



In this issue

- Photography: Aperture and Shutter Speed
- Restoring Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)
- Book Review: Managing Native Broadleaved Woodland
- Chainsaw Review—Stihl MS192CE
- DEFRA consultation on the future of the public forest estate in England
- Design a Log Bog!
- RFS Excellence in Forestry Awards
- SWOG Meetings
- Other Meetings
- News for Small Woodland Owners
- Course listing and Directory
- On the blogs at woodlands.co.uk
- Woodlands.tv
- Forthcoming woodfairs
- On the Forum

In the Newsletter this Month

A new year and another bumper edition of the newsletter. We have another instalment in the photography basics series to inspire you as the weather starts to improve. There are also reviews of an important new book from the Forestry Commission, and of a lovely little chainsaw. We also have a great article on the restoration of PAWS (plantations on ancient woodland sites) from Robin Walter.

This year is looking to be a bumper year for SWOG meetings and there are several forthcoming in the next few months. Please do see if you can take a day away from your own woods and visit the woods of other SWOG members and learn from their experiences, as well as from the expert guest speakers.

The news section is full too, catching up on news since the last edition: this includes the important impending deadline for the RFS Excellence in Forestry Awards. Woodlands.co.uk are sponsoring the Small Woods category of these awards, which is for small woods of 20ha or less, managed by or under close supervision of the owner. If you want to enter, and own a wood in the East Midlands or East of England, the deadline is 8th March.

There is also a slightly more prosaic competition—the Log Bog Competition! We are challenging you to send in photos to see who has designed the most creative toilet in your woodlands! Enter before the end of March, and your photo will feature on the web site—you may even win a prize!

Please do have a look also at the DEFRA consultation on the future of the public forest estate in England, and make your views known on the proposals.

We would always love to hear tales from your woods, so please do write something, however small, for the newsletter. Whether it be your favourite tree, a review of your favourite tool, an account of a wonderful day in your woods, or just sharing your experience on a particular topic, we would love to hear from you.

Sarah Walters (sarah@swog.org.uk)

Photography Basics: Aperture and Shutter Speed

In the first article we looked at composition, in the second article at exposure, and in this article we will look at how you can vary the elements of exposure to obtain the image you want. You may remember that exposure (how much light gets to the film or sensor) is determined by three things:

1. Aperture – how much light is allowed through the diaphragm of the lens.
2. Shutter speed – how quickly the shutter opens and closes
3. Sensitivity (ISO setting) of film or sensor

We will look at each of these in turn to see how varying each element, while keeping the overall exposure the same, can affect the image that you take, and sometimes help you to get the effect that you want.

Aperture and Depth of Field

Varying the aperture can give you control over what proportion of your image is in focus. This is known as the depth of field – a wide depth of field means you get both near and far objects in focus, a narrow depth of field can be used to blur the background or foreground, and focus selectively on one object in the picture.

Here's how it works

Depth of field	Aperture	Effect	Side effects
Wide	Small (high f number)	Both foreground and background are in focus	Shutter speed will tend to get slower to allow in more light. You could end up with a blurred image unless you use a higher ISO setting or you use a tripod. Extremes of aperture reduce the performance of the lens.
Narrow	Wide (low f number)	Selective focus on subject either in foreground or background.	Shutter speed will tend to get faster to reduce the light. You might end up over exposing in bright conditions unless you use neutral density filters or use a low ISO setting. Extremes of aperture reduce the performance of the lens.



The images above (of the fence and the two trees) have wide depth of field – the foreground and much of the background remain in focus, although the far trees are out of focus. By contrast the images of angelica and bluebells below have a narrow depth of field: the seed head stands out from the woodland in the background, and there are only one or two heads of bluebells in focus with the remaining background and foreground fuzzy.



How do you adjust aperture?

1. On a digital SLR camera, choose Aperture Priority metering – usually indicated by Av on the dial. Almost all SLR cameras have this option – film and digital. Then choose your aperture using the menu controls. Using the fully automatic setting will usually default to f8.0 or f11.0, at which the lens performs the best. For a narrower depth of field, select f5.6 even smaller numbers (how small it goes depends on your lens, but most zooms will go down to f3.5 and some to f2.8). For a wider depth of field, select larger f number (smaller aperture) – f16, f22, or higher. Then check what shutter speed you are getting – a general rule is that if your shutter speed is smaller than the focal length of your lens (e.g. shutter speed 1/50 second, lens length 70mm), then you run the risk of camera shake. If you have image stabilisation on your lens, you might get away with about 1/25 second for a 70mm lens, but after that, you will get blurred images and you will need a tripod, or will need to select a slightly lower f number (wider aperture) to let in more light. Finally, don't forget to check your exposure, as in the previous article, and use exposure compensation to adjust it upwards or downwards.

Using creative modes – on compact cameras and the few SLR cameras that don't allow Av mode, choose the landscape mode for a wide depth of field, and the portrait or macro mode for a narrower depth of field.

Course Directory

Field Studies Council

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

Institute of Chartered Foresters

<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 early 2011 visit

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

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

To see courses for the coming year visit

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

LILI Courses

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

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

Wildlife Trusts

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

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

Shutter Speed and Movement

Varying the shutter speed gives you control over

1. How movement appears in your pictures and
2. Helps you to control blur caused by camera shake when hand-holding the camera

Freezing movement

You may want to capture a sharp image of something that is moving such as a bird or insect in flight, or an action photograph of a person – for this you will need a high shutter speed. Even quite old SLR cameras can manage a shutter speed of 1/1000 of a second, and modern cameras can manage 1/2000 or even faster – enough to freeze very fast motion.



The down side of using a very fast shutter speed is that you might not be able to let in enough light – your lens may not have a wide enough aperture for the shutter speed selected. You can compensate for this by selecting a high ISO setting (but see below for the effect this has on the image), or putting faster film in a film camera. You may also find that photographing a moving subject makes auto-focus difficult – many systems cannot cope with very rapid changes in the distance between subject and camera.



To cope with this, you will need to pre-focus using manual focus, if you have it. Select the place where

the subject is going to be, focus on it, then forget about focus and take the pictures when the subject reaches that point. Remember, using a fast shutter speed will lead the camera to select a wide aperture, and you will get a narrow depth of field, so less margin for error when focusing!

In the pictures above, motion has been frozen by using a fast shutter speed. The little bee is frozen in mid air on its way to the thistle, although the wings beat too fast even for the fast shutter speed setting. The axeman is frozen in full swing—even the chunk of wood that is falling appears to hover in mid-air.

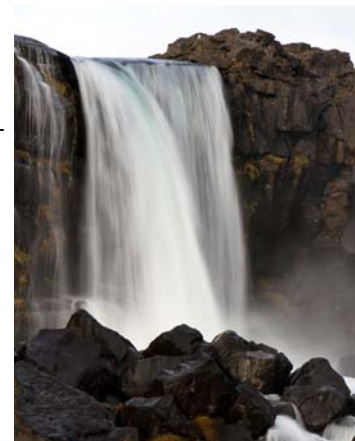
Blurring movement



You may want to convey the feeling of movement by showing a blurred image of objects moving – for example the streaks of car headlamps in the dark, a panned image of a running dog or flying bird, or the blur of water over a waterfall.

In this instance, you need to select a slow shutter speed – usually one that is lower than the focal length of your lens, and sometimes much slower – one second or more.

A slow shutter speed means two things: first of all you will have to use some kind of support for your camera – a monopod, a tripod or a natural support such as a rock or fence post. You will also find that you need to select a narrow aperture (high f number) to reduce the amount of light get-



ting in to the camera and prevent over exposure. This will make the depth of field wide, so if you want to isolate your subject from the background, you may also need to use filters that block out the light, and allow a wider aperture to be selected (these are called neutral density filters).

Low light photography

Another reason for selecting a slow shutter speed is to capture an image without using flash at night, or under low light conditions. You may need an exposure up to a minute or even longer, as in the photo of the aurora borealis here, which took 80 seconds.

Under these conditions you will have to use a tripod (a good sturdy tripod) to prevent camera shake. You will also need to have some way of releasing the shutter without pressing the button as this will cause the camera to shake a little. The best way to do this is to use the self-timer (set this for two seconds, press the shutter, and then the shutter will activate 2 seconds later) or a remote release. You may find at very long exposures, the mirror on your SLR also makes the camera shake a little



bit as it raises and lowers – some SLR cameras have a mirror lock to allow you to prevent this, but you will need to compose your picture first as you won't be able to see through the viewfinder once the mirror is locked up.

1. How to set your shutter speed
2. On a SLR Camera – select the shutter speed priority or Tv mode on your mode dial. Then use the menu to select your shutter speed. The camera will then select an appropriate aperture – check that there are no warnings about the aperture selected, as it may need to select an aperture narrower or wider than that available. Use a tripod if your shutter speed is slower than the focal length of your lens (i.e. if you select 1/15 second and the lens is 35mm then you will need a tripod).
3. On a compact camera using creative modes – to get a high shutter speed, use the sports mode. Getting a slower shutter speed is more difficult – you could try and fool the camera by selecting landscape mode, which will select a small aperture, and thus make it select a slow shutter speed to compensate. Sometimes the night time mode will also select a slow shutter speed – it depends on the camera!
4. For very low light photography, you will need to select the fully manual mode, and use the “bulb” setting. This allows you to open and shut the shutter manually – the shutter will remain open as long as you have your finger on the button. You will need to use the remote release or self timer, and also possibly the mirror lock.

ISO Setting and Image Detail

Most of us leave the ISO setting on “Auto” all the time. However there are good reasons for selecting the ISO setting manually when you want to achieve particular effects.



Smooth pictures and low ISO

If you want very detailed pictures, with very lovely saturated colours, and little grain, then choose a low ISO setting (ISO 100 or below). This means the sensitivity of the sensor (or film) will be low, and you will need more light to achieve the same exposure. Provided there is enough light, you will get lovely smooth, detailed images. This is great for portraits, macro work and landscapes, and for images you want to enlarge greatly.

Grainy pictures and high ISO

Sometimes, it is nice to have a grainy image for artistic reasons. Select a high ISO setting (ISO800 or above – many cameras will go up to ISO1600 or higher). The colours will be less saturated, and there will be less detail in the image, and if you enlarge it a lot, you will start to see a grainy feel to the image. This can be quite moody.

Leaving your camera on ISO Auto setting will mean that at low levels of light (if you have selected a small aperture, or fast shutter speed) your images will deteriorate in quality as a high ISO setting is selected, and the image becomes less detailed and more grainy. Sometimes that is the only way to get a picture, of course!



Exercises

1. Take a series of images of the same subject at different apertures, and watch how the depth of field changes
2. Now take some images with deliberately narrow and deliberately wide depth of field by varying the aperture of your camera (or selecting the landscape and portrait modes).
3. Take some pictures freezing motion by using a fast shutter speed (or sports mode).
4. Take some pictures blurring motion by using a slow shutter speed
5. Try some night-time images using a tripod and long exposure (remember to use the self-timer to set off the shutter)

Course Directory

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

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

Phil Hopkinson of Malvern Copping offers practical coppicing courses

<http://www.malverncopping.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>

The Sustainability Centre

offers lots of courses around the theme of sustainable living.

http://www.sustainability-centre.org/courses_adult.php

Royal Forestry Society Divisional Events

The programmes for early 2011 can be seen at

<http://www.rfs.org.uk/event/2011/02/01/month/all/all/1>

Restoring Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)

Robin Walter talks about these valuable habitats, and the free advice being offered by the Woodland Trust to owners to help them with restoration. Although his project is located in Wessex, there are other similar initiatives in other parts of the country.

Ancient woodland is the **UK's richest habitat for wildlife**, the result of centuries of continuous woodland conditions and management. This continuity means that it has had time to develop complex ecological communities characterised by species of plants, fungi and insects that are rarely found in younger woods. Ancient woods are also historical treasure troves full of archaeological and cultural features that give a picture of past land use. Ancient woodland is a scarce and irreplaceable resource.



Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites

(PAWS) are ancient woods that have been planted with non-native species, mostly during the 20th century with the intention of providing a strategic timber reserve. Non-native conifer plantations can have a particularly negative impact on the ecology of ancient woods, firstly through the process of establishing them and subsequently from the effects of the shade and leaf litter that they cast. However, research has shown that in most PAWS remnant historic and ecological features still survive in amongst the plantation crop. These remnants provide vital links back to the original ancient woodland. By acting now, owners and managers can make a major contribution towards restoring some of the UK's most valuable and threatened habitats.

To find out if your wood is Ancient or PAWS, visit [The Forestry Commission](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-lis) website at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-lis> and use the Land Information Search as a first step.

The **best starting point for restoring PAWS** is to gradually remove the source of threat, such as shade, to allow the remnant features to become more robust.

The approach starts from the premise that all PAWS are likely to retain some of the ecological and archaeological value from their ancient woodland origin.

The approach is in essence about gradual change, **in particular the management of light levels**, as most threats to remnant ancient woodland features may come from either excessive shade or light.

The Woodland Trust pioneered this work and advocates two distinct operational phases. First to **maintain and enhance** remnant ancient woodland features by reducing immediate threats to their survival. This process may take some years. Second to make long term improvement to the general ecological value of the site, by gradually shifting the canopy towards a more **semi-natural species composition and structure**. See more at <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/why-woods-matter/restoring/PAWS%20research/Pages/research.aspx>

Action to conserve and enhance remnant ancient woodland features is prioritised based on the level of threat, with urgent and careful attention being directed to those most at risk.

I have been commissioned by the Woodland Trust to offer free advice to owners of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites in Wessex to assist them with restoration. This advice could consist of a site visit to assess condition and then some recommendations for action. We can also discuss which FC grants may be applicable to your work. At present, works to improve PAWS woods in the

Southwest are eligible for grants to cover 80% of standard costs. See

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

Contact: Robin Walter MICFor on robin@trees-for-transition.co.uk or 07824 552414 for woods in Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire and Hants. Otherwise call Woodland Trust on 01476 581135 as there are a number of similar initiatives operating across the UK. *Photos Paul Glendell/Woodland Trust*



Ben Law

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

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

Brighton Permaculture Trust

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

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

Losehill Hall

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

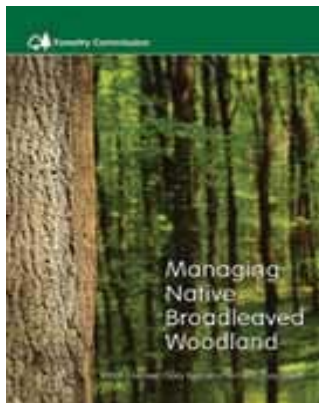
http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/professional_courses_brochure_2010-12.pdf

Kingcombe Environmental Studies Centre

Is running a course on the history and ecology of woodlands on 22-24th April 2011

<http://www.kingcombe.org/courses/Details/256>

Book Review: Managing Native Broadleaved Woodland



by R Harmer, G Kerr and R Thompson. Pub TSO, Edinburgh 2010 ISBN 978 0 11 497344 5. RRP £30.00 from Amazon and TSO.

This is a book for woodland managers, not a practical manual for woodsmen. If you are looking for a book that tells you how to do practical tasks, for example how to pollard an oak tree, this is not the one for you. Likewise, if you are looking for a book that provides you with a management formula – tells you what to do for each different type of woodland – then this isn't the one for you. However if you are looking for a book that teaches you how to think through the management of your woodland, and how to plan for its future, then it is an absolutely essential read.

Starting from the assumption that every woodland, or indeed every bit of every woodland is different, and that management needs to be on an individual basis depending on where it is, what soil it is on, what species are there, what the history of the woodland is, what management has gone before, and what your objective is, this book provides an absolute wealth of information to get you thinking about your wood, sometimes challenging accepted wisdom about what to do.

Each chapter starts with an essential checklist of questions for a woodland manager to ask about the topic covered: this gives a framework through which you can read the chapter, and then revisit those questions in the context of your own woodland.

As well as the main text, which is sometimes quite dense to read, there are boxes with case studies, checklists, decision-support algorithms, charts and tables, and plentiful illustrations. Many of these are very useful practical tools to help you think through the issues in the chapter in relation to your woodland.

The flow of chapters takes you through all the elements you need to consider in drawing up a plan of management for your wood. Although it is written by the Forestry Commission, it does not assume that production of timber or wood is the only, or even the main, objective of managing your wood. However it does assume that management is needed: even if you decide after working through the sections that the management plan is to do nothing, this will be based upon a conscious consideration of the reasons for that decision and consequences of it, and you will know what to expect.

Starting with a chapter on the history of broadleaved woodland, understanding and classifying your site, and basic silvicultural systems in current use, it progresses through sections on ground flora, regeneration, mammal damage, managed grazing, managing conservation interests, creating new broadleaved woodland, and finally on to management planning. Each of these chapters makes you think and sometimes challenges “accepted” wisdom: for example, grazing animals in woodland isn't always bad, coppicing isn't always good, and managing woodland on an “all sized” basis may not be the best way forward for a particular site. There is no one formula being proposed here – the book does not offer “a solution” for native broadleaved woodlands, but a system of thinking about them that should encourage diversity both within and between woods.

Indeed, biodiversity is featured throughout this book. The authors draw a distinction between management *for* wildlife and conservation and management *in the presence of* wildlife and conservation, recognising that you might do different things depending on your main objective but that regardless of your objective, the consequences of management for, and minimising impact upon, wildlife and conservation need to be considered. There is also a very good consideration of the conflicts that can arise when managing a woodland to encourage one particular species to the detriment of others: a solution offered is that the woodland is managed to provide a diversity of *habitats* into which a diverse selection of species might fit.



Developing Your Skills Courses from Berks, Bucks, Oxon Wildlife Trust

A range of courses aimed at developing personal skills, very helpful for the woodland owner.

Coppicing

Saturday 12 February 2010, 9.30 am – 4 pm

Warburg Nature Reserve, nr. Henley-on-Thames, Oxon

Charcoal Burning

Saturday 9 April 2011, 9.30 am – 4.30 pm

Warburg Nature Reserve, nr. Henley-on-Thames, Oxon.

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust are running six-part bird identification courses in spring of 2011 starting on 19th March.

See <http://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/events/> for details of these and other courses

The Barn Owl Trust are running a course on Barn Owl Ecology Course – 16th and 17th February.

Details are on - <http://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/infopage.html?Id=153>

Gwent Wildlife Trust are offering a course entitled A Beginners Guide to Woodland Management 14th April 2011

<http://www.sewbrec.org.uk/event/events-calendar/gwent-wildlife-trust-a-beginners-guide-to-woodland-management.page>

Creating new broadleaved woodland is a chapter that I read in depth, since we have just acquired 9 acres of former arable land on which to plant one. We are not told to plant certain species at a particular separation or use a particular method of weed management, but we are given the relative merits and problems with each different system that could be used, and allowed to draw our own conclusions based on our own site: at the very least we were given many things to think about and adapt to our own use.

The final chapter on management planning is also extremely useful: if you want to write a woodland management plan for Forestry Commission funding, then you need to read this, as it takes you through the process you need to follow in completing the paperwork. Assess your site, draw up your objectives, decide how you will monitor success, assess objectives for compatibility, translate your objectives into an action plan including tasks to be done and timescale. Little is said about operational planning here: it is strategic planning that is the main topic of this book, and operations are only covered as a brief section in this chapter. Still, you are given a checklist to get you started.

There are then some extremely useful appendices including a mini-encyclopaedia (called Chapter 12) of native and common introduced broadleaved trees and shrubs and their main silvicultural characteristics. Two useful tables also appear here: ground flora and tree species associated with different woodland classifications.

The book is quite readable, despite its size, although probably not one to read cover to cover without a break: more likely one to dip in and out of when considering various aspects of your own woodland. There are plenty of references given for each chapter should you wish to get further detail around any particular subject, and quite a lot of the material in the book is backed by research. Some readers may feel it falls between two schools: not scholarly or detailed enough for the scientists, not practical or prescriptive enough for the more practical minded. Although some chapters are easier to read than others (a function of multi-authorship), and there are occasional places where you get frustrated, in general I thought the balance was about right – you are given the means to go into more depth, as well as the means to decide what practical guides you need to consult.

If you want to learn what you need to think about when considering woodland management, challenge some of your preconceptions, think through some of your issues in depth, and formulate a clear management plan, written or in your head, then this is a book you simply have to read. It gives you a broad picture, a way of thinking about your wood (or any other) and making management decisions based upon a rational consideration of all the factors involved, rather than just gut feeling or an accepted formula. It is written by people who are clearly expert in their field, and it gives you a lead into more scholarly or more practical works should they be required. I would say it is essential reading.



Courses from Coppicewood College

Garden Structure Weaving—Sat 17th April for one day £25

Make your own Shavehorse- 3 days from Sat 30th April (£160)

Green woodworking-4 days starting Monday 14th March (£160)

<http://coppicewoodcollege.co.uk/>

Woodcraft School have published their timetable for woodcraft and bushcraft courses

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

BEAT—the Forest of Bradford—are offering weekend courses on hedgelaying in February and March

http://www.beat.org.uk/bm/forest_of_bradford/Courses-HedgelayingGreen-Woodcraft/index.shtml

Bodgers.org.uk

There is a listing of a wide range of pole lathe turning and green woodworking courses on the Bodgers.org.uk site.

<http://www.bodgers.org.uk/courses>

Brightwater Greenwood in Dorset run a range of greenwood craft courses and their 2011 calendar is now available

<http://www.brightwater.org.uk/bodgersbarn.html>

The Cherry Wood Project near Bath run a range of greenwood craft courses

<http://www.cherrywoodproject.co.uk/index.html>

Stihl MS192CE Chainsaw Review



I was looking for a chainsaw, but had a few problems that needed to be addressed. The main problem was arthritis in my hands: starting a chainsaw that kicks hard while pulling the starter cord was a problem, because the shock of the kicks could set off an attack of arthritis. Not good if you have several days put aside to do coppicing. Also the weight of a chainsaw can be an

issue if you have bad hands: I have no problem with weights (I am also a fitness instructor), but can't hold heavy weights all day without suffering problems with my hands on subsequent days.

So the new chainsaw had to be lightweight, and start easily without shock transmitting itself through the cord back to my hands.

Until recently, the only lightweight (sub 5kg) petrol chainsaws were top handle saws reserved for professional tree surgeons with appropriate qualifications, or the unimpressive cordless chainsaws. However the Stihl MS192CE with its 30cc two-stroke engine, has changed all that.

It is actually a carving saw, and we first saw it at the National Forest Woodfair in Leicestershire last summer in the hands of real experts using it to do amazing things to blocks of wood. Talking to one or two of them, it became clear that it was no toy, and could be suitable for me.

We then tried out the starter mechanism at the Cannock Chase APF Show: when they say “easy start” this doesn’t actually begin to say how easy it is. The mechanism is similar to those toy cars where you pull them backwards to wind up a spring and then release them and they whiz forwards. Only on the chainsaw, you pull the string gently until the spring is wound up enough to turn the engine and then it automatically releases and starts the saw. Seemples!

On this basis we took the plunge and bought one for me for my birthday, together with a day’s training from a professional chainsaw instructor on its use.

I was never planning to fell anything other than small scrubby bushes, and the main use was to be for snedding/de-limbing trees felled by others, and cross cutting logs. So the training was geared towards those particular tasks.

In use the saw is light and I can use it more or less all day and am still able to use my hands the next day. Because it is light, it might be thought of as flimsy, but I can say after doing this year’s coppice cut, it is not flimsy at all.

The star of the show is the start: prime it, open the choke, lock the throttle open, pull gently until the engine almost fires, close the choke and hey presto, it starts without any difficulty. Restarts are effortless, which means you can stop it and walk around your task and think a bit without worrying whether your saw will not start again.

The 12 inch carving bar and low kickback chain have been excellent too – ideal for getting into relatively small gaps when de-limbing or snedding. The chain has remained sharp despite relatively heavy use and use on harder woods such as oak and hawthorn.

Everybody who has used the saw has been impressed: the chainsaw instructor thought it was a great little saw, absolutely ideal for the job. My husband likes it so much that when I’m not there, he switches to my saw to do the delimiting as it is lighter, easier to start, the chain is sharper (despite being the same vintage as his chain), it is more convenient, and he doesn’t get so tired using it. It has made a huge difference to our productivity to have two people working with chainsaws – one doing felling and cutting larger limbs, one doing the snedding/smaller de-limbing, and then volunteers to remove the wood and complete the job with hand tools. It has removed a bottleneck in the process and allowed us to do our coppice cut much quicker this year.

Limitations: well, obviously there are some. It is not a saw for felling big trees, and I would not want to cut limbs much more than 15cm in diameter. It is not as robustly built as the heavier saws, but that is OK if you are respectful of your machinery and don’t chuck it about. It is certainly much more robust than a cordless saw of a similar weight. The chain tension does need adjusting relatively frequently, although that might be a function of it being a new saw and chain – however doing this is a doddle.

I thought I would never be able to use a chainsaw: now I have found one that I can use and start without inflaming my hands. And of course, I might have to have some lessons on carving from our instructor now we have the right saw for the job.

RRP is £325, but you may be able to get a deal from your local supplier.

Defra Consultation on the Future of Public Forests in England

There has been a lot of recent speculation and a certain amount of scare-mongering regarding the future of England’s forests, after the Government announced its intention to sell off the majority of the Forestry Commission estate.

The full consultation document has now been released (on 27th January), and is available to view, download or print on www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/forests/index.htm or at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-pfeconsultation.

Please do read it carefully and give feedback on these important plans which will have a major impact on the way the public forest estate is run.

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

http://www.mammal.org.uk/index.php?option=com_virtuemart&page=shop.browse&category_id=9&Itemid=219&vmccchk=1&Itemid=219

Courses in forthcoming months include mammal identification, dormouse ecology and conservation, badger ecology, survey and recording techniques and radio tracking.

Dorset Centre for Rural Skills

Run a range of courses of interest to woodland owners

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

Cotswolds Rural Skills Courses

Include hedgelaying and coppicing. 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

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

Northfield Ecocentre in Birmingham run a range of courses on sustainable living including a wild-food spring foraging course on 15th March <http://www.northfieldecocentre.org/courses>

Design a Log Bog!

Calling all SWOG Members!

We would like you to be as creative as possible, and show off your skills in the field of design. You know the problem—you have a wood, miles from any kind of plumbing facility, and you need to solve the problem of having Somewhere To Go.

Well, here it is, the greatest competition in SWOG history! Have you made a toilet in your woodland? Does it have a very special design, ambience or view? Send your bog photos and a short paragraph about why your woodland toilet is the BEST to tracy@woodlands.co.uk



All entries will go onto the website end of March and the winners announced in April. You might even win a prize! *Photo by Mike Pepler*

RFS Excellence in Forestry Awards

The clock is ticking in the search for this year's winners of the RFS Excellence in Forestry Awards. The deadline for entries is **Tuesday March 8** for all categories of the Royal Forestry Society's (RFS) Excellence in Forestry 2011 awards with prizes of **£1000** for the winner and **£500** for the runner up. Woodlands.co.uk are sponsoring a new category for Small Woodlands which is open to woodland in a single discreet block or in neighbouring small units up to a total of 20ha. There is no minimum size.

The awards are the premier woodland competition for England, Wales and Northern Ireland- and there are four woodlands categories – Silviculture, Multipurpose Woodlands, Small Woodlands and Community Forestry. There is also a prize for schools and educational organisations involved in projects which increase young people's understanding and appreciation of the environmental, social and economic potential of trees, woodlands and forests and of the link between trees and everyday wood products.

Entries are being sought from Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex – together with all the Greater London Boroughs north of the River Thames.

RFS Chief Executive Dr John Jackson said: "We know there are some tremendous examples of fine woodland practice across the region. This competition helps local owners, community groups and organisations demonstrate just how wise management can benefit the local environment and economy. In regions where the competition has been held in previous years we have discovered some previously unsung examples of excellence which can now act as local beacons for those who aspire to reach the same high standards."

The Awards are supported by Forestry Commission (England) and the National Forest Company. Major sponsors are: [John Clegg and Co \(Duke of Cornwall Multipurpose Award\)](#), [Tubex](#) (RFS Silviculture Award); [woodlands.co.uk](http://www.woodlands.co.uk) (Small Woodlands).

Additional sponsors include: PEFC UK (Community Forestry Award), ECL Howard Watson Smith (Schools Award); Fencing and Landscaping News (Silviculture Award), and Woodmizer (Small Woodlands).

For further details of the Excellence in Forestry Awards and entry forms visit www.rfs.org.uk and follow the 'Get Involved' competition links; email rfscpetition@boyns.net. or call 01824 704230.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust are running what sounds like a very useful course for woodland owners. Thinking and Skills for Small Woodlands on 4th Feb -

<http://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/Things-to-do/Events/Events-archive/Thinking-and-Skills-for-Small-Woodlands.aspx>

There are other courses of interest too on <http://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/Things-to-do/Events/Events-archive.aspx>

The Field Studies Council have a number of interesting looking courses in early 2011. At Epping the courses include birds, amphibians, lichens, mosses, liverworts, aquatic plants, bats, badgers and fungi.

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

At Flatford Mill there are courses on on film-making, photography, painting and drawing wildlife <http://field-studies-coun-cil.org/flatfordmill/professionaldev.aspx>

There is also a course on the NVC for woodlands in May 2011 at FSC Course NVC Woodlands (May 2011) - <http://field-studies-coun-cil.org/professional/2011/courseinfo.aspx?id=416>

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>

Forthcoming SWOG Meetings

Sevenoaks, Kent, 12-13th March 2011 (TBC)

Butterfly conservation and the Forestry Commission are offering meeting for Small woodland owners on the weekend of 12th – 13th March. (Date to be confirmed). Topics include woodland features for butterflies and grants and licences. Let Tracy know if you are interested and if we could visit your woodland in the afternoon. tracy@woodlands.co.uk



Spring Birds and Plants, Knowlands Wood, East Sussex, 16th April

Come and join us for a walk in Nick's woodland in April. Knowlands wood is 5 miles North of Lewes in East Sussex. We will mostly be looking at woodland birds, plants and butterflies. Nick has a huge range of plants and wildlife!



Woodland flowers (especially bluebells and Wood Anemones) and woodland birds, (especially early summer visitors) There should be lots of windflowers, primroses, dog violets, bluebells, other woodland species such as celandine, wild strawberry, barren strawberry, Dog's Mercury, Woodland Spurge. Maybe Early Purple Orchids. Warbler species (Chiffchaff, Blackcap plus if we're lucky Garden Warbler and Willow Warbler); the usual four tit species, Goldcrest, tree-creeper, nuthatch maybe. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker with a lot of luck! Email tracy@woodlands.co.uk if you would like to book your place.

Purleigh near Chelmsford, Essex, 30th April

Alex is holding an open day for SWOG members on the 30th April 2011, at his woodland in Purleigh, near Chelmsford, Essex. Alex is hoping to set up a retreat space in the woodland for people with dyspraxia and related conditions. He can share his knowledge on retreats, composting toilets and wigwams! This is ancient woodland with a wide variety of things to see. You can also have a go at some archery. Terrain: suitable for limited mobility.

Please talk to Tracy about your needs if you wish to come. Dogs allowed, but on leads please. Email tracy@woodlands.co.uk if you are interested to know more. There is the option to camp or stay in a local B and B if you wish.



Biocensus

Biocensus run courses of interest to woodland owners at their centre in Gloucestershire and will shortly be running courses in the Lake District

For further information please see

<http://www.biocensus.co.uk/training.asp>

Warwickshire College

Moreton Morrell Centre

Four week course on Woodland Management starting March 2011

http://www.warwickshire.ac.uk/courses/search_results/course_details.aspx?Id=11832

Ignite Woodfuel Courses

As well as running professional qualifications, there are a series of one day courses available, mainly in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Manchester and the North West. Forthcoming courses include Managing Woodlands for Woodfuel, a four day course on Woodfuel, and Woodlands Archaeology

<http://www.ruraldevelopment.org.uk/events/all>

BTCV London

have a number of woodland-related courses including coppicing, tree identification and tree planting

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

AJS crafts courses

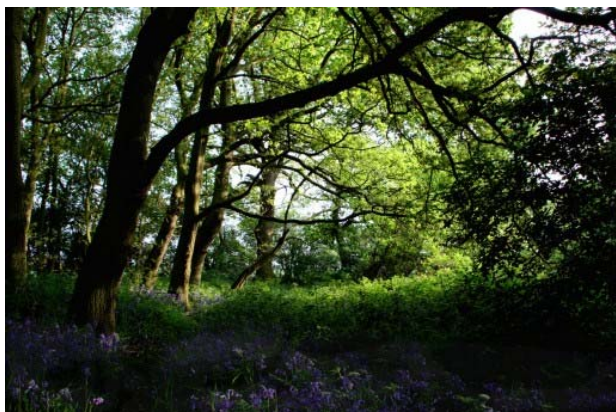
cover a range of relevant topics including willow cultivation, hedgelaying, tree planting and living willow chair-making.

Based in Kent

<http://www.ajscrafts.co.uk/common/Home.aspx>

Alvecote Wood, North Warwickshire, 8th May

Sarah and Stephen from Alvecote Wood in North Warwickshire are kindly hosting this meeting in May. The speaker will be Alistair Yeomans of the Sylva Foundation, who will be talking about the '[My Forest](#)' woodland inventory tools. This will be followed by a walk around the wood to discuss the practical application of the tools in a woodland setting. This talk may be indoors if the weather is bad as there is a barn available.



The afternoon will include a walk round the wood to discuss what the owners have been doing to manage it for wildlife and use by community groups. Including a visit to the new 9 acre extension (Betty's Wood) planted over the winter on an adjacent arable field purchased in November 2010. Camping (no facilities) will be available on request. Unfortunately, dogs are not permitted. There is limited access for wheelchairs through part of the site but some additional areas are accessible by 4 x 4 should this be required.

Stephen and Sarah bought Alvecote Wood in October 2007. It is a neglected piece of ancient semi-natural oak woodland that has been grazed in the past by sheep, pigs, goats, horses and cattle. When purchased, it was neglected, over-fertile, overgrown with bramble, elder and nettle, and there was relatively little regeneration. Since then, the owners have been managing it for wildlife and as a resource for community groups. This has included creation of ponds and wildflower meadows, hedgerow planting, bramble and scrub clearance, thinning, and coppicing to enhance diversity of habitats. Alvecote Wood was originally 11 acres in size, but in November 2010, 9 acres of adjacent arable field was purchased in order to create new woodland and wildlife habitat, taking the size to 20 acres. Alvecote Wood is supported by the Forestry Commission and is designated by the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust as a Local Wildlife Site and Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

The meeting will run from 09:30 to 4pm or thereabouts

Please email tracy@woodlands.co.uk if you would like to attend, detailed directions will be emailed to attendees nearer the time.

Newport Pagnell, Bucks, 29th May

Ann and Paul are offering a woodland walk and chat on the 29th May. Ann says "We have two pieces of woodland in the immediate area. 10 acres of plantation pine, which we have felled over the past 4 years to reveal deciduous trees and some new planting. It is interesting to see how the ground has reacted to the increase in light. The other is 2.5 acres (a few minutes walk) consisting of old oaks with coppiced hazel and bluebell carpet, occasional stream at edge. This is untouched apart from tidying up the ancient coppice (sadly neglected by past owners)



We do not have a speaker as such but Paul will be on hand to discuss the approach to the Forestry Commission for the Felling licence and to the local council for planning permission for the shed (lodge) that we have recently completed. He has also researched the history of this area of ancient woodland which goes back at least 400 years.

Terrain: suitable for limited mobility to centre of 10acre on a path else rutted and can be very wet. BUT not to the smaller wood (unless 4-wheel drive available) as it is a grassy slope approach which can prove a little steep for some."

Email tracy@woodlands.co.uk if you are interested in coming along.

Other Forthcoming Meetings of Interest

Royal Forestry Society Meetings—January to March 2011

South West Division Wednesday 16 February Dr Joan Webber of Forest Research will update RFS members on the latest in tree diseases at the winter evening meeting of our at Lavender House Hotel, Knowle Hill, Ashburton; 6:00pm for 6:30pm. The AGM and a meal follow the talk. For details, contact local Secretary Rupert Baker: rupert_baker@tiscali.co.uk.

Midlands Division Thursday 17 February, the well-known author Thomas Pakenham will talk on *'Remarkable Trees of the World'* at Kelmars Hall. During the meeting, RFS President, Anthony Bosanquet, will present an additional long-service award to Brian Lewin, to mark his 55 years' service at the Rockingham Estate: an extra 'bar' will be added to the RFS Long Service Medal Brian already holds. Contact Robin Truslove for details of the meeting: robin.truslove@lockhart-garratt.co.uk.

Worcestershire Division Wednesday 2 March, *'Tree Diseases and Continuous Forestry'* by Colin Price from Bangor University. Details from Ted Wilkes: 01905 453 225.

South East Wales Division Tuesday 8 March—an update on plant health at the Castle of Brecon Hotel starting 7pm, notably *Phytophthora* in larch from the Forestry Commission. Contact Gareth Henson: gareth.j.henson@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk.

Oxon-Bucks Division Wednesday 16 March at the Neighbours Hall, Great Milton. Keith Kirby of Natural England will be speaking on *'Twenty-first century forestry – back to biodiversity through production?'* and Nigel Adams, Vice Chairman of the National Hedgelaying Society will talk about *'Hedgerow management'*. For further details contact Tim Shardlow: 01869 340342.

Herefordshire Division Tuesday 22 March hot-pot supper at Hellens Great Barn, Much Marcle, near Ledbury. David Binnion, the founder of Bodenheim Arboretum and Earth Centre, will be talking on *'Creating an arboretum from scratch'*. The cost will be £15 including the £2 cap fee. Contact Chris Johnson: 01531 635069; chrisjohnson@bronwin.freeserve.co.uk.

Woodfuel seminars—Yorkshire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire—3rd, 15th, 17th and 24th February

RFS members in Yorkshire and The Humber are invited to FC seminars near York on 3 and 15 February. See [_](#) or contact: 01904 382317; mailto:rudie.humphrey@forestry.gsi.gov.uk. If you are a little further south, log on to www.heartwoods.co.uk for details of seminars in Warwickshire on 17 February and Staffordshire on 24 February.

Making woodlands pay – Tuesday 22nd March

Will the renewable heat incentive make woods profitable? Chaired by Sir Ben Gill, and held in the brand new Wyre Forest Discovery Centre, Worcestershire, this event on Tuesday 22 March includes presentations, discussions and a demonstration of woodland management techniques. The conference costs just £10 (including lunch and refreshments); booking essential. Please contact the Heartwoods office: 01952 435860; info@heartwoods.co.uk; or visit www.heartwoods.co.uk.

Chilterns Woodland Conference, 11 March

Focusing on *'Restoring ancient woods and woodfuel in the Chilterns'* speakers for this one-day conference include Tim Hodges of the Woodland Trust, Alistair Yeomans of MyForest and Matthew Woodcock, of the Forestry Commission. The event will be held at The Clare Foundation, Saunderton, Bucks. For further details, and to book, contact John Morris: 01844 355503; woodlands@chilternsaonb.org or see www.chilternsaonb.org/events_detail.asp?ID=29501917.



BES annual symposium, 28–30 March

The 2011 annual symposium of the British Ecological Society (BES) takes the theme *'Forests and Global Change'*, and will be held in Cambridge on 28–30 March. This conference will bring together researchers working in both tropical and temperate systems, in an attempt to enhance knowledge-sharing across the biomes. All abstracts are guaranteed to be accepted for either poster or oral presentation. To participate, or to book a place, visit www.britishecologicalsociety.org/2011symp.

News Round-up for SWOG Members

New Factsheets for Teachers and Educators from the RFS

If you are planning to talk about trees and climate change, and are looking for some reliable and eye-catching resources, the Royal Forestry Society (RFS) could provide the answer. The RFS is marking 2011, the International Year of Forestry, with the launch of a suite of free illustrated factsheets which can be used by organisations, speakers and teachers to explain the interactions of woodland management and climate change.

The factsheets cover eight topics:

- the role of trees in regulating our environment
- managing trees for climate change
- sustainable woodland management
- management for wildlife
- woodland management through the ages
- wood for fuel
- wood for building
- sustainable sources



For teachers, there are additional notes highlighting links to the Curriculum Key Stages 1,2 and 3 in Science, Geography and Citizenship. The factsheets can be downloaded from <http://www.rfs.org.uk/learning/climate-change>.

New Forestry Commission Practice Guide: Managing Ancient and Native Woodland in England

This provides a summary of best practice, as well as guidance for people managing ancient and native woodland in England. It builds on the book "Managing Native and Broadleaved Woodland" reviewed on page 6. It can be downloaded free from www.forestry.gov.uk/anwpracticeguide.

DEFRA Business plan 2011-2015

The business plan for DEFRA, covering all aspects but including forestry and wildlife, is downloadable from <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/about/what/documents/defra-businessplan-101108.pdf>

Woodfuel strategy survey

Bruce Richardson is an RFS student member taking an MSc in forestry at Bangor. Please help him by completing the short online survey about whether new woodfuel markets bring undermanaged woodlands back into the fold. The questions actually relate very well to the experience of small woodland owners trying to produce woodfuel for domestic, family, or commercial use. <http://tinyurl.com/woodmansurvey3>.

Extension to deadline for applications to Woodland Management Fund by FC Wales

Following the extended period of adverse weather conditions which turned many Welsh woodlands into icy no-go zones, the WMF application deadline has been extended in Wales. A low of -17°C was recorded in Powys – officially colder than Greenland. The weather meant woodlands were inaccessible and so planned work could not be completed. One claim will be permitted to include all work in any claim year, and this must be submitted by 28 February of that year. Details are at www.forestry.gov.uk/glastirwoodland, and claims forms are also on the main part of the FC website under www.forestry.gov.uk/wales or contact the Technical Services team on 0300 068 0300

New Forestry Task Force Announced

The Forestry Regulation Task Force, announced by the Forestry Minister for England in September 2010, has just published details of its membership and terms of reference. Chaired by Chris Starr, former head of the National School of Forestry, the Task Force will identify the best way to ensure the effective and efficient regulation of the forest and woodland sector, which will involve reviewing all the relevant regulations that govern the management of existing forests and the establishment of new ones, and identifying the impact of regulation on businesses throughout the wood supply chain.

As part of its remit, the Task Force will seek the views of key stakeholders, including the forestry industry, non-governmental

organisations (NGOs) and community representatives. It is scheduled to complete the review process and report back to the Government by the summer of 2011.

Further details are at www.forestry.gov.uk/regulationtaskforce and www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8D8EF3.

Do you want to volunteer as a woodland creation champion?

Woodland Trust are looking for volunteer woodland creation champions to inspire people, provide advice to people planting woodlands, and visit ongoing projects in their area - <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/take-part/volunteering/opportunities/Pages/woodland-creation-champion.aspx>

The Big Tree Plant

“ The Big Tree Plant is an England-wide campaign launched by the **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)** to encourage people and communities to plant more trees in urban and residential areas. The 5 year campaign will encourage local community groups to plant and care for trees in their neighbourhood, particularly in areas that are currently deprived of greenery. There are ways for individuals to get involved, through volunteering at local tree planting events if they exist and if not, to set up new events.”

The Big Tree Plant website is at <http://thebigtreeplant.direct.gov.uk/index.html>

ConservationEvidence.com

A new web site aimed at being a repository of evidence on which to base conservation practice. At present there are a fair number of academic papers, almost all from other countries and climates and relatively little about interventions, but this is likely to change in future. If you are of an academic mind, and wish to justify your practice, this could be a useful site for you.



PTES Grants for Hedgerows for Dormice

The Hedgerows for Dormice project seeks to re-establish hedgerows where they have disappeared and to encourage management to bring hedgerows into good condition for dormice in particular and wildlife in general.

If you are planting a new hedge this winter or rejuvenating an old one, the **Hedgerows for Dormice** team at People’s Trust for Endangered Species **may** be able to help with free plants, canes and spiral guards for planting or stakes and binders for hedge-laying. The **Hedgerows for Dormice Capital Costs Scheme** is available to landowners, land managers and farmers who are planting a hedge which will benefit dormice or other endangered species by providing habitat or improving connectivity, and who agree to manage their hedge in a wildlife-friendly way. See the flyer for further details.

<http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/FREE-HEDGEROW-PLANTS.pdf>



British Wildlife Wiki now online

A new wiki to which anybody can contribute, around the subject of British Wildlife. It is quite a slow web site, and has a lot of adverts, and most of the articles are brief and in progress, but you can contribute your own expertise to this project by editing the articles as they develop.

http://thewwcbritishwildlife.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page

Biomass Web Site

Are you a woodfuel supplier who wants a market for your fuel? If so, registering with Biomass can put you in touch with both other local suppliers, and potential buyers. There is a lot of other information there too, including information about sustainable

heating systems, producing woodfuel, and the relevant standards in the UK and elsewhere.

http://www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk/portal/page?_pageid=77.225275&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

Chilterns Woodland Project

The Chilterns Woodland Project have a number of articles from their newsletter available for download from their web site. These are of potential interest to small woodland owners across the country, not just in the Chilterns, and include articles on bats,



deadwood, wood fuel, woodland nature conservation and woodland restoration.

http://www.chilternsaonb.org/caring/woodlands_project.html

South East Woodlands Archaeology Forum Newsletter

Is now available via the SWOG web site <http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Newsletter2.pdf>—articles are of interest not just to those living in the South East. This one has a useful article on how to research the history of your woodlands.

On the Blogs at woodlands.co.uk...

Ancient Woodland Part 2—by *Chris*

The main risk to ancient woodlands is neglect—read more on the blog

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/ancient-woodland-part-2/#more-2291>

Centre for Alternative Technology by *Angus*

Why a visit to CAT in Machynllyth is worthwhile for woodland owners.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/centre-for-alternative-technology-cat-a-good-visit-for-woody-people/>

Making Sweet Chestnut Flour by *Andy Noble*

How to make sweet chestnut flour, and cook biscuits with it

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wild-food/making-sweet-chestnut-flour/#more-4324>

Simple Steps by *Dan*



How to construct a simple set of steps and make getting around a bit easier in your woodland.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/simple-steps/#more-4316>

Creating Woodland Glades by *Kevin Lerwill*

We know you need to let light into woods and creating glades is one way of doing this - here's how it was done in Lower Orlton Copse

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/creating-woodland-glades/#more-4415>



Save the Mistletoe! By *Lewis*

Why the loss of apple orchards is threatening the mistletoe.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/save-the-mistletoe/#more-4367>

Woodland Trust—a Leopard Changing its Spots by *Angus*

How the Woodland Trust is changing from an acquirer and manager of woodland to a lobbying organisation for

On the Blogs at woodlands.co.uk...(continued)

the planting of trees.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/trees/woodland-trust-a-leopard-changing-its-spots/>

Holly—predicting the weather? *By Chris*

So, can you really tell if it is going to be a hard winter just by looking at holly berries?

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/trees/holly-predicting-the-weather/>

Weather and Climate *by Chris*

What is the British Climate really like, and what will be the impact of the hard winter on wildlife?

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/trees/holly-predicting-the-weather/>



Medlars *by Lewis*

What are these unusual fruit, related to apples, and what can you do with them?

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/medlars/#more-4279>

One Planet Development in Wales *by Chris Colley*

A policy for sustainable development in Wales

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-economics/one-planet-development-in-wales-a-policy-for-low-impact-sustainable-livin/#more-4687>

Making Medlar Cheese *by Angus*

OK, so now we know what Medlars are, but we need a recipe—Angus tells us how to make Medlar cheese.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wild-food/making-medlar-cheese/#more-4546>

BTCV Conservation Volunteers *by Daniel*

Who are they? What do they do? How are they helping

Daniel to create a new woodland in Somerset?

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/btev-conservation-volunteers/#more-4757>



Leaf Fall? *By Nick Lear*

Why do some oaks retain their leaves in winter? Here's a good explanation.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/plants-flowers/leaf-fall/#more-4838>

Invasions and Introductions *by Lewis*

Why were some animals introduced and how do they become naturalised? Or invasive?

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/invasions-and-introductions%E2%80%A6/>

West View Project *by Chris Wise*

How this project found a woodland through woodlands.co.uk, and what they have done since acquiring it.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/community-woodland-use/west-view-project/>



Videos from Woodlandstv.co.uk

Adzing planks with historic adze techniques

Kim Williams is dubbing or adzing some timber planks using an adze, for a reconstruction Anglo Saxon building. Kim is part of the East Sussex Archaeology and Museums Partnership ESAMP

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2010/12/adzing-planks-with-historic-adze-techniques/>

Natural dyes, and dyeing from woodland plants

Jennie James and Rachel Collins are part of East Sussex Archaeology and Museums Partnership ESAMP. Following this fascinating introduction to dyes and dyeing the next programme looks at some of the natural products and the colours they produce.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2010/12/natural-dyes-and-dyeing-from-woodland-plants/>

Woodland plants for dyeing

Alder buckthorn bark, woad and weld can all be used for dyeing. Jennie James from the East Sussex Archaeology and Museums Partnership (ESAMP) shows what these plants look like and the sort of colours they produce.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2010/12/woodlands-plants-for-dyeing/>

Dyeing with madder root plant from woodland

Jennie James from the East Sussex Archaeology and Museums Partnership (ESAMP) shows what these plants look like and discusses how to use them, along with the use of iron pyrites. She also looks at the importance of temperature in dyeing.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2010/12/dyeing-with-madder-plant-root-from-woodland/>

Sustainable fuel from woodland and trees

By managing woodlands to provide fuel and building materials we can create a sustainable environment. Matthew Woodcock from the Forestry Commission illustrates the benefits of wood as a fuel with help from a poster

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2011/01/sustainable-fuel-from-woodland-and-trees/>

Forthcoming Woodfairs from woodfairs.co.uk

Woodfairs in Scotland

Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh

23-26th June 2011

<http://www.royalhighlandshow.org/visitors/tickets>

Tweed Valley Forest Festival

21st to 30th October 2011

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

Woodfairs in Wales

Archery for Woodlands—powerful bows and arrows

Neil Eddiford from Wolfshead Bowman describes the properties that made yew suitable for the long bow, and how often English yew wasn't used at all.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2011/01/archery-for-woodlands-powerful-bows-and-arrows/>

Wolfshead bowmen, woodland archery

A fascinating insight into the activities of one of the UK's



premier re-enactment groups. Demonstrating the use and power of the traditional long bow, they perform at events around the country.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2011/01/wolfshead-bowmen-woodland-archery/>

Rosie's Arch

Building a woven hazel arch for rose-growing.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2011/01/rosies-arch/>

Woodfest Wales

St Asaph, 3rd to 5th June 2011

http://www.woodfestwales.co.uk/north/general_information.php

Woodfairs in England

Capel Manor Gardens, J25 M25

15th-16th April

http://www.capelmanorgardens.co.uk/shows_and_events.asp

Newsletter - February 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

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All other enquiries

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www.swog.org.uk

Small Woodland Owners' Group Forum

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

Docsquid has been coppicing and has planted 700 trees to make a new hedgerow. Work is commencing on their new 9 acre woodland with 2400 trees to be planted in a mixed broad-leaved woodland compartment and a further 1000 trees in a wet woodland.

Tracy has had Butterfly Conservation along to help with coppicing and linking up rides.

Happy bonzo has been snarling at the rain while standing in the mud

Rich has been perfecting a circus trick to get across his new bridge.

John H has been struggling with the weather. "Although not frozen the ground was still quite dry so I felled a few spruce and forwarded them to the mill or logpile. I am falling further behind on our 5 year FC plan and it is looking unlikely that I will have a sufficient area cleared to be able to replant in time to claim the grant. The rain arrived towards the end of the week, so I milled the oak getting some nice 1.25 inch boards. I had forgotten how heavy green oak is. I loaded up the pick up and trailer with logs to

bring back to Essex. I stack them neatly so as to get as many on as possible."

Jillybean has been carving these fantastic spoons!



Solarwood "Had a lovely weekend. Doing some late felling of overstood sweet chestnut, about 8 stools of large stems some that just stayed suspended in other trees and needed a lot of extra coersing to fall. Built a log store for our own wood for home. Tidied the toilet area so guest do not think we are neanderthals when they visit."

Forthcoming Woodfairs (continued) woodfairs.co.uk

Devon County Show

Westpoint, Exeter, 19-21st May

<http://www.devoncountyshow.co.uk/home>

Live Crafts and Festival of Woods

Various dates and venues across SE England.

http://www.hdfairs.co.uk/live_crafts_default.html

Naturefest

Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum, Lewes, East Sussex, 28-30th May

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

Great Yorkshire Show

Harrogate, 12-14th July

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

Festival of the Tree

Westonbirt Arboretum, 26-29th August

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

Stock Gaylard Estate Oak Fair

Sturminster Newton, Devon, 27th August

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

National Forest Woodfair

Beacon Hill Country Park, Leicestershire, 29th August

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

South West Woodland Show

Longleat Estate, Warminster, Wilts, 9th September

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

Wild About Wood

Castle Howard Arboretum, 10th to 11th September

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

Bentley Weald Woodfair

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

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