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### In the Newsletter this Month

Bluebells, lovely bluebells. Your pictures feature strongly this month, as well as a discussion on the SWOG forum about these lovely plants, the real sign of spring.

I report on the creation of Betty's Wood, and on a moth-trapping evening held recently at our woods. Mike Pepler writes about installing off-grid solar as well as reviewing the Lightstorm wind-up torch.

The Log Bog competition has finished, and all winners are featured here, together with an account of how one of them was constructed.

There is a lot of news again for small woodland owners, with updates from the Forestry Commission, an updated version of woodlands.co.uk guide to building a shed in your woods, and keeping the planning authorities on your side. You can also make your views known regarding the Government Red Tape Challenge—a scheme for the public to have their say over which legislation should be rationalized, scrapped or modified. This includes environmental legislation, and SWOG members might find it interesting to look at and comment on existing legislation and in particular which controls should remain or be strengthened.

The bumper programme of SWOG meetings continues, and there is a report of the Knowlands Wood meeting as well as information about forthcoming meetings—please come along and meet like-minded folk. Woodlands.co.uk are also seeking your views on their forthcoming stand at the Festival of the Tree at Westonbirt Arboretum—you are invited to provide articles for sale, or photographs for the Woodlands.co.uk stand.

There is also an updated list of woodfairs, and news from the woodlands.co.uk blogs. *If you would like to write anything for this newsletter, please do! We would love to hear from you, what you are doing in your woods, and also would welcome photographs from all SWOG members.*

Sarah Walters (sarah@swog.org.uk)

### Betty's Wood—our experiences of woodland creation

We have owned Alvecote Wood since 2007. This is an isolated piece of ancient semi-natural woodland just outside Tamworth, an area with very little remaining ancient woodland. Although there is a SSSI across the canal from us, with regenerating birch woodland on a colliery site abandoned in the 1960's, we felt that there was an opportunity to create a much better wildlife corridor by linking our wood to an ancient hedgerow across an arable field, and thence to a country park and other wildlife sites across the M42.



So it was with some surprise that in summer 2010, the farmer who owned the aforementioned arable field, asked us if we would like to buy some land. Now we had found managing 11 acres to be pretty tough with just the two of us, and myself not in the best of health.

Another 9 acres to be tended seemed a bit too daunting, and the first reaction was that we couldn't do it. However we realised it was a "now or never" moment, and with a large gulp, decided to go for it, using money from my late mother's estate, hence the name Betty's Wood.

Various permutations were discussed, but once we established how much we could buy, based on the going rate per acre, then we decided on a square plot linking our woods with another piece of ancient woodland (owned by another farmer), adjoining the canal at the lower end.

After months of frustrating wait for the legals to progress at snail's pace, we were finally proud owners of part of a former wheat field. Fortunately, because we were known to the farmer who was selling, we were able to start the seasonal work that needed to be done, so we had the field sprayed to kill off residual wheat, then cultivated and planted with grass and wildflower mix. The idea of this was to suppress the unwanted weeds, and form the basis of meadows in large clearings.



The aim of the new woodland was to create a place for wildlife, but with the potential for coppice management in future. The field itself had two clear zones: a wet zone, constantly waterlogged, and a normal zone. We therefore planned the two zones differently. In the wet zone we were to plant willow, hazel, alder, poplar, aspen and other wet-tolerant species. In the dry zone, oak, ash, hazel, birch and field maple as the main species,

with small quantities of others including rowan, willow, sweet chestnut, wild cherry, crab apple, and lime. A fence was put in to prevent unwanted intrusion, particularly by people on off-road motorcycles, and along this we planned a hedge of hawthorn, blackthorn, rose, guelder rose, hazel and oak. Among the trees were three large wildflower meadows, themselves with thickets in the centre to provide cover for wildlife. And at the bottom, in the most waterlogged piece of the field, we planned five wildlife ponds.

We already have a woodland management plan for Alvecote Wood with the Forestry Commission, and so the next step was to apply for a Woodland Creation Grant. We really wanted to go-ahead as early in the planting season as possible, because the total number of trees needed to fulfil the density requirements for the grant, was 4500. That is a lot of trees to plant when there are basically two people plus an unknown but relatively small number of volunteers.

Unfortunately it was not to be an easy ride. First of all there were technical discussions as we didn't want to plant on a 2.5m square grid, which is what the FC required, but rather on a different pattern. We planned to have 3m corridors between the trees to allow a vehicle down there for maintenance, but with varying separation along the rows. We also planned some areas of higher density to form coppice, and some areas of lower density to allow single large trees to develop fully. Eventually our plan was approved. However there were further delays with the rural land registry, rural payments agency which meant that Christmas was rapidly approaching and we still hadn't got any trees in the ground. We also needed full planning permission for our ponds: this is charged according to the area of the site, and would have cost thousands for the 9 acres, until we got them to charge us only for the area of the ponds.

Since the FC won't support the creation of hedgerow, we were able to plant this as we were funding this



## Course Directory

### Field Studies Council

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

### Institute of Chartered Foresters

Forthcoming events are on

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

### British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

A large range of courses for woodland owners

For *BTCV Short Courses*

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

For *BTCV long courses*

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

### Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

To see upcoming courses for 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>



ourselves. The local paper were fantastic with publicity and we had an army of volunteers arranged and 750 trees, canes and guards ordered. They arrived on the Thursday, and on Friday we marked up the hedge, so people only had to dig on the marked spots and plant. But on Saturday the ground froze solid – you couldn't break it with a pickaxe. We soon had to abandon our efforts and heel the trees into a newly-rotavated potato patch which hadn't frozen thanks to the warming effects of compost and chicken poo! We had to wait for the long-delayed thaw before getting the trees planted, but this was done before Christmas, and in the meantime we focused on getting our coppice cut done for the year.

January came and went and there was no final approval, without which we weren't allowed to start planting, and the bare-root season was running out. But we finally got approval and ordered our first batch of trees for the last weekend in January, hoping lots of people would turn up to help us.

Lots of people were certainly prepared to help, but then the heavens opened and getting 500 trees in when the weather put so many folk off was impossible – we ended up planting most of them ourselves, with the work spilling over into the following week. Undaunted, we ordered 600 trees for the following weekend, and

despite the dreadful weather, people turned up and we got stuck in and they were all planted in record time.

On subsequent weekends we managed to get in a few hundred trees each time, with the maximum being 800 in each weekend. We didn't have to plant all 4500 – the hedge counted as some of the trees, 450 self-set oak seedlings had been protected by canes and guards in the autumn, and we were also planning to plant about 200 cloned willow sticks from our own coppicing activities and from willows growing on the canal bank (with permission from British Waterways).

The rain continued, and we had to give up on planting the last bit of wet woodland as the ground had turned into a quagmire into which we were sinking while trying to plant, and which was not doing the trees any good, but inspection by the Forestry Commission showed we had done enough to claim the first payment on our grant. Phew!

We had also engaged the help of a local contractor to dig our ponds, and Jeremy Biggs from Pond Conservation came down on yet another wet and windy February day to mark them out and provide advice on siting, shape and depth. Bill did an excellent job in his mini-digger,



creating ponds with variable bank and depth profiles, and linking some of them with drains, so that they could feed each other. Four of the five ponds filled pretty much overnight, and the plan is to allow them to colonise naturally.



The final trees went in during the first weekend in March, in glorious weather. What we didn't know at the time was that was that this would be the last time we had rain here this year. Frozen, soaked and now a drought. Initially, this wasn't a problem, as it took a very long time for the soaked ground to dry out. But dry out it did, and by mid April, some of the trees were looking very sad, particularly those in the wet woodland, used to having wet roots, but now planted in something resembling concrete. We had not thought of having to water 4500 trees, but suddenly we had to go into planning mode for this task. An arrangement with a tank, a bowser, an elderly and wheezy Honda pump picked up at an auction and a hose has meant that so far we have watered the 1200 or so worst affected trees. About 1/3 of the trees are not too bad – the water seems to be able to get up through the subsoil. So we have about another 1500 or more to go before we start going round again. Estimates so far are that 60% of the oaks have died in the worst affected areas, although almost all the other species have survived. In the better 1/3, most of the oaks have survived – about 80%. Ash is proving to be the most tolerant





of species, and we may plant more of this when we come to replace losses next winter.

Aside from the watering issue, we have also had theft. On one occasion a thief cut through the barbed wire, stole a fence post and then helped himself to 21 trees plus canes and guards, pulled out of the ground some way from the fence so we wouldn't notice it. More recently, 8 trees were pulled up with canes and guards: six were taken completely, two were left by the fence, and we hope to revive them if we can. We have had one or two losses to rabbits, but by and large the animal predation has been small, despite two red deer taking up residence for a few days.

The meadows are struggling in the dry weather, but we hope a return to rain will see them thrive. In some areas the grass is growing well, but in others we are

only getting rape (the crop grown two years ago and not covered by the selective herbicide applied last year). The ponds are showing signs of life, with some duckweed, some reeds, and pond grass starting to grow, and three mallard taking up residence on them, or nearby. Yellowhammer are seen feeding on the ground as well as green woodpecker.

People who come round on our open days are amazed that we planted all those trees. The most volunteers we had at once was eight, and some days it was just Stephen and myself left plugging away in the rain. Some people were extraordinarily helpful, though, giving up their Sundays in foul weather to come and help week in and week out. Without them, we would not have Betty's Wood.

Would we do it again. Yes...but! We would definitely not try and plant so many trees in so short a time. Every day is a learning experience, but we hope that in 10 years' time we can look out on Betty's Wood and enjoy it as a woodland, with all the benefits that will bring in the future.



## Off Grid Solar—by Mike Pepler



There are more photos on Mike's Blog at <http://peplers.blogspot.com/2011/04/eco-refubishment-installing-off-grid>.

Our friend Rich came to help us do the work, as he's had past experience doing roofing work. We did a work swap, I helped him in his wood [back in January](#), in return for his help. He also brought a lot of useful kit with him, like this scaffold tower. The process started by removing some tiles to find where the rafters were under the batons, as the brackets needed to screw onto these for strength. Having located these, we decided to grind a slot in the tiles so that they'd fit neatly round the brackets. Then the brackets could be screwed down (with a small wooden spacer underneath to help them fit better): and the tiles slotted back in. Of course,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<http://www.rfs.org.uk/event/2011/05/01/month/all/all/1>

**Bat Conservation Trust**

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



it wasn't all that simple, as soon as you put any weight on the bracket it put pressure onto the tiles at a single point, and some broke...

To resolve this we used more spacers underneath, bent the brackets slightly and also used the grinder to thin the tile a bit at that point, giving more clearance for the bracket. Then it was time to clamp down the panels. Below right is a picture of a clamp one with both panels in and tightened up:

Below left is the finished set, with the solar thermal tubes higher up the roof: Because this is an off-grid system, running at 24V, the panels have to be connected in parallel to an extent, which I zip-tied in place under the panels: Then they all come down in a bundle to connect into a junction box:



Wiring-in started with screwing a waterproof junction box to the wall and then fixing a dual busbar inside it. The next step was to wire in the PV panels. As I was setting this part of the system up at 24V, I wired the panels in pairs, as you can see below, with each PV cable having one wire screwed to the busbar and the other soldered to a wire from the opposite cable. The solder joints are then wrapped in heatshrink and PVC tape, to avoid any accidental short circuits. The wires coming out the right hand side of the junction box take the combined output of all six panels into the house. Before you ask, yes there are seven panels on the roof, but only six wired into the junction box. That's because one of the panels feeds straight into an existing 12V system I have set up which is used for DC supplies to charge small electronic appliances and also to power a night light for our cockatiels!

Anyway, here's the junction box with all the wires neatly bundled up: At the other end of the pair of cables heading off to the right, they disappear into an air vent... only to emerge inside the house, under the stairs. We [had a vent put in](#) by the cavity wall insulation installer, in preparation for this use. Once inside the cables head through a gap in the board on the left, going past the battery: I had bought two batteries second-hand from a friend, but it turns out one of them is dead, so I'll be running the system on 12V rather than 24V. More on that later... While we're looking at the battery, here's some detail on the wiring. There's a pair of wires going to the charge controller, and another pair going straight to an inverter. The little black pods are fuse holders, the rear one's open and you can see the red fuse inside it: Round the other side of that board is a neat little display I found, wired up to a switch so that when the switch is set to "1", it displays the battery voltage.



#### Ben Law

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

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

#### Brighton Permaculture Trust

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

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

#### Losehill Hall

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

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

#### Kingcombe Environmental Studies Centre

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

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



OK, on to the key component in the system - the charge controller, a Morningstar SunSaver MPPT. This performs several key tasks:

It uses a Maximum Power Point Tracker (MPPT) to allow the solar PV panels to operate at the voltage at which they will deliver the most power, and then converts this to whatever voltage the battery requires. This is done dynamically, as the MPP changes according to light levels. The other advantage of this feature is that it can take an input voltage up to 70V, which is why it didn't matter that I'd wired the panels for 24V operation, but then ended up using a 12V battery. In fact, using a higher voltage reduces current losses in the cables, so this is a good thing to do anyway.

It can auto switch to 12V or 24V. So, if I do decide to run a 24V system later on, it will work just fine (though I'd have some other bits of wiring to do on the load side of the system).

- It prevents the battery being over-charged, and actually goes through a 4-stage charging process to ensure that the battery is kept in good health.
- It prevents any loads connected to it from running the battery down so low that it is damaged.
- It includes protection against short circuit and excessive voltage on all of its connections.



With all that, you're probably not surprised to hear it cost as much as two of the 40W solar panels on the roof! The load connections from the charge controller go to a pair of busbars. I'll make a plastic cover for one to prevent short circuits later on, for now it just



has some tape over it to prevent accidents. Connected to the busbars is a 12V socket, like you'd find in a car, and plenty of room to add some more. This means anything you can get a car adaptor for, you can plug in here. For mains appliances I've got a Victron 180W pure sine inverter. Because this can draw more power than the charge controller can handle, it's connected directly to the battery. This isn't a problem, as the inverter also can detect when the battery voltage is too low, and disconnect

itself. I've had this inverter for some time, so it was just a case of screwing it to the wall and plugging it in. I got a pure sine version so it can run all kinds of electronics with no problems. Modified sine inverters are cheap, but won't work with everything... I plan to get a much larger inverter later on, so we can run things like the fridge or freezer for a few days in the event of a power cut.

At the output of the inverter I've plugged in a monitor, to see how many kWh of electricity I've used from the system. My general plan is to use the power when the sun is out, and not when it's dark or cloudy. While this means I'm not getting the maximum amount out of it, it does mean the battery is always full, ready for any power cut that may happen. Finally, the battery is boxed into a small compartment under the stairs,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Includes introduction to renewables on 4<sup>th</sup> May

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

**The Sustainability Centre**

offers lots of courses around the theme of sustainable living. Upcoming courses include Hedgelaying, OCN Sustainable Woodland Management, Build a Treebog, Shingle-making, Herbal Remedies, Eco Film-making and Thatching.

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

with the air vent inside it. This is essential, as charging a battery produces hydrogen, and as we saw in Fukushima, hydrogen mixed with air in confined spaces is not a good idea... Keeping it sealed away with a vent should eliminate any explosion risk.

So, what have I learned from all this? Several things:

- How to use a hydrometer to check if all the cells in a battery are working - and to check second hand batteries before buying them, even from a trusted source (as they may not know they're dead).
- How to do the basics of fitting roof tiles - after the PV was done, I went round the other side of the house and replaced a few low down cracked tiles myself.
- That the ancillary components of an off-grid PV system can cost more than the panels themselves!

It certainly would have been easier to pay someone to fit the system, but doing it myself was much more satisfying (and cheaper). It also meant that I was able to make some decisions as I went along, and as I designed and built the system, I know exactly how to fix it if it goes wrong.

## Nocturnal Visitors—a moth-trapping night with Butterfly Conservation



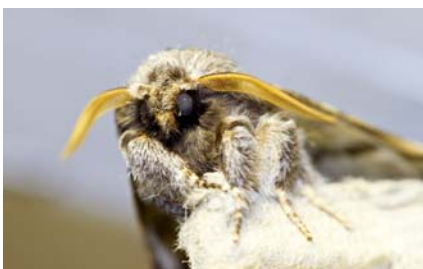
Moths are often seen as the less glamorous cousins of butterflies. The dull, drab, brown creatures with suicidal tendencies that flutter into the lights when we're having a barbecue, or the annoying little creatures that eat our cashmere sweaters.

Although familiar with some of the day-flying moths, many of which are quite as beautiful as butterflies, night-flying moths have been a bit of a closed book to me.

As a long-term enthusiast for butterflies, I was keen to get involved with the oft-neglected other half of the order *Lepidoptera* – indeed, there are many more moth species than butterflies in the UK.

After a visit to Alvecote Wood to advise on improvements in habitat to encourage butterflies, the Warwickshire branch of Butterfly Conservation arranged for a night-time moth-trapping session to attempt to establish a seasonal baseline for the woods, so we can chart the effect of any changes in management.

So it was we found ourselves on a warm, but rapidly-cooling night, walking around the wood with torches, moth traps, generators, lamps and cameras to see just what we had. And we were very lucky indeed in having Alan and Val, two extremely knowledgeable moth experts to do this survey, as well as Keith and Heather from Butterfly Conservation Warwickshire.



Three traps were quickly sited in three areas of woodland, selected to provide different habitats and therefore hopefully to get a wide range of moth species. Then we settled down to a cup of tea, thoughtfully provided by Val, and a biscuit and chat, listening to the first bats come out to



Woodcraft School have published their timetable for woodcraft and bushcraft courses

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

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

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

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

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

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

Shift Bristol are running a year long practical sustainability course as well as a seasonal programme of workshops. See <http://www.shiftbristol.org.uk/index.html> for further details.



play, before heading off for the first count.

Moths – nocturnal and drab? Not a bit of it. Some of the tiny little moths were quite restrained in their colouring, but even they had a delicate beauty. And there were some large and spectacular moths too, some with amazing names. Common Quaker, Angle Shades, Purple Thorn, Lunar Marbled Brown, Hebrew Character, Lesser Swallow Prominent, White Ermine and many more.

We learned a fantastic amount about moths from a real expert, as we were doing the rounds of the traps. We did

not know, for example, that moths come out at a certain time after dark. Some species are always the first to be caught, others come out later, so you need to keep looking until these later species appear – in our case we were looking for the Brindled Beauty. When she appears, we can pack up and go home, knowing that no more species will appear that night.

What was also impressive was the perfection of the camouflage that some moths have developed. Many of us know about moths such as the buff-tip which looks like a broken twig, but some of the really beautifully-coloured moths are less easy to envisage. However if, like Alan, you know where they roost, you can then see how they disappear into the background. The Lesser Swallow Prominent (the first picture on the previous page), for example, sits on birch bark. Quite vivid in the trap, you would not see it at all on a silver birch trunk.

And so it was, as time went on, different species began to emerge and appear in the traps, and we drank more tea and ate more biscuits. We had contacted the police in advance to warn them that there might be lights in the wood (in case they decided we were poachers). However we hadn't told the Parish Council, and as one Councillor was driving past and noticed the lights, she kindly phoned us to warn us that somebody was at the Woods. It is reassuring that folks are looking after the place for us.

Despite the tropical daytime temperatures, the night-time was cold, and the log-burner provided us with some warmth in between forays to the traps until finally, at just after 3am, the Brindled Beauty put in an appearance, and Alan and Val could pack up and go home, and we could climb into our sleeping bags and try to warm up and get some sleep.

I found the whole thing fascinating, particularly to watch an expert at work. Moths all have a four digit number code, and Alan knows every one of these codes. Many are remarkably similar, with only tiny differences between species, and to have someone at hand to point these differences out is a learning experience not to be missed.

We have already scheduled another session in July to catch the summer moths. 33 species were recorded on our site, which is very good for April. Predictions are that over the course of the year we may get up to 200 species of moth. Let's hope so! Please see *Butterfly Conservation's* web site for more information <http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/>



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

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

Courses in forthcoming months include mammal identification, 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/>

**Forest Garden Shovel-strode**

Practical woodland courses and yurt camping starting in May 2011. More information on Page 18 of this newsletter and on the web site at

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



## Lightstorm Torch Review



*Mike Pepler reviews this torch with technology designed not to let you down in an emergency. More information including a video review are available on his blog at <http://peplers.blogspot.com/p/lightstorm-cl1-wind-up-torch.html>. He also has some available for sale.*

Wind-up torches are great, as you'll never be without light and don't need to buy any batteries. However, most wind-up torches use small rechargeable batteries, either

NiMH or lithium based. While these have good energy storage capacity, they need to be kept topped up - if you forget to wind your torch for a few months, perhaps while it's sat in the car glove box, then the battery can be permanently damaged, leaving you needing a new torch. Even if you do keep winding it, after a few hundred charge/discharge cycles, the battery will be worn out anyway, once again leaving you needing a new torch, as the internal battery is not easy to replace - I know, as I've tried!

### Ultra-capacitor technology

Rather than using a rechargeable battery, it stores the energy generated when you wind it in a an [ultra-capacitor](#). This is not damaged by being left empty, so you can just wind the torch when you need some light, and it can also be charged over 100,000 times, perhaps even a lot more than that! It's also very quick to charge, with two minutes of winding giving you up to 20 minutes of light.

### Efficient LED lighting

The LightStorm CL1 actually has three LEDs in it. The main Quasar LED is rated at 0.5W (105,000 mcad) and is used like a spot-light. The other two LEDs output 15,000 mcad, and create a wider beam for flood-lighting an area.

### Mobile phone charging

The LightStorm CL1 also has a built-in power socket and comes with a charging cable and Mini USB connector which is suitable for charging various mobile phones as well as MP3 players. Other mobile phone connectors are also available separately.

### Uses for the LightStorm CL1

Home, Vehicle and Work Emergency Kits

Backpacking and Hiking

General utility work

### Special features

2 light settings: Spotlight and Floodlight

Built-in power connector for charging MP3 players and mobile phones

Durable and water resistant construction

ABS housing will withstand diesel fuel and motor oil



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>

### AJS Crafts—Coppice Week

Offer a wide range of courses covering many different woodland-related crafts

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

There is also a wide-ranging programme available during the Surrey and Sussex Coppice Group Coppice Week 17-22nd May

### Technical specifications

Quasar 1/2 watt (105,000 mcad) LED will spot illuminate a 3m (9ft) diameter area at a distance of 26m (80ft).

2 StarCore® (15,000 mcad) LEDs will flood illuminate a 4m (12ft) diameter area at a distance of 6m (20ft).

- Spotlight duration on a full charge: 15 minutes
- Floodlight duration on full charge: 20 minutes
- Two minutes of winding fully charges the ultra-capacitor power cell
- Ultra-capacitor can be recharged over 100,000 times
- Storage/operation temp: -40C to 60C (-40F to 140F)
- Length: 15cm (6")
- Width: 5cm (2")
- Height: 4.4cm (1.8")
- Weight: 207g (7.4oz)
- Color: slate grey housing with red front bezel

## Bluebells, lovely bluebells

Bluebells are at their best everywhere at the moment, and my impression is that this year has been a bumper year for them. Here are a few photos from SWOG members of bluebells in their wood. If any of you have any bluebell photos, or any other photos, please send them to us!

First of all, from Mike Pepler



Then from jillybean—what a stunning carpet of bluebells she has!



### Biocensus

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

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

**Moelyci Environmental Training Centre** offer a wide variety of courses of interest to woodland owners, including courses on habitat surveying, woodland management and beekeeping. See <http://www.moelyci.org> for further information.

**Lawrence Weston Community Farm** in Bristol is offering a Level 3 Forest School leader Course. See <http://www.lwfarm.org.uk/> for more information.

The Green Light Trust are also offering two upcoming Level 3 Forest School Leader courses. See <http://www.greenlighttrust.org/> for more information.

**Cranfield University** are having an Environmental Open Day on May 11th. See <http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/students/openday/page2312.html?cid=promobutton> for more information.

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





Absolutely beautiful bluebells from jillybean's wood

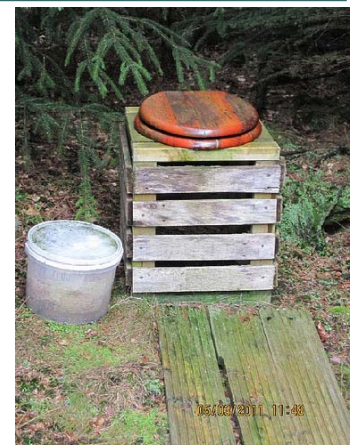
And finally some close-ups from Alvecote Wood by Sarah Walters



## The Log Bog Competition—photos of winning loos!

There were three entries to this competition, and all were so good, and so inventive, that they were all declared winners. Here are pictures of all the winning loos, together with a full account of how to build Log Bog Number 3 in your own wood.

Log Bog Number 1, pictured right, was made by Jill, evidently using some pieces of old pallet, a tasteful wooden seat, and some flooring of old decking boards. We are assured that this loo features no nasty niffs. The sawdust probably helps.







The next entry was from Bernie and Theresa—alfresco and no need to flush when raining. Comes complete with solar lighting.

And the rather palatial entry number 3 was from Richard and Fiona. They tell us how they made it “The toilet is made out of Sweet Chestnut for anything in contact with the ground and Birch and Hazel for the rest. We cleared an area for it and used what we cleared to build it. So the materials are about as local as you can get. Toilet seat and plywood for its enclosure were from a bit of skip diving as was the dustbin. What dustbin I hear you say? Underneath the box is a bottomless dustbin in the toilet hole... this is there because we’re on such sandy soil that we wanted to prevent a soil collapse. When full we can move the hole within the enclosure by sliding out the dustbin and digging a new

hole within the enclosure for it. That’s the theory anyway... how easy it is to slide out remains to be seen! The only bought materials were a few turbo coach bolts [Screwfix], some varnish for the box and a few screws. Some of the walls are left to give a bit of texture The only bought materials were a few turbo coach bolts [Screwfix], some varnish for the box and a few screws. Some of the walls are left to give a bit of texture .The roof has an old tarp so that we can collect the rainwater and is then thatched with the brush left over from the construction to camouflage and prettify it. Any other left over brush had been dead hedged to form the ‘Toilet compound’ This area has now been planted with Willows for basket making and to make use of the excess nutrients. It’s been in use for 9 months now and so far no smells.



*All three entrants won an Amazon voucher for £10. Even if you are too late for the competition, if you’ve built a log bog and would like to share the design, please let us know!*

## News for Small Woodland Owners

### From the Forestry Commission Publications Update

The Forestry Commission have a number of new publications available including the latest set of Forestry Facts and Figures for 2010, which makes for an interesting read. New planting has continued its downward trend, but production of wood is trending upwards, and is forecast to continue to rise. Woodland specialist birds show an increase, which is good news. Employment in forestry is falling, and the UK lags behind the EU average in growth of forest area. The UK remains a high net importer of wood, along with Japan and China, but imports fell in 2009. The full report can be seen at [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/PDF/fcfs210.pdf/\\$FILE/fcfs210.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/PDF/fcfs210.pdf/$FILE/fcfs210.pdf)

If you want regular updates to available publications, FC Pubs is also on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/#!/fcpubs>

### *Phytophthora ramorum* Update

An update to the guidance on *Phytophthora ramorum* has been published on 13th April. The full guidance note can be found at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8EJKP4>

### iPhone/iPad app

The Forestry Commission has launched an iPhone/iPad app to help people find, navigate around, and enjoy the public forest estate. There is also a nifty guide to identification of trees.

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

### Ancient Woodland Practice Guide

The Ancient Woodland Practice Guide at [www.forestry.gov.uk/anwpracticeguide](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/anwpracticeguide) is now in force, and being applied to EWGS applications. This consolidates previous advice on management and is absolutely essential reading should you be thinking of writing a woodland management plan or applying for an FC grant for management of your ancient woodland.

### Supervision of Agents

The Forestry Commission have noted in their latest Grants and Regulations Bulletin “Recently, we have received some WIG applications with what can only be described as ‘ambitious’ amounts of supervision time contained in them. Please be reminded that in most cases up to 10% of the cost of the work can be included as supervision at the discretion of the FC. In sensitive woodlands such as SSSIs, supervision costs above this norm can be agreed where justified.”



### Coed Lleol seeks Woodland Health Activities Leaders

Are you a health professional, sports instructor or nutritionist with an interest in taking your practice outdoors? Or maybe you already work in woodlands and would like to work with people with a range of physical and mental health issues? If so please get in touch with us, tell us who you are and what you do.

Coed Lleol coordinates Aber Active Woods a programme of woodland health and wellbeing activities in and around Aberystwyth as a place for health and wellbeing. We are planning a series of ten-week programmes that aims to get people active in the outdoors in the woods and we are looking for people to help us to deliver these activities.

We can offer £750 for the planning and delivery of ten sessions, and we will give you tailored training as well as support with planning and evaluation. Each session will involve approximately 2-3 hours delivery time plus preparation time. Activities will take place for 10 weeks between May and Sept 2011. This position is subject to advanced CRB check. We would welcome applications from individuals, secondments or partnership proposals with other organisations.

We are also interested in finding volunteers with an interest in working alongside us to deliver these activities and expand their skills in this area of work.



To apply please send a covering letter outlining your interest in this opportunity and any relevant experience along with a current CV. Applications by email or post by 5pm Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May to:

Zena Wilmot, Coed Lleol, Unit 6 Dyfi Eco Parc, Machynlleth, Powys, SY20 8AX  
Tel: 0845 4560342 Email: [zenawilmot@smallwoods.org.uk](mailto:zenawilmot@smallwoods.org.uk) Web  
[www.coedlleol.org.uk](http://www.coedlleol.org.uk)

### Best Habitats Web Site Launched

The new Best Habitats company website has gone live. Duncan and Bridgette are two SWOG members and this web site launches their new career in a new direction of wildlife conservation projects - from policy level through woodlands, farms and estates, to garden scale. It is all explained on the website, which includes a short video, so please do have a quick look ...

[www.besthabitats.com](http://www.besthabitats.com)



There are also free A4 download fact sheet on wildlife gardening (click Services/Gardens)

If any SWOG members have with an interest in wildlife conservation, or active in farming, woodland or estate management then this web site is definitely worth a look.

### Updated Guidance on Sheds and Planning from Woodlands.co.uk

So you want a shed in your woods? How to do this without falling foul of the planning authorities. Updated guidance and an illustrated leaflet is now available on woodlands.co.uk

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/owning-a-wood/sheds/sheds-leaflet.pdf>

### West Weald Landscape Project

The latest newsletter from the West Weald Landscape Project newsletter from Sussex Wildlife Trust is now available to read online <http://www.swog.org.uk/news/west-weald-landscape-project/>

### Environment Laws and the Red Tape Challenge

The majority of existing environmental legislation including that relating to habitats (such as SSSI), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and various elements of planning as they apply to woodlands and other wildlife habitats are up for review under the Red Tape Challenge. Review does not mean they are all going to be scrapped, but you may want to have your say about this legislation to ensure that amendment or consolidation does not result in adverse changes for you or your woodland. See <http://www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/environment/>

### UK's carbon plan

The Government's Carbon Plan was published in draft form in March. This plan sets out strict actions and deadlines for Whitehall departments to cut the carbon emissions within their remit. The final version of the plan will be published in the autumn, and it will be updated annually. To read the draft plan, have a look on [www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what\\_we\\_do/lc\\_uk/carbon\\_plan/carbon\\_plan.aspx](http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/lc_uk/carbon_plan/carbon_plan.aspx).

### International Year of Forests 2011 Communicators Pack

A communication pack has been launched to help engage the public in forest-related activities. This includes videos, posters, banners, suggested activities. It is downloadable from <http://foris.fao.org/preview/68425/en>

### Buglife Oil Beetle Survey

The charity Buglife are co-ordinating a survey to ensure protection for the UK's four species of oil beetle. These beetles thrive on wildflower-rich grassland, but since many of us have patches of grassland in, or adjacent to our woodlands, this may be of interest to SWOG members. Go to [www.buglife.org.uk/getinvolved/surveys/Oil+Beetle+Hunt/Oil+Beetle+Hunt+-+How+to+take+part.htm](http://www.buglife.org.uk/getinvolved/surveys/Oil+Beetle+Hunt/Oil+Beetle+Hunt+-+How+to+take+part.htm), for more information.



### Hedgerow Harvest – grants for Tree Council members

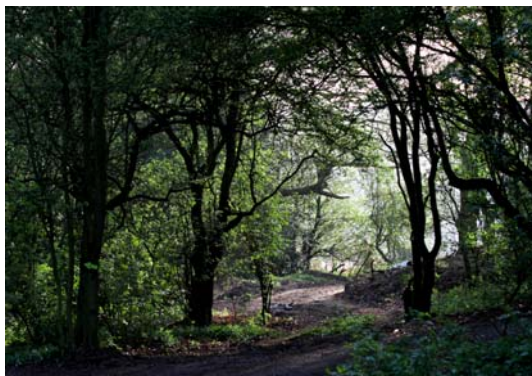
Hedgerow Harvest is a new project managed by the Tree Council. The project aims to promote the use of hedgerow produce by providing advice and guidance on what to plant and how best to use the harvest. 'Hedge packs' and grants for planting demonstration hedges are now available for Tree Council members in the South of England. See [www.hedgerowharvest.org.uk](http://www.hedgerowharvest.org.uk).



## Forthcoming SWOG Meetings

### Alvecote Wood, North Warwickshire, 8<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk) if you would like to attend, detailed directions will be emailed to attendees nearer the time.



### Newport Pagnell, Bucks, 29<sup>th</sup> 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

### Biocensus

Biocensus run courses of interest to woodland owners at their centre in Gloucestershire and will shortly be running courses in the Lake District. Include badger ecology, Phase 1 habitat survey, wildlife and the law and identifying common grassland plants.

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

### Ignite Woodfuel Courses

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

Courses include coppicing, tree identification and tree planting  
<http://shop.btcv.org.uk/shop/level3/536/level>

### Alvecote Wood, North Warwickshire

An expanded programme of events during 2011 including Introduction to Photography Workshops, SWOG meeting, Introductory Woodland Management Course and a Nordic Walking Workshop

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

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.”

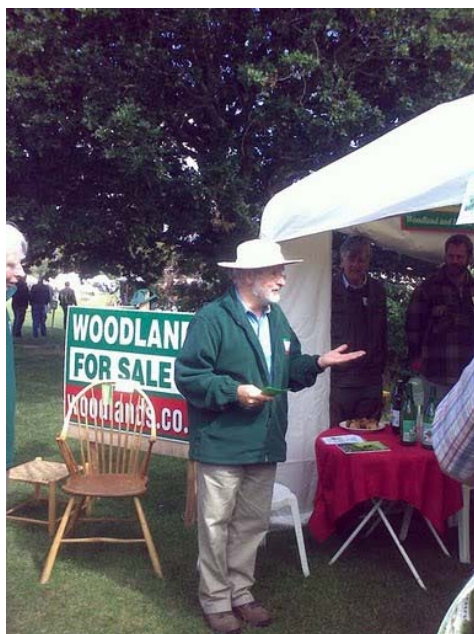
Email [tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:tracy@woodlands.co.uk) if you are interested in coming along.

### Dolgellau, Sunday 19th June

Stephen and Jane are offering to host a day in their woodland in Gwynnedd. Looks very interesting! Topics include enjoying woodland on a steep terrain and camping. Coed Glyndwr consists of mixed coniferous and deciduous trees. The total area is about fifteen acres. It lies on a North facing slope and offers spectacular views over the river Mawddach towards the Rhinog mountains. In many places the ground is steep and slippery, although there are parts which are virtually level, and some good tracks. There are other woodlands immediately adjacent to it. It is the largest woodland in the associated group. Unsuitable for those with limited mobility and dogs are allowed. Please email [Tracy@woodlands.co.uk](mailto:Tracy@woodlands.co.uk) if you would like to know more or to book your place



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



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

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

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

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

and loads of information leaflets and bits and bobs to give away. We would love your involvement with the woodfair, so please be in touch if you would like to have any of your photos on display or if you have anything small you might like to sell. (like homemade jams, cupcakes, charcoal, things you made out of wood). If you do bring something please make sure you are able to collect it if it doesn't sell and preferably the money if it does before the end of the show!

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



## SWOG April Meeting Knowlands Wood

Many thanks to Nick and Harriet for opening their stunning woodland in Barcombe to SWOG members. Nick has been managing it for wildlife for over 30 years and it truly is an amazing and diverse haven for birds, butterflies and many other woodland creatures, including ourselves on this wonderful spring day!

The wood is 75 acres of very diverse habitat, Nick puts his success down to coppicing every year, this way he always has regrowth at different stages, offering the widest possible niches for wildlife. The most productive being the first 7 or 8 years after cutting. He also has the space to put in large 20 metre rides and leave open annually mowed glades. These have helped transform the wood from a dark full canopy to an open, light and vibrant woodland.



Unsurprisingly the species of tree which help create this habitat is also quite wide and varied. Nick was kind enough to organise a quiz to see how many we could identify, he marked these 'mystery' trees with letters and gave us a list of possibles to match them up. Some were easy, others not so easy. There are lots more pictures of the day on <http://www.swog.org.uk/news/swog-meet-knowlands-wood/#more-1591>



This really was a very special visit, not only as it is such a fantastic haven for wildlife, but to be there at this time of year, just as everything is coming to life was such a joy.

If you weren't able to get there, turn your volume up and spend a minute listening to the sounds of Knowlands Wood in spring.

<http://www.swog.org.uk/news/swog-meet-knowlands-wood/attachment/voice0035/>

Many thanks once again to Nick and Harriet for hosting the meeting and making us feel so welcome.

## Kent Woodfuel Project Day



Tracy recently attended the Kent Woodfuel Project day and has provided a report for the SWOG web site. This was the launch of a new project to get woodfuel in Kent motoring along! It was a fabulous day, mostly because we went along to the [Torry Hill Farm](http://www.torryhill.co.uk/) (<http://www.torryhill.co.uk/>) to see all the brilliant work going on there. The meeting part in the morning was all interesting too, but actually seeing some of the work in action makes it more meaningful. Produce is made from every part of the tree, even the branches are used as faggots to strengthen river banks.

The story is best illustrated by the many photos on the

SWOG web site, so please see the full set of photos for details of this wonderful day.

<http://www.swog.org.uk/news/kent-woodfuel-project/>





## Win a free Wilderness Weekend Course



Win a FREE Wilderness Weekend Course, 11/12 June, Devon from Landrock Training at <http://www.landrock-training.com/> Enter your name and email address on the Contact page of the website to enter. Winner will be drawn on Wed 25 May 11 and will be notified by email.



## Forest Garden Shovelstrode Courses and Camping 2011



Yurt camping and woodland craft courses such as green wood working, basketry, hurdle making and bee keeping are all available at a new business enterprise called Forest Garden Shovelstrode, located in the High Weald of Sussex. The setting is based around 6 acres including an ancient woodland and a vacant paddock that has been recultivated into the early stages of a Forest Garden with a newly created wildlife pond. Forest Garden Shovelstrode is a place for people to come and learn the principles of Permaculture demonstrated in the Forest Garden and also a range of woodland craft. A shop will sell products such as honey, eggs, green wooding tools and locally produced crafts.

Charles Hooper and Lisa Aitken have worked on a plan since 2009, searching for ways to live more self sufficiently

and sustainably from a small area of land. Forest Garden Shovelstrode sets out to inspire others in a similar way. With the help of a European grant, work began in earnest in September 2010, with renovations made to stables creating a kitchen, farm shop, shower and WC facilities, a new parking area and a new storage barn was erected. Now with Spring arriving, they plan to welcome visitors for camping from the Easter weekend, Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April with courses beginning in June.

2 yurts are available for hire, the first being a traditional Mongolian style with painted wooden poles, the other is a locally produced hand crafted yurt made of coppiced wood. The yurts are both located in the woodland in a peaceful environment. The yurts are both fully equipped with a log burning stove and many creature comforts to create a truly wonderful camping experience. Glamping at its best!

Courses begin in May:-

Saturday 14th May – Intro to Vegetable Gardening  
 Sunday 22nd May – Intro to Bee Keeping  
 Saturday 11th June – Basket Willow Weaving  
 Thursday 16th/Friday 17th June – Green woodworking  
 Friday 15th July – Hurdle making  
 Sunday 17th July – Children's Green woodworking  
 Friday 22nd July – Flintknapping  
 Saturday 20th August- Beeswax Products

Further courses take place right up until October. Full information and details can be found on the website [www.forestgarden.info](http://www.forestgarden.info)



## Courses at Kingcombe Centre and Greenwood Centre from Robin Walter

Robin Walter is teaching some courses this year at Kingcombe Centre in Dorset and the Green Wood Centre in Shropshire.

### Kingcombe Centre:

#### 25th to 26th April - **Woodland Management**

We will consider British woodland in an historical and contemporary context and show how through effective management it can play a central role in the countryside of the future. Includes visits to ancient woods and other sites.

See: <https://www.kingcombe.org/courses/Details/263>

### The Green Wood Centre

#### 7th to 8th May - **Woodland Management**

We will consider British woodland in an historical and contemporary context and show how through effective management it can play a central role in the countryside of the future. Includes visits to ancient woods and other sites.

See: <http://www.acreswildwoodlands.co.uk/courses/course.shtml?c=AW001>

#### 3rd to 4th September - **Trees for Transition**

Focusing on how trees are incredibly useful for fuel, building materials, food, agro-forestry, shelter, carbon management, health & wellbeing and community initiatives, we will explore the important role trees and woods can play in the transition to a sustainable low-carbon future.

See: <http://www.acreswildwoodlands.co.uk/courses/course.shtml?c=AW011>

See Robin's website for a flavour of the courses: [www.trees-for-transition.co.uk](http://www.trees-for-transition.co.uk)



## On the blogs at woodlands.co.uk

### **Centre for Alternative Technology – Practical Woodland Courses by Angus**

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/the-centre-for-alternative-technology-practical-woodland-courses/#more-5338>

Angus talks us through what courses at CAT have to offer the woodland owner.

### **Woodland Shelter Build by Mike, Alex and Mark**

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

[woodland-shelter-build/#more-5742](#)

A design for a simple woodland shelter

### **Phytophthora ramorum by Rob Starbuck**

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/trees/phytophthora-ramorum-%E2%80%93-a-parasitic-fungus-to-look-out-for/>

Keep informed about the latest on this pathogen that threatens larch and oak trees.

### **Woodland burials on a grand scale by Dick**

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/woodland-burials-on-a-grand-scale/>

A great account of a large-scale woodland cemetery in Sweden

### **The National Forest by Chris**

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/the-national-forest/>

We may have heard about it, but where and what is the National Forest?

### **Woody tissues: Bark—by Chris**

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/plants-flowers/woody-tissues-bark/#more-5839>

We see it all the time, but how much do we know about bark?



## 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

**Woodfest Wales**

St Asaph, 28th to 30th May 2011

*Please note these are NEW dates—it is NOT in June as previously listed.*

[http://www.woodfestwales.co.uk/north/general\\_information.php](http://www.woodfestwales.co.uk/north/general_information.php)

### Woodfairs in England

**Weird and Wonderful Wood**

Haughley Park, Wetherden, Nr Stowmarket, IP14 3JY, 14th and 15th May

<http://www.weirdandwonderfulwood.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](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/>

**South Downs Woodfair**

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

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

**Great Yorkshire Show**

Harrogate, 12-14th July

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

**The Arb and Forestry Event**

15th and 16th July 2011, Shipborne, Kent

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

**Festival of the Tree**

Westonbirt Arboretum, 26-29th August

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

**Stock Gaylard Estate Oak Fair**

Sturminster Newton, Devon, 27th August

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

**National Forest Woodfair**

Beacon Hill Country Park, Leicestershire, 29th August

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

**Woodworks**

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

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

**South West Woodland Show**

Longleat Estate, Warminster, Wilts, 9th September

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

**Wild About Wood**

Castle Howard Arboretum, 10th to 11th September

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

**Bentley Weald Woodfair**

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

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

**Lincolnshire Firewood fair and auction**

Revesby Estate, Lincolnshire, 18th September 2011

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

**Cranborne Chase Woodfair**

8th-9th October, Larmer Tree Gardens

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

**Ickworth House, Suffolk**

8th and 9th October

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



## Newsletter - May 2011

### About SWOG

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

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

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

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

We've welcomed a few new members this month including **the village idiot** (although I'm sure he's not!) and **Clare Rosalind**. **The village idiot** reports a mission full of peril, trying to locate unmanaged coppice and propose to manage it for owners in return for the timber.

There has been some debate over the proposed review and possible scrapping of some environment legislation. **Woodlander** advises us to read carefully before signing any petitions and **wrekin** advises us to see the official web site for what is actually be proposed—there is a link to the official consultation on page 14 of this newsletter.

The legality, or otherwise, of digging up bluebells from the wild is also discussed, with

specific reference to exchanging them for other things. **Stephen1** provides some clarity—you can dig them up, but not sell them, and barter might be considered as a form of sale. **Exeldama** joined in the debate about how readily bluebells can spread, and the difference between gardens, where there is a lot of light, and woods, where there isn't. Clearly the ecology of bluebells is complex and interesting, and this thread is definitely worth a read. **HCR** ends up with a recommendation as to where to get bluebell bulbs if you want them, but don't have them, in your wood.

*Please visit the forum and tell us what you've been doing this month, and take part in the discussions and debates there.*



## New web site—Firewood.co.uk

Last month we reported that Woodlands.co.uk have launched a new web site—firewood.co.uk. Below is a taster of what you will find on there. Please drop in and take a look.

If you want to learn why you should burn wood, how to grow, cut, store, sell or buy firewood, then this is the place to go. There are photographs, videos and lots more information and it is definitely worth a read. *Photos by Mike Pepler*

