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## Meet the New Team Members - Newsletter Editor Sarah

My first task as editor of the SWOG Newsletter is to introduce the new team members who have arrived to help Tracy with the work of running SWOG.

My name is Sarah Walters. Having taken ill health retirement following many years working as a public health doctor, I took ownership of a woodland in October 2007 with my husband Stephen Briggs. Alvecote Wood is 11 acres of ancient semi-natural oak woodland on the border between Warwickshire and Staffordshire, just outside Tamworth. We were intrigued when this neglected woodland on our regular cycle route came up for sale and were keen to buy it and manage it for wildlife and for the use of community groups.

The site has probably been wooded since Domesday or before, but has evidently been clear-felled on more than one occasion. It has a colourful history, having been briefly owned by Queen Elizabeth I. In the last 100 years it has been used for grazing sheep, pigs, rare-breed goats and horses. This has led to over-fertility of the soil and to massive overgrowth of elder, bramble and nettle.

Lack of management has led to reduction in biodiversity including a reduction in breeding bird species over the years. The dense nettle and bramble was also stifling successional growth of new oak trees.

Since taking ownership, we have tried to deal with some of the problems. Some related to infrastructure - the site required drainage, and construction of access tracks as well as proper fencing and building of bridges. Others related to management of the woodland itself to maintain and improve the range of habitats available. We have dug 5 ponds to add

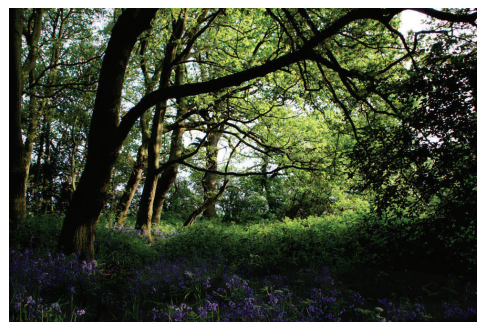
to the single pond on site when we took ownership, planted a new hedgerow of 600 trees, planted areas of wildflower meadow, commenced cutting a section of over-mature coppice, and planted 400 new coppice trees in areas cleared of bramble, nettle and elder. We have also helped young oaks escape the clutches of the brambles, and have started growing our own oaks from acorns too. We have also planted a small orchard in an area that was evidently once a garden.

Community groups have started to use the site, including Scouts, Beavers, Forest Schools and Local wildlife and natural history groups. This month we are even having a fashion photographer shoot there. We also hold public open days once a month and I run Nordic Walking classes in the wood.

See [www.alvecotewood.co.uk](http://www.alvecotewood.co.uk) for more information.

Sarah Walters

sarah@swog.org.uk



## - and Web Site Editor Rich

My name is Richard Hare, and I have the unenviable task of continuing the fantastic job Tracy has been doing of collating and publishing the mine of information you find on the SWOG website. You may see my posts signed as Rich on the forum.

I have always had a strong affinity with nature and the outdoors, but it is only in the last few years that this has been channelled towards woodlands and all things woody! My partner and I are custodians of 11 acre woodland on the edge of Ashdown Forest in the High Weald of East Sussex. The wood has a long history of coppicing as evidenced by the numerous charcoal burning Platforms, saw pits and iron smelting bloomeries to be found in it, and the adjoining woodland. This is the second year we have coppiced. It probably hasn't been touched in

20 or 25 years and there is still much evidence of the '87 storm damage. Although it is hard work and a steep learning curve, we are very much enjoying the process of restoring it.

My background is a mix of practical and health-care. I spent much of my twenties travelling and working in Australia and New Zealand on various small holdings and farms. On my return, I joined the NHS as an Occupational Therapy instructor and realised the healing power of just 'doing things'! Some of my most rewarding work involved taking patients, often with severe psychiatric conditions, to the local woods. I'm sure we can all understand how working in our woodlands, or even just being surrounded by trees can help us feel calmer, more balanced and ready to face the chaos of a 21st cen-

tury world we certainly didn't evolve to be in!

In 2004 I took a year out to walk from the deserts of the Mexican/USA border up through the mountain ranges of California, Oregon and Washington to finish in the northern Cascades and the border with Canada. It was unbelievable to experience nature at its most unspoilt and remote. Walking with just the necessities for survival is quite cathartic; it really does make you value resources and concentrates the mind wonderfully on what is really important!

So a few years later I seem to be facing an even greater challenge, that of following in Tracy's footsteps. I'm sure you will be gentle with me as I learn the ropes, and of course I will be forever grateful if you will continue to send relevant material for me to post, be it personal experiences of owning a woodland, wanting to own one or information on courses or events in your area.

Many thanks

Richard Hare

[rich@swog.org.uk](mailto:rich@swog.org.uk)

## Bat Conservation Events

### European Bat Weekend

28th-30th August 2010, UK-wide.

### National Bat Conference

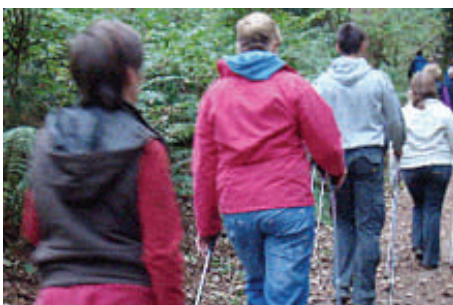
10th-12th September 2010, Loughborough University. BCT's National Bat Conference is the biggest annual event in the bat calendar and [bookings for 2010](#) are now open!

For further details, please see

<http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/events.html>

## Natural Exercise Good for Health

Just a small 'dose' of nature every day will benefit people's mood, self-esteem and mental health, a new study by the University of Essex has shown. Surprisingly the research found that just five minutes of green exercise produced the largest positive effect.



**Nordic Walking in the wood**  
© Photo: British Nordic Walking

Previous studies by the researchers had confirmed the links between nature, exercise in green environments, and health benefits. But this study is the first to quantify the health benefits in terms of the best 'dose' of nature.

The research by Dr Jo Barton and Professor Jules Pretty is published online (and in print on 15 May) in the American journal, *Environmental Science and Technology* (<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es903183r>)

Their analysis of 1,252 people (of different ages, gender and mental health status) drawn from ten existing studies in the UK, showed that activity in the presence of nature (green exercise) led to mental and physical health improvements. The activities analysed were walking, gardening, cycling, fishing, boating, horse-riding and farming.

'For the first time in the scientific literature, we have been able to show dose-response relationships for the positive effects of nature on human mental health', said Professor Pretty. The researchers concluded that green exercise should be developed for therapy purposes (green care), that planners and architects should improve access to green space (green design), and that children's learning should include working in outdoor settings (green education).

'A walk a day should help to keep the doctor away – and help to save the country money,' said Dr Barton. 'There is a large potential benefit to individuals, society and to the costs of the health service if all groups of people were to 'self-medicate' more with green exercise.'

Some of the substantial mental health challenges facing society and physical challenges arising from modern diets and sedentary lifestyles (such as the alarming growth in obesity) could be addressed by increased forms of activity in natural places, the authors argue.

The greatest health changes happened in the young and the mentally-ill, though all age and social groups benefited. All natural environments were beneficial (including urban green); although the presence of water generated greater effects. A blue and green environment seems even better for health, the authors stated.

A challenge for policy makers is that recommendations on physical activity are easily made but rarely adopted widely as public policy, said Professor Pretty. Simple prescriptions are unlikely to be adopted by whole populations unless supported by shifts in urban design, transport policy, support for social care, parenting, and patients' expectations of their doctors. The authors conclude that there is a natural health service available to everyone that complements the National Health Service.

## Oak Timber Framing Course 25 - 29 October 2010

This five day course is organised by Woodnet and Plumpton College at Flimwell.

It is aimed at those interested in learning how to construct an oak framed building. This is a practical hands-on course with participants working together to construct and erect an 8ft by 10ft frame with a roof. You will learn the main skills required to lay out the frame, mark and cut the joints, construct the roof, make the pegs, and erect the frame. The course uses hand tools with demonstration of the use of power tools and is held in the workshop at Flimwell.

Your tutors Chris Nutley and Will English of 'Sussex Oak Framers' will guide you through the week, teaching you the practical skills and explaining the stages in planning and managing a timber frame project.

The next 5 day course runs from Monday 25 October until Friday 29 October 2010 at Plumpton College at Flimwell, Woodland Enterprise Centre, Flimwell, East Sussex, TN5 7PR.

Course fee: £450

Venue: Woodland Enterprise Centre, Hastings Road, Flimwell, East Sussex, TN5 7PR

Map: [www.maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=TN5+7PR&t=m](http://www.maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=TN5+7PR&t=m)

To book a place or for further details please contact:

Tel: Plumpton College  
01273 92052

Email: [pd@plumpton.ac.uk](mailto:pd@plumpton.ac.uk)  
[www.woodnet.org.uk](http://www.woodnet.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.naturescraft.co.uk/courses/courses.htm>

## Lyme Disease under the Spotlight

The Royal Forestry Society (RFS) has joined forces with Ted Wilson to produce a new fact sheet on Lyme disease, highlighting preventative measures for all those involved in woodland and habitat management, and for members of the public.

Ted Wilson is formerly a senior lecturer in silviculture, and is now a student doctor with the University of Sheffield Medical School. He has developed a special interest in human health and environment issues and is actively publishing in this area.

Lyme disease (or Lyme borreliosis, as it is also known) is caused by a *Borrelia* bacteria that is transferred from infected wildlife species to humans through the bite of a tick which, in the UK, is *Ixodes ricinus*, commonly known as the sheep, deer, or woodland tick.

Symptoms of Lyme disease can initially be difficult to detect or may be absent. Commonly the infection starts as a target-shaped rash that spreads from the site of the bite and/or vague flu-like signs. If left untreated, more serious problems can include a viral-like meningitis, facial palsy, other nerve damage or arthritis. All stages of Lyme disease respond to antibiotics but treatment is more complicated if the infection is not diagnosed at an early stage.

Simple prevention measures such as wearing appropriate clothing can significantly reduce the chances of being infected, while brushing down clothing and cleaning boots after use can help prevent ticks being spread to other areas. Carrying a tick removal tool may be a good idea if you are planning to visit a known tick area.

RFS chief executive Dr John Jackson said: "Lyme disease is a major problem elsewhere in Europe and in North America. Although still relatively uncommon in the UK, there have been nearly 6,000 confirmed cases since 1999 and numbers are steadily increasing. People working in or visiting woodlands are at risk, particularly in late spring, early summer and autumn which are peak feeding times for ticks.

"Because it is vector-borne – moving through different hosts – prevention of the spread of infected ticks is vital and everyone working in habitat management needs to be aware of the measures."

Not all the ticks carry *Borrelia*, but high risk areas include the New Forest, Exmoor, other woodland and heathland habitat in

southern England, the South Downs, Thetford Forest, North York moors, the Lake District and the Scottish Highlands – all areas with high numbers of visitors.

**Ted Wilson will be giving a talk on Lyme disease to a number of RFS Divisions during the spring and summer. To view or download the fact sheet go**

[http://www.rfs.org.uk/files/RFS\\_Factsheet\\_Lyme\\_disease\\_May\\_2010.pdf](http://www.rfs.org.uk/files/RFS_Factsheet_Lyme_disease_May_2010.pdf)

The Health Protection Agency give the following advice about protection:-

Wear appropriate clothing in tick-infested areas (a long sleeved shirt and long trousers tucked into socks). Light coloured fabrics are useful, as it is easier to see ticks against a light background

Consider using insect repellents, e.g. DEET-containing preparations,

Inspect skin frequently and remove any attached ticks

At the end of the day, check again thoroughly for ticks, especially in skin folds

Make sure that children's head and neck areas, including scalps, are properly checked

Check that ticks are not brought home on clothes

Check that pets do not bring ticks into the home on their fur"



Picture of a tick from [www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk](http://www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk)

## Courses from BTCV Kent

WOODLAND ECOLOGY AND TREE ID

Saturday, 22nd May 2010 – Ashford

HEDGEROW ECOLOGY AND SURVEYING

Sunday, 6 June 2010 - Gillingham

TREE AND WOODLAND SURVEYS

Saturday, 7 August 2010 - Ashford

WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION FOR BEGINNERS

Wednesday, 23rd June 2010 – Ashford

INTRODUCTION TO THE TREE WARDEN SCHEME

(FREE to all) TBC October 2010

PRACTICAL COPPICING

Saturday, 6th November 2010 – Sparkes Gill Wood, Rolvenden

POND SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT (FAUNA)

Sunday, May 9th 2010 - Ashford.

POND SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT (FLORA)

Saturday, June 19th 2010 – Herne (between Whitstable / Canterbury)

POND MANAGEMENT

TBC September – West Kent

INTRODUCTION TO THE POND WARDEN SCHEME (FREE to all)

9th October 2010 – Ashford

AN INTRODUCTION TO DAY PROJECT LEADERSHIP (Leading Groups Safely) 18th September 2010 - Ashford

EMERGENCY FIRST AID

Saturday, June 12th 2010 – Ashford – 9.00am – 4.00pm

Please contact Sophie Walkden to discuss your training needs or book on courses:

Tel: 01233 666519 Email: [s.walkden@btcv.org.uk](mailto:s.walkden@btcv.org.uk)

## Word From Willoughby Wood: Labour Continues

*Willoughby Wood was first featured in the April Newsletter. Dorothy Mansfield has written an update on the work at this new woodland.*

Having bought the 10 acres of land with the half acre fishing pond in September 2009 we were keen to develop the site into Willoughby Wood at the optimum time for planting. We allowed enough time to draw up the plans, but once that was complete the severe frost and snow were upon us. The worst winter weather for years continued and we began to wonder how much of a delay there would be with establishing the trees, but then there was a respite which was long enough to begin the next phase of development. As mentioned earlier, we had employed the services of a forestry company as we felt this project warranted some expertise. If we were not happy with their advice we could pull out as no contract had been signed.

So it was that Mark met us to discuss our needs. He had been enthusiastic as he walked round the bare field, surveyed the area and took measurements. He asked us what we wanted and was able to transform the information into a planting plan. There were a few practicalities to consider. Running west to east were power cables on poles. These did not look out of place and were erected when electricity was brought to the village in 1956, but now they had to receive special attention so they would not create problems in the middle of the wood. We had already been aware of this, but used Mark's expertise to create a more open area under the cables. We are still debating how to effectively use this area productively and are investigating using a seed mixture, often used as a game cover crop to increase the environmental benefit and attract a wider variety of birds.

The arrival of the planting plan was greeted with anticipation and excitement. Not only was there some proof of what was, to us, an ambitious scheme but we also heard that the Forestry Commission grants were likely to be approved. However, we



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would not start receiving any money until the new financial year.

Access to the new wood is on a bend in the single track road and over the river. As the stakes and guards would be delivered by an outside contractor we requested that an articulated lorry was **not** used. The lane is just too narrow and the gateway is at right angles from the

narrow highway. An enormous lorry slid down the lane. As the driver was unable to negotiate the site, he parked the vehicle on the road. Fortunately there is not a lot of traffic but one or two locals had to be diverted. There was no way that the pallets containing the 4,500 split chestnut stakes and tree guards could be properly offloaded and they were dumped precariously by the single track carriageway but leaning heavily towards it. The road was extremely icy. A neighbour came to the rescue and shifted them to a place of safety before an accident happened.

We were unclear how long the practical task of planting the 4,500 trees would take and we were also concerned about the snowy and frosty weather and hoped this would not cause a delay. A window of milder weather enabled the forestry company to pull out all the stops when a thaw was forecast to be followed by milder conditions for a few days. And to our amazement all the trees were planted, tubed and staked within a week. What had been a grass field now took on a whole new feel. The plan became a reality. Not a mature wood, but the start of a project which will develop over the years.

At this point it seems appropriate to discuss the name. As we submitted the planting plan we were asked to give it a name. Several suggestions were made including Pringle Wood (from an ancient map), Brick & Tile Wood (after the pond) and Pipit Wood (attracting bird species). However we had already made our decision. It would be named Willoughby Wood in memory of Dorothy's parents whose history in the village dated back at least 90 years, and whose mother had died a few months earlier. We felt it was a fitting tribute to a couple who loved the village and the countryside. There is another memorial on the edge of the planting. A very dear neighbour who had moved out of the village eighteen months earlier died after a short illness. She had a beautiful horse chestnut tree on the edge of her garden so we asked her family if we could plant one of the saplings in the wood in her memory. Fortunately the current occupants were more than happy for us to dig up a young tree and transplant it.

### Find a course

#### Field Studies Council

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

#### The Wildlife Trusts

[http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/index.php?section=events&search\\_month=6&search\\_year=2010](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/index.php?section=events&search_month=6&search_year=2010)

#### Institute of Chartered Foresters

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

#### British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

For BTCV Short Courses

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

For BTCV long courses please see

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

#### Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

To download the short course brochure visit [http://www2.cat.org.uk/shortcourses/CAT\\_Shortcourses\\_2010.pdf](http://www2.cat.org.uk/shortcourses/CAT_Shortcourses_2010.pdf)

#### Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

To download the short course brochure, please visit [http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/Programme\\_tcm9-245883.pdf](http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/Programme_tcm9-245883.pdf)

#### Low Impact Living Initiative

A course on small woodland management

[http://www.lowimpact.org/course\\_outline\\_woodland\\_management.htm](http://www.lowimpact.org/course_outline_woodland_management.htm)

#### Malvern Coppicing

Practical coppicing courses from SWOG member Phil Hopkinson.

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

## Advice to New Woodland Owners



Reflecting on nearly three years of woodland ownership, it occurred to me that it would have been great to have lots of advice when we walked for the first time in our own woodland thinking “What have we done?!”.

There is no shortage of advice around. Almost

everybody has an opinion about what you should be doing. The advice is always different, nearly always conflicting, and often comes from strongly-held viewpoints. It is also backed by different levels of expertise.

Here are some of my thoughts and those of the SWOG forum.

### Seek advice from lots of people

One of the things we did was seek advice from a lot of people before taking any action. There are any number of organizations available to give advice, but remember that they come from different viewpoints: The Forestry Commission, The Wildlife Trusts, The Woodland Trust, The RSPB, the Local Authority and many other enthusiasts will provide expert but often conflicting advice. Listen to them all but do nothing until you have considered everything! You have to make the final decisions about what to do in your wood.

### Take time to get to know your wood before you do anything.

Your wood has almost certainly been growing for a very long time, so there is no need to wade in and do stuff. The trees were there a long time before you were, and will be there a long time after you have gone. Walk around. Sit and listen. You don't need to do lots straight away. Most of all, feel the place. What are the habitats you have? Are there damp areas? Dry areas? Cool areas? Sheltered areas? Listen to the birds, get to know the plants and insects, and learn to feel how the wood changes through the seasons. Continually revisit your wood in this way, even after you have started managing it—plans may change as the wood develops.

### Make a plan

It really is useful to make a plan. Sit down and think what you really want of your woodland. What is your absolute priority? What do you need to achieve this? It doesn't have to be a formal Woodland Management Plan, but it is worth doing. You can revise your plan, but it is important to structure your work in some way.

### Expect people to disagree with you and take time to explain.

People have strongly-held opinions about woods and trees. Having a plan will help with this, when you get inevitable criticism of what you are doing. In general, people are concerned if they see you cutting down trees, or making paths and tracks, or cutting down brambles. We have found that public open days are an ideal way of communicating with people, listening to their comments and educating them about the fundamentals of woodland management. Very few people remain negative if you take the time to explain.

### Take time to enjoy your wood

It is very easy to feel overwhelmed with the amount of work you have to do, and feel you have to work whenever you visit. I've found this to be the case in the winter, in particular, which is a busy time for infrastructure work, tree-cutting, coppicing, planting and other seasonal work, and when the days are short, so you feel pressure to achieve. However it is really important to take time out to just enjoy the wood for what it is—enjoying the sights, sounds, and smells of your own woodland must surely be one of the reasons we all become woodland owners!

### Take time to reflect on your progress

It might seem very daunting, so it is very important to sit back and reflect on what you have achieved, rather than looking at the list of jobs to be done. If you sit down and think about what you have achieved, and how you have made a positive impact on the woodland, it makes the list of upcoming jobs less daunting. Take photographs every year through the season. Things change slowly, but looking at old photographs will really bring home to you what you have done.

Sarah Walters

### Find a course (continued)

#### Small Woods Association

Run a wide range of woodland-related courses at their Greenwood Centre

<http://www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk/WoodlandCourse.s.htm>

#### Yorwoods

Run courses for foresters and woodland owners in the Yorkshire area

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

#### Ben Law

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

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

#### Worcester County Council

Countryside with Confidence Course – suitable for adults who want to get out in the countryside but haven't yet taken the first steps in that direction. Monday Evenings 7-9pm on 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June. Details on [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside) or on 01905 766493

**Are you running an event or course at your wood?  
Please tell us about it and we can advertise it here**

### Advice From the forum

“Love it for its own sake” **JamesM**

“Do nothing major for the first year except observe” **jillybean**

“If you want to enjoy the wildlife, shut up for 10 minutes and do not take your dog with you!” **woodbodger**

“Be creative” **Exeldama**

“Don't forget to enjoy your woods - take time to relax and get a kettle going on a fire whenever you're there. Have fun too - make a huge zipwire!” **DuncanB**

“Just remember you are not an owner, merely a guardian” **athelstan**

“Don't miss a planting season”. **RichardKing**

“Dig yourself a toilet—you'll need it!” **Darren**

## Forthcoming SWOG Events

**Better woodland for Wales, Near Llanddewi, Mid-Wales, 5th June 2010**

Better Woodland for Wales (BWW) is an excellent



scheme that supports woodland owners with advice and grants. If you own a woodland in Wales, this meeting will enlighten you to how it all works!

Shane Logan, a BWW management planner, will lead a walk around Ray's wood, talk through the whole process involving BWW, woodland management possibilities and help with paperwork.

Ray's seven acre woodland has an interesting mix of oak, birch, hazel, ash and semi mature conifers, spread over swampy and densely packed areas to more open glades. Ray is keen for help in identifying some of the trees he's not sure of.

Email [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk) if you would like to come along

Bring suitable clothing, your lunch, a mug and pen and paper!

The day will run from about 10 am to about 3pm, it is located between Newton and Llandrindod Wells, not far off the A483. Detailed instructions will be sent out nearer the time.

**Moths and bats, Northiam, E Sussex, 12 June 2010**

An evening meeting to look at moths and bats! We hope to have someone along with a moth trap to show us the magic of moths! (tbc) Dave from the National Trust will bring his Batbox, and talk



with us about woodland management for bats and PC Collins from Wildlife Crime will shed some light on bat and badger law for us.

Soup and refreshments will be provided, but please bring your own sandwiches or food to cook, a mug, utensils, a chair, a torch and some warm clothes. It's scheduled for 6pm – 10pm, but if the weather's good we can stay longer.

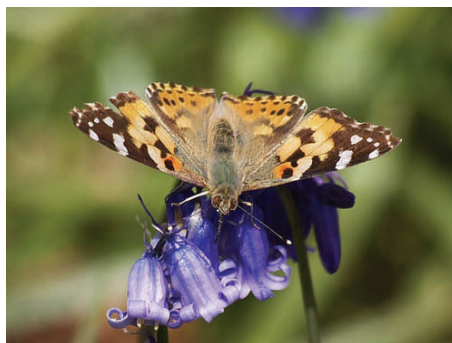
Please email [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk) if you would like to come along.



**Woodland Management and tree ID, Malvern, 11th July 2010**

Phil from [Malvern coppicing](#) will lead a day in the woodland in Worcs. A walk and chat about woodland management, rides and tree ID. Many members have been on Phil's courses and thoroughly enjoyed them!

Email [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk) if you would like to come along



**Registering your woodland. 4th September, Flimwell, East Sussex**

Details: This workshop will guide you through the land registration process. This is an essential prerequisite if you want to claim a woodland grant. The Land Registry want all land registered by 2012. By the end of the session we aim that you will have the forms completed. The event will also provide an overview of the available woodland grants available.

Contact Steve Wheatley to book: Telephone 01580 879958  
or Email [swheatley@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:swheatley@butterfly-conservation.org)

10:00 to 13:00

Woodland Enterprise Centre, Flimwell, TN5 7PR

**SWOG and Woodlands.co.uk at forthcoming woodfairs**

SWOG and Woodlands.co.uk will have stands at the following woodfairs during the coming months:-

**Woodfest, St Aseph, Wales. 4th – 6th June 2010**

**Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh. 24th – 27th June 2010**

**Westonbirt Festival of the Tree. 27- 30th August 2010**

Please see [www.woodfairs.co.uk](http://www.woodfairs.co.uk) for further details.

**DIARY DATE**

**SWOG Meeting in Hampshire - Saturday 16 October**

Julian Evans will run the event in his own wood with a theme of 'Actions to Help Trees and Woodlands'. Topics include: coppicing neglected hazel; thinning-trees to help them grow; and how to develop a glade. Each topic will be interactive, very practical but safe, with participants themselves deciding what to cut/remove. Later in the day participants will return to see the impact of their decisions, as trees will be cut down during the day itself, as a discussion point and for learning.

Further information will follow.

There are photos of Julian's wood on [www.patulabooks.co.uk](http://www.patulabooks.co.uk) so do visit.

## Newsletter - June 2010

### 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)

Contact us:-

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[tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk)

[www.swog.org.uk](http://www.swog.org.uk)

## Small Woodland Owners' Group Forum

### What have we been doing this month?

Sarah has had a busy month. We have started to get community groups to use the woods. One of the local Forest Schools have visited, we held a bluebell walk for the local wildlife group, and we have had the Beaver Scouts visiting. We hosted a stall at the Wild About Tamworth event, and held another public open day. In terms of the wood, we have been trying to establish new areas of wildflower meadow in our big clearing, as well as planting out oak trees grown from seed. The bluebells have been fantastic. Some of the hazel we planted in our lower coppice has suffered collateral damage as the rabbits took a liking to bamboo canes.

Richard King hosted a SWA woodland visit and the bluebells were amazing. He collected birch brush for pea sticks and traded in his old Land Rover for a newer model built to spec.

Tracy has been sitting and watching things grow, and has a school group coming to learn navigation and shelter-building skills.

Rich has been enjoying the bluebells too. Also the cant that they cut two seasons ago. "The herb layer is fantastic if ever you want to illustrate the increase in biodiversity by comparing it



We were enjoying our bluebells in May

with an uncut cant. It is not just about bluebells when you start coppicing! Only slight problem is that some of the new hazel we gapped up with is being eaten by caterpillars—I don't know, you invite people over and what do they do?!" Rich also finished the chestnut bridge over the stream into the newly-cut cant, except it's not really a stream any more.

### Bushcraft Course from Natures Craft



Cooking damper on green hazel sticks

Andy Noble of [Natures Craft](http://www.naturescraft.co.uk) is running an introduction to bushcraft day at Lords Wood near Alton in Hampshire later this year. This is being offered to SWOG members at a considerable discount, (£20 instead of £70) to cover their costs. Numbers will be limited to 10 so book early to avoid disappointment.

#### The Day's Outline

A one day introductory session in bushcraft and wilderness living

11th September 2010 10am – 5pm – £20

The 'Introduction to bushcraft' session provides a taster into just some of the wide range of skills encompassed under the title "Bushcraft", demonstrating how enjoyable and rewarding it can be to learn these skills.

Run by Andy Noble, of [Natures Craft](http://www.naturescraft.co.uk) you will

spend the day based in a woodland bushcraft camp where you will be shown and practice the following bushcraft skills:

- Making fire in a variety of methods
- Shelter construction
- Cordage production
- Plant, Fungi and Tree identification and their Bushcraft uses

The Natures Craft team will also be at hand to answer any other bushcraft related questions and will have a multitude of craft items on display to further demonstrate the potentials of this craft and hopefully provide some inspirational insights into the joys of working with natural materials.

Attendees will also be supplied with a voucher which will entitle the holder to a 15% discount on a future Natures Craft weekend long course.

Participants will need to supply a packed lunch, but there will be teas/coffee and squash available to help yourself to.

Please email [rich@swog.org.uk](mailto:rich@swog.org.uk) to book a place on a first come first served basis.

See <http://www.naturescraft.co.uk/index.htm> for more courses.