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### In the Newsletter this Month

Solar power. We've heard before from Mike Pepler about installation of off-grid solar, but this time, we have a report from Sarah and Stephen about installation of grid-connected solar power at their home. The subsidies for this will be cut or end in April 2012, so now is the time to think about it for your home.

We also have a great report from Rich about Bentley Woodfair, and an update from the Gatwick Greenspace Partnership on their project. It is great to hear about community use of woodlands, and if anybody else has any examples, we'd love to hear from you.

One post on the forum has produced some excellent replies, so this has been edited into an article for this newsletter: why do some woods seem quiet, and where is all the wildlife? Is there a one-size fits all solution? Some great things to think about here.

There is a lot of news this month: the deadline for responding to the National Planning Policy Framework consultation is approaching on 17th October. Many wildlife and conservation bodies are concerned about the impact this could have, and we have given you some pointers as to where to go for further information to help formulate your response.

An important report on the state of UK Mammals has also been released this month—some species are doing well, but others, including hedgehogs and red squirrels, are doing poorly. Please take a look and think what you can do to support mammals in your woodlands.

Birds, too, have shown mixed fortunes. The BTO survey report shows that both woodland and farmland birds are doing poorly in the south, but better in the north.

Woodlands.co.uk have released an app for the iPhone. OK, we don't all have an iPhone, but the app is reviewed here for those of us with an iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad. Maybe an Android version will be forthcoming in future?

Finally, please keep those contributions coming—we love to hear from you!

Sarah Walters (sarah@swog.org.uk)

### Feed-in Tariff Solar Power—our experience

Although this isn't directly about woodlands, a lot of woodland folk are very keen to make use of renewable energy technology, be it wood-fuel, wind power or solar. Thank you to Mike and Tracy Pepler, we have already heard about off-grid solar power. However there is another scheme available that avoids the need for batteries. This scheme is called the feed-in tariff, and allows you to sell the surplus power that you make to the National Grid. And you are also paid a subsidy by the Government for allowing your roof to be used in this way. So how does this scheme work?

First of all, it is limited to installations of 4kw or less: a system above this capacity is permitted but will attract a much smaller subsidy. You also need a roof that points more or less south, but in practice this is flexible. Our roof points East-South-East, and is very suitable. Whether your roof is suitable is also affected by the pitch of the roof and whether or not it is overlooked by other buildings, trees or chimneys that cast shadows. If you have a suitable roof, then you can go ahead with panels.

The system works like this: you pay for the installation, and the Government pays you for the electricity you generate at a rate of 43p per kilowatt hour (kwh). You get paid this tax free, index linked for 25 years, regardless of whether you use the electricity or export it to

the Grid. You also get paid 3.1 pence per kwh by your electricity supplier for all electricity you export back to the Grid. Plus if you use your own electricity instead of buying it in from the Grid, you save money on your bill.

So, if you can generate 4,000 kwh per year, you would get £1720 from the Government. Assuming you use 50% of the energy you generate, you would get a further £62 from your supplier. And the average saving of such a system would be £200 to £300 off your electricity bill. That could be an income of £1800 a year, as well as the saving. The saving will be greatest if you work at home and use electricity all day, and if you have energy-hungry appliances running by day. We have adjusted our routine to run the dishwasher, washing machine and bread maker by day rather than overnight as previously, making the most of free electricity. Our quarterly electricity usage was 38% lower from June to August, but we only had the panels installed on 6<sup>th</sup> July – including June at the same rate as the other two months gives a 57% reduction.

To date, in just over two months, we have generated just over 1 megawatt hour (1,000 kwh). However, these are the sunny months of July and August, and we expect generation to fall during the winter. Nevertheless, 3500 or more kwh seems plausible given performance to date, and bearing in mind we have had a very cloudy summer.

The systems are expensive. Depending on the panels you choose, and whether any community discounts are available (more about this in a minute), a 4kw system will cost between £10,000 and £14,000. But you should pay for a mid range £12k system in 7 to 8 years and after that you will make a profit. And you will be making a saving on CO<sub>2</sub> of 1893kg per year.

### Choosing your installer

There are very few installers who have been in the solar business for a long time. However this is an installation you cannot do yourself. The system must be installed by a Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) accredited installer. However many have only recently added on MCS installations to other business (often uPVC windows or plumbing) and only a few have a history of commitment to renewables. So it is very much worth asking around for a good installer. Our approach was to look up those companies that have been involved in installations for Local Government and Schools and we found one candidate that way. The second approach was to ask the local MCS trainer (Navitron, based in Nottingham) for a good local company. For both companies we visited and looked at installations they had done and asked about the installer. In the end, they were very similar, but we preferred the smaller company (City Solar from Nuneaton) as they communicated with us better and had the panels we wanted available. It seems our choice was very good: the company did an excellent job with minimum of fuss, the only delay being getting the scaffolding removed, which was not under their direct control.

### Choosing panels and inverter

Solar panel technology is developing rapidly, and for this reason it is worth researching the panels your installer is recommending. Efficiency of the panels is not necessarily a problem if you have a large roof space, but if your roof has limited space, or is affected by



## 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 and 2012 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>



shading, you may need more efficient panels to achieve the 4kw maximum installation. It is also worth thinking about the manufacturer: a lot of panels are currently made in China. Many of these are very good and very reasonably-priced. But, one of the considerations we had was the guarantee. A ten year guarantee is no good if the manufacturer has gone out of business and you can't get a replacement panel. Therefore we were drawn to the larger and better-known Japanese manufacturers, Sanyo and Sharp. Both have a very long history in the solar industry. However we would have needed three rows of panels to get 4kw from the Sharp system but only two rows from the much more efficient and compact 250 watt Sanyo panels. Although these were more expensive, we felt the look of our house was much better, and in

addition, the Sanyo panels have a lower carbon cost of manufacture, and degrade slower over time. We felt that this paid for the difference in price but that was a personal decision, and cheaper systems also offer very good value for money. We have some very good Yingli panels on the building at our wood, providing off-grid battery power for lighting, tools and intruder alarm.

So we have 16 x 250 watt Sanyo panels and within 24 hours were getting the full 4kw and a little bit more from the system. On our best day we generated over 25 kwh of electricity, and on our worst day just under 6 kwh. We averaged 16 kwh per day in July and 14 kwh per day in August and 11.7 kwh per day so far in September.

For the inverter we went with and SMA Sunny Boy. This is a German company and the inverter is supposed to be very reliable. The panels are wired in two rows and the inverter has the capacity for 4 rows to be joined in. The panels output 12v DC and the inverter changes this to 240v AC. It has an illuminated panel showing you real-time output and also a Bluetooth interface. Linking to your PC with a dongle, a free app will tell you real time output and allow you to view graphs of output by day, month and year, as well as download data files which can give a resolution of every 5 minutes if you need, or hourly or daily files. This will quickly turn you into a solar geek, so beware!

#### **Down sides of solar**

You may be thinking, "Ah, but what if I move house?". But that doesn't matter. The tariff belongs to you, not the house. So you can either sell it with the house, if you want to, or keep the payment for yourself, if you don't want solar at your new house. You will lose the savings on your bill, and the small payment from the electricity supplier, but keep the payment from the Government for the full 25 year term. So moving house isn't a big thing.

Solar is a good investment if you have the money, giving a better rate of return than most others. But you do have to be willing to bolt your capital to the house and wait for it to become profitable. You also have to bear in mind that while you may like the look of solar panels on your roof, not everybody does, and thus your property may lose value. You may also need to clean the panels periodically, not always easy.

You may also not be allowed to install conventional solar panels if you live in a listed building or conservation area. Panels are being developed by the Centre for Alternative Technology that look like traditional roof slates, and can thus be approved for use in conservation areas, but these are not yet widely available through MCS installers.

If you don't have the capital to pay for the panels, there are companies who will install them for free. You get the lower bills, but they take all the profit from the feed-in payment and so this isn't really such a good deal.

Finally, the feed-in scheme is not going to last. As the price of panels comes down, the incentive needed to get people to use them will also go down, and the money available from the Government will go down. The current scheme is only guaranteed to April 2012.

#### **In summary**

Solar is a great investment if you have the cash and a suitable roof, as the return is very good and you get this return whether or not you use the electricity that you generate and whether or not you stay in the house or move. You have to be prepared to tie your money to the roof, though, and possibly suffer a fall in the value of your house due to their appearance.. However, you get savings on your bill, and the electricity generated saves a lot of carbon dioxide. Most of all, you get that great feeling that when the sun shines, you can power not only your own house, but others nearby too. We have had several other people interested as a result of our own installation, and we hope this leads to a cascade effect, with more clean power generation and more CO2 emissions saved. That is a great feeling to have.

*Thank you to Stephen for climbing up the scaffolding to take the photo!*

*Some useful links*

From the Energy Saving Trust, an unbiased review of the state of play regarding Feed-in Solar <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Generate-your-own-energy/Sell-your-own-energy/Feed-in-Tariff-scheme>

Micro-generation Certification Scheme web site (MCS) <http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/>

## SWOG at the Woodfairs—Reports from Westonbirt and Bentley



*First of all, Rich reports from the Westonbirt Festival of the Tree, held over August Bank Holiday Weekend.*

SWOG were kindly offered a share of the Woodlands.co.uk tent at the Westonbirt woodfair which took place over the August bank holiday weekend.

It was a very enjoyable event, mixed weather but plenty of enthusiastic woodie type people around and quite a range of

woodland craft work on show. Westonbirt is a much smaller event than Bentley for instance and does not have the large contingent of heavy forestry exhibitors that most bigger shows have, but these are not necessarily of such interest to the small woodland owner.

We had some local and not so local members show up. Many thanks to Nigel and Elaine of Lapwing Wood in Somerset, who kindly took to the stand to help out and were great ambassadors for woodland ownership. Margaret, an owner from Kent had made a long journey but fortunately has relatives close by the Arboretum so found a ready excuse to visit the woodfair, or was it an excuse to visit her relatives!

Local owner Mike came along to show us the tree survey he has completed for his woodland. Using an excel spreadsheet divided into a grid, Mike worked out a colour coding method of representing all his trees, according to size and species. Certainly a huge help when it comes to working out his management plan.

We had bargain SWOG fleeces on sale, these are offered at cost price of £12 plus a free T-shirt, very useful for the autumnal weather which seems to have arrived and two zip pockets to keep your conkers and sweet chestnuts in respectively! We will have them again at the Bentley woodfair so make sure you pick one up there, or email me at

**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 October 2011 can be seen at

<http://www.rfs.org.uk/event/2011/10/01/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



rich@swog.org.uk if you can't make it, I could send you one.

The show was well worth a visit if you didn't make it, add a note in your diary for next year, but make sure you put enough time aside to see the arboretum. The highlight for me was the Giant Redwoods, (actually described as 'Babies', in relation to their Californian cousins) and the 2000 year old lime coppice. This is a coppice stool grown to about 30 metres in diameter and believed to be around 2000 years old, Penny and I found ourselves sheltering under it in one of the sporadic downpours of the weekend. I wonder how many other people would have done the same thing over the lifetime of the stool?

Finally after the show Nigel and Elaine kindly hosted us at Lapwing wood, their beautiful young mixed broad-leaf woodland (planted about 20 years ago). We spent a very nice afternoon enjoying a bbq and looking around their woodland and also their neighbour Mike's wood. We even got a bit of an impromptu scything lesson from Mike. These are a very efficient cutting implements for keeping down the grass and herb layer in young woodlands, glades and rides. I believe 'Living Woods' magazine reported on a bit of a showdown at a woodfair between a scythe expertly used and a 2 stroke petrol engine brush cutter with the scythe winning the contest. Not only that, but they are of course much, much, MUCH quieter, and eco friendly to boot. I'm also told it is a relaxing almost meditative activity once mastered. If anyone is interested, email me and we'll see if we can get enough numbers to organise a more formal workshop.

*Next, a report and some photos from Bentley Woodfair*

SWOG was at the Bentley Woodfair again which took place last weekend (16—18th September). It is one of the biggest and best shows in the country and could take you the whole weekend to go round.

The highlight for me was as always was the woodland. In a slightly chillier and damper woodland this year were many of the county's craftsmen and women, Sussex and Surrey Coppice Group was well represented and there was a strong contingent of 'Bushcrafty' types, all eager to explain their particular craft or expertise.



It was good to see a lot of SWOG members make it to the stand and a special thanks to those that helped set up and break camp, brought interesting items to show or sell and helped on the stand.

#### **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/>

#### **Bulworthy Project**

The Bulworthy project run courses including guided walks, as well as one day introductions to charcoal burning

See <http://www.bulworthyproject.org.uk/>

#### **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>

#### **Plantlife**

A charity dedicated to wildflowers and wild plants, run a programme of educational activities

[http://www.plantlife.org.uk/things\\_to\\_do/activities/](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/things_to_do/activities/)

Bernie and Theresa turned up with a novel idea for getting rid of that Rhododendron....turn it into Tea and Soft Drinks! Bernie had just returned from India where it makes a nice cuppa and thirst quencher, maybe it will catch on here too and rid us of this unwelcome invader.



**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/1258.pdf>

**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)

**Bishops Wood Centre** at Stourport on Severn, offer a wide range of courses of interest to woodland owners including bushcrafts, photography, pole lathe and other woodland crafts, as well as offering forest school leader training and CPD

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/education-and-learning/be-healthy/outdoor-education-centres/bishops-wood-centre/training-and-courses.aspx>

**British Dragonfly Society** run a programme of field visits and educational events.

<http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/diary-field-trips-and-other-bds-events>

## Gatwick Greenspace Partnership—Overnighters by Kevin Lerwill

You really can't beat a day or two in the woods to recharge the mental batteries and escape from the pressures that we all face day to day...On a recent "overnighter" at Orlton's Copse, near Rusper, West Sussex, a small group of us did just that...

After setting up the shelters, using Hornbeam logs and poles from last Winter's thinning operations, the insulation and roofing was provided by a dense layer of Bracken from the nearby clearing. Showers had been forecast for that night, so we made sure that the Bracken was piled on to provide a layer several inches thick...with no gaps!

The next priority was to get the camp fire going...but we were going to try the traditional "Fire bow" method instead of a lighter, which, although it would have been a lot easier and quicker, would not have been such a satisfying achievement. Plus a few of us had not tried this before, so it was a good opportunity to learn a new/old skill!

The components we used were as follows (although there are many other kinds of wood that are just as good, if not better, but we used what was available to us)...

A Hazel bow, with cord, a Hornbeam drill, a Hazel hearth, a Hornbeam ember pan and a Hornbeam bearing block. The basic premise is that a hardwood drill rotated rapidly on a softwood base (hearth) will gradually produce a fine wood-dust powder and then an ember. All the components must be dry and not rotten.

Gouge a small area at one end of the hearth. Shape the drill evenly at



both ends, so that a rounded end fits into the hearth and a slightly more pointed end fits into the bearing block. In a kneeling position, you then need to wind the bowstring once around the drill and move the bow backwards and forwards, keeping the drill upright and exerting downward pressure onto the bearing block.

After several false starts (this needs patience), you should begin to get a steady rhythm going and begin to see dark wood powder forming as a result of the friction... You then need to cut a narrow “V” shaped notch out of one side of your hearth, so that this powder collects and drops onto your ember pan.

Finally, you should form an ember large enough, which will glow as it receives oxygen... this ember can be (carefully) transferred to a pre-gathered ball of dried grass (or other suitable tinder material). You then need to coax the ember into life by alternately blowing on it and covering it until smoke starts to emerge... a few more breaths and you should have flames... which you can then transfer to your cooking area.

There are variations on this technique, which are just as good and you might want to experiment yourself to find a way that suits you best... By trying different woods, you will also get different results each time. The final thing to do is to get your campfire kettle on the go and then decide who is going to cook the next meal! Believe me, it's a great sense of achievement the first time you get flames from a few bits of wood, but it doesn't come easy and it takes considerable effort, so try not to be too disappointed if it doesn't work first time... Good luck!



## Woodlands.co.uk app for iPhone

We don't all have iPhones, but a lot of us do own either an iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad. There are various woodland and tree-related apps available for iOS devices, but now we have the Woodlands.co.uk app available.

So what is it all about, and how good is it?

For those of you who aren't into apps—an App is a compact piece of software capable of running on a smartphone or pad computer. iPhone apps have to be downloaded via iTunes, but this can be done via your PC or Mac or directly over the internet if you have a wireless or 3G connection. Without 3G it would be painfully slow and would probably fail, so you need 3G at the minimum to download them.

Some Apps are standalone: this means that all the data and software to run the app is loaded onto the phone in one go, and they will then work independently of any internet connection. They are usually regularly updated to ensure the information they contain is up to date. Other apps require an internet connection or GPS signal, or sometimes both. These provide a framework into which online data or GPS data can be processed on the

**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 and 2012 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.



device. Many apps are a combination of the two with both standalone and networked components. Woodlands.co.uk requires both internet connection and GPS to run, so again, won't be helpful if you don't have at least 3G signals available to you.

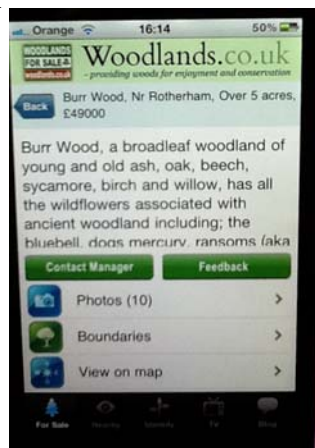
The opening screen is followed by a series of options along the bottom: woodlands for sale, open access woodlands (Near Me), identify (tree identification), TV (videos) and Blog (the woodlands.co.uk blog entries).

Woodlands for sale are listed by Region, but these aren't the standard UK regions, so you need to look carefully to see which region your woodland might fall into.

Tap a Region and you get a list of woods for sale in that region.

However because they are quite large regions in some places, you might have to look hard to find the exact area that you are interested in. Each wood is listed in summary, with the price and a brief description. Tap again, on the wood of your choice and you get some more details about it including photos, location map, a map of the boundaries and in some instance, directions to the wood for viewing. You can also contact the manager involved in the sale of the woods.

This element of the app is useful if you are looking for woodlands for sale, but many of us already own woodlands, so what else is there of interest? First of all, publicly-accessible woodlands near you are mapped under the second menu choice. To do this you will need a GPS signal, and to enable the app to see your location—not something everybody will want to do. There is fortunately an alternative option of entering the postcode around which you want the app to search, but you can't alter other elements of the search, e.g. its radius. The list of woodlands can then be accessed to get details of where the wood is, and this taps in to the Woodland Trust and other web sites. It is not as comprehensive as Visit-Woods.com, but it is a start.



Identify allows you to identify a tree of interest—trees are listed by species name which is fine if you have a clue what you are looking at, but if you have no idea, this is difficult, and it doesn't have a key that allows you to search by other features e.g. leaf arrangement, fruits or flower structures. You can "Ask an Expert" - take a photo and e-mail it off for identification, or for other questions regarding the tree in question. The aim is to get a reply to you within 48 hours, but I haven't tested that. This section is essentially lifted from the woodlands.co.uk web site, and the tree identification and fact guides on that site are very good, so this should provide most of the information you need while on the go in the woods. There are other apps that allow you to input key features, such as bark, buds, leaf, flower and fruit to get an ID probability for trees: TreeID and Winter TreeID for a start. The Forestry Commission App Forest Explorer, also offers a Tree ID guide based on tree features.

Finally, there are two other sections—TV and Blog. These sections allow you to access the videos and blog entries posted to the woodlands.co.uk web site. As many of us already know, these blogs and videos can be extremely informative, but there is no index-

**Courses from The Mammal Society** – a wide variety of courses, at various venues and dates. 2012 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)



ing, so finding something on a particular topic will be harder than just browsing and finding some interesting reading during a break in your woodland work.

I have tested this app on the iPhone 4 and iPad 2. It seems quite stable on the iPhone, but less so on the iPad (hence the photos are taken with the iPad of the app on the iPhone and not the other way round). The layout is slightly different on the iPad, making greater use of the screen, and the hi-res capability. Sadly it seems to terminate without warning unexpectedly, and I couldn't work out which particular bit of the app was causing the most difficulty. It works pretty fast with Wi-Fi, and isn't too bad out in the field using a 3G signal, which sometimes proves elusive. I had hoped to test it on holiday in North Norfolk but with virtually no 3G on that part of the coast, it didn't take kindly to trying to work with GPRS.

Overall, for a free app, this is good, even if you aren't looking to buy a wood, and very good if you are. It would be better if the tree ID was standalone, with some kind of ID index according to features, in case you haven't a clue what the tree is. It would also be useful if a search facility were added to the Blog and TV sections. And, of course, it would be great if it were available for Blackberry and Android devices too.

## Wildlife Deficient: Where is the wildlife in my woodland?

**Exeldama** wrote on the forum "*My piece forms part of about 300 acres mixed deciduous woodland. Its mixed age, semi ancient etc, variable trees, topography etc...however there never seem to be that many birds about or indeed insects.... Why.? Is it because ...well i don't know why..it just sounds quieter than i would expect. The only explanaton for the birds is the permissive path through the whole lot that means dog walkers let their dogs run through the woods scaring everything...but that doesn't explain the insects. My parents' woods and indeed others I have visited over many years seem more alive. Mine and the greater part feel half dead yet full of trees*"



So why can our wonderful woodlands, which should be a haven for biodiversity and wildlife, and which we are told are some of the richest habitats available, seem to be devoid of wildlife?

Stephen1 has written two excellent responses to this question, and they are well worth a read, because they raise a number of important issues regarding the balance between light and shade, the importance of deadwood, and managed versus unmanaged forests and areas of woodland. Have a read, and thank you for such an informative set of posts, Stephen.

### Reply 1: It all depends on how you define wildlife!

The woodland edge, wide open rides, clearings and widely thinned areas all support what might be described as a more 'showy' flora and fauna. (Very small woods effectively are all woodland edge.) These species are of two broad groups; generalists i.e. species that can live in a wide variety of habitats and are not restricted to woodland, these

**The Field Studies Council** have a number of interesting looking courses in 2012. 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>

species are usually very mobile enabling them move between sites and exploit new patches of habitat. The second group of these showy species are woodland specialists, but they're the sort of creatures that originally evolved to exploit the temporary sun filled habitat patches that arise when a mature canopy tree, or group of trees, dies and for a while far more sun reaches the woodland floor until a tree grows up and fills the gap in the canopy - returning the area to the original deep shade. These species also had to evolve to be mobile so they could find and exploit new habitat patches. Often the wildlife that we are most familiar with as woodland wildlife are these mobile creatures - we see them when they're moving. These are the sort of woodland creatures that had evolved characteristics that enabled them to flourish and massively increase in number once humans started managing woodland and creating many more sun lit areas within woodland than would have been the case in the original wildwood. (Don't start quoting Vera at me - it was a good idea, stimulated debate but it has been put to bed IMHO!! :-)) Of course the ultimate example of woodland management that reduces shade levels and favours these showy mobile species is coppicing.

However there is another group of woodland specialists. These species are the inhabitants of deep, little disturbed shady woodland. These species evolved in the original wildwood where conditions were relatively constant and so typically didn't need to be particularly mobile - and didn't evolve behaviour patterns that led them to spend time searching for new suitable habitat patches. These creatures of deep woodland include many species of snail, beetle, micro moth etc. All



these creatures are pretty cryptic and spend almost their whole life in a very small area. I would suggest that the majority of these creatures require deadwood of one kind or another.

Most large woods now found in the UK are either currently managed or have, in woodland terms, only recently been left to their own devices to grow wild (typically less than 60-70 years since management ceased). These woods therefore contain very little of the generalists and the woodland species that were once 'glade' specialists but that now flourish in human managed woods - which have vastly more sunlit patches than the original pre-human wildwood. Unfortunately most of these woods with little human input in the UK have not yet been 'little or unmanaged' for long enough to build up a great deal of the many kinds of dead wood vital for the specialist of deep large naturally shady woodland.

You need deadwood both in various levels of shade, moisture and exposure - on the floor but also standing deadwood reaching to the canopy - and of many diameters.

It's this variety of deadwood that is usually the limiting factor in 'little or unmanaged woods' in the UK. My advice is always to create as much as you can. Fell trees and leave some on the floor - different diameters (as these have very different temperature/moisture patterns within them) but also kill some trees (ring bark) and leave them standing. Even if you think you have a lot of dead wood compared to other woods you visit try finding pictures of virgin temperate woodland and you will be amazed at the volume of dead wood.

Sorry I know I go on! But essentially managed woods, or small woods with lots of edge relative to their size have lots of sunlight and harbour certain showy, mobile species. The conservation of these is relatively easy as their mobility allows them to colonise

### 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 woodland management and coppicing.

<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)

new suitable patches relatively quickly.

The woodland specialist of deep relatively stable woods are much harder to conserve because the conditions they need take much longer than a single human lifetime to achieve - it takes a long time for a tree to grow to large diameter, die and begin to rot.

So most unmanaged large woods in the UK have neither large numbers of the showy mobile sun loving creatures that rose to prominence in our woodlands thanks to coppicing (and that we think of as the 'main' woodland beasts but nor do they have large numbers of the beasties of the original wildwood that need large areas of very old growth with huge quantities of all shapes, sizes and kinds of deadwood.

I would suggest that in a small wood - particularly if you have a lot of boundary with open habitats such as fields then there may be more value in promoting sun light down to the woodland floor. You will see the benefits very quickly (in woodland terms)- but still always ensuring you're developing some deadwood.

In a large wood the creation of all manner of deadwood is (in my opinion) the most valuable thing you can do. However this is a much longer term game - and of course that is why provision of this sort of habitat is so much less popular and is rarely begun - and of course if begun is rarely allowed to run its course - woodland ownership changes, perceived priorities change, woodland conservation fads come and go. You can undo decades of work towards true old growth in a week or so, letting the sunlight flood in and the new owner sees the 'benefits' in the next couple of years as the butterflies and flowers increase.



Of course both sorts of woodland are needed - it's just harder to have woodlands with a continuity of aim that lasts longer than a human lifetime, and letting the sun in is so easy, so quick and gives you beautiful tangible results in just a few years!

Any takers for the long haul of promoting old growth in their bit??

#### **Reply 2: With References**

If you're interested in the the current thinking on the likely structure of European temperate woodland I'd suggest having a look at;

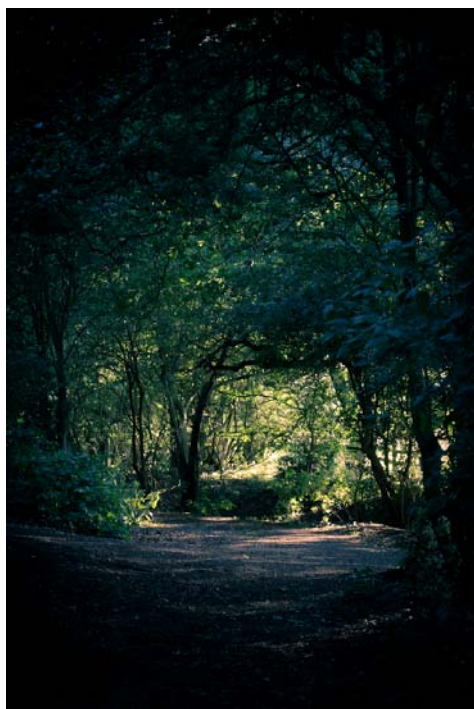
*Mitchell, F.J.G. (2005) How open were European primeval forests? Hypothesis testing using palaeoecological data. J. Ecol. 93, 168–177*

*Birks, H. John B (2005) Mind the gap: how open were European primeval forests?. Trends in ecology & evolution 20, 154-156*

*Whitehouse and Smith (2010). How fragmented was the British Holocene wildwood? Perspectives on the "Vera" grazing debate from the fossil beetle record, Quaternary Science Reviews 29: 539–553*

The first is a good primary source, the latter two both good 'review' type papers - obviously well referenced if you want to delve further. The current belief is that the evidence points to a closed canopy high forest structure over the vast majority of the area.

I quite agree with your second point. Consultants clearly have little to gain by suggesting the relatively little input that promoting the conditions to eventually produce old growth stands would require. I offer it as just my opinion that both the F.C. and organisations such as The Woodland Trust also have a model of a sort of Golden Period for woodland with humans being the "keystone species". Conservation science and practice really suffers from trends and fashions. At the moment there is a trend towards biodiversity as a short term end in itself. The problem with that is how you measure biodiversity. Obviously count up the species - but at what scale? Is it always an improvement to increase the number of species at any given site? I would suggest not. As a crass example - if you have a 5 acre site of flower rich grassland you can increase the biodiversity of the 5 acre site by planting an acre of it with trees. Unfortunately you will have reduced the resilience of the remaining, now smaller, meadow to retain all its valuable species. (Fortunately this sort of thing happens less frequently now at such an obvious level - however the same thing still happens very often in more subtle ways when people do inappropriate species enrichment planting



within small woodland plots - typically when misunderstanding how NVC woodland typing usefully informs woodland management decisions)

The problem with woodland management aiming for Old Growth Structure is that for the first 60-100 years (depending on the site/species/starting structure) of "neglect / under-management" biodiversity typically falls. So 'neglect/under-management' is dogmatically seen as a bad thing.

In terms of your own wood it is true however that over stood coppice is a very difficult starting point to take in the direction of old growth structure. It's quite likely that on balance such a site might be more appropriately managed with a different long term aim than an Old Growth Structure - although I would still argue the mantra of increase the amount and types of dead wood on the site - particularly large diameter dead wood.

I take the view that management for species requiring increased levels of sun light is valuable for many sites, but not all. I also follow Oliver Rackham's view that the management history of many of our ancient woodlands should be continued - they aren't natural, they are historical human constructs and can be thought of as similar to our cathedrals.

But I'm also an advocate of a sort of re-wilding of some of our woodland

towards a 'wild wood style' of Old Growth Structure, despite the impracticalities of the time scales involved and the drop in biodiversity during its initial long development.

The trouble with grants is that you get a one size fits all Procrustean bed.... there appear to be plenty of options but many approaches just get swept away and the 'choices' that are presented by the F.C. and consultants are really quite narrow.

## News for Small Woodland Owners

### National Planning Policy Framework Consultation: Deadline 17th October

The NPPF Consultation closes on 17th October. The reception to the framework has been mixed, with developers generally very much in favour of it, and wildlife, conservation and heritage charities generally against. The main document can be downloaded from <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework/> and you need to download both the framework and also the consultation document.

Some disturbing features have caught the eye of those keen to ensure that wildlife and habitats are protected: First of all, the default position is development—admittedly “sustainable” development, but there is no definition of what sustainable development actually is—without that, the “sustainable” is readily dropped, or substituted with “economic” instead. If the Local Authority has no plan, then development must be permitted unless there is a statutory protection in place. Second, even if there is a plan, with designated green space, Local Wildlife Sites and SSSI's, this can be over-ridden, and planning decisions are already being challenged by developers citing the new presumption in favour of development. The lack of statutory protection for designated sites is of concern: Local Wildlife Sites (such as our own woodland), AONB, National Parks and even SSSI are not given *de facto* protection. Protection for ancient woodland is mentioned, but not detailed. Designated green spaces are limited in size and scope and insufficient to provide landscape-scale habitat protection. No mention is made of the Nature Improvement Areas envisaged in the Natural Environment White Paper and Biodiversity Strategy—clearly these cannot improve nature if at constant threat from development, even if they are incorporated into local plans.

If you would like to comment on the framework document there are several places where you can get inspiration, and which are designed to make your response easier.

First of all, Andrew Lainton's blog is well worth a good look: Not only does it explore the issues in some detail, but it hosts an alternative Framework drafted by the Campaign Against Sprawl. <http://andrewlainton.wordpress.com/> - the latter is designed to demonstrate that with a good framework, both development and wildlife can prosper.

The Wildlife Trusts have also been active in responding to the consultation: Sussex Wildlife Trust have published a good briefing document of the Wildlife Trusts' collective position on <http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/wt-main.live.drupal.precedenthost.co.uk/files/September%202011%20NPPF%20BRIEFING.doc> and also detailed the key issues on their web site at <http://www.sussexwt.org.uk/conservation/planning/page00012.htm>. Their key points are

- **Greater recognition and protection for Local Wildlife Sites:** there are 40,000 Local Wildlife Sites in England, an area 4.5 times the size of Greater London. There are in excess of **600 Local Wildlife Sites in East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove**. Under the proposed new guidance for planners these sites would no longer have specific protection;
- **Remove the primacy given to economic development** in the draft NPPF and restate the importance of the natural environment;
- **Require Local Plans to identify Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs):** The Natural Environment White Paper introduced the concept of NIAs: large areas where nature's restoration would have greater priority. Any planning framework will be critical to achieving NIAs and yet they have no mention in the draft NPPF.

Another very good article from the Chief Executive of Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has also been published outlining their concerns: <http://saveourwoods.co.uk/get-involved/national-campaigns/the-national-planning-policy-framework-%E2%80%93-what-future-for-wildlife/>

It is not just the Wildlife Trusts who are concerned: The National Trust, RSPB, Woodland Trust and other organizations are also seriously worried about the planning proposals, and you can read their responses on their own web sites.

Finally, if you would like to write to your MP about the issue, there is a very good framework letter that you can use and edit on <http://wildsoundscape.co.uk/index.php?itemid=94&catid=16>—it is in Word format, and unlike many framework letters, contains some well-argued points which you can edit yourself.

### Wildlife advocacy under threat

Under direction from Ministers, the independent bodies charged with the protection of wildlife, the natural environment and woodlands, namely Natural England, Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission are now banned from stating a view on Government policy—they are merely there to carry it out and monitor its effects. In the opinion of some, this leaves wildlife without a single advocate in the UK, but rather with a confusion of many conservation organisations, often pulling in different directions, and trying hard not to upset their main source of funding, which is often the Government or its agencies. Mark Avery, former conservation director of the RSPB has written a controversial but interesting blog looking at “tangled bank” of conservation organisations. Are there too many? Or too few? Do we need an organisation that acts as advocate for wildlife and habitats overall?



Peter Marren's article in The Independent is also worth reading: <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/peter-marren-our-wildlife-needs-a-voice-2354141.html>

### 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

Free 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. Next photography workshop is 9th October—places filling fast!

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

### Black Country Living Landscape –

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

**BTCV London** is running local courses on woodland management as well as on tree identification in summer and winter.

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

### Mallinson

Mallinson offer a range of green woodworking courses in Dorset

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

### Birds doing better in the North than South

A new report from the British Trust for Ornithology shows that there is a growing North-South divide in the fates of woodland and farmland birds, with those in the North doing better than those in the South. Farmland birds are declining in all regions, but much slower in the North, and woodland birds have actually increased in the North, but declined in the South.

Download the full report from [http://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/u11/abstracts/latest\\_research/Regional%20indicators%20report%202011.pdf](http://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/u11/abstracts/latest_research/Regional%20indicators%20report%202011.pdf)

### State of British Mammals Report from PTES

Downloadable from <http://www.ptes.org/index.php?news=157>

A new report on the state of British Mammals has been released by the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES). The message is mixed. Some mammals have recovered from endangered status in the 1990's including otters, water voles, pipistrelles and greater horseshoe bats. But others have been added to the endangered list and are still declining: these include red squirrels, Scottish wildcats, mountain hares, harvest mice, hazel dormice and hedgehogs in rural areas. There is a very good summary of the report on the BBC web site at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/15019859>

Following on from this report, if you are interested in surveying mammals in your woodland, you can find out a lot about mammals and how they are counted and surveyed from The Mammal Society on <http://www.mammal.org.uk/>

For some mammals, including bats and dormice, you will need a licence to handle and survey them: details of how to get these licences are summarized on the Natural England web site at <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/licences/hints.aspx>



### Deer Management Plans Reduce Damage

Landscape level deer management is best – woodlands without deer management plans most likely to be damaged by deer, it has been reported on the BBC web site. Studies have shown that where landowners come together to put in place coherent deer management plans, as opposed to making ad hoc arrangements, deer damage can be reduced. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-14804549>

Information on deer management and constructing plans can be obtained from The Deer Initiative <http://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk/>

### News From LANTRA

LANTRA are reviewing occupational standards for forestry and these are now open for consultation. Have your say regarding skills you need, or that the contractors you employ would need <http://www.lantra.co.uk/tree-nos>

LANTRA has also put up funding for women in environmental occupations including forestry. This funding will support employers to take on female workers and provide training. See <http://www.lantra.co.uk/womenandwork>

### News from the Forestry Commission

A New Woodfuel Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) has been announced and applications will be accepted from 1st October. It is available in all parts of England except the South West, where resources have been taken up fighting *P. ramorum* disease. This grant will support infrastructure required to harvest and extract wood, including construction of tracks. See <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infid-8fwc98> for fur-

ther details.

A new FC publication has also been released: Human Dimensions of Adaptive Forest Management and Climate Change <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/HCOU-4VXJ5B> - a review of international experience of a highly structured adaptive management approach to forest management in the face of climate change. This can be downloaded from the link provided.



### Nature Improvement Area Grants—First Round

Preliminary applications have been sought for landscape-scale conservation projects to form new Nature Improvement Areas under the Natural Environment White Paper. We have been approached to become part of a bid that would link several key conservation sites in our area. Our bid is being coordinated by the Wildlife Trust, but other organisations may be taking the lead in other areas. At this stage, preliminary applications are being put together and full applications will be sought from those passing the screening process. Of interest is that funding might be provided to improve woodlands for conservation and also improve public

access to them. If you think you would like to be part of landscape-scale conservation projects, it would be worth asking around your local Wildlife Trust or County Council to see if any bids are in progress.

### Welsh Schools to receive Climate Change Pack

A pack has been prepared for all Welsh Schools at Key Stage 4 that deals with the issues to do with climate change and links them to different parts of the National Curriculum. The full pack can be downloaded from <http://www.severnestuary.net/yocco/education.htm>

### News from the Royal Forestry Society (RFS)

The RFS are currently offering reduced price membership—15 months for price of 12. Membership benefits include a full events programme, and the Quarterly Journal of Forestry, as well as the opportunity to enter for awards and link with other woodland owners and forestry professionals. For the discounted membership see <http://www.rfs.org.uk/join/join-online>

The RFS have also produced a comprehensive A to Z of trees in partnership with the Readers Digest. This can be accessed on <http://www.rfs.org.uk/learning>

The RFS also have a wide range of regional events for October—see <http://www.rfs.org.uk/event/2011/10/01/month/all/all/1>

### Land Management Guides from the RSPB

The RSPB have produced a comprehensive set of guides on habitat management for many different types of site and situation. These can be accessed for free on <http://www.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/advice/>

### World Forests absorb more CO2 than previously thought

We all know that the forests of the world are a vital mechanism for clearing up human CO2. But we didn't know just how good they are—almost 40% of our CO2 is absorbed by forests: Read more in the article from the Telegraph <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/8708979/Worlds-forests-absorb-almost-40-per-cent-of-man-made-CO2.html>

### Beyond 2010 Biodiversity Strategies Report

A report of a conference can now be downloaded from the Environmental Change Network web site

**Sier, A.R.J., Monteith, D. and Brooks, S. (2011) Beyond 2010: Strategies for understanding and responding to long-term trends in UK biodiversity: Conference report. 42pp (unpublished report)**

This is the summary report of a meeting held at the Natural History Museum in November 2010. The meeting highlighted how much information we were already collecting, what the gaps are, what data are not currently being used to their full advantage, and most worryingly of all, the potential reduction in funding for biodiversity monitoring activity.

## Events: SWOG Coppicewood Coppicing Course and Woodfuel and Biodiversity Day from Heartwoods

### Coppicing Event for SWOG Members at Coppicewood—26th November

There's an exciting 'Hands on' coppicing event taking place *especially for SWOG Members* at Coppicewood College on November 26th

Cwm Plygog Woods consist of about 11 acres of deciduous trees mostly, willow, sycamore, ash, hazel and hawthorn, with a perimeter of Douglas Fir consisting of a further 6 acres which we do not work. The Douglas fir borders the river Teifi a renown Welsh salmon river. The woodland was neglected previous to our tenure some 6 years ago since when we have been restoring about one acre per year. The work is done by volunteers and students. The woodland is fairly flat and has clear pathways that are easy to walk but they can get muddy in wet weather. We do have a compost toilet and a workshop with a log burner, there is also a covered area nearby housing the pole lathes.



We plan a to devote the day to coppicing which will involve hands on experience for those keen to have a go. The day will be led by our Senior Instructor and naturalist Nick Barnes (Nick is also a volunteer and member of the management committee). Nick will explain the basics of coppicing, illustrate the hand tools their use and maintenance and about all the importance of this low impact approach to woodland Management.

We can accommodate up to 20 people and 10 cars parked along the track out side the woodland entrance and parking is possible in the village of Cilgerran just a 10 min walk away.

Refreshments – We can supply hot water and mugs for teas etc .Please bring lunch and snacks. Regret no facilities for cooking.

Dogs can come but must be on a lead at all times, remember we will be using sharp edge tools at times during the day. Most people who bring their dogs leave them in the car and take them for a walk up to the river on another track during lunchtime and this is preferable.

10:00 for 10:30 start finish around 3:00pm tea and coffee offered

The woodland address is:

Cwm Plygog Woods

Cilgerran

Pembrokeshire.

SA44

For directions on how to find us go to: <http://coppicewoodcollege.co.uk/how-to-find-us/> and download the PDF

Telephone number for the day will be 01239881394 before 9:30am and 07831 158346 after that time.

We are a charity and we would appreciate a donation on the day if people have enjoyed their visit.

### Managing Woodlands for Woodfuel and Biodiversity event

<http://heartwoods.co.uk/other/managing-woodlands-for-woodfuel-and-biodiversity-event/>

This event is aimed at woodland owners in the West Midlands and on Wednesday 20th October at Aymestrey Village Hall, Aymestrey, Leominster, and then at Gatley Park, Leominster. For further information please contact the Heartwoods office on **01952 435860** or alternatively email [info@heartwoods.co.uk](mailto:info@heartwoods.co.uk)

The event costs £5.00 which includes refreshments and lunch **Heartwoods** is a project of the Small Woods Association (Registered Charity Number 1081874)



## Other Events, Meetings and Courses

### Sussex Wildlife Trust Events Programme Autumn 2011 to Spring 2012

This programme is now available for download. There are loads of events from Autumn to Spring in their new brochure including Gruffalo Pie, Wildlife Walks, Mammal Surveying, Bird Identification. For more information please download the brochure on [http://www.sussexwt.org.uk/uploads/winter%20events%202011\\_small.pdf](http://www.sussexwt.org.uk/uploads/winter%20events%202011_small.pdf)

### Embrace Workshops: Natural History Photography including Macro and Nature Photography

Embrace are offering a wide range of photography workshops including macro and nature photography. The Embrace Project runs photography workshops and supports charitable projects in South London, and courses start from £15. For more information about the project and the workshops, please see

<http://www.embraceworkshops.com/photography>

### Heritage Crafts Green Woodworking and Wood-carving

St Werburgs City Farm, Bristol is offering workshops and courses in green woodworking and heritage crafts. These are five week courses in the City Farm site. For more information please see

<http://s344054061.websitehome.co.uk/training/courses/>

### Box Moor Trust

Box Moor Trust is offering Forest School Taster Sessions and Level 1 Training. If you don't know what Forest Schools are, or have never attended one, this is a great way to learn what they have to offer. For more information please see

<http://www.boxmoortrust.org.uk/1-a-d/fs.html>

### Natural Connections Conference 2012 from Dialogue Matters

A conference will take place at the School of African and Oriental Studies, Russell Square, London, on 2nd February 2012 on the subject of working in partnership for a better environment. It will deal with many of the current issues, including planning guidance and natural environment white paper. For more information, please see

<http://www.dialoguematters.co.uk/conferences.asp>

### Association of Professional Foresters Show 2012—Diary Date!

APF 2012 will be held at Ragley Estate, Alcester, Warwickshire on the 13/14/15th September 2012 by kind permission of the Marquess Of Hertford. This show is the place to go for all types of forestry equipment from small chainsaws to massive harvester/processors. The show moves to Ragley from Cannock Chase this coming year.

There are competitions, exhibitions, woodcrafts and many other attractions to see at this show, as well as retail displays and equipment demonstrations.

See <http://www.apfexhibition.co.uk/> for more information.

### Forest Health Day

The next Forest Health Day from the Forestry Commission will be in the East of England at Santon Downham on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2011. These seminars are free to attend. For more information please see

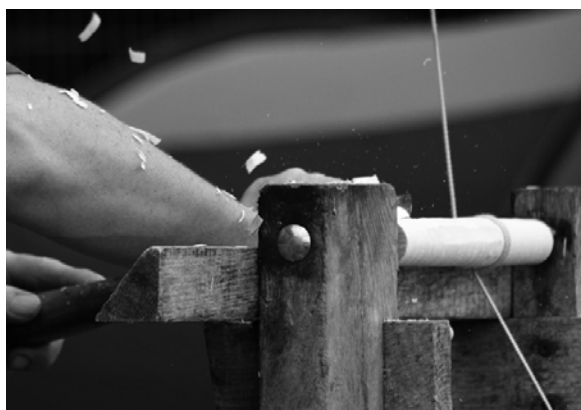
<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-8J4BDM>

### BTCV Woodland Management Courses

BTCV London is running some courses in Woodland Management and coppicing in the London area over the next few weeks. For the Woodland Management course see

<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level4/6/level> and for the Coppicing Courses see

<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level4/31/level>



### Badger courses from Acorn Ecology

Badger ecology is assuming greater importance with the potential for badger culling, badger vaccination and the bovine TB control project. But they are also amazing animals to study in their own right. If you want an introduction to badger ecology, and to learn more about your own badgers, Acorn Ecology have certificated courses available. For more information see

[http://www.ecologytraining.co.uk/page/badger\\_courses](http://www.ecologytraining.co.uk/page/badger_courses)



### BTO Training Programme for 2012

The British Trust for Ornithology runs training programmes in bird identification and bird survey techniques. For more information and to download the 2012 training programme see

<http://www.bto.org/node/5912>

### Moelyci Environment Centre Courses

Upcoming courses include Hedgelaying, NVC Classification, and Phase 1 Habitat Survey. For more information see

<http://www.moelyci.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=197&Itemid=2>

### Free Invasive Species Awareness Training in Grangemouth

Do you know which species are classified as invasive? Can you recognise them and do you know what to do with them if they are found in your woodland? For those with woodlands in Scotland, particularly in the Grangemouth area, there are free awareness courses available. For more information see

<http://www.catca.org.uk/index.php/News/Details/id/11>

### FC North West Customer Liaison day 28<sup>th</sup> November

The Forestry Commission North West are running a Customer Liaison day on 28th November. This is a diary date, venue yet to be confirmed. The liaison day will allow customers, and potential customers to find out more about the FC services and grants available to woodland owners. For more information please see

[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

## Forthcoming Woodfairs from woodfairs.co.uk

*Just a few left this year, here are the details of the shows in October. Time for a last woodfair fix before the winter.*

### Woodfairs in Scotland

#### Tweed Valley Forest Festival

21st to 30th October 2011

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

### Woodfairs in England

#### Cranborne Chase Woodfair

8th-9th October, Larmer Tree Gardens

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

#### Surrey Hills Woodfair

#### Ickworth House, Suffolk

8th and 9th October

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



## Forthcoming SWOG Meetings and Events

### Note from Tracy

If you do book a place, please actually turn up! We have rather a large number of 'no shows' at meetings which is very disheartening for those running them and means that others might have been able to go in your place.

### SWOG Meeting South Ayrshire: POSTPONED to 2012

This meeting, originally scheduled for 29th October 2011, is now to be re-scheduled for 2012. Please see the SWOG web site for updates on dates. It promises to be an excellent meeting. 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.



### SWOG Meeting 22nd October in Hampshire

Julian Evans is kindly hosting another SWOG meeting in his woodland on the 22nd October.

His woodland is 7 miles from Basingstoke in Hampshire. The topics will include measuring trees and timber, woodland replanting and regeneration – and of course, being Julian, so much more! Find out about fencing, halo thinning, soil types, tree types, coppicing, fell-ing.... the list goes on!

Please email [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk) to book your place. Places are limited to 20 so book soon.

### SWOG Meeting Rainham, Kent, 17th June 2012

Andy has offered us a SWOG meeting with a difference! This one involves his Alpaca farm (and lots of newly planted trees) There will also be a guided walk by Peter from Butterfly Conservation.

More details to follow, please keep the date free in your diary!

### SWOG Meetings in 2012

We have already been offered some new woods (and old favourites) for SWOG meetings in the coming year. Meeting venues include Pembrokeshire, Warwickshire, Falkirk and Andy's Alpaca Farm. This list is being regularly updated and you can follow progress and get the dates into your diary on the SWOG web site at

<http://www.swog.org.uk/swog-events/swog-meetings-2011/#more-1419>



## On the blogs at woodlands.co.uk and woodlandsTV

### **Making more use of small diameter wood by Angus**

We all get small diameter wood, but what to do with that wood. In this entry we hear from Tim Parry who talks about making geodesic structures and furniture from this common coppice product.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/making-more-use-of-small-diameter-wood/>

### **Invasive Species—Rats by Chris**

Rats! They are everywhere, but how much do you know about them? Find out here...

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/invasive-species-%E2%80%93-rats/>

### **Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner Moth: An App by Chris**

This moth has been wreaking havoc in horse chestnut. But can you recognise the moth, or the damage it is causing? There is now a mobile phone app that helps you contribute to research on its spread.

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

### **Wildlife Organisations by Lewis**

There seem to be so many conservation and wildlife organisations around. So who does what and where can you find them? Great guide in this blog entry.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/wildlife-organizations/>



### **Heathlands by Chris**

Endangered habitat, heathlands are under pressure from all sides, including modern forestry practice and the gradual loss of traditional heath management. The UK has 1/5 of the World total of heathlands, so learn more about this vital habitat here.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/heathlands/>

### **Pine Resin and the many uses for woodland pine by WoodlandsTV**

In the final part of his series about the pine tree, Sean looks at the use of dead or dying pine, including the resin.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2011/09/pine-resin-and-many-uses-for-woodland-pine/>

### **Choosing a Chainsaw by WoodlandsTV**

In this movie, Dave Vickers looks at a range of Stihl and Husquvarna chainsaws, and goes over the things you need to consider when purchasing or upgrading your equipment.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2011/09/choosing-a-chainsaw-mov/>

## Newsletter - October 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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[www.swog.org.uk](http://www.swog.org.uk)

## Small Woodland Owners' Group Forum

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

New owners were welcomed to the forum this month including **Obsession** from East Sussex and **rob\_sticks** from Oxfordshire, **andyxnikki** and **saxon**. Great to see so many new owners and prospective owners active on the forum.

**Hobby** was asking about which chainsaw to upgrade to from his existing 142e. The 346xp got several recommendations. Remember to tell us what you got, **Hobby**! Also some updates on Hobby's wish to replace static caravans with log cabins and the planning issues involved therein.

**Exeldama** asked why his wood seemed so devoid of wildlife. The OP and the excellent replies have been posted in detail in this newsletter and are well worth a read.

**Tom** is looking for woodland in which to build a mountain bike course in the Milton Keynes area—if you can help, please see the forum.

**Cassie** updated us on the problems with her neighbour regarding tree maintenance.

**Limeguy** and **Rory** and **daniel070883** are offering vermin control services—see the forum for further information.

**Mikepepler** has uploaded two videos of a quick method for loading firewood into your trailer and log rack—definitely worth a watch on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrS8q10Vy3Q> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJappc180vI>

The iPhone app from woodlands.co.uk that is reviewed elsewhere in this newsletter is

also discussed on the forum to mixed reviews. Have a look and see what you think.

**Splodger** reported back on the offers of free tuition in return for help with woodland work for his Dad. Lovely to see so many people from the forum actively contributing.

**Bagnally** posted a photo of something that may, or may not, be a cherry tree. What is it? Visit the forum to leave your suggestions.

**Austino** also updated us with progress on his eco-toilet project: a perennial issue for those of us who spend time in the woods.

**Bagnally** also updated us on progress regarding his dream of owning and making a living from a woodland. RESPECT! Yes indeed, not an easy thing to do, but if you have any further suggestions, please visit the forum.

**Tomkettlewell** is a NPTC certified chainsaw operator available in North Yorkshire. Need his help? See details on the forum.

**Henrietta** posted a warning about people offering services in your woods: there are a lot of people who want access for badger-baiting.

**Treabloke** posted a message from Jemma Higgins, who is looking for volunteers in the Worcestershire area to survey wildlife and woodland plants. Training available. See the forum for details.

*Please do visit the forum and contribute to the discussion threads. Don't feel any question is too simple, or difficult—just come along and participate. It's a good place to be!*

### Contributions—yes please!

It is lovely to receive contributions for the newsletter, and it would be great to hear more about what you are doing in your woods. We are looking for all sorts of things: personal experience of courses or workshops, articles on a particular area of expertise, accounts of lovely days or nights in the woods, reviews of equipment you have bought or made and lots of photographs. Please don't worry about writing lots, just have a go! There are so many people with such a lot to share—so please think about sharing some of your experiences with other small wood owners. Photographs don't have to be press quality—just interesting, fun, or illustrative. Please send all contributions to [sarah@swog.org.uk](mailto:sarah@swog.org.uk), preferably by 25th month for inclusion in the next month's newsletter. Keep them coming! We are all very, very grateful.