



Newsletter  
Spring 2020

## Hemlock Happenings

A Publication of  
Save Georgia's Hemlocks

*Hemlock Happenings* is a periodic e-newsletter for members, facilitators and other volunteers, donors, and friends of Save Georgia's Hemlocks to share hemlock news, educational information, service opportunities, and announcements. If you'd like to submit an article or calendar item, please send it to the e-mail address below. Readers' feedback is always welcome.

### News from the front

During these difficult times of the corona virus pandemic, we hope all of you are staying well and finding ways to *feel* together even when we can't *be* together. We extend our sincere appreciation to the front-line personnel and essential workers who are keeping our communities safe and functioning. We also send our heartfelt encouragement to those who have suffered loss, are feeling isolated, experiencing changes in employment, or dealing with the challenges of radically different social and family life.

As indicated on our [Schedule of Events](#) page, all the group events we had planned for April and May have been postponed in compliance with CDC guidelines. However, the Hemlock Help Line remains open 7 days a week to answer your hemlock questions, and SGH Facilitators are available on an individual basis to make on-site visits, share advice, and in some cases provide hands-on assistance – with proper social distancing, of course.

And while we await the gradual reopening of our lives, please enjoy this beautiful photo that David Wasileski took at Stanley Creek and was kind enough to share.



We hope to see you again soon. In the meantime, be well, do good, and keep in touch.

### New hemlock hybrid that withstands HWA

Here is some long-awaited GREAT NEWS from the USDA Agricultural Research Service.



WASHINGTON, D.C., April 14, 2020—A first-of-its-kind hybrid hemlock, which is not vulnerable to the insect hemlock woolly adelgid, has been developed by the Agricultural Research Service's [\(ARS\) U.S. National Arboretum](#).

Traveler, as the new variety is named, is a cross between the Chinese hemlock and the native Carolina hemlock. The new tree has the native hemlock's handsome symmetrical evergreen growth habit with slightly weeping branches. It has a moderately slow growth rate and produces large cones.

But its most important characteristic is the ability to survive attack from the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA). "We've had trials of Traveler growing since 2000, and we haven't seen any damage from the insects despite the trees being planted out among susceptible Carolina and eastern hemlocks," said ARS horticulturist Susan Bentz.

Bentz is with the U.S. National Arboretum's

[Floral and Nursery Plants Research Unit](#) in Beltsville, Maryland.

Originally from Asia, HWA arrived in the eastern United States in 1951 and infests states from Georgia to New England and southwestern Nova Scotia, killing millions of both Carolina and Eastern hemlocks. The insect has virtually eliminated hemlocks as a marketable ornamental tree in the eastern U.S.

<https://www.ars.usda.gov/news-events/news/research-news/2020/new-hemlock-hybrid-withstands-killing-insect/>

Continued on page 4



### NEW — Paddling for hemlocks



Thousands of hemlocks growing along Georgia's river corridors are infested with HWA, and while some trees are already dead or dying, many are still healthy enough to be treated and saved. And it's important to do so because the loss of these hemlocks could have serious results — warmer water temperatures negatively impacting fish populations, greater risk of forest fire endangering our public lands and nearby communities, and more trees falling into the rivers creating strainers and making them less safe for paddlers, fishermen, and others who enjoy recreation on our waterways.

Based on these concerns SGH, in partnership with the Georgia Canoeing Association (GCA) and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and with the benefit of mentoring by Asheville-based Hemlock Restoration Initiative (HRI) and Paddlers for Hemlock Health Action Taskforce (PHHAT), has launched a new initiative called Paddling for Hemlocks.

The mission is to preserve the health of hemlocks in the riparian corridor of the Cartecay and other north Georgia rivers, utilizing the ability of experienced whitewater paddlers to access groves that are not readily accessible by land. Under the leadership of SGH's Dave Teffetteller, GCA's Dan MacIntyre, and PHHAT's Alex Harvey, we began recruiting and training in January and February and held our first treatment outing in March on the Cartecay. We plan to resume floating the rivers and treating hemlocks in selected groves as soon as access is reopened. Initially, treatment will be only on DNR land where permission has been given.

In the March 2020 GCA *Eddy Line*, Dan MacIntyre wrote, "The hemlocks are considered by most paddlers to be the most beautiful trees on the river." After enumerating their many benefits, he went on to say, "Without our hemlocks, Georgia's rivers and river banks will not be the same." [Read Dan's full article.](#)

For more information, contact [Dave Teffetteller](#) or [Dan MacIntyre](#). Please join us!

## MUCH ACCOMPLISHED in 2019

FY 2019 was a very productive year, one of growth in membership and partnerships, increased volunteer participation, personalized hands-on service, and great educational outreach. Thanks to all our members and volunteers for your generous contributions of your time and energy.

- \* 71 Facilitator visits (probably more) made with charitable treatment of 859 trees
- \* 18 hemlock treatment projects with 326 volunteers treating /retreating 3,541 trees



- \* 13 hemlock rescue projects with 25 volunteers rescuing and potting 430 saplings for use in educational and service activities or future adoption
- \* 6 hemlock sapling planting projects (including a large one at Yonah Preserve) with 64 volunteers planting 100 saplings



- \* 8 presentations to civic and community groups with 288 attendees, and 2 Hemlock Lessons for 25 students and teachers
- \* 13 Facilitator Training Workshops for 64 new Facilitators, bringing our active total to 340 in Georgia and 79 in other states



- \* 2 customized training classes for 8 volunteers and public land managers

- \* 14 festivals / public events with information booth and hemlock saplings for adoption – 79 volunteers and 2,217 visitors / contacts



- \* 298 saplings adopted and 8 saplings donated to municipalities / schools / nonprofits
- \* 23 articles / news items written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers / magazines
- \* 15 soil injectors repaired / refurbished
- \* 808 calls on the Hemlock Help Line
- \* Total of 5,925 volunteer hours logged

## A GOOD START to the year 2020 ... before the pause

This year got off to a fast start with three partnership initiatives — two new and one ongoing. Here are the highlights.

On January 25, Georgia Appalachian Trail Club volunteers took training and then did a practice treatment project at Blackwell Creek in preparation for our new partnership to treat the hemlocks in a number of HCAs to be established along the AT (pending USFS approval).



In early February, members of the Georgia Canoeing Association members received training for our new Paddling for Hemlocks partnership. A month later on their first outing, the paddlers treated 129 hemlocks along the Cartecay River in Ellijay.



On February 29 SGH, in an ongoing partnership with the Nature Conservancy, the Forest Service, Georgia Forest Watch, and volunteers from Dalton State College and North Georgia University, planted 2 dozen large hemlock saplings and 54 other native trees and shrubs around a new bridge and bottomless culvert on the Rocky Flats OHV Trail at Mill Creek in Murray County.



## CALENDAR CORNER

While nothing is certain these days, we're hoping to resume *some* of our group activities in early summer — carefully and with social distancing. *Please check our [Schedule of Events](#) page for details.*

### Training — Facilitator

Training Workshops that were postponed will be rescheduled starting in June. It will be determined on a case-by-case basis whether each class will be conducted in person or on-line. To sign up for any of our classes, email [kimberlyraewood@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlyraewood@gmail.com) or call 706-455-2313.



### Festivals —

Those that were scheduled for this spring have been postponed or canceled. However, depending on conditions later this year and guidance from our Board, we *may* consider participation in some of the fall festivals. Stay tuned.



### Service Events —

SGH has received USFS's permission to resume our hemlock treatments on the national forest, and we plan to restart on June 27. We are also in process of rescheduling USFS, DNR, and other projects that were postponed and will be following CDC guidelines for the safety of our volunteers on all such activities (see page 3).



## Celebrate Earth Day 50 all year



The first Earth Day in 1970 mobilized millions of Americans for the protection of the planet. Twenty million Americans — 10% of the U.S. population at the time — took to the streets, college campuses and hundreds of cities to protest environmental ignorance and demand a new way forward for our planet. The first Earth Day is credited with launching the modern environmental movement and is now recognized as the planet's largest civic event.

Earth Day led to passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States, including the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts. Many countries soon adopted similar laws, and in 2016, the United Nations chose Earth Day as the day to sign the Paris Climate Agreement.

"Despite that amazing success and decades of environmental progress, we find ourselves facing an even more dire, almost existential, set of global environmental challenges, from loss of biodiversity to climate change to plastic pollution, that call for action at all levels of government," said Denis Hayes, the organizer of the first Earth Day in 1970 and Earth Day Network's Board Chair Emeritus.

"Progress has slowed, climate change impacts grow, and our adversaries are better financed," said Earth Day Network president Kathleen Rogers. "We find ourselves today in a world facing global threats that demand a unified global response. For Earth Day 2020, we will build a new generation of environmentalist activists worldwide." [From <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2020/>]

While this year's Earth Day theme of **climate action** is certainly about much more than just hemlocks, here are some of the hemlock-related activities that can help the earth.

\* **Learning** about the hemlock problem and solutions and **sharing** what you know with others

\* The very best way to learn a lot and be prepared to help others is to take our **Facilitator training**. We're starting to reschedule classes for summer.



\* **Giving presentations** to kids and adults or **writing articles** for a POA or organization newsletter

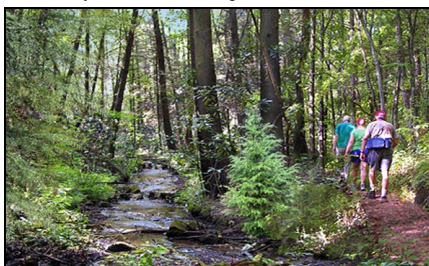
\* **Helping on a hemlock treatment project** on our public lands or nonprofit properties



\* **Paddling for Hemlocks** to treat the trees along the Cartecay and other rivers where they run through DNR land



\* **Hiking for Hemlocks** to treat the trees along some of your favorite hiking trails



\* **Rescuing hemlock saplings** and potting them for future adoption or donation



\* **Planting hemlocks** and other natives to restore healthy forests and shady, stable stream banks



\* And there are lots of other ways to take action. See page 4 for more Earth Day ideas.

## USFS begins reopening of trails and recreation areas

Gainesville, Ga., May 21, 2020—Effective May 22, the Forest Service will open a series of trailheads and access points to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.



*Chestatee Overlook near Dockery Lake*

The Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/recmain/conf/recreation>) in Georgia, Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests in North Carolina, Cherokee National Forest in Tennessee, and George Washington and Jefferson National Forests in Virginia will participate in the coordinated reopening.

To recreate responsibly outdoors, please avoid congregating at parking areas, refrain from gathering in large groups, and maintain a 6-foot distance from others, especially when passing other hikers.

Bathroom facilities may not be available. Shelters will remain closed at this time.

While work continues opening trails and roads, staffing may remain limited to encourage safe distancing. This may also cause a delay in rescue operations. It is not recommended that visitors engage in risky recreation activities at this time.

For maps, see [www.fs.usda.gov/detail/full/conf/maps-pubs/?cid=FSEPRD706439&width=full](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/full/conf/maps-pubs/?cid=FSEPRD706439&width=full).

Visitors to our National Forests are urged to take the precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). See [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html).

### Hemlock photos wanted



Hemlock trees have a way of inspiring us with their beauty, strength, tenacity, and enormous contribution. Sadly, as so many are succumbing to the adelgid onslaught, it seems important to preserve a visual record in tribute to these magnificent giants — and their babies too since we're in the season of Mother's Day and Father's Day.

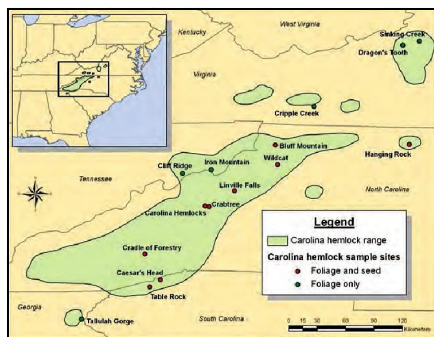
So if you have taken, or now have time to take, photos of healthy beautiful ones, we'd appreciate your sharing them with us. They can be in the forest, along streams, in landscape, stand-alone, with animals or people, in any season. Email them to [donna@SaveGeorgiasHemlocks.org](mailto:donna@SaveGeorgiasHemlocks.org).

**THANKS!** ... and for a real treat, see page 7.

## New hemlock (cont'd. from page 1)

One reason for the adelgid's power to wipe out large stands of hemlocks is its ability to reproduce parthenogenetically, or without their eggs being fertilized. This means female adelgids can reproduce without males, resulting in substantial annual population increases and decimation of large stands of hemlocks.

The Carolina hemlock's native range is basically part of the Appalachian Mountains in Georgia (in Tallulah Gorge), South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia, as shown below.



More widespread, the eastern hemlock is found throughout New England, mid-Atlantic states and the Lake States and south into the Appalachian Mountains in northern Georgia and Alabama and west from the mountains into Indiana, western Ohio, and western Kentucky.

While developing these hybrids, Bentz and colleagues found that the eastern hemlock would not cross with the Chinese hemlock, while crosses between the Carolina and Chinese hemlock produced several offspring that were verified using molecular techniques.

After promising replicated field and greenhouse trials in Beltsville, MD, the researchers moved on to field trials of Traveler and other similar crosses in North Carolina and Connecticut.

"After 6 years in the North Carolina trial, the average height of Traveler trees planted was 3.5 meters (11.5 feet) and all have survived," Bentz said. "It will make a very attractive specimen tree in a large yard, park, commercial site, or as an informal large screen."



Hemlocks play important roles in forest ecosystems as well as in cultivated landscapes, serving as a foundational species that impacts hydrologic cycles, wildlife, and biodiversity. However, because Traveler is relatively slow growing and must be reproduced asexually from cuttings, it will likely not be economically feasible to use Traveler routinely in forest renovation.

A plant patent has been applied for Traveler, and ARS is looking for commercial propagation partners to help bring this new plant to the nursery trade.

*Click here to read a [related article](#) from 2010.*

## MORE ON CLIMATE ACTION

### Actions for the planet during a pandemic

As many of us are experiencing semi-solitary time, why not use it to reassess our current habits and develop new ones that are better for the planet. Here are some ideas that hopefully will stick well into the future.



- \* Go plant-based and start composting.
- \* Choose reading over streaming.
- \* Support a political candidate who is committed to environmental health.
- \* When life gives you lemons, make disinfectant.
- \* Switch to green power.
- \* Share your stuff with others, if you can.
- \* Volunteer for Earth Day activities all year.
- \* Do an eco-friendly, multi-generational activity.
- \* Start a victory garden to grow fresh veggies.
- \* Keep your body moving and your mind active.

*Click on the link above for more detail on these and other ideas.*

### Ways to reduce your carbon footprint

The rate at which humans are pumping out CO<sub>2</sub> is alarming, and it's all serving to trap heat on the planet and fuel climate change. Fortunately, there are small, easy steps everyone can take to reduce their carbon footprint. Here are a few personal things you can do:

- \* Skip the grass-fed beef and bacon-egg-cheese sandwich.
- \* Turn your thermostat up in summer and down in winter.
- \* Switch to energy-saving light bulbs and appliances.
- \* Wash your clothes in cold water and hang them to air-dry.
- \* Unplug appliances when not in use.
- \* Carpool when you can. Consolidate errands.
- \* Plant a tree — or a whole forest!



*Do you have other ideas you'd like to share?*

### Get your community to take action

- \* Use your artistic talents to engage people's hearts and inspire their will to change.
- \* Organize a clean-up of a neighborhood, recreation area, or waterway.
- \* Work with others to create a new green space or improve an existing one.
- \* Start a neighborhood garden exchange.
- \* Raise support for protecting habitat and endangered species.
- \* Encourage your faith community to embrace climate action as a moral, religious, and justice issue.
- \* Reach out to others to offer and ask for help.



## Responsible water conservation

As we've seen from devastating events all over the world, responsible water conservation is more critical than ever to protect the planet from catastrophic droughts and wildfires. Here are some thought-provoking (and practical) web sites you may want to consider:

- \* [10 Reasons Why We Should Not Waste Water](#)
- \* [Water-Saving Technology You Should Care About](#)
- \* [8 Water-Saving Home Renovations](#)
- \* [How Does Eating Meat Impact Your Water Footprint?](#)
- \* [Drought Resistant Landscaping](#)

*Note: The above web sites are provided for information only and not for any commercial endorsement.*

### Warming winters benefit HWA

A graduate student at University of Vermont studying forests threatened by climate change and invasive pests shares her observations and concerns. Olivia Box says, "Warmer winter temperatures caused by climate change bode well for HWA — and poorly for Eastern hemlocks. Hemlock woolly adelgids begin to die on days when the sustained temperature is below freezing, known as 'kill days.' The fewer kill days there are, the more likely it is that HWA will maintain high populations throughout the winter. Warmer temperatures could also allow HWA to exist in more northern locations."



### Climate consequences of hemlock decline

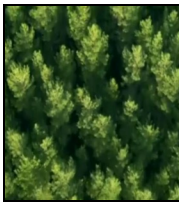
Findings in a recently published research paper by professors of plant science Danielle Ignace and Jesse Bellemare at Smith College suggest that the loss of hemlocks may have dramatic effects on climate and the forest ecosystem:

- \* More light reaching the forest floor speeds up decomposition of leaf litter, resulting in shallow, nutrient-poor soils.
- \* Faster soil decomposition releases more carbon into the atmosphere, contributing to global warming.
- \* Loss of the hemlock's cool shade and deep, acidic, nutrient-rich soil negatively impacts habitats for a unique set of other species, both plants and animals.
- \* The crisp, evergreen smell and cool shade of hemlocks have defined the landscapes of the northeast throughout history. Generations to come may not be able to experience the unique twilight grandeur of our eastern hemlock forests. **If a solution to the hemlock woolly adelgid infestation isn't found, we risk losing more than just carbon storage — we will lose a cornerstone of majesty and heritage in our country's forests.**

*Click here to read the [full story](#). Also read a [related story](#).*

## Can planting more trees save the planet?

This BBC My World video begins with: "There are 3 trillion trees on planet earth. That's over 420 trees for every person, and each is helping fight climate change.



"For decades human activity has been pushing more carbon dioxide into the air, and it's a big reason for climate change. The good news is that trees are the world's natural carbon storers. The bad news is that so many are under threat."

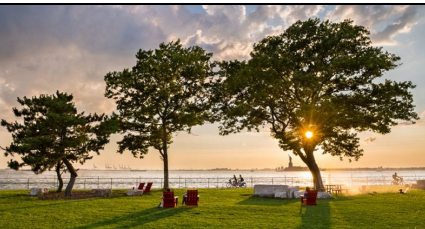
The video goes on to highlight what some countries are doing to replant trees being lost to natural or human-caused wildfires and deliberate deforestation. And there are lessons for us as well, so please [view the 3-minute video](#) and then contact us to see how you can help through SGH.

## Planting a billion trees

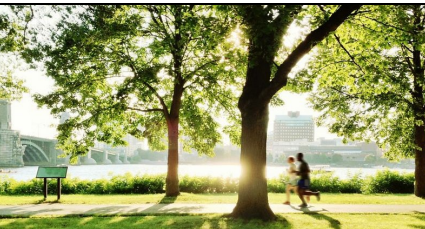
During our first Leadership Team meeting in 2020, we chose three areas for special focus: partnerships, preserving existing trees, and planting more trees. At that time we also learned that our partner organization The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has set a huge goal of planting a billion trees worldwide.

So in addition to offering hemlock saplings for private property owners to plant and looking for planting opportunities on our public lands, we'll be teaming up with TNC to plant **a lot more** hemlocks and other trees.

How can you help? Send us suggestions for public lands, churches, schools, and nonprofits that would accept the donation and planting of hemlock saplings. We also need more volunteers to help with sapling rescue and planting projects.



"The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit." — Nelson Henderson



"Trees exhale for us so that we can inhale them to stay alive. Can we ever forget that? **Let us love trees with every breath we take** until we perish." — Munia Khan

## READERS & VIEWERS DIGEST

### Estimating the age of hemlocks

Hemlock trees have a slow to medium growth rate of 12 to 24 inches in height per year, maturing to an average of 50 to 70 feet tall and 25 feet wide in typical landscape settings. However, their growth rate can vary widely — seedlings and saplings grow more slowly than more mature trees; and trees growing in dense shade, with limited moisture, poor drainage, poor soil nutrition, or with a lot of competition grow much more slowly than those with more suitable growth conditions. Here is some scholarly information on the subject.



Because early growth of eastern hemlock is so slow, trees less than 1 inch in trunk diameter at breast height (dbh) may be as old as 100 years, and trees with a dbh of 2-3 inches may be 200 years old. Growth during the pole stage also tends to be slow, mainly because of crowding and over-story suppression. One 10.3 inch tree in a dense stand, for example, was 359 years old. Other trees of the same age in the dominant portion of the stand ranged from 24 to 36 dbh. Although many trees may be suppressed for as long as 200 years, they retain good stem form and live crown ratios.

Mature eastern hemlock trees attain relatively large diameters and height while retaining excellent stem form. The record age is reported to be 988 years, largest diameter 84 inches, and maximum height 160 feet. In typical stands, however, ages approaching 400 years, diameters of 35-40 inches, and heights in excess of 100 feet are not uncommon. See the table below for average dimensions of dominant eastern hemlock trees in the Southern Appalachians.

Age Yr.	DBH In.	Height Ft.
40	9.0	53
60	13.1	71
80	16.9	86
100	20.6	98
120	24.3	107
140	28.0	114
160	31.9	120
180	35.7	125

Click here for [growth information](#) on other trees.

## Excellent new brochure



The University of Georgia and the Georgia Forestry Commission have published an excellent new brochure on the management of hemlock woolly adelgid in Georgia. It covers why hemlock trees are important, what HWA is and its lifecycle, several ways HWA is being managed in Georgia, and the roles of the University of Georgia and Georgia Forestry Commission in these efforts.

### Hemlock—poison or not?

Everyone reading this newsletter is familiar with our favorite tree — hemlock, *Tsuga Canadensis*. It's easy to recognize by its needles and cones and is definitely NOT poisonous. In fact, some people brew the needles to make an interesting flavored tea.



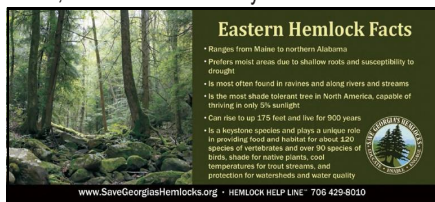
However, there is another plant with the word "hemlock" in its English name, also called water hemlock, but it's a completely different plant from the hemlock tree. Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) is a shrubby herb found in most of the U.S., looks dangerously similar to other edible plants, and can be DEADLY to livestock and people (like Socrates). Most modern day exposures in humans are the result of plant misidentification. **So be sure you can tell the difference!!!**



## FOCUS ON FACILITATORS

### While you're home, help your hemlocks

This is the title of an article we recently published in the newspapers across north Georgia, and it has raised the interest of many property owners who have called the Hemlock Help Line. We hope YOU are also sharing the hemlock message with your friends and neighbors, making Facilitator visits, and helping others save their trees. If you need a supply of our rack cards, please let us know, and we'll mail them to you.



### **Soil injectors for borrowing**

The list of places that have soil injectors for lending has been updated on our [Contacts](#) page. Those at the [Georgia Forestry Commission](#), Co-operative Extension Service, and POAs may be Kioritz, Nu-Arbor, or EZ-Ject Lite. SGH also has several EZ-Ject Lites for lending.

Note that the mixing instructions for DIFFERENT for each kind of injector. For the correct version, go to the Treatment Instructions section of our [Resources](#) page, find the particular chemical and formulation you plan to use, and then choose the specific application method or device.

### **Soil injectors for purchase**

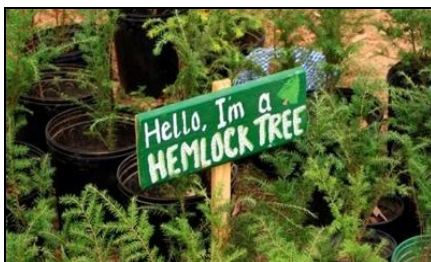
While the Kioritz soil injector is no longer made, the Nu-Arbor 1-Two Root Injector and EZ-Ject handheld device can be purchased from distributors. The Nu-Arbor backpack unit can hold up to 4 gallons of fluid, and the EZ-Ject holds up to one gallon.

Since this equipment can cost from \$500—\$800, and since there are several models of the EZ-Ject, anyone considering a purchase is invited to call the Hemlock Help Line 706-429-8010 for information on the features, pros, and cons of each kind, based on our own user experience. Also see our [Contacts](#) page.



*SGH receives no benefit of any kind from the manufacturers or distributors of these products.*

### **Hemlock saplings available for adoption**



Spring festival season is usually a time when many of our hemlock saplings get adopted into forever homes, but since that didn't happen this year, we have LOTS of lovely little trees available to offer to property owners. They range from 12-24" tall in 1-gallon pots for a suggested donation of \$10 to 4' tall in 3- to 5-gallon pots for a suggested donation of \$50. Planting and care instructions are provided with each adoption.

Anyone who is interested may call the Hemlock Help Line 706-429-8010, and please help us spread the word about sapling availability.

### **New USFS map and list of HCAs**

Gregg Slezak, the Zoned District Silviculturist for Blue Ridge and Chattooga River Districts, has prepared a new map and list of the current hemlock conservation areas on the Chattahoochee National Forest. It's a large format pdf document, but if you zoom in, you can see each HCA location on the map and a chart listing the HCA number, common site name, kind(s) of treatment, and year in which the next treatment is scheduled.

*Thank you, Gregg!*



### **Do you have a SGH tee-shirt?**

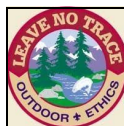
We encourage all our Facilitators and hemlock fans to get a SGH tee-shirt. Available from Café Press, there are lots of colors and styles to choose from, and they're a great way to start a conversation with others about hemlocks.

### **Leave no trace**

Save Georgia's Hemlocks is privileged to spend much of our time and energy helping hemlocks and the people who care about them. And while we're out doing good in the woods, there are more ways we can become truly responsible citizens of plant earth.

If you haven't taken Leave No Trace training yet, now there's an easy, at-home way to do it. A brief on-line awareness course will provide you with a better understanding of recreation-related impacts, the Seven Principles, and how Leave No Trace skills and ethics can help protect the outdoor places we love.

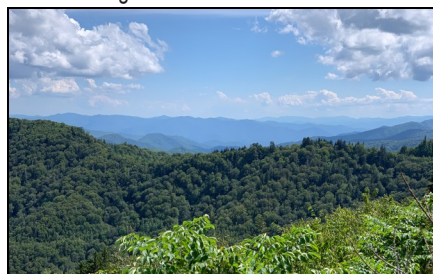
*Please consider taking the course.*



### **Have you noticed?**

While most of us have been hunkered down at home recently, a lot has changed in the world around us — and in a good way.

\* The air is cleaner and fresher, and there's less trash on the ground.



\* With the mild winter and plentiful spring rains, the trees have put on spectacular new growth.

\* And it's quiet enough to actually HEAR the bubbling streams and beautiful bird songs. So why not download a free [Birding by Ear](#) guide or a good birdsong identification app for your phone.



\* It's been easier to find solitude in the woods.

\* We're seeing more wildlife up close and personal.



\* People are learning new communications skills, enjoying creative hobbies and time with family, and being kinder and more thoughtful toward others.



**WE ARE SO BLESSED!**

### **AmazonSmile Benefits SGH**

If you shop on Amazon, please use SGH's unique link <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-0598579>.

Or just go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) and look up Save Georgia's Hemlocks under Charities. When you do so, Amazon will direct a small share of your purchases to SGH. **THANK YOU!!!**



Winding Forest Road

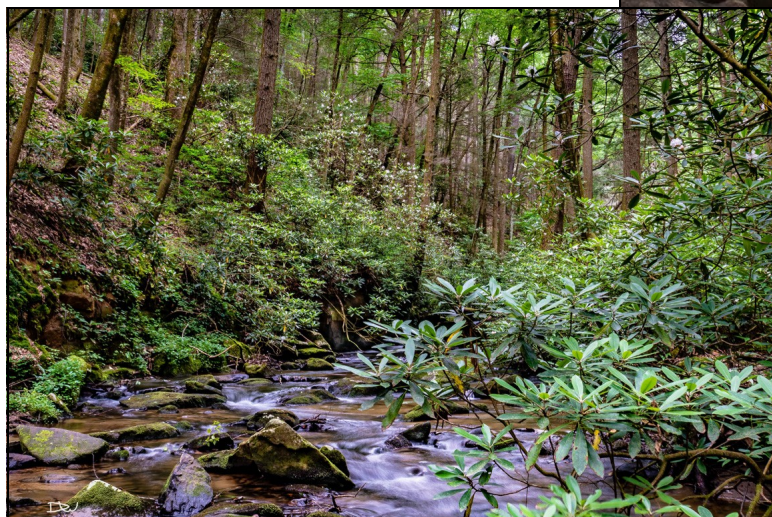
“The mountains are calling,  
and I must go.” - John Muir

Echoed in photographs by  
David Wasileski

*Thank you, David!*



Fall Branch Falls



Stanley Creek

Sunset View Hemlocks

