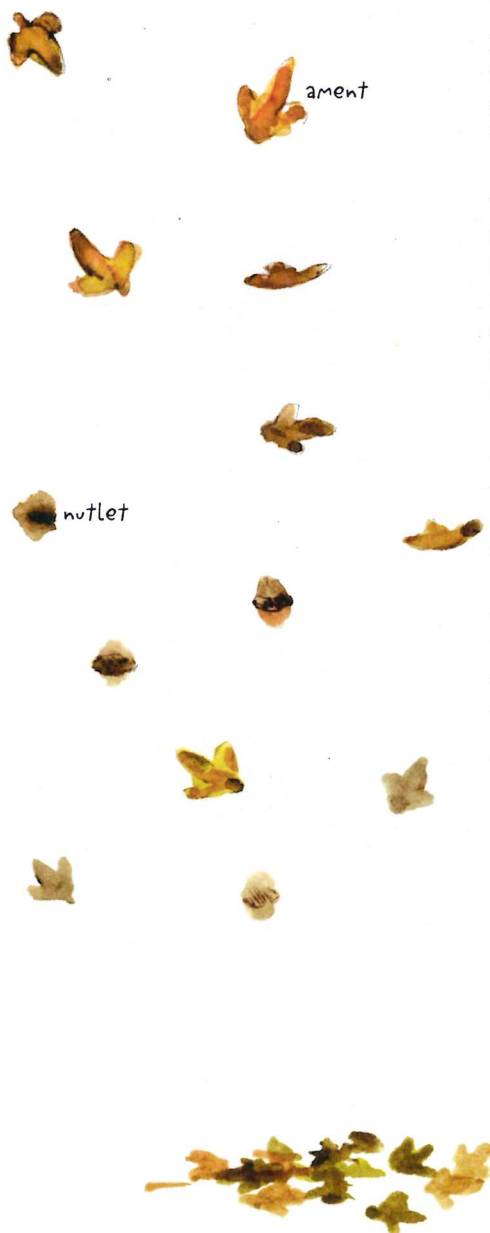


## [ WHOOPS ]

## Department of Corrections

It was brought to our attention that by labeling both aments and nutlets as “yellow birch seeds,” (“The Overstory,” Winter 2011) we were not being technically correct. To clarify, the three-lobed shapes are scales from a female flower cluster (ament). The rounded “nutlets” are the seeds themselves.



## [ REMEMBERING ]

## Remembering Carl Reidel

Carl Reidel loved Vermont. He was deeply taken with “the genius of the place,” as he would say, quoting biologist René Dubos. In his unlikely trajectory from the south side of Chicago – the first in his family to graduate from high school – to his peaceful farmstead in North Ferrisburgh, Vermont, where he died this fall, Reidel came to understand one of the deep paradoxes of environmental awareness.

It is in “tranquil settings that people have become most conscious of the very real environmental crisis facing our little planet,” he said in September, 1972, as the convocation speaker at the University of Vermont (UVM).

That year, Reidel was recruited by UVM to start the nation’s first university-wide interdisciplinary environmental program. He ran the program until his retirement in 2000, and along the way he had a remarkable record of care for the forests and people of northern New England – including service on the board of Northern Woodlands, with a term as its president.

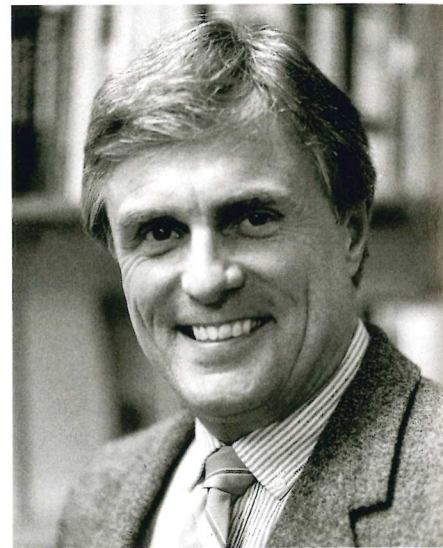
“Our magazine was making a decision at that time to become a non-profit,” recalls *Northern Woodlands* founding co-editor Steve Long. “Carl was widely respected by people from all sorts of viewpoints. He was a terrific leader in a time of transition.”

As a boy, Reidel fell in love with the outdoors on fishing and hunting trips to Wisconsin and, according to his son Jon Reidel, at 17 he boarded a train to Minneapolis to pursue a bachelor’s degree in forestry and wildlife. Upon graduation, he took a job in Nevada as district ranger with the U.S. Forest Service.

Carl Reidel received his MPA from Harvard’s Kennedy School in 1964, and then returned to Minnesota to complete his PhD in natural resources policy. In addition to UVM, he served on the faculty of the University of Minnesota, Williams, Harvard, and Yale.

“He was a brilliant man of many accomplishments, but there wasn’t the slightest whiff of pomposity about him,” said forester Virginia Barlow, co-editor of *Northern Woodlands* magazine. “He was deeply warm and generous and could improve everyone’s mood by just walking in the door.”

Reidel served in the Vermont House of Representatives, sat on the Governor’s Council of Environmental Advisors, and worked as a consul-



tant to the Congressional Research Service, the US Forest Service, and the National Park Service. He also served as president of the American Forestry Association, vice president of the National Wildlife Federation, and on the board of the wilderness advocacy group Forest Watch.

In all this work, Reidel saw how environmentalism could tip toward fatalism and a litany of gloomy statistics. But he also saw how academic and political institutions could devour genuine efforts to bring deep change – they, like the fox in the fable of Henny Penny, often lured the “radical chicken and her friends,” Reidel wrote, “into his den for further study of the problem ... and ate them.”

Against this problem, Reidel invoked Vermont.

“I believe in Vermont,” he wrote in an essay for the *Burlington Free Press* in 2010. He spoke admiringly of the fact that Vermont has banned billboards, but protects the right to hunt and fish on any unposted land; that it has a statewide environmental planning law, but allows citizens to carry a concealed firearm without a permit. Reidel saw a way forward in Vermont’s admixture of liberal and conservative values, and in the essay he quotes his UVM colleague Frank Bryan’s summary of Vermont as “an enigma” whose people combine “hard living and fierce loyalty to locality” and who are “feisty, taciturn, honest to a fault.”

Like the Vermonters he admired, Reidel “spoke truth to anybody,” said UVM professor Tom Hudspeth, who joined Reidel’s new program in 1972 – and yet Reidel was an “adroit diplomat,” who knew, Hudspeth recalled, when to wear tweed and when flannel.

Carl Reidel, 74, died of pancreatic cancer on November 3, 2011.

JOSHUA BROWN