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### In the Newsletter this Month

Late summer, and in the drought, everything is already starting to look autumnal, and the buzz of combine harvesters is heard in the fields next to our wood. We hear again this month from Willoughby Wood and their new woodland, the costs of equipment and problems with drought. A study of failure due to drought is summarized here too, from Alvecote Wood.

A supply of clean water can be a problem in woods, but Craig tells us how he developed a rain water filtration system supplying water for washing and washing-up.

There is a review of a new book on woodland management for butterflies and moths, as well as news of a special half-price offer on this publication. An analysis of the newly-announced draft National Planning Policy Framework is also presented—this could affect you, so have your say.

Phil Hopkinson, of Malvern Coppicing, has secured funding to train three skilled coppice workers—find out more in his article about how you can get involved.

The badger cull in England looks likely to go ahead, initially in two pilot areas. Woodland owners in these areas may soon be asked for permission to cull on their land. A consultation is underway at present on how this might be managed—please have your say.

A series on the woodlands.co.uk blogs on becoming a hunter-gatherer, and only eating meat you can forage or hunt, is not for the squeamish, but very interesting. Although the SWOG meetings programme is winding down, **there is still a fantastic event in Ayrshire in October**, and lots of other events of great interest to woodland owners. If you are interested in our own woodland management course, with an emphasis on management for wildlife, there are details here too.

Have a lovely summer in your woods! If you're stuck for things to do, there are some ideas in the newsletter too as well as pointers to sites where you can get even more ideas.

Sarah Walters ([sarah@swog.org.uk](mailto:sarah@swog.org.uk))

### Word from Willoughby Wood—Nurturing and Useful Contacts

*News from Dorothy and Robert Mansfield of developments at Willoughby Wood*

Local wood fairs can be a source of excellent local information and useful contacts in the surrounding area. It was at one of these that we met a firm installing solar panels for hot water. Now it is fair to say that the two of us did not necessarily agree on whether we wanted to use the sun to produce electricity or heat the water, and as they are from two different systems it would be useful if we could at least sort out what we wanted. In this instance the male of the species won the argument, but not for long as you will discover.

We had a quote for a system heating the water. Further investigation and checking the credentials of a firm we had never heard of became quite important, even if they had manned a stall at the wood fair. I felt overwhelmed by statistics and detail so we invited them back to discuss further the proposed plans, sadly one of us was held up and so the meeting went ahead minus the unsure member of the household. Further details were given, but it seemed a lot of money for what? A third meeting was arranged with a very patient founder of the company and at that point with both of us present, we decided to go ahead with solar panels. Now we enjoy free hot showers instead of having to use the electric shower.

I had been keen to use the power of the sun to produce electricity, so now we have photovoltaic panels installed as well. Females can still work their charms! On a serious note, there were no arguments, it was just that we each had different ideas as to which system was better, but after much discussion we agreed that to have both was what would best suit our needs. As I write in the late evening we are safe in the knowledge that electricity is being produced and there is plenty of hot water for tomorrow's needs. Without the visit to the wood fair we may still have been dithering and I guess we do not dither well.



In a previous piece I had discussed the cost of managing the new woodland. It was recommended that each tree should have a sprayed circle around to facilitate the maximum benefit to the saplings. I had watched as two men, one on a quad bike the other with the equipment had done the job for us last year. As we paid the bill we thought that it was a job which we could tackle, although we had neither sprayer nor quad bike, but one of us had a certificate of competence at using spraying equipment. This was the only good thing to come from a job in industry many years ago.

Creative thinking was needed. The cost of the 90 litre tank amounted to about two thirds of the cost of one treatment. We priced up the ingredients and decided that economically it might prove a saving in the long run. BUT we did not own a quad bike, however we do possess a ride-on mower and small trailer designed to be pulled behind it. Next we needed a battery to power the sprayer, but the battery on the mower did not seem to want to work, so we used a free standing one in the trailer and that was fine. Incidentally the battery was free from a local garage and has plenty of power for small scale needs. You don't know what you can beg until you ask.

Having set up the equipment, now we needed fine weather for a few hours and only very light winds. All 4,500 trees were successfully treated at the weekend, but one of the greatest challenges at first was finding a successful way of knowing which trees had been tackled. In the end we found it easiest to drive up and down the rows. That way we could identify where we had been and the linear approach was easier to handle.

The very dry spring is a cause for concern. These young trees are now experiencing wind-burn as they emerge from the tops of the tubes to the drying winds. They have already in had the longest coldest winter for 50 years and a significant period without rainfall.

One of the delights of surveying every inch of ground was that we found two patches of common orchids (pictured above) which we were previously unaware of. These have been identified so that any woodland and grass management will be done to enhance these

areas. The grassland is poor with patches of white and some red clover. It was delightful to see small blue and some small brown butterflies enjoying the summer weather. They were like jewels in the sun.

Another exciting environmental discovery was the emergence of six goslings from the two pairs of Canada geese. One pair produced nothing after the nest was destroyed by foxes. All four adults are



## Course Directory

### Field Studies Council

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

### Institute of Chartered Foresters

Forthcoming events are on

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

### British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

A large range of courses for woodland owners

For *BTCV Short Courses*

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

For *BTCV long courses*

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

### Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

To see upcoming courses for 2011 visit

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

### Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

To see courses for the coming year visit

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

### LILI Courses

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

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

### Wildlife Trusts

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

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

protective towards the rapidly growing young.

In some areas they are considered to be a nuisance and from the original pair introduced into the village about 20 years ago we have witnessed a huge increase in numbers in some years.

Finally the Exmoor pony, June, unexpectedly produced a charming foal, Jemima, much earlier than anticipated, although the precise service date was unknown as she had been running with the herd. All was well and calm for the first couple of days but when they were stabled for the night, one of us had not closed the gate on to the lane! It was at that point that we discovered how fast a 48hour old foal can gallop.



June and Jemima and their more docile companion decided to test the village boundaries and were only deterred by fences, hedges and ditches. It was no use chasing them, but keeping up with them as it was getting dark was a huge problem. Eventually they were brought nearer home to the woodland paddock where they stayed or a few days, before being moved back to their usual quarters. Lots of help was on hand for this manoeuvre. The gate is now usually firmly closed.

## Sapling failure in the spring drought—a report from Alvecote Wood

This year we planted 4500 trees as part of a woodland-creation project on a former arable field adjacent to our own ancient semi-natural woodland. Although the land was obtained in October 2010, we did not get approval of our woodland creation grant until the end of January 2011, and planting took place over six weekends from the end of January to the start of March. Planting took place into waterlogged ground in February, when it rained almost constantly, but from the start of March until June we had almost no rain at all. We also had an unusual frost at the start of May. The young trees were therefore subjected to waterlogging, drought and frost in succession. We made efforts to water the trees worst affected by drought, but could not water the whole 9 acre site.

Reviewing the trees in May 2011, it was clear that survival differed by species as well as by zone, and I therefore did a survey to see what factors could possibly have affected their survival. As somebody from a scientific background, I felt that use of a scientific method could give us some useful insights into what had happened, and from which we could learn lessons for the future.

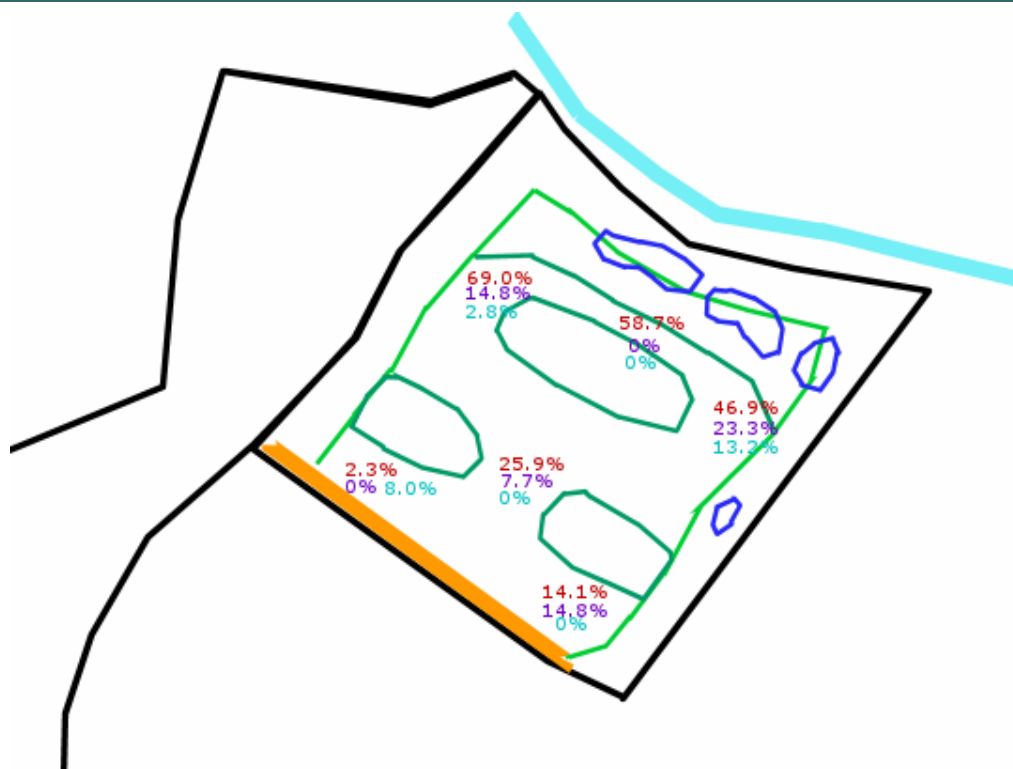
Over the whole site, the trees planted were 28% oak, 12% ash, 14% hazel, 8% birch, 7% each of field maple, goat willow and white willow, 6% alder and the remaining 11% small quantities of other native broadleaves. Wet woodland species were concentrated in the lower part of the site, where soil is usually waterlogged. Watering was started in April, using a 1 tonne bowser, water pump and hose pipe to deliver water from the ponds to the saplings. We concentrated on those areas where there seemed to be the greatest problem, and some areas of the woodland were watered twice, others not at all.

The site was then surveyed on 11<sup>th</sup> May. It was divided into separate areas and signs of viability were noted for trees planted in that area, concentrating on oak, hazel and alder. In survey areas, a total of 1403 trees were examined, representing about one quarter of all new trees on the site. Frost damage was also noted on the ash trees which were the only ones showing frost sensitivity (see picture). We got weather recent weather data from Polesworth, 2km from our site, and long-term climate data from Birmingham Airport, which is 20km from us.

The results were interesting: Rainfall had only been 16% of average in March, 23% of average in April and 44% of average in May. December 2010 and January 2011 had also been very dry months, with 37% and 48% average respectively. Only February 2011, at 117% average, had been wet, resulting in us planting into very waterlogged







ground. The fact that this had been a prolonged dry spell was interesting, and unexpected.

The diagram shows the failure rates for oak (red), hazel (purple) and birch (pale blue) in different parts of the wood.

The woodland slopes down from the hedge (marked in orange) to the canal, and the areas of wet woodland are planted at the lower end by the canal and on the right hand boundary, where the soil is usually waterlogged for much of the year. The dark blue ponds are placed in areas of permanent waterlogging. Natural regeneration is being allowed on the side nearest Alvecote Wood, and by the canal. The central area is planted with mixed broadleaved woodland, and the rectangular areas marked are left without trees, as future wildflower meadows. Frost damage on ash trees was most marked in the lower right hand corner, where 23-25% of ash trees were damaged.

The results show that the patterns of failure differed for oak, birch and hazel. The oak failure was greatest nearest Alvecote Wood despite this being sheltered from frost, and receiving the greatest amount of watering. Hazel and birch, on the other hand, had highest failure rates in the frost pocket at the lower right part of the wood.

We wondered what the reasons might be for this differing pattern. This is what we came up with.

- Late planting – the last oak to be planted was in the area with the highest failure rate. Late planted trees had less time to establish roots before the drought.
- Quality of stock – the stock received varied in quality but was generally poorer the later in the season it was received.
- Planting methods – the number of volunteers used gradually increased during the planting season as word got around; this could lead to more inconsistency in methods as the season wore on.
- Soil conditions – evidence from studies in Spain suggest that oak survival is worst when planted into waterlogged soil and then subjected to drought. This is exactly the conditions into which oak was planted in our field, and waterlog-

**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 August 2011 can be seen at

<http://www.rfs.org.uk/event/2011/08/01/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

ging was worst in the areas with highest oak failure rates. A heavy clay soil, such as that in our waterlogged areas, when it dries, tends to crack, and this lets air enter the root area, leading to catastrophic drying.

- Watering – in the previously waterlogged areas, oak survival was better in areas which had been watered twice, albeit with less water, than in the part watered once with more water, although in neither area was it good.
- Weather – survival of hazel and birch was worst in the frost pocket areas identified by frost damage to ash trees, situated on the right hand side of the field.

The lessons we learned from this are

- Plant as early as possible in the season to get the best stock and best establishment of roots before the spring.
- Plant consistently – volunteers were trained, but supervision was not always ideal.
- Avoid planting in wet conditions – plan to plant during November/December rather than February
- Water regularly – a little water frequently rather than a lot of water all at once
- Selection of species – oak is clearly less tolerant than other species of extreme weather. That being so, replacement of failed oak trees by other species such as ash (which had 100% viability) might be better than trying oak again.

Since the survey, some trees have sprouted late, from the base, suggesting that viability is higher than initially thought, and we will survey again in the autumn before leaf drop to identify which trees have not survived, and need replacing.

The full methodology has been written up as a scientific paper and is available on our web site at <http://www.alvecotewood.co.uk/FailureRatePaper.pdf>

## Rainwater filtration

*Craig tells us how he filters rainwater for washing and washing-up using a biosand system.*

One of the main problems at our wood is a lack of water. We bring drinking water in aquarolls but as we stay for upto three weeks ferrying washing water in was impractical. I used to bring 400 litres in barrels 45 miles but the cost in diesel was crippling. We found a solution on the internet used in Africa called a biosand filter. As we were only using the water for washing and washing up we used fine play sand as the filter media. If you search biosand filter you can find out all the technical info as well as how you can make a filter suitable for making drinking water.

It all starts with an outdoor workshop roof where we collect rainwater through a filter



### Ben Law

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

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

### Brighton Permaculture Trust

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

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

### Bulworthy Project

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

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

### Kingcombe Environmental Studies Centre

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

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

### Plantlife

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

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



**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>

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

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

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

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

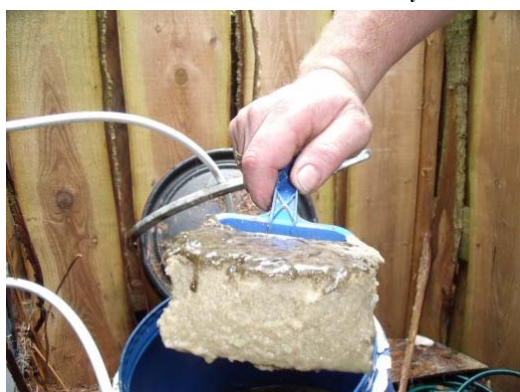
**British Dragonfly Society** run a programme of field visits and educational events.

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

which removes a large amount of vegetable matter.

Next the water is stored in an IBC (1000 litre tank). It passes from here into the sand filter, the outlet of the sand filter has to be higher than the upper level of the sand so the filter never dries out. (some element of the biology needs to stay wet and not freeze!) so the pipe rises to the inlet on the second IBC. It is then fed via a float valve into a clean water storage tank. Because of the fittings we can only store 800 litres of clean and 800 litres of dirty water.

This system provides us with plenty of filtered water for washing and washing up. I have drunk from it but don't usually as it can be stored for long periods. The tanks are painted black to keep sunlight out, which can cause algae to form.



As far as maintenance goes, once a year I clear the top couple of inches of sand off. As you can see from the photos the muck only goes an inch or so through the sand and a little further at the edges. In winter we have cut dead bracken and filled the enclosure to isolate the filter. It has been in service three years now and still seems to be performing well.

## Woodland Games for the School Holidays

Do you have any favourite games for children to play in the woods during the long summer holidays? Enjoyment of woodlands and wildlife can be greatly enhanced by games, and children can often learn a great deal from them too.

Our favourite game for children visiting our woods is a Treasure Hunt. We place clues around the wood. Each clue has a question on the front, and directions to the next clue on the back, so this leads children on a trail around the wood. The clues are usually context-specific i.e. relate to their location, or to a tree, plant, log, nest box or something else in close proximity. They vary in difficulty so that whole families can play. The final clue directs them back to us, where the children can see the answers, and collect their treasure (usually a choice of sweets). It helps the fun if you can dress up as a pirate, put the clues on scrolls with pirate pictures on them, and put a toy parrot on your shoulder (don't ask me how I know this!).

On the forum, there are other favourite games: Treebloke reports kids enjoy making mud monsters using clay from on site for the body and head, and twigs for the legs and



leaves for the ears.

Keith Williams reports that “Building dens, lighting fires and using knives seem to be what kids like most - all need good supervision (plus an adult who knows what they're doing) and a first aid kit to hand (plenty of cold water with fires)!” He also suggests “For older kids, identifying tracks, identifying trees/flora, silent movement games with a blindfolded victim the others must creep up on - or do this at night. Camouflaging themselves with mud/ash and leaves if you don't mind the clean up afterwards.”

Finally, he provided a great link for further ideas <http://www.welshwildlife.org/attachments/env%20games%20lesson%20plan.pdf> Games include a natural orchestra (not one if you want a quiet life...), an adaptation of the game of tag called the seed game, the bat and moth game, the fox and squirrel game (another adaptation of tag), and owls and crows (a quiz with lots of chasing!).

Another good site for games and activities to do with children in the woods during the summer is Nature Detectives, run by the Woodland Trust. Currently this provides ideas for 150 summer activities which can be downloaded completely free. This year the pack includes a picnic log book, a butterfly pack and an art competition.

I got the templates for my treasure hunt from this site, as well as colouring sheets for quieter children. We also use their leaf and seed hunt material in the winter, and I have used their track identification sheets with groups of scouts at our wood. Seasonal booklets can also be downloaded, each of which has several activities. <http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/summer>

Other things we have found to engage children are birds of prey: we have a local friend with Harris hawks, and these are fascinating to children. He also brings gundogs and allows children to hide the lure and send the dogs out to search and retrieve.

If you have any favourite games, it would be great to hear about them, be they summer, autumn or winter games, or games you can play any time of year.



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>

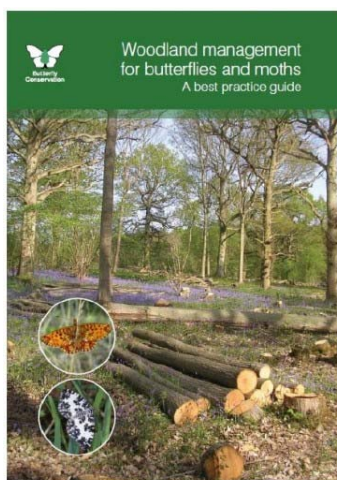
Willowcraft and Woodlands is a social enterprise doing woodcrafts and woodland management based in Worcestershire. They run a number of woodland management and woodcraft courses of potential interest to woodland owners including courses on Living Willow structures, coppice management and treebog construction.

<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.

## Woodland Management for Butterflies and Moths—book review



*Woodland Management for Butterflies and Moths: A best practice guide* by Susan Clarke, David Green, Nigel Bourn and Daniel Hoare Published by Butterfly Conservation, Manor Yard, E Luhworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP. ISBN 978-0-9562216-8-1

This book is about butterflies of woodland, both the specialists and the generalists that live in woodland environments. It is designed to give practical advice on how to manage woodland habitats to encourage butterflies and general and certain specific butterfly species in particular. In two sections, the first three chapters deal with butterflies and why they are declining, woodland habitats and the Lepidoptera they support, and methods of



woodland management for butterflies. The second section goes through specific species of butterfly and moth, looking at their life cycle and food plants, and methods of management that can encourage individual species.

Why is such a book required? There are 16 species of butterfly that are woodland specialists and a further 24 generalists that occur in woodland as well as in other habitats. Woodland specialist butterflies have declined 56% since 1990 despite a concurrent increase in broadleaved woodland. Species associated with mature woodland, such as purple hairstreak (pictured left), have increased, but the main

factor associated with other species decline is lack of management, resulting in loss of woodland edge and woodland ride habitats. Along with replacement of native with non native trees and fragmentation of habitat, loss of butterflies is down to a loss of open rides and clearings. Deer browsing, intensive agriculture, loss of wet woodland, loss of deadwood, loss of native trees and loss of veteran trees also contribute.

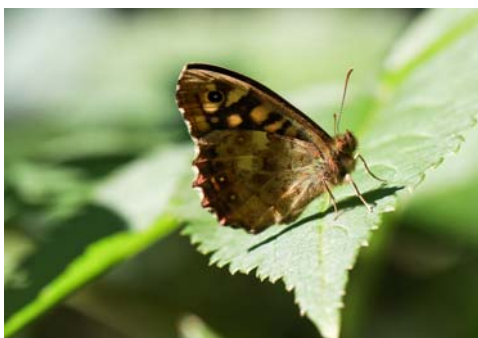


The book takes us through different types of woodland, their characteristics and associated species before looking at management interventions for butterflies and moths. There are five clear objectives here: structural complexity, habitat diversity, food plant diversity, management continuity and landscape connectivity. "The single most important factor that makes a woodland good for butterflies and moths is a diverse, uneven structure".

Coppicing features strongly in the management interventions favoured, but is not a cure-all, and not appropriate for all woodlands. Ideally, varying rotations can produce the best variety of habitats and ground flora required for moths and butterflies. But if you cannot coppice your whole wood, like us, you can also manage rides and glades or open spaces better and this book covers the creation and maintenance of rides by zonal mowing. If you have meadows, autumn

mowing is recommended to preserve plants upon which butterflies depend. The book also covers woodland edge management, grazing, management of high forest and wet woodlands, deer and game management and enhancing landscape connectivity. The latter is beyond the remit of small woodland owners, but working in concert with neighbouring woodland and farmland owners, may be something to which we can still contribute.

The book then goes on to consider species individually, with management options. What it doesn't make clear is there is no point in managing to attract a particular butterfly if it is not naturally occurring in the vicinity. It is vital to liaise with Butterfly Conservation to see which species occur nearby and would benefit from moving to



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

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

Courses in forthcoming months include mammal identification and radio tracking.

**Dorset Centre for Rural Skills**

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

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

**Cotswolds Rural Skills Courses**

Include grassland management and drystone walling. Details on.

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

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

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

**Forest Garden Shovel-strode**

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

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



an additional site. We sought such advice and have managed for dingy skippers and brown argus, attracting the latter but not the former so far.

The book is small, just 62 pages, but does give a lot of material for thought. In particular it is an antidote to the single solution for everything type of book. It finishes off with a list of sources for further information.

Woodland management for different types of wildlife is never simple and there are always different options that will favour one or other species. This balance is explained in this book, and it is a good read if you want to do a little bit to help butterflies and moths in your woodland. It is expensive at full price, though, despite the support it gives to Butterfly Conservation. If you can, take up the offer before it is too late!

*This book is currently on special offer from Butterfly Conservation at £7.50, rather than £15RRP. Details are on <http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Woodland-Management-for-Butterflies-Moths.pdf>*



## National Planning Policy Framework and Small Woods

*This article is printed with permission of Save Our Woods, and is also available on their web site.*

On 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011, the Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was released. This could have implications for small woodland owners, particularly in the fields of protection for the environment, and for those owners seeking permission for storage sheds or other development in their woods.

The central core of the document is that *there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development* with Local Authorities encouraged to *approve all individual proposals wherever possible*. They are also required to have policies that show how this presumption will be implemented locally.

Development is centred around Local Plans, which should plan for prosperity (economic), people (social) and places (environment). Plans will be drawn up to cover all three areas, and approval given to any development that accords with the plan, or where the plan is absent, silent or indeterminate, or where policies are out of date.

Local plans need to consider housing, retail and commercial, transport, minerals, waste, energy, telecoms, water, health, security, community infrastructure and last on the list, mitigation of climate change and protection and enhancement of natural and historic environment. Neighbourhood plans on a smaller geographic level feed into these local plans, which feed into wider area strategic plans.

### Business and Economy

Rural economic plans need to support sustainable growth of rural businesses and promote development and diversification of agricultural businesses, as well as support sustainable tourism. This could be welcome news to small woodland owners struggling to



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

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

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

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

### AJS Crafts

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

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

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

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

gain permission to develop a sustainable wood products or tourist and leisure business on their site.

But there are other things here of potential concern: local plans need to include plans for mineral extraction with an expectation that plans will give sufficient weight to this. Many woods (our own included) are sold without the mineral rights, so if your wood is included in the local mineral plan, it could be at risk.

### Housing

The document makes clear more housing is needed, particularly in rural areas, so people can live in affordable housing in the community they want to live. This being so, all Local Authorities are being asked to identify potential sites for housing. However this is not a charter to build houses on rural land, or small woodlands, at least at first sight. Isolated homes in the countryside are to be avoided unless it can be shown to be essential for a rural worker to live near their place of work, or where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance the local setting, or the development is of exceptional quality or innovative design.



### Environment

Local Green Area designation was proposed in the White Paper on the Natural Environment, but in this document it is made clear that this can only be applied if it is close to a centre of population, demonstrably special to a community or its wildlife, where it is not extensive, and does not overlap with Green Belt. This seems to limit the designation to small urban parks or village greens/commons.

Green Belt legislation also comes in for a change: buildings for agriculture and forestry would be permitted, as would sports and recreation, modest extensions, replacement of buildings, and infilling on existing developed sites. Mineral extraction, infrastructure work, re-use of existing buildings and development under

Community Right to Build orders (developments that neighbourhoods decide are desirable, although the definition of neighbourhood is very broad, and can include a relatively small grouping of individuals) are also to be allowed *as will approved Community Forests*.

“Green buildings” or developments will be encouraged, or even mandatory, and Local Authorities will be required to have a strategy for the development of renewable and low carbon energy sources, which could include sustainable wood fuel sources – potentially good for small woodland owners trying to establish a sustainable woodfuel business.

The document states that the planning system should enhance natural and local environment by protecting valued landscapes, minimising impacts on biodiversity (providing gains where possible) and preventing new or existing development from being affected by unacceptable levels of pollution, noise or land instability. So far, so good.

However, this does not necessarily protect valuable wildlife sites. Rather, Local Authorities each have to set out criteria against which they will weight the benefits of development against the potential damage to wildlife sites when considering development plans. They are encouraged to, but not obliged to, identify the areas of lowest value for wildlife and agriculture when identifying sites for development. Wildlife and habitats are to be given greater weighting in AONB’s and the Broads, but even there, developments can be approved if they are in the public interest.

### Biocensus

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

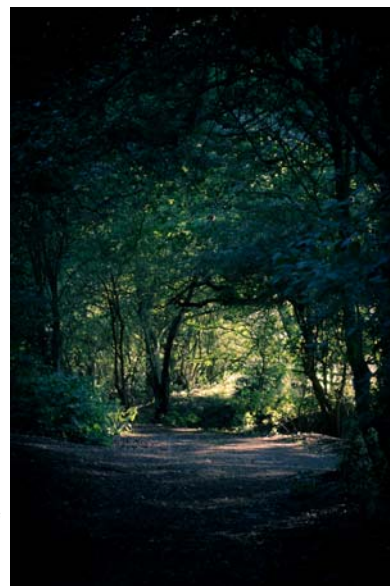
**Abbots Living Wood** offers a range of green woodworking courses

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

Local planners need to have policies that address biodiversity at the landscape scale, identifying valuable habitats and ecological networks and the areas identified by Local Nature Partnerships for habitat restoration and creation. Now we get to the key bit of the document: the criteria for deciding whether to develop a site.

If “significant harm” cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for, then the plan should be refused, and plans where the objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity will be permitted.

Planning permission should also be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and veteran trees outside woodland, *unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss*. However the criteria for weighing these losses and benefits are not given. Statutory protection is only given to sites under the Birds and Habitats Directive, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar sites and sites identified as areas to compensate for the above, or proposed such sites. *Effectively, the only statutory protection is that afforded under international or EU legislation*. British legislation or designations are not mentioned, including SSSI’s, Local Wildlife Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and other current limited protection.



What does this mean for the woodland owner? There are some positives: support for housing for rural workers may help genuine coppice workers to live in or near their woodland, and there is support for development of low carbon sustainable energy sources. But there is a lot to worry about too: woodland does not have statutory protection, or even the enhanced protection given to AONB’s or the Broads. It seems that if you want your wood protected from development, then it you will need to engage with the Local Nature Partnerships and Nature Improvement Areas, so that these are incorporated as valued habitat within the Local Plans. Even then, with the flexibility to change plans and weigh benefits, with a clear expectation that the highest priority will be given to economic and housing development, little protection is offered to woodlands, unless they are businesses generating sustainable fuel, or running a sports, recreation or tourism facility. Without protection or designation, many woods, including ancient woodland, seem vulnerable – more vulnerable than areas designated as future potential sites for mineral extraction under this document. Owning your own woodland may not be protection from mineral development, or compulsory purchase for houses, infrastructure, sports and recreation facilities or other local purposes.

This framework has been released *before* the outcome of the Independent Panel on the Future of Forestry in England (Forestry Panel) is delivered. Submissions to the Forestry Panel from the Woodland Trust, and others, suggest that ancient semi-natural woodland, and plantations on ancient woodland sites, should be granted highest level protection and development be prohibited. Clearly this would affect owners of such woodland, whether they are for or against development.

***If you would like to have your say, there is a consultation open until 31<sup>st</sup> October.*** The Framework can be downloaded on <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/draftframework> and the Consultation document on <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/draftframeworkconsultation>

## News for Small Woodland Owners

### Badger Cull in England

Yes...maybe! An announcement on 19th July revealed that the Secretary of State was “strongly-minded” to allow a science-led cull of badgers in areas of England heavily affected by bovine TB. The Government are now consulting with stakeholders before announcing exactly when and how the cull will go ahead.

In the Randomised Badger Culling Trial (RBCT), new cases of TB can be reduced in the cull area by 16%, although there is considerable debate about whether this is offset by increased TB in areas surrounding the cull zone. There is also debate about the role of badgers in the spread of TB to new areas, as opposed to them acting as a reservoir in already infected zones. Finally, there is debate about the role of other species as reservoirs, including rats



and domestic cats. The rate of reduction achieved in the trials would only be attained if the methods used were the same as those in the trial—trapping and humane culling.

The badger cull in England that is being proposed would

- Issue licenses to farmers to cull badgers on an area of land not less than 150 square kilometres
- 90% of the land inside the area must be accessible or within 200m or accessible land
- Must reduce badger population by at least 70%
- Sustain culling annually for at least 4 years
- Use both cage trapping and field shooting as culling methods
- Be carried out at the cost of the farmers who must deposit money to cover the whole cost plus contingency before the cull begins
- Be subject to monitoring and management by Natural England who will step in to complete the cull if it is not carried out correctly.
- Be carried out only by those with deer stalking licences who have attended additional training delivered by the farming community
- Supplemented by vaccination when it becomes available at the expense of the farmer
- Be trialled in two areas (Devon and Gloucestershire) initially and rolled out if monitoring shows it to be humane
- Not be permitted near towns, and be subject to public safety controls, particularly near public rights of way



At present, there is *no plan to force right of entry where landowners do not wish to participate in the cull*: however large conservation organisations have already said they will not permit the cull on their land (e.g. Woodland Trust, Wildlife Trusts and RSPB) , which could undermine the cull in many areas, as these are large landowners. If you live in an area affected by the cull, you may be asked for permission to access your land for the purpose of conducting a cull, and badgers from your land may be enticed into the open so they can be culled, even without permission to enter. Compulsory rights of entry have not yet been ruled out and may be recommended after the consultation, or after the pilot study in Devon and Gloucestershire.

The Government is currently holding a consultation on the methodology of the cull, rather than the principles behind granting permission for it to take place. This is available on <http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/files/bovinetb-guidance-ne-110719.pdf>—*if you wish to contribute to this, please respond by 20th September.*

A petition against the cull has also been launched on <http://www.38degrees.org.uk/page/s/badgers-petition#petition>

## Woodland Carbon Code Launched

The Woodland Carbon Code has been launched in England by the Forestry Commission. This new code of practice covers woodlands created as a means of offsetting carbon emissions, usually involving investment by companies in methods of offsetting carbon emissions. It is a voluntary standard for woodlands created under such a scheme.

### Compliance with the code means that woodland carbon projects:

- are responsibly and sustainably managed to national standards;
- can provide reliable estimates of the amount of carbon that will be sequestered or locked up as a result of the tree planting;
- must be publicly registered and independently verified;
- meet transparent criteria and standards to ensure that real carbon benefits are delivered.

### To meet the requirements of the code, projects must:

- register with the Forestry Commission, stating the exact location and long-term objectives of their project;
- meet national forestry standards to ensure they are sustainably and responsibly managed;
- have a long-term management plan;

- use standard methods for estimating the carbon that will be sequestered;
- demonstrate that the project delivers additional carbon benefits than would otherwise have been the case.

Although designed for larger areas of woodland over 50ha, small areas can come together jointly to pay for the carbon audit and registration process, and this could be a potential source of funding for woodland owners who are in the position to create new woodland. However conservation organisations warn that woodland should not be created at the expense of other valuable wildlife habitat, so not all areas would be suitable.



More information is available on <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-863FFL> and the code can be downloaded from this site too. A lot of the paperwork overlaps with forms required for woodland creation and management grants by the Forestry Commission, so if you are familiar with them, additional work should not be too great, and the main cost will be the carbon audit required before application.

### Big Butterfly Count Extended

The Big Butterfly Count has been extended by one week because of the poor and cloudy weather that occurred during the majority of the period originally scheduled for the count. Due to end on July 31st, this count has now been extended to August 7th. If you have a spare 15 minutes to spend in your woods, please count the butterflies and report them to the Big Butterfly Count web site <http://bigbutterflycount.org/>

### A guide to dealing with woodland crime in Wales

Published by FC Wales, a new guide to tackling woodland crime has been written by a number of stakeholder groups, and has received the support of all four Welsh police forces.

The leaflet – A Guide to Dealing with Woodland Crime in Wales – is in response to rising levels of crime and anti-social activities in woodlands and is supported by all four Welsh police forces. Chief Superintendent Gwyn Thomas, the chair of the All Wales Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group said

“This guide will help woodland owners and managers to deal with the effects of crime and anti-social behaviour and also identifies steps that can be taken to work with others to address and reduce the problems.”

The guide contains information on what to do if you find evidence of crime and offers useful tips on how to help identify culprits who use our woodlands as an illegal dumping ground.

Peter Cloke, FC Wales Deputy Forest District Manager in South Wales, said, “Crime and anti-social activities affect woodland owners and managers and those who work in or use woodlands for recreation. Our woods define the special landscape character of Wales but the people who perpetrate these acts have no thought for the damage they cause to the countryside.”

Woodland owners and managers and members of community woodland groups sometimes find themselves dealing with the aftermath of crime or may witness people committing crimes. Problems include fly-tipping, illegal use of motor vehicles, theft and criminal damage. When such incidents occur, the guide clarifies how to deal with them and the procedures for gathering evidence to assist in identifying and, hopefully, prosecuting offenders.

It also identifies when woodland can be classified as a public place where the police, Environment Agency Wales and local authorities have powers to deal with criminal and antisocial activities. There is also a list of people to contact in the event of a crime and advice on how woodland owners and managers can work with the police and



other agencies.

Peter added, “We have found that working with other organisations such as Environment Agency Wales has made a real difference to dealing with and preventing crime in the woodlands we manage.

“This way of working is brought out in the guide and, by following it, we’re confident other woodland owners and managers will see an improvement.”

The guide was drawn up in association with a number of groups including ConFor, Llais y Goedwig, Coed Cymru, the Wales Forest Business Partnership and Coed Cadw (the Woodland Trust in Wales).

The guide can be downloaded from <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8JNKMS>

### ***Phytophthora ramorum* found in larch in Derbyshire, Lancashire and Isle of Mull**

The Forestry Commission has reported that *P. ramorum* infection of larch has now occurred in three areas previously free from the disease. The Lancashire outbreak, in woodland managed by Lancashire County Council at Churn Clough Reservoir between Burnley and Clitheroe, is the second confirmed finding on larch in England outside the South West. This comes a few weeks after the discovery of *P. ramorum* in larch in the Peak District, noted as a result of an aerial survey. The outbreak in the Isle of Mull is only the second reported occurrence in Scotland.

Dr John Morgan, Head of the Forestry Commission’s Plant Health Service, said,

“.. these outbreaks in new regions demonstrate that the threat posed by this disease is still serious. I therefore continue to encourage everyone involved with tree and forest management to remain vigilant for signs of the disease, not just in larch trees, but also in other susceptible plants, particularly rhododendron and bilberry. Anyone who suspects they have seen its symptoms should report it to us without delay.”

### **New Biosecurity Strategy launched to tackle pest and disease threats to trees in Britain**

An interim Biosecurity strategy to tackle disease threats to trees has been launched in Britain. In time this will form part of a broader integrated plant health strategy.

Tim Rollinson, Forestry Commission Director-General, said,

“The Tree Health Strategy provides leadership in these uncertain times, by identifying the threats, by setting out a clear strategy for addressing them, and by supporting active engagement from woodland and tree owners and managers to mitigate them.

“The strategy identifies three key lines of defence. First, through our border controls, we work to prevent pests from entering Britain. Second, in the event of a new outbreak, we move as quickly as we can to eradicate the threat, or if this is not possible, to contain it. Finally, we might have to learn to live with some new pests and diseases, and adapt our tree and forest management regimes to reduce the threats they pose.”

The strategy can be downloaded from <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-8gykba>



### **United Nations Phytosanitary Standards in Forestry Guide**

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has recently published a Guide to implementation of phytosanitary standards in forestry, with best practice guidance for preventing the spread of pests and diseases and of guidance on improving the health of trees. The guide is available in English, and can be downloaded from [www.fao.org/forestry/foresthalthguide/en](http://www.fao.org/forestry/foresthalthguide/en).



## Forestry Skills Action Plan Launched

A new action plan to ensure that we develop and maintain an appropriately-skilled forestry workforce to meet future challenges has been launched on <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8HSJV2>

The key objectives of this plan are to ensure we have a skilled workforce to

1. Increase sustainable woodland management
2. Realise woodland creation aspirations
3. Grow and creates green jobs and businesses.
4. Add value to UK timber



## Continuous Cover Forestry can be Economic

Continuous cover forestry, as opposed to clear felling and replanting, can be economic—so says a new report from Forest Research. While most of us manage our woodlands for pleasure and wildlife, those looking for a timber crop might be interested in the report, which is available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/ccfcosts](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/ccfcosts)

## Remember Westonbirt—26th to 29th August

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

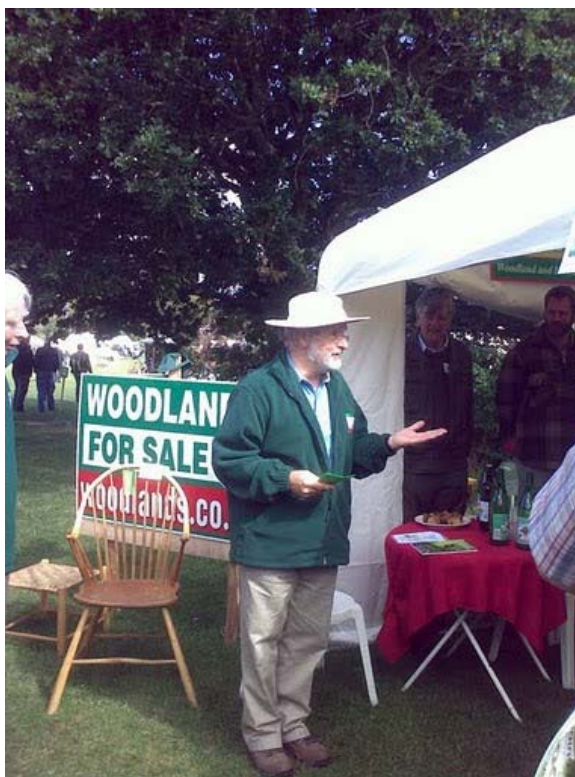
The small woodland owners group have been invited to have a table and display in the Woodlands.co.uk tent at the Festival of the Tree. Come along and meet Daniel and Rich and share how you are getting on in your woodlands.

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

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

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

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



## Greenwood Centre course on Treebogs

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

## Sharpham Trust

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

## How to cultivate fungi

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

## Alvecote Wood, North Warwickshire

Introduction to Photography Workshops, and an Introductory Woodland Management workshop

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

## Black Country Living Landscape –

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

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

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

## Mallinson

Mallinson offer a range of green woodworking courses in Dorset

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

## Funded Coppice Worker Training Available

Would you like to become a woodland worker? Spending your working day in native woodlands and learning about their management? One man who has already done this and who would like you to share in his woodland vision is Phil Hopkinson of Malvern Coppicing. **Malvern Coppicing** now have funding from the Malvern Hills AONB sustainable development fund and Natural England to train 3 coppice workers. The aim of the project is to increase the number of skilled coppice workers to enable more of the local small woods to become sustainably managed for coppiced products and improve their habitat for wildlife.



The week in the woods course will be used as part of the selection process for the 3 trainee's. Further training will include a professional Chainsaw course, First aid and courses in Charcoal making, Willow weaving and other woodland crafts. The week in the woods will be used to select 3 people to become my Coppicing trainee's.

“The week in the woods” is an introduction to coppicing and all aspects of traditional woodland management. The courses are based around Phil's woodland workshop where there is the opportunity to use my shaving horses and other equipment during the week.

The first day starts with a walk through the woods looking at various compartments that have been coppiced over the last ten years and the benefits of coppicing and the differences between native deciduous woodland and conifer plantations.

During the first two days practical tasks can include path and ride management and fence maintenance as well as surveying the ground flora and natural regeneration.

Planning the work area, looking at various devices and horses, building work breaks and coppice restoration are all covered on the course. There is a session on Tree identification led by local naturalist, Dr Simon Roberts. There is a very large selection of trees present in the wood, including Alder, Ash, Birch, Beech, Cherry, Elm, Oak, Hornbeam, Willow, Larch, Corsican Pine, Norway Spruce. The under-storey includes Field Maple, Hawthorn, Elder, Spindle, Hazel, Holly.

Working methods, practical coppicing, material selection, processing and storage are usually covered during the last three days of the course.



Good quality sharp tools will be provided. A certificate and full course notes along with a tree identification guide are included in the course fee.

The woodland workshop has a camp fire, and camp kitchen where hot and cold drinks and a mid-day meal are supplied and a fire, cooking pots, frying pans and cooking utensils are provided for those who prefer to cook their own food. The only thing that participants need to bring is their food if they have any special dietary requirements. The course is over five days and the price is £190 including all food. There is a subsidy of £145 funded by the Malvern Hills AONB sustainable development fund for anyone taking part in the trainee selection process.



## Woodfuel opportunities in Kent



The Kent Downs Woodfuel Pathfinder, in partnership with the Forestry Commission, would like to invite you to a briefing and networking event entitled 'Woodfuel Opportunities in Kent'.

Whilst prices are currently fluctuating on a daily basis the trend for energy prices in the short, medium and long-term is upwards. One of the 'Big Six' energy utilities has already announced gas and electricity price increases in recent weeks, and history tells us that the others will probably follow suit. Consequently many people are considering how they can reduce their energy consumption and/or use alternative sources of energy such as wood.

This event is designed to help inform a range of consumers how modern wood fuelled heating systems can help protect households from spiralling energy costs and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Specialists from the forestry and woodheat sectors will present on a number of topics, including the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) – the World's first financial incentive of its kind which is set to revolutionise the way heat is generated and used in buildings. Places are limited to 50 delegates per location and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. There is no charge.

Details are on the flier at [http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Invitation\\_Woodfuel-Pathfinder-evening-seminars.pdf](http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Invitation_Woodfuel-Pathfinder-evening-seminars.pdf)

## Oxford Woodland Group Event—8th October 2011



Members of the Oxfordshire Woodland Group are putting together a really interesting Saturday event this autumn to which SWOG members are cordially invited.

The venue is a particularly good one to show how recent planting can rapidly develop into beautiful habitat that can also help pay the bills and it's a must for anyone wishing to be inspired! For those who are travelling some distance, there might be some accommodation available. In the morning, the hazel plots at Heath Farm will be visited and demonstrations of cutting with a hook and handling of coppice products will take place, as well as discussion of marketing, biodiversity, management and

deer and squirrel issues. In the afternoon, a tour of the woodland will take place and visitors can see the results of pruning, thinning and management for nut and oil production.

You can attend one or both sessions, but pre-booking is essential. Please see the flier for further details on <http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/heath-Farm-coppice-visit-8-Oct-10am.pdf>

## Other Events of Interest

### The Woodland Edge—29th to 30th September, near Taunton.

This conference promises to be very interesting, covering the broad theme of people and nature in our wooded landscape at a time of change. The event will explore the natural and human issues surrounding woodlands and wider landscapes, and the overlapping perspectives affecting their future. Covering the highly topical subjects of how woodland can be managed best to deliver environmental and social benefits, and how we can shape landscape-scale policy for our woodland, the conference will include a number of keynote speakers including speakers from the Forestry Commission, and the owner of Hill Holt Wood, the winner of the RFS Excellence in Forestry Award from small woodlands in 2011. The event will take place literally on the edge of the forest, with camping



available on site or in nearby B&B accommodation.

For full details and bookings, including early-bird discounts, see [www.nerochescheme.org](http://www.nerochescheme.org) or contact [info@nerochescheme.org](mailto:info@nerochescheme.org).

### **Forest health days from Forest Research and FC England**

There will be a number of such events happening around the UK. This is an ideal way to get updated on the latest about tree diseases and tree health. Events that we know of are at

**Farnham, Surrey** - 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

**Santon Downham, Suffolk** - 28<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

There is also a *Phytophthora* awareness event in Scotland at Roslin on 19th August. For more details, please see <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestresearch.nsf/ByUnique/INFD-5ZM9UN>

### **Wilderness Gathering—18th to 21st August 2011**

For those of you interested in Bushcraft, this is a wonderful gathering where you can share your skills and learn new ones. Based on a farm in South Wiltshire, you can learn new skills at a variety of workshops and take part in a lot of activities for people of all ages. Activities include bow-drilling, felting, carving, fire-making, whistle-making, shelter-building and blacksmithing.

More information and tickets are available from <http://www.wildernessgathering.co.uk/index.html>

### **Woodland Management Course with an emphasis on management for wildlife**

*Have you bought a woodland and now feel overwhelmed by it all? Want to manage it for wildlife? Want to work with other organisations and apply for grants but feel it is all a bit too complicated?*

Stephen and Sarah at Alvecote Wood are running a woodland management weekend on 10th and 11th September. Based in North Warwickshire, Stephen and Sarah own an 11 acre ancient woodland, with an extra 9 acres of newly-planted woodland in an adjacent field. They have restored the neglected site through development of paths, rides, open areas and ponds, and restoration of coppicing in part of the woodland. They have also established wildflower meadows, and planted 4500 trees to form a new woodland and hedgerow on their former arable field. Working



with the Forestry Commission, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, the Pond Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation and with other local wildlife experts, they are in the process of creating a site for wildlife, while still enjoying sustainable wood for fuel and crafts. They have successfully developed their own woodland management plan, and obtained Woodland Management, Woodland Improvement and Woodland Creation grants from the Forestry Commission under the English Woodland Grant Scheme. They use wood from their coppice for their own wood-burning stove, as well as for small craft items. The woodland is not open to the public all the time, but a regular programme of public open days, open evenings, treasure hunts, and visits from wildlife groups and schools means many local people can now enjoy their woods.

Sarah said “We learned the hard way, and made some mistakes, but you don’t have to! We have negotiated the grant system, learned practical skills, and learned how to harness the expertise available to help you manage your woodland for wildlife. We have also had several planning applications approved, which have allowed us to construct a new building for equipment, a wood store, paths, ponds and a small greenhouse as well as carry out work on Tree Preservation Order protected trees.”

If you would like to learn from people who have been there and done that, please come along. Please contact [info@pragmasis.com](mailto:info@pragmasis.com) for more information about the course. The price will be £140 including VAT for two days. Basic camping is available on site.

## On the blogs at woodlands.co.uk



### Dragonflies and Damselflies *by Chris*

New dragonfly and damselfly species are thriving in some parts of the UK, but others are under threat. Read more here

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/dragonflies-and-damselflies/#more-6054>

### Food for Thought *by Sean*

Only eating meat that you have hunted or foraged for yourself? Read about it here

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/food-for-thought/>

### Hunter Gatherer *by Sean*

The second instalment in Sean's quest to eat food he has hunted or foraged for himself.

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

### Roadkill *by Sean*

Third instalment in Sean's series on the use of roadkill. Possibly not for the squeamish...

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/road-kill-top-10/>

### Excellence in Forestry Awards *by Angus*

For the first time, small woodlands had their own category in the RFS Excellence in Forestry Awards held recently. This award was supported by Woodlands.co.uk Read about the winners here

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/events-places/small-woodlands-compete-for-top-award-at-excellence-in-forestry-competition-2011/>

### National Vegetation Classification *by Lewis*

What is the NVC, how do you apply it in practice, and what does it say about woodlands?

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-plants-flowers/the-national-vegetation-classification/>



### Red Squirrels in Scotland *by Dr Dick Morris*

Cute and iconic, what is the truth about these symbols of Scottish woodlands?

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/wildlife/red-squirrels-in-scotland/>

*And on Woodlands.co.uk/tv* **An Upside Down Fire**—what is it, how do you build one and why is it good.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv/2011/07/upside-down-fire-mov/>

## Re-using a Forestry Commission Machine for habitat restoration



The Forestry Commission have sent us a report on a new use for one of their harvesters.

A machine more used to cutting down trees destined for saw-mills throughout Wales is playing a vital role in helping to preserve some of our rarest plants, insects, and bird life.

Forestry Commission Wales has converted one of its harvesters to solve the problem of restoring sensitive heathland which endangered species such as the black grouse depend on.

FC Wales removed the harvester's cutting head and replaced it with a powerful flail with fixed, hardened teeth which can mulch trees and vegetation in order to preserve a patchwork of heather and heathland in our forests.

The unique machine has already been put to work in Clocaenog forest, where open areas of mixed woodland and heather have been cut to encourage the regeneration of heather shoots and cotton grass, all vital for the recovery of black grouse, nightjars and other species that are reliant on this open woodland habitat.

Read more on the SWOG web site at <http://www.swog.org.uk/articles/machine%E2%80%99s-new-lease-of-life-is-good-news-for-threatened-species/#more-1878>

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## Forthcoming Meetings and Events



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

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

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

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## Forthcoming Woodfairs from woodfairs.co.uk

### Woodfairs in Scotland

#### Tweed Valley Forest Festival

21st to 30th October 2011

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

### Woodfairs in England

#### Live Crafts and Festival of Woods

Various dates and venues across SE England.

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

#### Woodfair, Joydens Wood

Dartford 20th August 2011

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

#### Festival of the Tree

Westonbirt Arboretum, 26-29th August

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

#### Stock Gaylard Estate Oak Fair

Sturminster Newton, Devon, 27th August

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

#### National Forest Woodfair

Beacon Hill Country Park, Leicestershire, 29th August

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

#### Woodworks

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

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

#### Wychwood Woodfair

Sunday 4th September

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

#### South West Woodland Show

Longleat Estate, Warminster, Wilts, 9th September

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

#### Wild About Wood



Castle Howard Arboretum, 10th to 11th September

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

#### Bentley Weald Woodfair

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

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

#### Lincolnshire Firewood fair and auction

Revesby Estate, Lincolnshire, 18th September 2011

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

#### Cranborne Chase Woodfair

8th-9th October, Larmer Tree Gardens

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

#### Surrey Hills Woodfair

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

#### Ickworth House, Suffolk

8th and 9th October

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



## Newsletter - August 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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### Small Woodland Owners' Group Forum

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

**SteveP** asked advice on whether, and how, he could apply to buy some land from the local Council. **Stephen1** has experience of buying from the Parish Council and suggested a Leasehold with restrictions, or covenants, related to activities to be carried out.

Tree theft was under discussion again this month, with some members unimpressed by the new guide from FC Wales.

A new member, **earlybay** was welcomed to the site after purchasing Paddock Wood.

**Tracy** posted to let members know a discount voucher is available for SWOG members wishing to attend Bentley Woodfair. If you want a voucher, contact tracy.

Sinful tools re-surfaced after a long interval with **The Barrowers** buying a SPARE chainsaw. **Woodbodger** reported "The most sinful tool I have ever bought:- a Chinese chainsaw, my neighbour has one also and between us we don't have enough parts to make one work. I have also bought a Chinese light sensor and remote door bells and they don't work either. My dad always said I was a slow learner!" A lesson for us all!

**Austino** reported on progress a year after buying his SSSI woodland. A throwaway comment about bryophytes led to some discussion, and it is clear that is a specialist area and identification is not straightforward.

**Dave177** is asking for input from SWOG members. He is studying woodland management and looking for two things from SWOG: information on helpful literature

for woodland owners and financial benefits and resources available for managing woodlands. Please reply via the forum.

**Meadowcopse** reported very eloquently on the increase in recent intrusions onto his site, and in particular about the general ignorance of these informal visitors: one lady with dogs kicking a football around his newly-planted trees and disturbing the mulch was educated, but others seem intent on pushing past the landowner's vehicle to get access, damaging a fence, and grumbling about being access being blocked. It is an ongoing problem for many of us. If you have problems, reply on the "28 day camping" thread on the forum.

**Filbo** asked about designing and building a home-made bandsaw mill. An ambitious project, with several suggestions made. Hire of a mill being expensive, other options include a season producing firewood to fund a proper mill, and offers of help were made. To reply, please see the forum.

**The Barrowers** have bought a Bushnell trail camera (see article in July Newsletter) but can't get the SD card to read in another camera. Suggestions were made as to how this could be remedied.

**Iain and Benjamin** are two qualified shooters who are willing to offer their services to SWOG members—please see forum for details.

**Rogerspianocat** was concerned that his tree was sick—advice was offered, including some potential causes for the problem.

**Westtec** is a forestry contractor offering services to SWOG members. See the forum if you are interested.

## Contributions—Don't stop them coming..



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