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### In the Newsletter this Month

First of all I would like to say a big “Thank You” to all the wonderful contributors this month. It is fantastic to hear from so many of you, and I hope this will spur more of you to contribute in the months to come.

People have been camping and charcoal burning in their woods and we have some great reports on charcoal-burning activities. We also have an article on the use of trail cameras in your woods for wildlife and security, a warning about tree-felling safety from a professional, and a huge amount of news for small woodland owners.

Of particular interest is the report on woodland owners, why they bought and what they do in their woods from woodlands.co.uk, the Natural Environment White Paper and the National Ecosystem Assessment, all published this month. Please also remember you only have until 31st July to respond to the Independent Forestry Panel Consultation.

A reminder, also, of the closing date of 16th July for our photographic competition featuring grandparents and grandchildren in their woods, and the Festival of the Tree at Westonbirt in August, where woodlands.co.uk are offering you the chance to display photographs or craft items for sale.

The winners of the Royal Forestry Society small woodlands award are featured here too, as well as reports from the Aberdeen SWOG meeting, a report on a clog-making course, and an invitation to another Scottish meeting in Ayrshire in October. There is also a listing of forthcoming woodfairs in England and Scotland.

There are some great blog entries featured too: chocolate bananas and caramelized apples on the camp fire anyone?

Finally, I'm slightly biased, as I love butterflies, but please support the Big Butterfly Count from 16th to 31st July (details on page 13). It only takes 15 minutes of your time.

Sarah Walters (sarah@swog.org.uk)

### Tree felling safety—appeal from a professional!



*David Rossney, a professional forester and chainsaw instructor, has written regarding one of the threads on the SWOG Forum offering advice about felling trees:-*

I am both worried/staggered by the daftness of some of the blog entries and reassured by the good sense of others.

SWOG members like anyone else should be very wary of giving advice on potentially lethal situations without even seeing the trees or sites concerned, especially when they clearly have very actual little know how or experience. I am thinking, for instance of advice on felling Pines with chainsaws or 'chain saw trousers are not always necessary'.

I am a professional feller of trees and registered instructor, and I would certainly not presume to advice

over the internet under these circumstances. Just imagine if someone took this advice and came a cropper? How would you feel then?

Luckily most of the entries fall into the second, rather more cautious category.

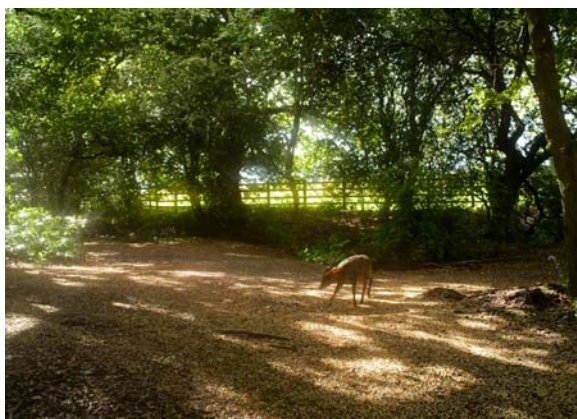
Tree felling is undoubtedly fun, and sometimes exciting, but is always potentially very dangerous, and not to be undertaken lightly or carelessly. So much can and does go wrong, and sometimes trees even kill the professionals who mostly know what they are doing! We lose a forestry worker on average once every year or two in the south east, and many more tree surgeons. Obviously lots more nasty injuries as well!

So... take it easy and stop the silly Gung ho advice, please!

## Trail Cameras for Wildlife Watching

How do you keep tabs on wildlife at your woods when you aren't there, or when the wildlife is shy, nocturnal or keeps under cover? How can you know what is actually there, and thus know how best to protect the wildlife on your site. The answer might be to use a trail camera.

A trail camera is a digital camera that can be attached to a tree or post, and left to take pictures remotely. It usually uses an infra-red trigger, which means that every time something warm-blooded such as a mammal or bird comes into the field of view, the shutter will be triggered – a movement trigger would result in a lot of false triggers from movement of foliage. The picture above right was taken with one of our trail cameras, showing a muntjac deer enjoying the morning sunshine.



There are a number of options available: you can get cameras that operate at night using a conventional flash, or using an infra-red sensor and light. The latter is less likely to disturb the wildlife but will also result in relatively poor quality and grainy pictures, with white foliage due to the spectrum of infra-red light. It is also not invisible, producing a red glow when the light is triggered. Almost all of them record onto widely-available and cheap SD cards.

Cameras usually have a number of set-up options: you can set the camera to trigger once on detecting a subject, or multiple times, and you can sometimes set the delay in between each frame, as well as the delay before the camera will accept another trigger. You can also usually set the camera to record stills or video, and set the length of the video clip you want to record. Not all cameras have a viewing screen, but the quality of the pre-view screen is generally poor. We have reduced the cost of the cameras and instead carry around a cheap digital camera with which to look at the SD cards onto which the video or stills are recorded.

Some cameras run from rechargeable batteries, some from conventional AA batteries, and some have the facility for a 12v battery back-up e.g. from a hidden car battery. If you have easy access and can regularly visit the camera, rechargeables are fine, but if you don't visit that often, you may well need either AA batteries (which last between 3 and 12 months) or the car battery option.

Some cameras also offer the facility to securely bolt them to trees. The advantage of this is that they are less easy to steal (however the security cables and padlocks are often very flimsy, and could be cut with simple bolt cutters), but the disadvantage is that they be-

### Course Directory

#### Field Studies Council

<http://www.field-studies-council.org/>

#### Institute of Chartered Foresters

Forthcoming events are on

<http://www.charteredforesters.org/default.asp?page=33>

#### British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

A large range of courses for woodland owners

For *BTCV Short Courses*

<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level3/536/level>

For *BTCV long courses*

<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level3/561/level>

#### Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

To see upcoming courses for 2011 visit

<http://www2.cat.org.uk/shortcourses/>

#### Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

To see courses for the coming year visit

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/events/courses.aspx>

#### LILI Courses

For the full range of courses from the Low Impact Living Initiative, please see

<http://www.lowimpact.org/courses.htm>

#### Wildlife Trusts

All 47 UK Wildlife Trusts run events of potential interest to woodland owners. For further details please see

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/index.php?section=events>

come easier to see. Cameras also come in a variety of colours, including camouflage, which makes them very difficult to pick out if you conceal them. As our woods are relatively frequently visited by unauthorised human visitors, we have chosen to rely on camouflage rather than an easily-defeated locking system and so far the intruders have not noticed the cameras.

The price of cameras varies, and generally you get what you pay for. Cheaper cameras tend to have lower resolution, more false triggers, shorter battery life, and a more flimsy and sometimes non-waterproof case. More expensive cameras have higher resolution (not necessarily more megapixels, but a better lens), more robust cases, better securing straps, more robust switches, better waterproofing, and you usually pay more for camouflage finish too.

Our favourite is the Bushnell Trophy Cam, <http://www.bushnell.com/products/trail-cameras/trophy-cam/> - High quality, robust, waterproof, one year battery life and well camouflaged. It is pictured above right in camouflage livery, but also available in dark brown and black to suit the intended background.



### Siting the cameras

#### *For wildlife*

You will be surprised: wildlife shows up nearly everywhere. If you are just looking to see what is there, a good place to start is on a path – animals like the easy route too, and we find the animals follow the paths that we have made. If you don't have many paths, you can usually spot animal tracks through the undergrowth, and site the camera near them. Then you can sit back and see what comes through.

If you are looking for a particular target, such as a badger or fox, then you need to be a bit canny. Predators often have a very acute sense of smell and they will smell when something new arrives. Places we have tried include badger latrines (where badgers scent mark the edge of their territory with their poo), and near rabbit warrens (usually guaranteed to attract a fox, although you will get lot of bunny pictures too).

Look for a suitable tree, about 5-10 metres from the target area, which needs to be clear so you can see what is there. I find siting the camera lower down on the tree to be best, although the down-side of this is that the animal can detect and potentially damage the camera, and it won't get recognisable pictures of human intruders if that is your intent.

If there is no tree or post available, then you will need to put in a post, and I would normally do this for a few days without the camera before putting the camera on it, to allow the wildlife to get used to it.

#### *For security*

Cameras can be extremely reassuring if you are having security issues with unwanted intruders on your site. Obviously you would want these cameras to be able to record the registration number of intruder vehicles, and also if possible the face of human intruders too. The difficulty is that the cameras can be spotted, and so it is a good idea not to have the red IV light in direct line of view when an intruder is approaching your building, tool store, log pile or whatever.

We have sited the cameras slightly away from the features of interest, while covering the only path by which they can be approached. So we have sited cameras covering the entrance path, close to our log store and log piles, and covering the main "crossroads" in the woods – unless you know your way around, it is hard to avoid being photographed here. The picture above shows us on a moth trapping evening.





These cameras have already captured a nocturnal visitor in his motorcycle helmet, and a vehicle entering unauthorised while I was working in another part of the wood, with the gate closed but not locked.

When in a more exposed position, such as on the boundary, I have carefully camouflaged the cameras using ivy and straw and other items from nearby. This can be so effective that I can't see them, even when up close, and I know they are there!

It should be said that concealed cameras cannot be used as evidence. Nevertheless, if a crime such as theft were committed, it is likely that other evidence could be collected by the Police, and we feel that advertising the fact we have cameras might invite their theft. It might also deter those people we don't mind visiting the woods: the guys who control the rabbits and woodpigeons, and a couple of local birdwatchers who know the way in and are welcome as they help us monitor what is there.

## Results

### *What is there?*

The best thing about these cameras is they give you an idea of what is there: what species are there, and where they go. For example, we know we have muntjac deer on the site, but we didn't know how many, or where they were. The cameras have given us an idea that we have at least two females (we could identify one because she had a wound on her flank, the other was not wounded), at least one buck, and at least one baby.

We also didn't know we had badgers on the site until we got the cameras. Cameras can also be useful in determining the identity of a mystery animal. We heard scuffling in our barn building but didn't know if it was a rat, mouse, vole or squirrel: the camera soon identified a huge rat!



### *What they are doing?*

Even more useful is knowing what they are doing. Photos and videos are time and date stamped, so you can work out which animal is going where and when. Knowing the time-tables can be really useful if you actually want to watch them for real, and knowing the route by which they move round the woods can be helpful if you want to protect them, and avoid disturbing them.

You sometimes also capture elements of animal behaviour: a blue-tit thought that the lens on the camera was a new nest box. Below is a picture of a fox, stopping to have a scratch right in front of the camera.



We now feel we know a lot more about the woods than we did before we got the cameras and feel much more connected to the wildlife, night and day. We also feel a bit more confident that people trying to do bad things on site are more likely to be captured on camera. The quality is not the same as a proper camera, but you get shots you could rarely get with a regular camera, and at least it tells you where and when to set up your

**The Greenwood Centre** offer a range of courses of interest to woodland owners

<http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk/WoodlandCourses.htm>

**Phil Hopkinson of Malvern Coppicing** offers practical coppicing courses

<http://www.malverncoppicing.co.uk/>

**Yorwoods** offer courses for woodland owners and managers in the Yorkshire area

<http://www.yorwoods.org.uk/training>

**Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management** offer a wide range of courses, some of which are of interest to woodland owners

<http://www.ieem.net/otherevents.asp>

**Royal Forestry Society Divisional Events** The programmes for June 2011 can be seen at

<http://www.rfs.org.uk/event/2011/07/01/month/all/all/1>

**Bat Conservation Trust**

Run a number of training courses. The full brochure is available at <http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/training.html> There are special courses for arborists, on use of bat detectors and bat surveys

camera if you want to get conventional shots.

### Other options

As well as conventional trail cameras, there are other sorts available, including underwater cameras that allow you to monitor newts, frogs and other underwater life in your ponds

<https://www.recycleworks.co.uk/product.php?productid=16414&cat=316&page=1>

Tracy and Mike Pepler have also written about their experiences with trail cameras

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/trail-cameras-woodland-wildlife-on-camera/>

And there is another article about trail cameras on the woodlands.co.uk blog:-

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/catching-woodland-wildlife-on-camera/>

## Nesting Woodpeckers

*Austino wrote on the forum*

“In the distance I could hear a constant chirping I guess 30 yards from my camp. I wondered over to where the noise was coming from and found it coming from a hole in a tree. I immediately stepped away and viewed from behind a tree 10 yards away. I could see the parent woodpeckers feeding the chicks, backwards and forwards supplying an ever ending supply of grubs etc. The chick I saw most of had a bright red head and nearly fell out the tree to be fed it looked really close to fledging with the amount of feathers it had. When I spoke to another woodland owner he said this was quite rare in woods in the E. Sussex area and I was very lucky to see this shy bird. Anyone else got any nesting woodpeckers.”



It seems that quite a lot of us are lucky enough to have these great birds nesting in our woods. Exeldama, Rogerspianocat, Tracy and Henrietta all report nesting great-spotted woodpeckers, and we have at least three pairs nesting in our wood, along with green and lesser spotted woodpeckers.

So here are some more facts about this very handsome bird:-

- Great spotted woodpeckers have been increasing in range and numbers in the UK and Ireland, thanks in part to unmanaged woodland: they like hollow mature trees for their nest but these can be broadleaves or conifers.
- The male (pictured above) has a small red patch on the back of its head: the female has a completely black cap and the young have a completely red cap.
- They will use nest boxes, but need a 50mm hole, and the nest box needs to be filled with soft wood which they can hollow out—they aren't interested if they can't hollow it out themselves!
- Nest holes are excavated for each brood and are rarely used again. They may also excavate holes for roosting if no natural holes are found.

### Ben Law

Runs a wide range of woodland management and woodcraft courses in Sussex

<http://www.ben-law.co.uk/education.html>

### Brighton Permaculture Trust

Run a number of courses of potential interest including courses on pruning old fruit trees, introduction to permaculture and building with straw bales.

<http://www.brightonpermaculture.org.uk/>

### Losehill Hall

This beautiful centre in the Peak District runs residential courses for professionals working in countryside and environment management. This includes courses on managing paths and public rights of way, and habitat creation and restoration.

[http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/professional\\_courses\\_brochure\\_2010-12.pdf](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/professional_courses brochure_2010-12.pdf)

### Kingcombe Environmental Studies Centre

Run a wide range of courses on wildlife, livestock and lifestyle management. See their web site for more information.

<https://www.kingcombe.org/courses/intro.aspx>

- The great spotted woodpecker has a loud “tchick” call, and can often be heard drumming on trees to indicate their territory.
- Diet includes insects for which they bore into wood, fruits, nuts and seeds. They also sometimes take the eggs of other hole-nesting or box-nesting species. They can be persuaded to use bird feeders and bird tables.
- The lesser spotted woodpecker is smaller (sparrow-sized), rarer, shyer and has a higher pitched drumming sound and different call.

## Photography Competition: Grandparents REMINDER!



*Left: Mick's grandsons are waiting while Grandad raises the swing with his pulley*

*Below Right: Alice's Grandad showing her where the baby birds are hiding.*

A lot of people feel the best quality time they have with their grandchildren is in their woods. Here is a place where Grandad is the expert, and where exciting things happen. You can light fires and toast buns. You can build shelters and climb trees. You can even get the grown-ups to play hide-and-seek. No one is bothered if you get muddy, or tear your shirt, and there's always lots of sticking plaster for

those inevitable bumps and scratches.

### **This month we're having a photo competition for the clearest, most interesting and most original photos of grandparents doing things with their grandchildren.**

Runners up will all get a book from Amazon ; “Go Wild” by Fiona Danks and Jo Schofield, or if you prefer a £10 gift voucher. First prize will be a £50 Amazon token, so you can buy both books, and lots more besides. If you get a prize, we might put your photo on the Woodlands.co.uk website, or even use it in one of our magazine adverts. (our grandchildren love that!) and we assume we have permission for that. Make sure the parents are happy about that too.



Maybe in your picture it isn't entirely clear what is happening- feel free to add a caption if necessary. And it would be helpful if you include the first names of each grandchild, and/or the first name of the grandparent shown. All entries to be emailed to [margaret@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:margaret@woodlands.co.uk) with the subject heading **GRANDPARENTS** before the 16<sup>th</sup> July. It doesn't matter about the size of the picture, but somewhere between 600kb and 2MB would be convenient. There is no fee for entry, so feel free to send lots.

**Staffordshire Wildlife Trust** – Forest Schools/Delivering the Curriculum Outdoors, a full range of courses for those working with children in their woods

<http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/files/documents/706.pdf>

**Barn Owl Trust** offers courses relating to Barn Owl ecology and surveying.

<http://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/infopage.html?id=153>

19th and 20th July. Barn Owl Ecology, Surveys and Signs (BOESS) course.

21st July. Advanced Barn Owl Surveying and Mitigation (ABOSM) course

**National Energy Foundation**, Milton Keynes, is offering courses on renewable energy

Includes introduction to renewables on 6th July and MCS certification

<http://www.nef.org.uk/energytraining/index.htm>

**The Sustainability Centre** offers lots of courses around the theme of sustainable living. Upcoming courses include Permaculture, Low Energy Living and Coppicing.

[http://www.sustainability-centre.org/courses\\_adult.php](http://www.sustainability-centre.org/courses_adult.php)



## Charcoal burns at Combwell Woods

*From Martin Keelor at Combwell Woods, Kent, here is an account of a great family event.*



We've had a couple of friendly Charcoal Burns at Combwell Woods recently. I took along the charcoal ring from my wood, the hazel was cut by Ian in his wood, Tony and Andy arranged the barbecue and the event was held in Mark's field. We notified all the owners from this side of the woods, and most of them came, from ten woods in all.

On a glorious day, we began to fill the charcoal ring about noon. I gave them a run-down on how it works, with wood

piled round the sides first, and brush in the bottom for the lighting, then filling up on top. When it was full the kids had a great time drawing all over the ring with some stray bits of charcoal. The lighting is always dodgy. We had a rag well soaked in paraffin, and a pointed stick I had prepared, and we pushed the lighted rag underneath the burner, which was of course raised slightly off the ground for ventilation. Fingers crossed, we waited, and when smoke began to curl up at the top, and we



knew we were winning.

I use a six foot kiln for the burns as it is easily portable by hand if necessary and each burn lasted for around 9 hours once the kiln was alight. We were starting the burns mid afternoon so that meant sitting up until gone midnight to shut them down and this worked very well as it provided a chance, for those who could, to stay overnight and enjoy a glass or two of wine.

The first burn was a pure Hazel burn and produced some remarkable charcoal, burns very hot and will make good blacksmiths fuel. I have an arrangement to supply a local blacksmith with charcoal. The second burn was of mixed Birch and

Willow and was very different in character from the first, being very smokey due to the higher moisture content in the woods.

On both days it was good to make new friends, and get reacquainted with some old ones too. It was immensely enjoyable, spending time with people of similar interests and passion for woodlands. While the tracks are dry, we plan to have a working party to spread some stone on them, . Then we hope to organise more days like this for Combwell owners, small groups or families.



Woodcraft School have published their timetable for woodcraft and bushcraft courses

<http://www.woodcraftschool.co.uk/woodcraft-courses.htm>

Acres Wild Woodland have a 2011 timetable of woodland and woodcrafts courses available on

<http://www.acreswildwoodlands.co.uk/courses/index.shtml>

Willowcraft and Woodlands is a social enterprise doing woodcrafts and woodland management based in Worcestershire. They run a number of woodland management and woodcraft courses of potential interest to woodland owners including courses on Living Willow structures, coppice management and treebog construction.

<http://www.willowcraftandwoodlands.co.uk/>

John Waller, Underwoodsman has an extensive programme of courses available. Lots of green woodworking, coppice management, charcoal making, living willow and introductory blacksmithing. See [http://www.underwoodsman.co.uk/html/at\\_a\\_glance.html](http://www.underwoodsman.co.uk/html/at_a_glance.html)

Shift Bristol are running a year long practical sustainability course as well as a seasonal programme of workshops. See

<http://www.shiftbristol.org.uk/index.html> for further details.

## A first go at charcoal burning

*Gillian Leddy writes about camping in her wood, and her first try at charcoal burning which sounds like great fun.*

I just had my first go at making charcoal while we were camping in the wood a couple of weeks ago and was surprised how easy it was, or maybe beginner's luck.

Firstly we used an oil can which has a removeable lid and cut 2 small circles on opposite edges of the lid, and drilled 5 small holes in the base. We used seasoned chestnut logs about 2-5 inches diameter and 10-12 inches long and packed them upright on some kindling and around a thick upright log (this would be removed once the burner was full and the space filled with burning sticks to start the blaze).

Halfway up we put another level of kindling and packed the logs so they stood about 4 inches proud at the top of the burner. The thick log was removed leaving a space that was filled with burning sticks and charcoal from the camp fire and a good fierce blaze ensued.

At first we thought it would all burn away to nothing and put the lid on and stopped up some air holes too soon which resulted in some of the wood burning properly and most of the wood not lit at all. So after we closed it down, it cooled very quickly and after an hour or so we opened it and had to re-light it with more burning sticks.

This time, got a good blaze and kept the air channels open till I could see the wood glowing inside and alternating the openings underneath to encourage even airflow and burning. This we did by clearing the clay from between the base bricks on one side and banking it up on another side and alternating this from time to time.

They tell you to use sand to seal the gaps when you're closing down to stop the oxygen but I forgot to get any and having noticed some uprooted trees earlier, where the earth was still attached to the roots, in our wood it's clay and when it's dry it crumbles easily and has the quality of sand so we collected that and used it instead (probably more eco-friendly to use existing materials rather than introducing alien sand).

Watching the smoke, at first billowy and grey-white to brown, change, to bluish, wispy smoke after about an hour and a half to 2 hours ( actually, I forgot to time the whole thing I was so excited). The changing smoke I found a little uncertain as there seems to be bluish smoke from one chimney( the start of carbonisation I guess) but also some white and brown smoke at the same time from the other chimney as the burn is not always as even as it should be.

So after some debate, we closed it down and stopped up all the air holes. By now it was evening, so left it overnight to cool and the next morning opened it up to find real charcoal 12 kg in fact which I bagged up loosely and kept dry in the car as by now the lovely hot dry weather we'd had for the last 3 days was breaking and rain threatened. The charcoal now exposed to the dry air would complete it's processing.

There were a few logs that were still brown, mainly the thicker ones around one side, so maybe 5 inch diameter is a bit thick for that burner, but they'll go into the next burn nearer the centre.

We also made a woodland privy by the way which I put together one afternoon before the camp. It's mostly lashed together between 3 living trees and using a pallet for the back wall and poles made from thinnings from the clearing. The toilet seating arrangement is detachable and is stored in the tool box and shower curtains from the 99p shop ( also detachable when not in use) hooked to the roof crossbars. We found it comfortable and private to use and a handfull of leaf litter after use kept it remarkably fresh.

We had so much fun camping and playing in the wood, I can't wait to do it again.

**Courses from The Mammal Society** – a wide variety of courses, at various venues and dates. 2011 dates now announced.

<http://tinyurl.com/69l76s7>

Courses in forthcoming months include mammal identification and radio tracking.

**Dorset Centre for Rural Skills**

Run a range of courses of interest to woodland owners including hurdle-making and green wood-working.

<http://www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk/courses.htm>

**Cotswolds Rural Skills Courses**

Include grassland management and drystone walling. Details on.

<http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/?page=cotswolds-rural-skills>

**Acorn Ecology** in Exeter run a range of courses including a Phase 1 habitat survey course, and courses on surveying and handling bats, otters, water voles, dormice and other protected species

<http://www.acornecology.co.uk/>

**Forest Garden Shovel-strode**

Practical woodland courses and yurt camping. Upcoming courses include green woodworking, hurdle-making, beekeeping for adults and children.

[www.forestgarden.info](http://www.forestgarden.info)



## An Overnight Stay in Lower Orilton Wood

*Sussex Wildlife Trust have kindly sent in an account of an overnight stay for a group of young people at Lower Orilton Wood, written by Tom Forward, the Forest Schools co-ordinator for Gatwick Greenspace Partnership.*

A youth group from the local Baptist Church contacted me about leading an overnighter following a bushcraft day at Buchan Country Park that they had enjoyed the year before. Here, they had learnt about shelter building, fire lighting, cooking and tool use. This time they wanted to test their skills and go for the overnighter experience.

Now that Gatwick Greenspace Partnership leases a patch of beautiful old Hornbeam coppice woodland nearby, we are well-set to be able to offer this. Our plot is rented from the kind people at Woodlands.co.uk, who are very keen to encourage more people out to explore and make best use of the woods in their communities. Indeed, Community Woodlands are not only essential for bringing people and nature together, but the concept also has a variety of benefits, including education, self-confidence, team building, improved communication, spiritual well-being and a greater awareness of life outside the normal daily routine.

The focus for the young people was (in groups of 2 or 3) to build a proper bushcraft shelter, but only making use of a few basic hand tools (no hammers or nails allowed) and any natural materials around them. In doing this, they needed to take into account slope, prevailing wind, weather, insulation, water-proofing and ultimately working cooperatively to achieve an effective shelter before the night set in. We were able to make use of the brash and cord wood left behind from ride opening and glade clearing during the winter.

After completing their shelters they practiced their fire lighting skills and lit small fires close to the entrance of their homes for the night and used the smoke to purge the inside of creepy crawlies.

While I got on with preparing supper over the main camp-fire, their final task was to dig a loo pit and provide some privacy using tarps. The concept for the toilet was to leave only solid waste behind and toilet paper was collected in a bag and taken off-site.

A well-earned pasta and vegetable sauce supper was enjoyed around the fire. Once dark-



The Field Studies Council have a number of interesting looking courses in 2011. At Epping the courses include plant identification and hedgelaying.

<http://field-studies-coun-cil.org/eppingforest/professionaldev.aspx>

At Flatford Mill there are courses on on film-making, photography, painting and drawing wildlife as well as birds, wildflowers, dragonflies, butterflies and tree identification. <http://field-studies-coun-cil.org/flatfordmill/professionaldev.aspx>

For full details of courses at all the FSC Centres of particular relevance to woodland owners see <http://field-studies-coun-cil.org/professional/2011/habitats/habitats.aspx>

### AJS Crafts

Offer a wide range of courses covering many different woodland-related crafts. Upcoming are courses on spoon making, charcoal burning, willow basketry and sweet chestnut gates and hurdles.

<http://www.ajscrafts.co.uk/courses/CourseList.aspx>

DWWP offer a range of woodland activity and traditional woodcraft courses in Yorkshire

<http://www.dwwp.co.uk/Woodland%20Skills.asp>

ness set in, I led the group on a night walk through the woodland, looking and listening out for the wildlife of the night. We saw Bats hawking for insects in gaps in the canopy and heard the hoots of a Tawny Owl. Following a “night stalkers” game, fires were extinguished and we went to our shelters to sleep.

Up until 5am we had been blessed with fine weather and then the heavens opened with gusting winds bringing in heavy showers. I arose



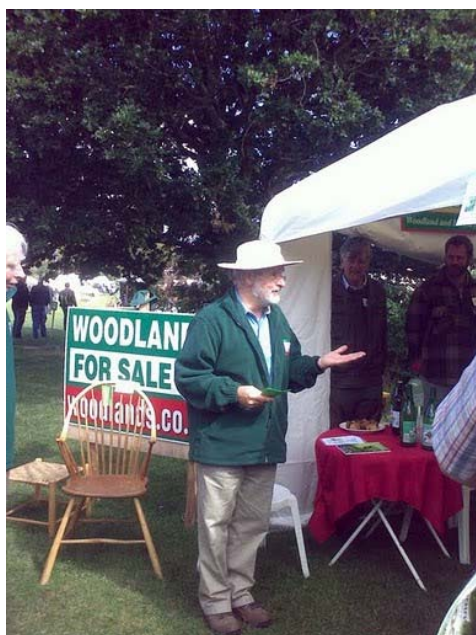
to make sure that the cooking fires were lit before it got too wet and to see whether the groups were staying dry in their debris shelters.

I was pleased that the efforts from the day before had paid off and nearly all members of the group had managed to stay dry in their shelters.

The rain eased while we tucked into a fried breakfast and talked about the night time experience. After that, there was just time to break camp, clear up and walk out of the woods, all smiles, stories and smelling of wood smoke.

The group would like to come again...and this time do the cooking themselves!

## REMINDER: Festival of the Tree at Westonbirt Arboretum 26th to 29th August



<http://www.woodfairs.co.uk/england/>

The small woodland owners group have been invited to have a table and display in the Woodlands.co.uk tent at the Festival of the Tree. Come along and meet Daniel and Rich and share how you are getting on in your woodlands.

We will have our new book for sale with a special offer price

(<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/managing-your-woodland-for-wildlife/>)

and loads of information leaflets and bits and bobs to give away. We would love your involvement with the woodfair, so please be in touch if you would like to have any of your photos on display or if you have anything small you might like to sell. (like homemade

jams, cupcakes, charcoal, things you made out of wood). If you do bring something please make sure you are able to collect it if it doesn't sell and preferably the money if does before the end of the show!

Please contact Rich for more information [rich@swog.org.uk](mailto:rich@swog.org.uk)

## Woodlands.co.uk report on small woodland ownership



Woodlands.co.uk have recently sponsored research into why people buy small woods and how they manage them, and this has produced some interesting findings.

Almost all the owners were passionate about wildlife, with 89% citing wildlife conservation as a reason for buying. Owners pay an average of 60 visits a year to their woods, and they are a highly social event, with 14% also inviting community groups into their woods. The majority of owners also plan to leave their woodland to future

### Biocensus

Offer a range of courses including Phase One Habitat Survey and Wildlife Legislation. Full programme available on

<http://www.biocensus.co.uk/Upload/docs/BiocensusTrainingTimetable2011.pdf>

Moelyci Environmental Training Centre offer a wide variety of courses of interest to woodland owners, including courses on Phase 1 habitat surveys, national vegetation classification and wildlife surveys. <http://www.moelyci.org> for further information.

Monkton Wyld Court in Dorset offer a wide range of courses in sustainable living. See <http://www.monktonwyldcourt.co.uk/> for more information.

BTCV London are running courses on wild flower identification at their Rotherhithe Centre in June and August

<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level4/19/level>

They also run a wide range of other courses on wildlife and conservation including practical and certificated training.

Woodlandskills.com Based in Sussex, they offer a variety of courses in the field of woodland living, survival and traditional wood crafts.

Abbots Living Wood offers a range of green woodworking courses

[http://www.living-wood.co.uk/2011\\_course\\_dates.html](http://www.living-wood.co.uk/2011_course_dates.html)





generations of their family.

Learning woodland management, keeping fit, birdwatching, butterfly conservation and having a place for friends to visit were other major reasons for buying.

Woodland owners undertake many management tasks with over three-quarters of owners planting trees or undertaking coppicing. It is estimated that woodlands.co.uk owners have planted 220,000 trees over the years. This paints a picture of owners who are actively involved in managing, conserving and improving their woods and taking a long-term view. Very few owners bought their woods as a financial investment, or for commercial timber production.

Further details are available on the woodlands.co.uk web site <http://www.woodlands.co.uk/about-us/press-releases/23.05.2011-uk-survey-report.php> and the full report is available at <http://www.woodlands.co.uk/about-us/articles/woodland-owner-survey-report.pdf>

## News for Small Woodland Owners

### OurForests set up to monitor Independent Forestry Panel

Following concerns that the Independent Forestry Panel may not be truly independent, and may have conflicts of interests, a new “ginger” group has been set up to monitor their work. The individual members are

- **Hen Anderson** (Co-founder ‘Save Our Woods’, who also runs a smallholding and woodland on Exmoor)
- **Richard Daniels** (Chair of the grassroots campaigning group Hands off our Forest (HOOF) in the Forest of Dean)
- **Dr Gabriel Hemery** (chartered forester, co-founder and Chief Executive, the Sylva Foundation);
- **Tony Juniper** (independent environmental advisor, campaigner, writer and former Director of Friends of the Earth);
- **Rod Leslie** (former Chief Executive, Forest Enterprise);
- **Robin Maynard** (environmental campaign consultant);
- **Jonathon Porritt** (Founder Director Forum for the Future and former Chair of UK Sustainable Development Commission).

The group will question panel members individually, as well as continue to monitor their work and ensure that public concerns are taken up with the panel. If you have any issues you want to raise with the panel, please contact them.

<http://saveourwoods.co.uk/our-forests/our-forests-full-launch-press-release/>

### Evidence from 2009 consultation on public forests in England published

A summary of this consultation from 2009 has been made available on the OurForests web site. The Forestry Commission, and the public forest estate in general, were seen as doing a good job, and providing value for money. See - <http://saveourwoods.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/OurForests-2009-summary-public-consultation-16.6.11.pdf>.



### Who are the thugs in British Woodlands?

A report published in the Kew Bulletin, and made available through the BBC, shows that native “thug” plants, predominantly nettles, brambles and ivy, can be more damaging to regeneration of native woodland than alien invaders. Even dog mercury, growing in carpets as it does, can suppress regeneration, despite also being an indicator plant of native woodland. The summary is on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/wondermonkey/2011/06/who-are-the-thugs-in-british-w-shipment> and the full scientific paper is published in



the Kew Bulletin <http://www.springerlink.com/content/b6p6425827520u4u/fulltext.pdf>

## Natural Environment White Paper

The long-awaited Natural Environment White Paper was published in June 2011 by DEFRA. This long document is the Government response to the 2010 report “Making Space for Nature” (The “Lawson Report”) which had the stated goals to

- Improve quality of current habitat
- Increase size of existing wildlife sites
- Enhance connections between sites
- Reduce pressure on wildlife

There are a number of new concepts to be introduced which have the potential to improve quality, increase size of habitats and improve connections between sites. Local Nature Partnerships (LNP’s) will be formed by local groups which can include private and public sector organisations and voluntary groups, with the remit to oversee local habitat and ecosystem protection, independent of administrative boundaries. This could be excellent in addressing the discontinuities that occur at present administrative boundaries, something of which we have direct experience with our own wood on the Warwickshire/Staffordshire border. Groups of these can then oversee landscape-scale ecological networks by forming Nature Improvement Areas (NIA’s), again, improving quality and particularly connectivity. Landscape-scale conservation is something that we have been lacking, and that needs addressing.



Biodiversity Offsetting is another concept introduced: the concept that if a development goes ahead, and mitigation is insufficient to prevent ecosystem damage, then this can be offset by the developer investing in ecosystems elsewhere.

Woodland policy has stated goals of planting productive and native woodlands, planting trees in cities and towns, bringing a much larger proportion of woodland into management and increase sustainably-grown wood and products. Better protection for Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (ASNW and PAWS) is promised, but no details are given as to how this might be delivered. In urban areas, new designated Green Areas can be incorporated into local plans, and there is encouragement to manage the wildlife habitat alongside road and rail infrastructure more effectively. Support is to be given to gardeners to manage their gardens for wildlife, and encouragement given to volunteer groups and community groups to take over the management of under-managed or neglected areas.

The English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) administered by the Forestry Commission may merge with the Stewardship Schemes (ELS/HLS) currently administered by Natural England in an attempt to make landscape-scale conservation crossing multiple habitats more effective, although recent EU debates over continuation of Pillar 2 payments under the Common Agricultural Policy may affect the Stewardship Schemes, and undermine the intention to enhance these.

Barriers to outdoor learning are also to be addressed and removed by discussion with the Health and Safety Executive, with every child getting the right to some outdoor learning.

Overall, there is a lot of potential, although the lack of detail as to how much of this will be achieved, reliance on voluntary agreements, and the relatively low funding allocated means it is yet to be seen how it will work in practice, or mesh with the current deliberations of the Independent Forestry Panel and the review of environmental and planning legislation currently underway.

See <http://www.archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/natural/documents/newp-white-paper-110607.pdf> for the full report.

## Forestry Commission Statistics: Inventory for 2011: Woodland Area, Planting and Re-stocking

- The area of woodland in the UK at 31 March 2011 is 3.08 million hectares. This represents 13 per cent of the total land area in the UK, 10 per cent in England, 15 per cent in Wales, 18 per cent in Scotland and 6 per cent in Northern Ireland.
- Of the total UK woodland area, 0.87 million hectares is owned or managed by the Forestry Commission (in Great Britain) or the Forest Service (in Northern Ireland).
- The total certified area in the UK at 31 March 2011 is 1.33 million hectares, including all Forestry Commission/ Forest Service woodland. Overall, 43 per cent of the UK woodland area is certified.
- Nine thousand hectares of new woodland were created in the UK in 2010-11, mostly with broadleaved species.

- Fourteen thousand hectares of woodland were restocked in the UK in 2010-11, mostly with conifers.

The summary can be seen on <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8GKKG4> and a more detailed report on [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/area2011.pdf/\\$FILE/area2011.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/area2011.pdf/$FILE/area2011.pdf)



### Tick prevention advice from NHS

Following some discussion on the forum about ticks, how to prevent their bites, what to do if bitten and the risks of Lyme disease, there is a good summary of what to do on the NHS web site at

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Lyme-disease/Pages/Prevention.aspx>

### Plans for legally binding agreement to protect European Forests

European ministers responsible for forests made an historical decision on 15th June to launch negotiations for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe. They also adopted European 2020 Targets for forests. This far-reaching political step was taken at the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, which took place from 14-16 June in Oslo, Norway. The agreement will include a target for all nations to implement a national forest programme to contain climate change and mitigation strategies, cut the rate of biodiversity loss and eliminate illegal logging.

For more details see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-13733996> and <http://www.foresteurope.org/>  
The full press release is on:

[http://www.foresteurope.org/filestore/foresteurope/Press\\_releases/2011/Press\\_Release\\_FOREST\\_EUROPE\\_Ministrial\\_Conference\\_Decision\\_LegallyBinding\\_Agreement.pdf](http://www.foresteurope.org/filestore/foresteurope/Press_releases/2011/Press_Release_FOREST_EUROPE_Ministrial_Conference_Decision_LegallyBinding_Agreement.pdf)

### Summary report on state of European forests

FOREST EUROPE have also released a summary and full report on the state of European Forests. There are a lot of interesting things to read in here. For example, forests cover nearly 50% of European land area, and comprise 25% of the world's woodlands and forests as a whole. However the forests are at risk from acid rain and eutrophication, and many trees are in poor condition, dying or dead. The rate of planting exceeds that of felling, and Europe remains a major producer of wood.

The non-timber benefits of woodlands are recognised, and most forests in Europe have management plans in place. About 10% of European (non-Russian) forests are protected, but the level of protection varies locally.

The majority of states have national forest programmes in place, that respond to needs for sustainable energy, biodiversity and climate change to varying degrees. The future roles of forests in climate change mitigation, sustainable fuel production, biodiversity enhancement and the green economy are recognised.

[http://www.foresteurope.org/filestore/foresteurope/Publications/pdf/Summary\\_for\\_Policy\\_Makers\\_State\\_of\\_Europes\\_Forests\\_2011\\_web.pdf](http://www.foresteurope.org/filestore/foresteurope/Publications/pdf/Summary_for_Policy_Makers_State_of_Europes_Forests_2011_web.pdf)



### Big Butterfly Count – 16<sup>th</sup> July

Butterfly Conservation is organising a nationwide Big Butterfly Count between 16th and 31st July. Everybody can help by registering at the web site, get help with butterfly identification, and upload your results online. You only need to take 15 minutes to survey butterflies in a bright or sunny spot, and you can survey more than one area. Woodland butterflies, particularly specialist species such as purple emperor and white admiral, have been declining, so help from woodland owners to monitor the progress of these and other woodland species would be very welcome. The web site provides live maps showing sightings in your area.

See <http://bigbutterflycount.org/> for more information on how to get involved.

### FC Toolbox for public engagement in forest & woodland planning

The Forestry Commission have released a toolbox for engaging with the public in

planning and management of woodlands. Even for small woodland owners, what we do may impact upon the public, and therefore advice on how to engage with the public is helpful, particularly if your wood is in a sensitive area, and any work you are going to do will impact upon the local community, or seek to involve them as volunteers. More information is at

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-5XMDS8>

### **National Forest Inventory Data**

The ongoing National Forest Inventory is making all its data available as summaries and maps on <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/INFD-8EYJWF>

Initial maps and area reports were published in May 2011, and this inventory will be updated with all updates being made publicly available.

Although woodland area in England is larger than previously thought, losses are also substantial, with the major culprits residential buildings, quarries and golf courses. The vast majority of new planting is grant-aided.

Maps are also available, showing the inventory data against a coloured OS background. Shape files are available for use with Geographical Information Systems. At present, the maps are not very detailed, available only at national level, but this may improve in future.

### **New UN FAO guide on protecting forests from pests and diseases**

Two British experts made key contributions to important new international guidance for people involved in efforts to protect trees, woods and forests from pests and diseases. The “Guide to implementation of phytosanitary standards in forestry” has just been published by the United Nations Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO). It sets out information about internationally recommended standards for measures to maintain the health of trees and to minimise the risk to them from pests and diseases.

Two key contributors were Professor Hugh Evans, the head of Forest Research in Wales, who is an internationally recognised expert on tree pests and diseases, and Roddie Burgess, who was head of the Forestry Commission’s Plant Health Service for 14 years until retiring in March 2011. The booklet identifies the growth in international trade, which provides numerous pathways for accidentally spreading plant pests and pathogens around the world, as an important contributor to the increasing threats to trees and forests. It outlines a range of measures encompassing import controls, forest management practices and biosecurity precautions that can be taken to minimise the threats without imposing burdensome restrictions on trade.

It includes explanations of a wide range of good practices that can be employed by people managing or working in tree nurseries, or who manage, plant or harvest trees, or manufacture, sell or transport forest products. It is also designed to benefit forestry policy-makers, planners, managers and educators. Included are a number of case examples of pests and pathogens that have moved across international boundaries to cause significant damage to forests in new countries. These include the pathogens that cause Dutch elm disease that has wiped out millions of Britain’s elms, and the ramorum disease that is currently killing larch trees here.

The report can be downloaded for free at [www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2080e/i2080e00.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2080e/i2080e00.htm)

### **National Ecosystem Assessment Report Published**

This major report looks at the ecosystems we have, what services they deliver (including biodiversity and support services, as well as provisioning and social/cultural), how they have changed and what pressures exist and feeds into the Natural Environment White Paper. A big feature of this report is that for the first time, monetary values are attached to ecosystems and the benefits they produce.

There is a large section in this report on Woodlands, looking at the history of UK woodlands, distribution and types of woodlands, trends and changes in woodland area and type, drivers of change, and ecosystem goods and services provided for people including ecosystem services, provisioning services (such as woodfuel), regulating services (CO2 reduction and water and soil improvement), cultural services (recreation, health and wellbeing) and supporting services. Finally, an economic valuation is put on these services provided by forests and woodlands.

The report can be seen at <http://uknea.unep-cmc.org/Home/tabid/38/Default.aspx>

### **Abandoned Public Forests in England Consultation data released**



Forest Research have released an analysis of the first consultation on Public Forests in England that was abandoned by the Government after very strong public outcry. Over 7000 responses were analysed, examining both the closed and open questions in the consultation. Although participants were not asked directly about the principle of disposal of forestry assets, the majority disagreed with this principle, and with the way in which the consultation was being conducted. Most responders disagreed with disposal to charities and commercial organisations, and thought that efficiency would not be increased. Community groups were not felt to be the best way to safeguard the future of the woodlands. A minority agreed with woodlands reverting to private ownership. The full report can be viewed at [http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/pdf/PFE\\_consultation\\_analysis\\_2011.pdf/\\$FILE/PFE\\_consultation\\_analysis\\_2011.pdf](http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/pdf/PFE_consultation_analysis_2011.pdf/$FILE/PFE_consultation_analysis_2011.pdf)

## Department for Energy and Climate Change Microgeneration Strategy Launched

In June 2011, DECC launched its microgeneration strategy based upon two principles: First, that Government incentives were needed to support the growth of microgeneration via the Feed-In Tariff and Renewable Heat Incentive. Second, that barriers to microgeneration need to be identified and overcome. A criticism of the reform of the financial incentives is that it has hit small-scale community microgeneration projects, and this is addressed in Chapter 5, where a willingness to support community initiatives without subsidising commercial projects is seen. This could include community buying schemes so materials can be obtained at a discount, as well as support for community-led schemes or schemes where the community is a major shareholder. A new roundtable will be set up to discuss how community microgeneration projects can be supported. A series of meetings is also scheduled in July.



See [http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/meeting\\_energy/microgen/strategy/strategy.aspx](http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/meeting_energy/microgen/strategy/strategy.aspx)



From left, RFS Small Woodlands Award winners Carolyn Church and Hugh Ross, owners of Rawhaw Wood at Pipewell, received the award from Richard Scholfield Estate manager from woodlands.co.uk and awards co-ordinator Trefor Thompson and RFS president Anthony Bosanquet.

## RFS Small Woodlands Winners

The Royal Forestry Society Excellence in Forestry Awards for 2011 were sponsored by woodlands.co.uk with additional sponsorship by Woodmizer, and the winners were announced in a presentation in Cambridge.

**The winner was Rawhaw Wood, Pipewell, Nr Kettering, Northants:** The 12ha wood is a remnant of Rockingham Forest, an ancient semi-natural woodland and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It has a long history of coppice management dating back over four centuries and remnants of medieval boundary ditches have been discovered during scrub clear-

## Greenwood Centre course on Treebogs

<http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk/2011aWoddlAndTreebogs27-28Aug.php>

## Sharpham Trust

Mammal Tracks and Signs for Photographers  
[http://www.sharphamtrust.org/event\\_detail.php?id=13376](http://www.sharphamtrust.org/event_detail.php?id=13376)

How to cultivate fungi (Peckings from the Wood)

Fee course in South London from Trust for Urban Ecology  
<http://www.environmentjob.co.uk/adverts/28312>

## Alvecote Wood, North Warwickshire

Introduction to Photography Workshops, and an Introductory Woodland Management workshop

<http://www.alvecotewood.co.uk/AW-EventsProg-0211.pdf>

## Black Country Living Landscape –

courses including wildflower plug planting and rustic fence-building  
[http://www.bcell.org.uk/whats\\_happening/events.html](http://www.bcell.org.uk/whats_happening/events.html)

## Trees Matter Course:

for anybody planting or looking after trees particularly in urban environment 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> July in Manchester.  
<http://freepdfhosting.com/b46851fbd3.pdf>

Latest CAT short courses  
Eco building, Eco refurb and Eco interiors  
<http://www2.cat.org.uk/shortcourses/> and course calendar on [http://www2.cat.org.uk/short-courses/course\\_calendar.php](http://www2.cat.org.uk/short-courses/course_calendar.php)



ance. The wood is made up of oak and ash standards with predominantly Hazel understorey which had become very neglected before being taken over by the current owners .

The owners have introduced two ten -year coppice cycles, restocking coups as they are cleared using locally provenanced whips and layering from existing stools.

Selective felling of mature

oak and ash and the re-coppicing of over mature ash stools has helped reduce the high canopy to 25-30% cover.

The reintroduction of coppicing has had a marked increase in biodiversity, which is monitored by a number of groups and information passed to Natural England for their records. Notable species found on site include white letter hairstreak , herb Paris, greater butterfly orchid and strong populations of hole nesting birds such as march tits

Rawhaw Wood is a venue for a number of school visits and projects; practical courses are run on coppice management and charcoal making, there are links with local agricultural colleges and with the Greenwood Trust to provide OCN level 2 training.

**The runner-up was Red Lodge Wood**, Tilton- on-the-Hill, Leicestershire. The 14.5ha wood has been created in an area which include around half a mile of disused railway track, part of which is in a deep cutting and part on an embankment, and adjoining agricultural land.

On open land, David planted sessile oak, ash and hornbeam, with ash as the nursery crop. The work was carried out under a Woodland Grant Scheme. On the exposed north face of the wood is field maple and Norway maple, both coppiced to provide shelter and warmth. The disused rail line was planted to encourage wildlife and last year the local Entomological Society counted 17 species of birds and five species of mammals. Ponds were also created from an existing stream which runs through the plantations and there are plan to reintroduce English crayfish.

David has learnt how to high prune and it on course to complete the last plantation this winter. A link up with Brooksby Agriculture College has helped train students in the use of chain saws – and provided David with timber from 20-year old trees to sell for firewood.

Red Lodge Lane is an old Drovers Way, open to the public, and bisects Red Lodge Wood.

**A certificate of Merit was awarded to Vera's Spinney, Needham Hill Farm, Kinoulton, Nottinghamshire.**

Vera's Spinney was planted in 1996 on former arable land as a discrete block of largely native woodland under the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme. There were three main aims to:

- create a native woodland to extend the range of wildlife on the farm;
- improve the local landscape which is dominated by agricultural land; and
- provide an educational resource for the village school.

Main tree species are oak, birch, ash, small-leaved lime, cherry and sycamore with some conifer nurse species.

A pond was retained along with mature hedgerows on three boundaries and a new hedgerow was planted in 2005.

Thinning is proposed shortly to remove the nurse conifers and non natives, such as sycamore. The outer row of lower growing trees will be coppiced on a four-year cycle, one side per year, to encourage insects , and hence woodland birds.

The RSPB has recorded eight species of woodland birds, and seven species of woodland butterflies at the spinet . Produce from thinning and coppicing is being sold directly to the customer at the farm gate as firewood.





## Independent Forestry Panel Public Consultation—REMINDER July 31st Deadline!

This is a reminder that you have only until 31st July to submit your views to the Independent Forestry Panel on the future of forests in England. The consultation document can be downloaded from

<http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/forestry/documents/forestry-panel-callforviews-110519.pdf>

Due to difficulty accessing the above link, the consultation document is also on <http://saveourwoods.co.uk/respond-to-the-forestry-panel/>

The document poses the framework of questions that they would like answered. You don't have to answer all of them, and you can also write a freehand response. Please submit your views before the consultation closes. to: [forestry-panel@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:forestry-panel@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

## On the blogs at woodlands.co.uk

### Forestry Commission National Forest Inventory by *Chris*

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/forestry-commission-the-national-forest-inventory-nfi/>

### Motivations for buying Woodland by *Hannah*

The new report from woodlands.co.uk on motivations for buying woodland and what the owners do in and with their woods.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/motivations-for-buying-woodland/>

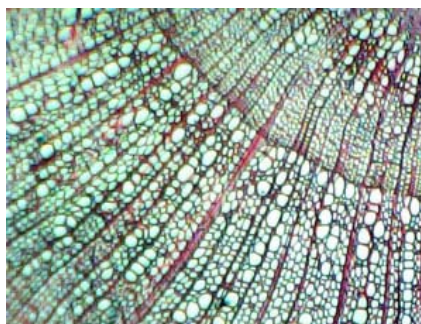
### Financing your Wood by *Angus*

How did woodland owners finance their purchase? Read the results from the research report.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/financing-your-wood/>

### Rings, Climate and History by *Chris*

What is dendrochronology and what can it tell you about your trees?



<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/rings-climate-and-history/>

### Chocolate bananas and caramelised apples on a campfire by *Angus*

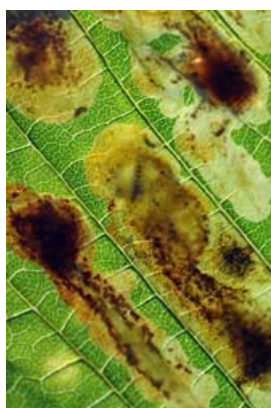
Not just sausages—some alternative things to cook on your campfire!

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/chocolate-bananas-and-caramelised-apples-on-a-campfire/>

### Invasion of the killer shrimps by *Chris*

An invader from the Caspian Sea is threatening our waters. Read more about the killer shrimp here

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/invasion-of-the-killer-shrimps/>



### Horse Chestnut Tree Miner Moth by *Chris*

This moth is not a recent introduction, or a parasite that has switched host, but has travelled from the Balkans.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/trees/horse-chestnut-leaf-miner-moth/>



## SWOG Meeting in Aberdeen 26th June 2011



Adrian offered to host a day in his woods just South of Aberdeen. The plan was to walk through the wood about 1.5 Km to the bothy and have a BBQ. The main aim was to make contact with other SWOG members in the area.

Unfortunately, SWOG members were unable to attend this event, but not to be deterred, Adrian ran the event anyway, inviting friends that have helped in the wood over the last two years.

A Botanist from the university pointed out the ancient woodland indicators, a forager who pointed out that we could eat them and the Dunotter bodging group did an excellent demo and got people having a go.

It rained bit but we had a good time! Here are some more photos..



## Coppice Week Clog Making Course by Rich



The Sussex and Surrey Coppice Group again held a very successful ‘Coppice Week’ on Ashdown forest. There was a rich mix of courses to try your hand at, I took on a challenging two days with one of the last traditional hand made clog makers in the country. Making Clogs with Jeremy Atkinson turned out to be a lot of fun. It’s probably the most difficult thing I’ve tried to do with a piece of wood but also one of the most satisfying.

Tools were straight forward. A well worn bench set up at about thigh height and a choice of 2 stock knives. One was a straight single bevelled blade on about a 3 foot handle. There is a hook at the end of the blade which locates in an eye in the bench and gives a vague ‘impression’ of control and safety in use! . The other is very similar except it has a curved blade much like a spoon knife and was used later on in the process for carving out the profile of the foot where it sits in the clog. In addition, a rebating knife, basically a tethered V gouge, was used to re-bate the sole where an upper could be attached. Anyone who has done this course

or tried using one of these will have their own name for it. I could have probably spent the whole 2 days, just trying to get the hang of it alone.

So to the method. Cleave a piece of wood to roughly the size you want. In our case we had some nice green alder, other woods like sycamore can be used, but alder was often chosen as it was cheap and easily available – remember this was footwear for the proletariat. Draw a cardboard pattern around your foot and cut it out. The next part would take an expert like Jeremy about an hour and half to rough out and pare down to size. We spent about a day and a half getting there. It’s one of those techniques which defy explanation, you really just have to do it. In fact although Jeremy does have an extensive and colourful vocabulary, he frequently had to just grab our work and get into position with it before he could explain his posture and technique. A lot of the control does come from the knife, but the skill also lies in the way you brace the piece, move it in tandem with the knife and feather and adjust the angles to gain power, control and leverage. There’s a lot to think about not least of which is safety. These knives need to be kept razor sharp, so any slip ups could be disastrous. There were only two of us on the course and after a while I discovered why. Jeremy had positioned himself on a chair about 4 feet away from our benches and although he is a formidable raconteur and we covered a great deal of ground outside the sphere of traditional clog making, he was never distracted and if we put so much as a little finger nail out of place he would stop us before we could do any damage. Any more than two students on a course like this would be very difficult to supervise safely.

So eventually towards the end of the second day, aided with a rasp and a bit of added confidence, we arrived at a shape we were happy with. The end grains of the soles were covered with a bit of beeswax to prevent them from splitting as they dry out, they are now in a dark corner of my shed. Once they are seasoned I’ll be bugging Jeremy to help me fit the uppers. Sadly the craft is dying out, Jeremy is one of the last craftsmen in the country still making clogs this way. The course was both challenging and enjoyable, but mostly it really opened my eyes to the great skill and time it takes to master the craft, You can find out more about clogmaking and view some of Jeremy’s work by visiting his website at <http://www.clogmaker.co.uk/index.php>.

## Forthcoming Meetings and Events



### SWOG Meeting South Ayrshire, 29th October 2011

Nick and his local FC officer are leading a walk around his wood in October. The woodland is half semi ancient and half coniferous, and abundant in natural regeneration! There are deer, hare, squirrel (red and grey) and birds of prey.

This looks like a fantastic event, so please do try and support it if you can. Please let [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk) know if you are interested in attending.



## Forthcoming Woodfairs from woodfairs.co.uk

### Woodfairs in Scotland

#### Tweed Valley Forest Festival

21st to 30th October 2011

<http://www.forest-festival.com/website/index.php>

### Woodfairs in England

#### Live Crafts and Festival of Woods

Various dates and venues across SE England.

[http://www.hdfairs.co.uk/live\\_crafts\\_default.html](http://www.hdfairs.co.uk/live_crafts_default.html)

#### Blackdown Hills Woodfair

2nd July, Park Farm near Wellington

<http://www.woodbiz.co.uk/freepage.asp?ID=9>

#### South Downs Woodfair

9th and 10th July 2011, Queen Elizabeth Country park, South Downs National Park

<http://www.woodlandcrafts.co.uk/>

#### Great Yorkshire Show

Harrogate, 12-14th July

<http://www.greatyorkshireshow.com/html/home/>

#### The Arb and Forestry Event

15th and 16th July 2011, Shipborne, Kent

<http://www.frijonesandson.co.uk/show/>

**New Forest and Hampshire County Show**  
Brockenhurst, Hampshire  
26th - 28th July 2011

For more information visit their <http://www.newforestshow.co.uk/index.htm>

**Woodfair, Joydens Wood**  
Dartford 20th August 2011

For more information, visit their <http://blog.bexleyweb.co.uk/2011/05/wood-fair-joydens-wood-dartford/>

#### Festival of the Tree

Westonbirt Arboretum, 26-29th August

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt>

#### Stock Gaylard Estate Oak Fair



Sturminster Newton, Devon, 27th August

<http://www.stockgaylard.com/oak-fair/oak-fair-at-stock-gaylard.html>

#### National Forest Woodfair

Beacon Hill Country Park, Leicestershire, 29th August

<http://www.leics.gov.uk/woodfair>

#### Woodworks

3rd and 4th September 2011,  
Marston Mortaine, Bedfordshire

<http://www.marstonvale.org/woodworks/>

#### Wychwood Woodfair

Sunday 4th September

<http://www.wychwoodproject.org/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Wychwood/Events/>

#### South West Woodland Show

Longleat Estate, Warminster, Wilts, 9th September

<http://www.southwestwoodlandshow.org.uk/>

#### Wild About Wood

Castle Howard Arboretum, 10th to 11th September

<http://www.wildaboutwood.org/>

#### Bentley Weald Woodfair

Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum, Lewes, East Sussex, 16-18th September

<http://www.bentley.org.uk/#/woodfair/4525168793>

#### Lincolnshire Firewood fair and auction

Revesby Estate, Lincolnshire, 18th September 2011

<http://www.lincolnshirefirewoodfair.co.uk/>

#### Cranborne Chase Woodfair

8th-9th October, Larmer Tree Gardens

<http://www.woodfair.org.uk/>

#### Surrey Hills Woodfair

<http://www.surreyhillswoodfair.co.uk/>

#### Ickworth House, Suffolk

8th and 9th October

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-ickworth>





## Newsletter - July 2011

### About SWOG

The Small Woodland Owner's group has been formed to aid the enjoyment, diversity and conservation of British Woodland. As Woodlands.co.uk is sponsoring the group there will be no annual fee for members, and events are free of charge unless otherwise stated.

Anyone can join in, (you do not need to own a woodland) just send Tracy your details (name, address, email) to be put on the list. We will not pass your information to anyone else.

Please do join with us and share your wealth of knowledge and experience with others, as well as your joys and moans. We have members from all over the country. We are also on Facebook if you like to communicate that way! See [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=61487332523](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=61487332523)

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## On the forum...what have we been doing this month?

**Rich** asked if you can use silver birch in a hedge—advice was that it doesn't like growing in a hedge, or being cut or laid.

**Woodlander** was concerned about possible *P.ramorum* infection in his woods. He got the all clear from Forest Research, but raised the question as to whether woodland insurance would cover the costs of a compulsory felling order.

**Michaelb811** raised the question of woodland insurance again. Third party insurers often provide cover for trespassers but not for friends and family or groups of volunteers. Beech Tree insurance provides wider cover, but there are health and safety and duty of care issues to consider when inviting guests to your wood.

**Emma S** was welcomed to the forum, and her first job is felling 400 trees as part of a scheduled ancient monument restoration—quite a steep learning curve!

**Meadowcopse** reported the theft of trees from a nursery, and noted that Farmers Weekly have a rural crime register on <http://www.fwi.co.uk/Articles/2011/06/10/127257/Farmers-Weekly-launches-Crime-Register.htm>

**Iain** is looking to provide professional vermin control services using air rifles, prompting a discussion about where to go



for people looking for good advice and professional help controlling squirrels and rabbits. **Viperteks** and **happybonzo** also offer shooting services.

**MikeG** was looking to rent a woodland for paintballing, prompting a discussion on the potential impacts of such activities on woodlands and whether it produces permanent or temporary detriment to the woodland ecosystem. Do any of you have any experience of paintballing in

your wood?

**Meadowcopse** is still looking for advice on registering a newly-planted traditional orchard with the Rural Land Registry—can anybody help? Please reply on the forum.

**solarbud** and quite a few others have had problems with ticks when visiting and working in their woods. Advice on tick removal with tweezers was provided, and o'tom tick removal tweezers are available from vets. Tick bite prevention advice is available from the NHS web site, and from the Lyme Disease Trust.

Rainwater harvesting was also a topic of discussion, with lots of different solutions being considered. **Cagsley** has written a lovely article on use of a sand filter to produce clean rainwater for washing available on the SWOG web site at <http://www.swog.org.uk/articles/rainwater-harvesting/> (see picture) - full article will feature next month!

## Contributions, THANK YOU!



I would like to say a huge THANK YOU for all the contributions this month. It makes the newsletter much more exciting when we can read about your own experiences at first hand. We would still like some more. Have you attended a course recently? Read a good book and would like to review it? Have you any pictures of you and your friends and family enjoying your woods? Do you have an unusual hobby? Can you provide a review of any of your equipment? Any wildlife photos? *Any contributions gratefully received. Please send to [sarah@swog.org.uk](mailto:sarah@swog.org.uk)*