may be a possibility. Grad school is on tap for the future.
Undergraduates
Wildlife Ecology (WLE)
Experience is everything. As a sophomore majoring in Wildlife Ecology at the University of Maine, one has the opportunity to advance their undergraduate education in a program that is all about experience. From the courses, to the faculty, and the relationships developed between fellow students, the second year of enrollment in Wildlife Ecology gives students the experience needed to progress in the wildlife field.

Second year courses in the Wildlife Ecology program further increase interest and offer greater knowledge in the subject. For example, Ecology Lecture introduced and covered a wide range of facts and concepts of many organisms in all environments. Moreover, Ecology Lab expanded and applied the concepts learned in lecture through hands-on experience in the field. However, gaining more knowledge in subject matter is not the only plus of the second year, one also interacts and gets to know the faculty in the department much more.

The faculty of the Wildlife Ecology Department are some of the best the University of Maine has to offer. A primary reason for this is their willingness to interact with students in and out of the classroom. Faculty always have an open door and are easily approachable. One of the best experiences of the second year is knowing that someone is always there to help, whether it is coursework, employment advice, or just someone to talk to.
During my first year in Wood Science and Technology, I have learned many things. I have been introduced to the world of advanced wood composites. Although I was the only freshmen in my major, I have not had to go far for support and guidance from other students and faculty. Everyone in Nutting Hall has made my first year at UMaine very enjoyable and successful.

The greatest thing that I have learned is that the people in Nutting Hall are always eager to help you. The different majors in the building do not form separate clicks which you find in other departments. If that were true here, I would be pretty lonely. I was invited to join the Society of American Foresters even though I was not a Forestry major. Through the Noontime Lectures, I have been able to learn about the other issues in forestry which I may not have known about otherwise. It has given me a greater respect for every job in the forest industry.

As a Wood Science & Technology major, I have learned about some of the new technologies which will help increase the versatility and efficient use of wood in the future. Through the Advanced Engineered Wood Composite Center, I have learned how the University of Maine and other Maine-based businesses are playing a part in the advancement of wood technology. This field of study is relatively new compared to the practice of forestry. However, it is very important for the future of forestry to create new technologies that will improve the uses of wood.

My first year has taught me a lot, not only about wood science, but about myself. I look forward to continuing my education over the next three years. My greatest hope is that more incoming UMaine students will come into the Wood Science & Technology program. The future of the forest industry greatly depends on developing new technologies to make wood a more viable product that can compete with future construction materials.
Forestry (FTY)
More Foresters...
Three words can probably sum up the best thing I will ever do in my five years at UMaine, Forestry Summer Camp. Freshmen talk about going to summer camp after their first year, and everyone else talks about their experiences from there for years after. There is something special about summer camp. It’s not just three extra weeks of classes that get taken out of your summer. It is a great experience for doing work in the field, as well as getting a chance to know your classmates better. Besides, Summer Camp is a blast. I promise, Louis and Al aren’t as tough as they pretend to be, although they do take the program seriously, and do a wonderful job running it as well.

The first week of camp is spent in Orono, most of the time in the University Forest. While there, students get to learn chainsaw safety and go through the Level One of Game of Logging with Robin and Francis Avery. (you even get to take down a few trees!) Also, you learn about Best Management Practices (BMP’s) from Al, and road construction with Louis. That may not sound all that exciting now, but once you’ve played around with the excavators and dozers, you’ll probably think a little different.

Week two and three are spent at Acadia National Park. One week is spent doing vista restorations on the Carriage Trails in the park, and the second you go on a week vacation to a sunny island where you cruise and study the island. For anyone who goes to Long Island, beware of the buffalo! When doing the vista restorations, you have the pleasure of clinging for dear life to a tree to prevent yourself from slipping down a steep slope all while trying to cut down a tree. If you’re really lucky, you’ll get to do it in the pouring rain, like last year. But really, it’s not bad at all. If you’re not taking down trees on the slope, you’re bucking up logs, piling brush for the chipper, or running/working on the skyline logging system. When you go out to the island, you wouldn’t believe how much fun you can actually have. Personally, I enjoyed the boat ride over. You wouldn’t believe how happy Al gets on that trip; the smile on his face is big as you will ever see it. At the island, you work hard all day, but you have fun at night. Whether its taking long walks on the beach or collecting fresh mussels for dinner and cooking them on the sand, it promises to be a good time.

While I learned a great deal during my three weeks of camp, the best thing I took away from Summer Camp was the friendships I made. Sure, everyone knows each other at the start, but you learn so much more about a person when you are stuck with them for three weeks! Especially when you try to squeeze five people to a tent for a week because someone from another tent party forgot the poles to the tent, but that’s another story. By the end of Summer Camp, everyone who is there is more like family than friends. You wouldn’t think it would happen, but when you work, cook, eat and live with the same people every day, you all learn how to get along together, and fast. I was lucky, my year no one got on each others nerves too bad. Actually, my year mostly everyone stuck around the camp on the weekends to fish, hike Acadia, have a hard-core horseshoe tournament, or to just spend time with each other.
Lastly, here is a list of the most important things I learned at summer camp.

1) Sign up early if you want to be in the horseshoe tournament.
2) Put your name on your food so it doesn’t go missing.
3) Bring lots of clothes for the rain.
4) Remember the tent poles.
5) Don’t eat excessive amounts of peanuts for a week straight.
6) The loons make noise all night and there is nothing you can do about it.
7) Make sure you have a camera when your buddy decides to balance on a decaying log over water to try to retrieve his fishing lure.
8) Stake out a good place in front of the fireplace because the heat doesn’t fill the room.
9) If you attempt to make blueberry muffin mix in front of Louis, he takes pity on you and makes you real ones!
10) Work hard, but have fun doing it!
Forest Operations Science (FSC)
There I was: pitch black, pouring down rain with mosquitoes buzzing all around my head. It was getting close to 2 AM and I still had over fifty traps to check. I was getting very frustrated trying to ear tag a very uncooperative deer mouse. It was week 4 of an insanely rigorous field season that entailed checking 100 small mammal traps from midnight to 5 AM every other night. Soaking wet, I eventually finished and made my way back to my truck. What am I doing all this for I thought to myself. I sat down in my truck just as the rising sun was breaking through the trees. The rain had stopped and a couple birds had started singing. There is nothing more peaceful than being alone in the woods as its waking up, and its moments like these that remind me why I’m out there...doing exactly what I love to do.

Research is an essential part of understanding and managing wildlife species, therefore it is an essential part of any Wildlife Ecology undergraduate education. While many undergraduates gain experience as research technicians and assistants, few have the opportunity or luck as in my case to take on the full responsibility for proposing and conducting their own research project. The National Science Foundation and many other funding agencies have several programs that cater strictly to undergraduates, with the intent of these students gaining practical research experience that they will carry on as they further their education and career. The opportunity to gain this valuable experience does not come without some costs. The responsibility and pressure of conducting a research project while carrying an intense course load can sometimes be stressful and overwhelming, but the experience that I and some other undergraduates in the department gain from conducting our own research is extremely rewarding.

So how did I get the opportunity to design this project? I began working as a field technician for the Land-use effects on Amphibian Populations project the fall of my sophomore year. This project uses a replicated experimental landscape to examine the effects of forest harvesting (partial harvesting and clearcutting) on amphibians. My first day on the job, I was told by my supervisor that it would great if they could use the landscape to examine other taxa apart from amphibians. Over the next several weeks I discussed the possibility of funding through the National Science Foundation’s Research Experiences for Undergraduates program. Through the semester I designed a project and submitted a proposal examining the effects of forest harvesting on small mammals. I was notified that spring that I had received funding and could start my project.

The responsibility of having my own project was overwhelming at times. Along with any good project, there were frustrations that accompanied it. Many of the products I ordered were late and I had to call every vendor at least once. The field work was challenging, both working alone all night and doing vegetation surveys. The ongoing analysis of my results still makes for many long nights. But with these frustrations come lasting rewards. The experience I’ve gained from designing and conducting this project is unmatched. I have learned so much about research in general, the ecology of small mammals, and about myself. I have submitted another grant request and plan to continue the project for a second field season and plan to publish in a peer-reviewed journal before I graduate.
Top 5 things I’ve learned from doing my own project:

5. Try not to use your personal vehicle to drive on logging roads, you might end up snapping your ball joints (it only costs $800 to fix) or getting a flat tire (only happened once).
4. Make sure when you decide on your methods that they are feasible and you can do all the work without killing yourself (I only lost 25 pounds during my field season).
3. Make sure you call all the companies you order products from because their only guarantee is that they will screw it up.
2. Everyone hates Stats, but be sure to know analysis before you start anything in the field.
1. Really love your project... because honestly even after all I’ve had to deal with, I can’t wait to do it again.
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Spencer Perry
Jason Stevens
Keith Trask

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Maggie Burke
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Brandie Cambio
Garth Carson
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As a Wildlife Ecology major and an athlete I run into many conflicts. Between labs, practices, and meets there is hardly enough time in the day to do the expected hours of studying each night. Being a student athlete is not easy. However, over half of Orono’s student athletes have achieved a 3.0 GPA or above this year, which I believe is very respectable considering the time and dedication required of them.

While I don’t always have the time to participate in clubs and campus activities, I am still getting the experience of a lifetime. Teammates expose me to a more diverse group of people with a range of interests I would never find in classmates, and the friendships found are ones that will last a lifetime. The opportunity to compete as a Division one athlete as well as study at Orono has taught me more than I ever would have learned in the classroom alone.

Studying Wildlife Ecology has also had a profound effect on my life in ways I never would have imagined. Admittedly, I did not really know what I was getting myself into when I decided to pursue this field, and I’m still not sure where I will end up. However, I do know that I will thoroughly enjoy my studies and I can’t ask for anything more.