



Coppice Week at Ashdown Forest

Traditional Charcoal Earth Burn

(Alan Waters and Mark Cox)

Wednesday 11th to Sunday 15th August 2010

Alan Waters is a full time coppice worker and has been conducting traditional earth burns annually for the past 30 years to commemorate St. Alexander's Day, patron saint of charcoal burners.

Mark Cox joined him 15 years ago and has been present on every burn since.

Alan's average earth burn uses 5 tonnes of wood, but this year, as in 1996, he is doing a larger burn using 15 tonnes of wood from the Ashdown Forest, which should yield about 2 tonnes of charcoal.

Earth burns require 24 hr monitoring and as much activity occurs at night as in the day. Students are not expected to stay up all night, but it is recommended that some night activity take place in order to gain the experience and atmosphere of how this ancient craft works.

Day one: Build kiln. Make centre flue, stack wood around in three tiers to reach height of 12ft. Cover with hay and earth, light kiln and assemble screens.

Day Two: monitor burn, plug holes, and make adjustments as wood shrinks and shape changes. Change screens if necessary.

Days Three and Four: as above.

Day Five: Early start, remove screens, close kiln. Sort and grade the charcoal. Get black! Bag charcoal and take it home for a truly traditional barbecue.

It is expected that trainees attend the crucial first and last days and at least one other during the process. We will probably organise some shifts to help balance work commitments and allow people to drop by for a few hours at a time.

Full Cost £160

HLF £75

RDPE £58

Course has 10 Places and lasts up to 5 days

Enquire: Jo Waters on 0778 651 5460 wildwoodcoppice@btinternet.com





Coppice Week at Ashdown Forest

Oak Swill Baskets

(Owen Jones)

Thursday 12th to Saturday 14th August 2010

Owen Jones has been making oak swill baskets since 1988. He conducts a number of three-day courses both in Cumbria and nationally, and demonstrates his craft at various agricultural and craft shows throughout the year. He is the only person in this country making swills (or spelks) on a full time basis.

Swills have been widely used for many centuries, on farms, in industry and in the home, and are thought to have originated from the Viking days. Students will learn to quarter the oak into billets and, after it has boiled in water for several hours, they will learn to rive the oak into thin strips and dress the material with a draw-knife on a swiller's mare ready for weaving. They will steam bend hazel rods into an oval shape around which the basket is woven. At the end of the course each student will take home his/her swill basket.



Full Cost £240

HLF £113

RDPE £87

Course has 5 Places and lasts 3 days

Enquire: Jo Waters on 0778 651 5460 wildwoodcoppice@btinternet.com





Coppice Week at Ashdown Forest

Hazel Hurdles (Neil McLaughlin)

Thursday 12th to Saturday 14th August 2010

Neil McLaughlin is a full time hurdle maker and coppice worker. He teaches on a regular basis at Sparsholt College in Hampshire and supplies hurdles and faggots to Blenheim Palace and The Environment Agency, respectively, as well as other organizations and private customers.

Although traditionally used by shepherds for their lambing pens, hazel hurdles are now in great demand as fencing for gardens. Students will learn to make their sails and split the hazel for weaving using billhooks. They will learn step by step the pattern for laying in the bottom hazel rods which are tied in to hold the structure together, and how to weave and twist the ends around the outer sails. Finally they will learn how to finish and tie in the top rods to complete the hurdle. Each student will take home at the end of the course a 6ft long 3ft high hurdle.



Full Cost £200

HLF £94

RDPE £59

Course has 6 Places

Enquire: Jo Waters on 0778 651 5460 wildwoodcoppice@btinternet.com





Coppice Week at Ashdown Forest

Wooden Clog Soles (Jeremy Atkinson)

Thursday 12th to Friday 13th August 2010
and
Saturday 14th to Sunday 15th August 2010

Jeremy Atkinson is renowned in the coppice world for his skills as a traditional clog maker. He specialises in 19th century traditional styles and demonstrates at many shows throughout the country, always drawing big crowds.

Jeremy carves the soles by hand from beginning to finish and this makes him unique. His skill in mastering the three swivel knives to carve the wooden soles took many years to acquire.

This course will be an introduction to the craft of making traditional clog soles as it takes a lot of practice and skill to operate the knives that are used.

However with Jeremy's guidance, and this unique opportunity to handle such rare tools, students will return home with a greater understanding of carving wood, and a greater appreciation of the skill of craftsmen who could tailor make clogs to fit each individual's foot without the use of machinery.

Full Cost £350

HLF £165

RDPE £74

Courses have 2 Places

Enquire: Jo Waters on 0778 651 5460 wildwoodcoppice@btinternet.com

Both Courses Full!





Coppice Week at Ashdown Forest

Wooden Tent Pegs (Terry Heard)

Wednesday 12th August 2010

Terry Heard has been working in the coppice industry for over 30 years. He travels to country shows in Dorset, Hampshire and Somerset, and from his wonderful shepherds' hut he demonstrates the art of tent peg making, and besom making.

He receives large orders for his pegs from America and the UK, which proves that demand for traditional wooden tent pegs is as vibrant today as it was in the past.

During the course Terry will show you how to use a froe to split the wood into billets and later how to use the stock knife correctly in order to trim the billets efficiently and turn out tent pegs of varying sizes with the minimal number of cuts.

Full Cost £67

HLF £32

RDPE £26

Course has 6 Places

Enquire: Jo Waters on 0778 651 5460 wildwoodcoppice@btinternet.com





Coppice Week at Ashdown Forest

Besom Brooms

(Stan Card)

Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th August 2010

Stan Card is based at Highgate Green between Forest Row and Wych Cross and worked in The Broom Yard, Highgate Green for 18 years until it closed in 1972. At that time the business was owned by his family, and there had been besom brooms made there on and off for 260 years.

Stan will be demonstrating on the final weekend of coppice week and people will have the chance to make their own Besom Broom with the old tools out of locally grown birch.

Come and get your own besom broom in plenty of time for Halloween!

If anyone is interested in learning about the finer points of Besom production, there will be the opportunity to have a 1-day course at a later date.

Trainees will learn about evaluating suitable birch for use, cutting out and storing material, making into besoms as well as making the equipment needed to do the job to the required standard.

Full Cost £67

HLF £32

RDPE £26

Course has 6 Places

Enquire: Jo Waters on 0778 651 5460 wildwoodcoppice@btinternet.com





Coppice Week at Ashdown Forest

Sweet Chestnut Gate Hurdles (Alan Sage)

Saturday 14th August 2010

Get to grips with cleaving, shaving, mortising and shaping tenons.
Then brace and strop your sweet chestnut gate hurdle together.

Light but strong, gate hurdles are beautiful and useful in many situations.
The full-sized hurdles are ideal for the farm or smallholding and were
traditionally used with sheep.

The smaller ones are perfect for the allotment or garden.

This 1-day course will concentrate on making smaller hurdles, but once
the techniques have been learned, you will be able to make other sizes at
home.

Full Cost £67

HLF £32

RDPE £26

Course has 6 Places

Enquire: Jo Waters on 0778 651 5460 wildwoodcoppice@btinternet.com

