



In the Newsletter this Month

Back again after a bit of a break, just in time for the coppicing season, this newsletter is full of reports, events and in particular, courses that you can attend in preparation for a winter of work in the woods.

There are all kinds of activities you can hold in your woods—I've written about a photography exhibition that we have held in our woods, and which will be in place until the end of November. Art and nature work very well together—something worth considering for your woods.

There is also a report from the APF Show, and a great set of notes on how to approach tree safety in your woods, the latter from Sean Harrison from Surrey County Council. Definitely worth a read.

There are LOTS of courses and events coming up, not the least a SWOG meeting and course being run by Kent Wildlife Trust on 28th October—definitely worth a visit if you are in the area, or even if you aren't!

If you haven't already used the forum to get in touch with your woodland neighbours, please do visit and start a thread for your own woodland. It is possible to achieve a lot more if you work together, and share the costs of woodland ownership and management, so give it a go. You can now also use the forum to organize a meeting in your woods – again, have a go, it doesn't have to be a massive event, just a walk round your woods.

If you like social networks, there is also a review of a new social network for forestry people, called Forestcomms.org—a sort of Facebook for tree people. Different from SWOG, but worth a look

If you have any contributions, we really would love to hear from you. Please send to Sarah Walters (sarah@swog.org.uk) - there is a section in this newsletter giving you ideas—poems, photos, articles, reports, reviews...it is up to you!

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A photography exhibition in the woods—by Sarah

Our woods are beautiful. Exquisitely, amazingly beautiful. The challenge I have always had is how to communicate that beauty to others. Everybody sees different things as they walk through the woods on our open days and open evenings, but very few see beyond the surface. What I wanted to do was to provide a conduit to allow people to see the woods through my eyes, and to provide visitors with an enhanced experience.

There are heated debates about whether photography is art or not – my view is that it *can* be art, particularly if your definition of art is something that changes your perception of the world in some way. Photography can certainly do that, along with painting, writing, sculpture and music. What I was seeking to do was to change perceptions of the woods, and make a visit into a deeper experience – if you like to allow visitors to





take a short-cut to the view of the woods that come from the intimate knowledge of prolonged exposure to it.

Over the past 2 ½ years I have been studying a professional photography course. I have no desire to become a professional photographer, because 99% of professionals make money from weddings, families and pets, and this is something I don't want to do. The motivation for the course was to improve my skills so that my images could go beyond the superficial portrayal of objects, and go into the realm of art, of changing perceptions, of evoking emotions in the viewer.

It has been a long road, and the woods have played a vital role along the way, as the setting for many images and the subject of many more. It was obvious, therefore, that when I had to set up a final exhibition, the woods should be the subject.

However, I had to decide where to display them. It is very hard to experience the feeling of being in the woods if you are stuck in a small gallery or library looking at photos on the wall. Maybe a photographer more skilled than me could transcend the setting, but to me it seemed wrong. The pictures were taken outside in a special place, and they needed to be shown in that same special place.

The context was important: The images could both enhance and be enhanced by the setting. An image of a daisy, surrounded by daisies would have many advantages: The image would be seen as part of a coherent whole, and in its turn, draw the eye of the viewer into its setting, allowing them to see the daisies in a different context. Added to this the changing light, temperature, wind, smells and sounds of the wood, and a simple image could turn into something really special.



So I started to pursue the idea. In particular I was concerned about how to make images sufficiently robust that they would be able to survive several months outdoors. Most printers don't do waterproof pictures, so I had to drop the idea of art/gallery quality in favour of toughness, and in the end went for printing onto Foamex board – the sort of stuff you see on factory and shop signs.

Then there was selecting the images: I had to put up a minimum of 12, but this would not be enough to fill a walk around the woods. However I also had to mind the cost, and the realistic prospects of recouping this through sales of prints. In the end I settled on



25 images in 22 locations, which maintained interest around approximately 1 ½ mile walk around our site.

Selecting the sites for mounting the images was also difficult. There was a lot to consider: Context, lighting (at different times of day and year), colour, perspective and link between the image and the setting or habitat. We decided to mount the images on stakes, so we also had to consider where we were going to put the stakes – some ground was too soft, other ground too stony, other ground had tree roots to be considered. So, for example, I decided to place a macro image of moss, backlit by the early spring

Course Directory

Institute of Chartered Foresters

Forthcoming events are on

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

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 2012 visit

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

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

To see courses for the coming year visit

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

LILI Courses

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

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

Wildlife Trusts

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

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/whats-on>

sunshine, next to the log where it was taken. In the evening, at this time of year, the lighting is similar, and draws the eye into the log, encouraging the viewer to look more closely at it, covered in lichen at this time of year. Where an image is constructed to draw the eye in a particular direction, I was keen to ensure that there was something in the setting to which the eye could be drawn – such as a clearing into which my dandelion seed could fly. I obviously needed to put butterflies in their correct habitat, in the hope that the viewer would see the real thing alongside the image. Ultimately, compromises had to be made, but with a great deal of effort from Stephen and his post-knocker, we got everything up, and the exhibition opened at August Bank Holiday.



Although our woods have never been open to the public before we took ownership, we have always wanted to allow access through open days, open evenings and to community groups. We opened our woods on Bank Holiday Sunday and Monday, and over the course of two days had 63 visitors. The exhibition will stay in place through our September 23rd, October 28th and November 25th Open Days. We didn't charge an entry fee, because we didn't want people to feel they couldn't visit if they were short of money. A lot of people made a donation, though, as well as purchasing our existing photographic greeting cards and other craft products. We have so far sold five originals or prints, with interest from a hospital for others to use in their corridors. I need to sell 12 to break even, but it was never about making money – it was much more about using art to make a connection to the landscape or rather between the art and landscape.



That is the key – making a connection with the landscape. It is very easy to walk through a landscape, urban or rural, without noticing what it is made of. Because people don't see things, it is easy to fall into the mindset that these things don't exist, or they are not important. But our wildlife, our ecosystems, our woodlands are about the synergy between all the little things, the overlooked, the non-obvious, as well as the big things like trees and plants and animals. In a world in which people have become disconnected from nature, art can be used to re-establish that connection, and through that connection, bring people to realise what beauty is there, all around them, and how precious it is, and how vulnerable it is to being lost forever because of ignorance and greed. Coming from a scientific background, I have come to appreciate that art can be used to change the world, particularly if it is used in context.

Has it fulfilled a dream? A cautious “yes”, I think. Certainly a number of visitors returned after their walk saying that they had been drawn to see the woods in a different way. I called the exhibition “The Eye of the Beholder” because it was about seeing the woods through my eyes, or at least through fresh eyes. I hope that this was achieved, at least for some.

And is it worth considering an art exhibition in your woods? Again, yes, provided you are happy to open it to the public, at least for some of the time. Art, landscape and wildlife blend very well together, and the process of working through developing and staging the exhibition can be very exhilarating, even if you aren't doing the artwork yourself. The more that people can be helped to appreciate the woodlands and their wildlife, the better. If art helps to achieve that, then it is definitely worthwhile.

A presentation of the images in the context of the woodlands is available on YouTube, set to music at http://youtu.be/4JICR_nmvqo. If you would like to visit, the exhibition will be open on 28th October and 25th November, but if you are a SWOG member and would like to visit, just contact us if you would like to come at another time and we'll try and help: see www.alvecotewood.co.uk



A visit to the APF Show



The Association of Professional Foresters show is a big event held every two years. Last time it was at Cannock Chase, but this year returned to the Ragley Estate in Alcester. It is always a big event – in every sense of the word. Big machinery, displays covering a very large area, and lots of championship events taking place during the show. But that doesn't mean it is of low relevance to small woodland owners, because the trade and craft displays are wide-ranging and offer something for people who own everything from one acre to thousands of acres of woodland.

The new venue seemed more compact than at Cannock – both the main trade display area and the demonstrations in the woodland seemed easier to walk round. But I sensed the show was a little smaller than in previous years, and there seemed to be fewer retail stands, and fewer real demonstrations (where you could have a go yourself) were on offer.

But what was on offer was impressive. First of all, the competitions – the European Horse Logging Championships, the World 25m Pole Climbing Championships, the European Chainsaw Carving Championships, incorporating the speed carving event, and the Association of Pole Lathe Turners log to leg competition (where competitors aim to be the quickest to convert a log to a turned stool leg).

All of these were immensely impressive. Climbing is not something I have ever attempted, but the skill in both categories (tree surgeon and expert) was immense. The tree surgeon category was for people who had not won before, and who were climbing with conventional instep spikes, the experts were using toe spikes to various designs. And they flew up the pole! There was a separate competition for veterans and ladies (it is a lady in the photograph above), but to my mind the ladies didn't need a separate competition – the two ladies I saw climbing were more than capable of being well placed overall. There was also an excellent demonstration of Forestry Skills that are used in the World Forester Championships, including competitive chainsaw maintenance (how fast can you remove the bar, reverse it, put on a new chain and restore the chainsaw to working order – and you have to then use it for the rest of the event!), precision felling (felling a tree onto a marked stake on the ground), and precision limbing. The latter was a thing of grace and beauty to watch in the hands of an expert, unlike my ungainly struggles to de-limb trees when I'm coppicing!

Horse logging is also an amazing thing to watch. The venue, at the



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

<http://smallwoods.org.uk/courses-events/courses-calendar/>

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 September 2012 can be seen at

<http://www.rfs.org.uk/event/2012/10/01/month/all/all/1>

Bat Conservation Trust

Run a number of training courses. The full brochure is available at <http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/training.html>



very far corner of the demonstration area, was rather remote, and as a consequence, didn't attract many people, which was a shame. The horses were also well hidden from viewers at times when doing their tasks. But the horses I did see were amazing. Beautiful animals, with astonishing grace and power but also amazing precision. I saw a team from Japan, as well as a beautiful horse with an owner who, when I heard him speak, spoke in German – I think the horse may have been a Rheinlander. To watch these beautiful, huge horses loading logs onto a trailer with great precision was really something.

The chainsaw carving was impressive as ever, although the pieces were still in an early stage of development when we visited on Friday.

The craft area was small, but interesting, and there were demonstrations and sales of baskets made from willow and strips of oak, carving, furniture and sales of tools, old and new.

One of the main attractions of these shows is the opportunity to try out kit before buying it, particularly if it is expensive. Last time, we were able to try a Stihl chainsaw before I bought it, and I am very happy indeed with my purchase. This year, though, Stihl said they couldn't do it because of health and safety – which was odd, because both Husqvarna and Makita were letting people have a go (provided you toggged up first).

Stephen is in the market for a new saw – his old one was a second-hand reconditioned Efco saw, and after 5 years of use is now ready to be replaced. So it was we decided that in the absence of ability to try out Stihl, he would try the Husqvarna instead. The demo area was great – you toggged up in helmet, gloves, chainsaw chaps and then had the opportunity to try cutting up a felled tree as well as some snedding. The small group under the eyes of an instructor had the chance to try the old 550 and new 560 saw. I was allowed to take photos, provided I wore a chainsaw helmet – which I was happy to do, although the visor gets in the way of photography a bit! It was clear that both Stephen and the tree surgeon professionals in the same group all rated the new 560 very highly, and the fact that it comes with heated grips as an option was very tempting – if you suffer badly from Raynauds which is made worse by chainsaw vibration, this is actually very important. So, message to Stihl – offer demonstrations, and you may clinch a sale.

We also picked up some chainsaw gloves (at last I found a pair small enough for me – I have had to wear general purpose gloves because gloves that are an inch too long in the finger are frankly dan-



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. <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/



gerous), and a couple of folding Silky pruning saws, as well as a combined two-stroke-chainsaw-oil fuel can. All ready for a season of coppicing. We also looked at various types of log bags for both storage and sale, as well as various types of staking and tree protection options.

We stopped off for a chat with our Forestry Commission area manager, who is very friendly and even came and planted a few trees for us in 2011 when we were planting Betty's Wood. And we had a lovely cup of tea on the Crofter Machinery stand – this is a small friendly business that makes hydraulic log-splitters. We bought a tractor-mounted one last year, spurred on by the fact that our local blacksmith makes the splitting wedges for his machines. We sat and chatted about our mutual friend, a lovely, friendly way to end the day.

Is it worth the money? At £17 on the door, it wasn't exactly cheap for two of us to visit. Well, it depends what your motivation for attending the day is. If it is to get bargains that offset the price of the ticket, then probably not. We went to have

a go on potential chainsaw purchases before buying – and it seems that not all manufacturers are willing to offer this service, but for us, this was worth the price of tickets on its own. But added to that, you get to watch really skilled people performing forestry – related skills really, really well. It is a great day out, with a lot of things on show. It is also a great source of ideas, and an opportunity to network with professionals. For me, the horses alone were worth the entry fee, let alone the amazing forestry skills demonstrations, chainsaw carving and pole climbing.



British Woodlands Survey—A reminder!

British Woodlands 2012 survey—Please Take Part!

There is still time to participate in this survey, which was launched to ask the views of woodland owners and managers about the challenges and opportunities facing British Woodlands.

Who should take the Survey?

We are interested in the views of a wide range of people who are responsible for the stewardship and upkeep of woodlands owned by councils, charities, companies, communities and private individuals. Additionally if you completed the survey you will be invited to a woodland conference at Oxford University in December 2012 where the results of the survey will be discussed *We would be grateful if you as a woodland owner or manager could take the survey.*

The survey should take about 20-30 minutes to complete. All data will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Results will be presented in an amalgamated version only. Click here to take part in the British Woodlands 2012 survey: <http://bit.ly/BritishWoodlands2012> and Updates will be on <http://bit.ly/BritishWoodlands2012> when they are available.



Tree Safety Notes—by Sean Harrison

Sean Harrison from Surrey County Council writes some very helpful practical guidance on how to fulfil your legal Duty of Care regarding risk from your trees.

Editor's Note: The 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees' guidance can be downloaded at [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCMS024.pdf/\\$FILE/FCMS024.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCMS024.pdf/$FILE/FCMS024.pdf), and a summary for landowners at [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCMS025.pdf/\\$FILE/FCMS025.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCMS025.pdf/$FILE/FCMS025.pdf)

The new guidance document has been discussed in a previous newsletter <http://www.swog.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2012/01/NL-Feb2012-final.pdf> and the article also describes what we have done in our woods, and our tree safety policy. Please also see the May 2012 SWOG Newsletter for a report from the Woodland Liabilities and Insurance Conference, including a practical session on tree safety.

As a woodland owner, following all the exciting work planned and sitting back and admiring the work you've already done and the natural beauty, one of the often-overlooked jobs is ensuring that you're clear about your statutory Duty of Care to visitors, neighbours, adjacent roads and property.

I will stress at this point however, that deadwood is a vital component of the woodland ecosystem and should be retained where there is no conflict with safety.

As the owner of trees and woodland, you have a statutory duty of care to take reasonable steps to avoid acts or omissions, which you can reasonably foresee, would be likely to cause harm. Harm might be in the form of people or property being hit by or colliding with trees, or parts of them. This is especially important if your woods have open access or rights of way, or has shared boundaries with private residential housing, schools and highways.

A number of responsibilities arise as a result of owning woodland, including:

- Avoidance of harm to people or their property while occupying or visiting your land.
- Avoidance of harm to people or property on land adjacent to your land.
- Avoidance of harm to those on the public highway (including other rights of way).
- Regulation of woodland management and tree felling.
- Protection of woodland and trees of special amenity and cultural importance.
- Protection of wildlife species and their habitats.

With all the above considered, how are you supposed to ensure it's all catered for? In practice it is never possible to eliminate completely all danger. The law requires, however, that you take all reasonable care to

- Identify possible sources of foreseeable danger and
- Remove them as far as is reasonably practicable.

Well, the easiest way is to walk your boundaries, tracks and paths and make notes of what you find, in terms of potential hazards, the date and details of prescribed work.

The important thing to consider is the amount of use both on your land and to adjacent



Staffordshire Wildlife Trust – Forest Schools/Delivering the Curriculum Outdoors, a full range of courses for those working with children in their woods, plus other courses for 2012

<http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/page/training-courses>

The Sustainability Centre offers lots of courses around the theme of sustainable living. Upcoming courses include Green Woodworking, Permaculture and Bushcraft.

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/bishops-wood-centre.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>

land, roads and buildings. This also applies, strangely, to illegal access!

Initiate a tree inspection programme, which is suitable for your wood. You don't need to go overboard here, just ensure that you understand the following three aims

- Identification of hazards
- Assessment of risk
- Identification of remedial action, where necessary

Or

What is wrong with the tree (the hazard), who or what could be damaged (the risk) and how can this be avoided (action)

The frequency and method of inspection is inextricably linked to the level of risk associated with the site, its use and adjacent land use.

If your wood is adjacent to trunk roads, building, railways and any other area of near continual/high use, you will be expected to ensure that your trees have been inspected more regularly than a wood that has little or no access or adjoining property.

Beware of making the mistake of assuming a low use road is a low risk. Country roads can have many bends and are notorious for the relative high speeds of motorists. And a fallen tree, on a bend, at night can be a lethal combination for any motorist, particularly motorcyclists.

As a guide, trees adjacent to high use, high risk, areas should be inspected at least biannually, preferably annually.

Medium risk areas (low use paths & tracks) should be inspected at intervals of no more than three years.

Other areas (low risk) should be checked at intervals of about five years.



Following adverse weather conditions, ensure somebody undertakes an informal "walk by" inspections to determine the extent of any damage. These inspections should be prioritised to the high-risk zones. Any reports from staff, visitors or contractors should be investigated as soon as possible.

Be sure that you keep a record of any inspections. If the worst should happen, these will be required as evidence of your compliance with legislation. Without the records, you could be found negligent of your duty of care.

Be sure of your ability and where necessary get the services of a professional to survey the high-risk areas. However, the low and medium risk areas are a great opportunity to keep up to date with your boundaries and also learn about trees and fungi.

Undertake a Visual Tree Assessment (VTA)

These inspections start at ground level, 360 degrees around the stem, and finish with the crown. Noting, amongst other issues, cracks, drought stress & dieback, dead and dangerous limbs, and the presence of fungi and/or damaged bark whilst also taking into account the age of tree(s) and the species relationship to soil and location.

There is lots of info about VTA to be found online.

If you would like more info or advice please contact me at sean.harrison@surreycc.gov.uk

Woodcraft School have published their timetable for woodcraft and bushcraft courses

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

Acres Wild Woodland have 2012 timetable of woodland and woodcrafts courses available on

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

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

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

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

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.

FloraLocale run a wide range of courses of interest to woodland owners www.floralocale.org

News for small woodland owners

From the Forestry Commission

Three starter farms opportunities available from FC Scotland.

New entrants to farming can now apply for a ten-year Long Duration Tenancy (LTD) at Falgunzeon by Dalbeattie, Dumfriesshire, Upper Tullochbeg near Huntly, Aberdeenshire, or Carserigg by Kirkconnel, Dumfriesshire.

These small farms build on an initiative piloted earlier this year by Forestry Commission Scotland to complement its woodland creation operations and its broader commitment to increasing the integration of land use on the national forest estate. The 'starter farm' programme is design to enable new entrants get a foot hold into the industry. See the press release for more details if you are interested.

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/WebPRByCountryLang/FCB4FD3BF577AFD680257A700033D674>

New FC Apprenticeship Scheme

Forestry Commission England has announced the launch of a new apprenticeship scheme that will employ and train 20 apprentices across the country. Based at locations across the Public Forest Estate in England, each apprentice will be given the opportunity to learn and work their way to professional qualifications and longer-term employment opportunities within the forestry sector.

Applications close on 5th October 2012. Details are on <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-54qfw5>

Phytophthora ramorum found on larch trees in Surrey and West Sussex

A highly destructive tree disease has been found on larch trees in South East England for the first time.

Ramorum disease, caused by the fungus-like pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum* (*P. ramorum*), has been confirmed in larch trees in two woodlands: one in West Sussex, and the other in Surrey. The Forestry Commission first became concerned when larch trees showing symptoms were spotted during a helicopter survey of the region in June, and ground-based checks confirmed the surveyors' suspicions.

Ramorum disease has been responsible for the premature felling of more than 3 million larch trees in the United Kingdom since it was first found killing larches in the West Country in 2009. Most cases have occurred in the wetter, western parts of Great Britain as well as Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the Isle of Man. This month's confirmation that the disease has reached South East England is the first time it has been recorded so far east, although the organism has previously been found in the region infecting other plants, such as rhododendron.

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/WebNewsReleases/54E43E8BA6E51BB380257A700031A6D0>

FC, Environment Agency and Natural England joint consultation on Building a Better Environment

Building a Better Environment is a consultation document which seeks the views of a wide range of people, including those involved with woodlands and forestry, on the current planning system and the proposed planning reforms. There is a document which you can complete to share your views. This is predominantly a guide document for developers, and considers a wide range of planning issues, including how to deal with woodlands, trees, so-called "ecosystem services" and wildlife and nature. Your chance to have a say on this document, which will be used by developers when submitting planning applications. The consultation ends 19th October

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/142517.aspx>

FC Publishes case study of their experience managing Ramorum disease

Lee Dawson from FC Wales has written an extremely interesting article on the FC web site about their experience with Ramorum disease in Wales and the way in which they have approached it. The article deals with Biosecurity, Disease Location (including use of aerial surveys), Felling, End Use and Lessons Learned, which can be passed



on to other areas as the disease inevitably spreads. A good read.

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

FC Calls for moratorium on ash tree imports to prevent Chalara dieback of ash.

The Forestry Commission and the Food & Environment Research Agency (Fera) have welcomed a call by the Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) for a voluntary moratorium on importing ash trees. The moratorium call is a bid to help prevent the destructive disease Chalara dieback of ash becoming established in the UK.

Young ash trees infected by the *Chalara fraxinea* fungus, which causes the disease, have been found this year in six nurseries and four planting sites in England and Scotland. The Forestry Commission and Fera are taking emergency measures to prevent the disease spreading into ash trees in the wider environment.

Fera has also published a Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) drafted by tree health scientists at the Forestry Commission's Forest Research agency. It has invited views on the analysis by 26 October, with a view to using it to support national legislation to protect the UK from the risk of accidentally importing the disease from continental Europe, where it is widespread.

In a gesture of support, the HTA, which is the trade association for the horticultural industries such as nurseries, garden centres and related activities, this week (Tuesday 18 September) called for a voluntary moratorium by its members on the importation of ash plants. It also called on the plant health authorities to compensate tree owners who are required to destroy diseased plants, and for the Forestry Commission to permit woodland owners who are committed to grant-aided tree-planting schemes which include ash trees to use alternative species without loss of grant.

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/AllByUNID/C10D1EC2B44D1DBD80257A7E004DD630>

A nature lesson with a difference – combining lessons on nature and industrial heritage in Afan Valley

Nature and history are being brought together at Afan Forest Park, where groups of primary school pupils are learning how trees and woodlands supported the mining industry at a time when the valley was a powerhouse for the Industrial Revolution.

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/WebPRByCountryLang/F6DA533C809195F780257A60003F1469>

Forest Explorer App now available for Wales

The Forest Explorer App, previously only available for woodlands in England is now available in a bilingual edition for forests in Wales.

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8EJFYs> for iOS and Android.

FC Biosecurity Guidance issued

Biosecurity is the cornerstone of the strategy to reduce spread of diseases of trees. We all love visiting woodlands other than our own, be it on a SWOG meeting, or attending a woodfair, or just visiting public woodlands in other areas. BUT PLEASE FOLLOW THIS if you are visiting woodland sites for woodfairs, or going to SWOG meetings. Cleaning your boots and the wheels of your vehicles can be extremely effective.

See <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/AllByUNID/9FCF05F292AE021A80257A4D00509A0E> and download the document on [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf/\\$file/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf/$file/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf)

Arboricultural Association releases warning for Oak Processionary Moth inside M25

Be aware if working in oak trees within the M25 of the potential for OPM. This caterpillar is a defoliator of oaks, both common species and Evergreen Oak and Sweet Chestnut. It has been a problem in West London since it was first reported in 2006. These caterpillars are posing an increasing threat to humans as their range is being extended by the warming European climate. The Forestry Commission has issued a [pdf](#) outlining how to identify the moth and what should be done if you spot one.

Sightings of caterpillars or nests must be reported to the Forestry Commission's Forest Research Agency.



<http://www.trees.org.uk/aa/news/WARNING-The-Oak-Processionary-Moth-96.html>

Wildlife Surveys—Participants needed!

The Birds and Garden Berries Study begins on Sunday 30th September and survey packs are being sent out just ahead of this. *If you would like to take part in the study or find out more about the project then please email us at gbw@bto.org.* The study has three components, the first of which looks at [berry availability](#) throughout the winter. The second examines [how quickly berries are removed](#) from plants and the third looks at [which birds take berries](#). We hope that you will contribute to all three components but any contribution would be particularly welcome.

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw/about/background/projects/berries>

The Woodland Trust are also looking for more participants for their Nature's Calendar Phenology survey. This survey helps to record key specific events from year to year, such as the fruiting dates of trees, or the arrival and departure dates for migratory birds. This in turn helps to track the effects of climate change and other factors on wildlife. See <http://www.naturescalendar.org.uk/research/phenology.htm>

If you'd like to know which other surveys are taking place and would like your help, please see our March 2012 newsletter.

Autumn Woodland Activities—Knitting, Cooking, Identification Sheets and Play Ideas

Like knitting? Some woodland knitting projects from the Woodland Trust – a badger hat, a scarf with a leaf pattern, and knitted oak leaves

<http://visitwoods.org.uk/en/visit-woods/for-nature/Pages/autumn-fun.aspx#.UGBoXq7WfN4>

On the same page are also some great recipes, and activity sheets for the Autumn woodland with fungi identification sheets, autumn leaf recognition sheets, den-building instructions and play activities for children.



There are many more autumn activities from the

Woodland Trust Nature Detectives site <http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/autumn/?>

[utma=59620786.1075080563.1348339196.1348484244.1348495454.3&utmb=59620786.2.9.1348495469234&utmc=59620786&utmz=59620786.1348484244.2.2.utmcsr=facebook|utmccn=autumn|utmcmd=social&utmvl=173009895](http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/autumn/?utma=59620786.1075080563.1348339196.1348484244.1348495454.3&utmb=59620786.2.9.1348495469234&utmc=59620786&utmz=59620786.1348484244.2.2.utmcsr=facebook|utmccn=autumn|utmcmd=social&utmvl=173009895)

RFS Excellence in Forestry Awards 2013

Following on from the success of the 2012 competition, next year, the RFS Excellence in Forestry competition will visit the North West and the West Midlands covering Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, the West Midlands, Staffordshire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Lancashire, Cumbria and the Isle of Man. There is a category for small woodlands, so if you live in these areas, consider entering your woodland.

Details are available now on <http://www.rfs.org.uk/involved/RFS-Excellence-in-Forestry-Awards-overview>

Alternative Silvicultural Systems

Well-known RFS member and past winner of the RFS James Cup, Dr. Scott McG. Wilson, is carrying out a review of recent adoption of alternative silvicultural systems to clear-cutting (ATC) in Britain, sponsored by the Scottish Forestry Trust and the Forestry Commission. This will produce a technical report on key issues, supported by development of illustrated case-studies and an up-to-date locational register of examples. Central aspects to be examined will include location and extent of adoption, silvicultural context and systems, owner/manager motivations for adoption, monitoring and outcomes. If you manage woodlands using any system not involving clear-cutting, Scott is interested to hear from you by the end of October 2012, and, where appropriate, will arrange to discuss with you by telephone or visit your woodlands. He can best be contacted at scottmcgwilson@hotmail.com or Mobile: 07798-693303.

Forest Education Network – first bulletin published Forest Education Network (FEN)

The first FEN bulletin is now out. Set up in April this year, the FEN is the successor to the Forest Education Ini-

tiative (FEI) in England. The FEN aims to bring together those with an interest in all aspects of forest education; promote the sharing of good practice; improve communication; and help create opportunities for, and raise standards in delivery. The Network will be developed and run by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (CLOtC) in partnership with the Natural Route. The purpose of this pioneer bulletin is to update the Network on news, projects and initiatives related to trees, woods and forests including the activity of other members.

See www.lotc.org.uk/2012/07/forest-education-network-bulletin-issue-1/

Response to Independent Forestry Panel—Next Steps

DEFRA have published the first of series of surveys to help them frame response to Independent Forestry Panel. See <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/forestry2012>

A National Stakeholder forum has also been set up to help inform the response which the Government expects will be delivered early in 2013. Updates will appear on www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel/

CONFOR England Conference

This is a major national conference, a landmark event to discuss the findings of the Independent Forestry Panel <http://www.confor.org.uk/NewsAndEvents/Events.aspx?pid=25&id=1112>

The flyer and booking form are here http://www.confor.org.uk/Upload/Documents/16_ConforEnglandconference2012Bookingform.pdf

Publications from England's Community Forests Network

The England's Community Forests Network (CFN) have a lot of useful publications online, which include their response to the Independent Forestry Panel report.

See <http://www.communityforest.org.uk/publicationsandevents.htm>



Woodland Trust WoodWise publications

Wood Wise Summer 2012 edition focuses on management of woodland for endangered species – legal and practical aspects <http://www.scribd.com/doc/104854733/Wood-Wise-Summer-2012> The Spring edition is also available, and this examines the management of open habitats within woodland <http://www.scribd.com/doc/95282959/Wood-Wise-Spring-2012>

Tree Diseases Summary by the BBC

BBC's Mark Kinver writes about tree diseases and pests threatening our woodlands and trees. This is a very clear, brief, and well-written set of summaries of the new diseases threatening our trees and what we can do about it.

See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-19167307> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-19197660>

Consultation on Wildlife Law Reform

This is important because it WILL affect you if you own a small woodland, and in particular if you permit others to hunt in your wood. It introduces the concept of vicarious liability which makes YOU liable for the actions of those you employ or sanction to hunt in the woods - http://lawcommission.justice.gov.uk/docs/LCCP206_Wildlife_Law_consultation_paper_summary_%28web%29.pdf

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

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

Courses in forthcoming months include mammal identification and radio tracking.

Dorset Centre for Rural Skills

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

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

Cotswolds Rural Skills Courses

Include grassland management and drystone walling. Details on.

<http://www.cotswoldsraonh.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. They also run online ecology courses.

www.acornecology.co.uk

Forest Garden Show-elstrode

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

www.forestgarden.info

Badger Cull Licences Issued in England after High Court Challenge Fails

The first Badger Cull Licences have been issued for pilot culls in England after a challenge to its legality failed in the High Court. The culls will be funded and carried out by farmers or those acting on their behalf, under licence. You do not have to give permission for the cull to take place on your land if you do not want to. The Natural England web site states "Culling can only take place on land where the farmer and/or landowner has given permission for it to take place and has signed an agreement giving access to those who are carrying out the cull. No one can come on to your land to carry out the culling of badgers under this policy/licence without your permission." Free shooting of badgers is not a method that has been used in previous cull, and there are concerns about whether this will be effective and humane, which is one reason for this pilot (which will not evaluate the effect on bovine TB).



The cull is extremely controversial, and deeply unpopular, particularly in the light of the failure of the scientific evidence to support a cull, and the distinct possibility that bovine TB will be spread by a cull. Vaccination can be carried out by qualified personnel and is an alternative and is available via <http://www.brockvaccination.co.uk/> among others.

There are also significant concerns about public safety, particularly for those who enjoy the countryside at night—bat-watchers, bird-watchers and those walking dogs during long winter nights. Some organisations have already curtailed outdoor activities at night because of the cull. There are also concerns that removal of badgers from an ecosystem will cause other effects due to disturbance of the usual predator-prey relationships, and indirect effects.

If you are concerned about badger culling in your area, please see Natural England for the official FAQ at <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/species/btbfaq.aspx>

If you would like to read the original scientific report underpinning the decision to cull badgers please read the Bourne report on http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/atoz/tb/isg/report/final_report.pdf. The two key conclusions of this report were "*First, while badgers are clearly a source of cattle TB, careful evaluation of our own and others' data indicates that badger culling can make no meaningful contribution to cattle TB control in Britain. Indeed, some policies under consideration are likely to make matters worse rather than better. Second, weaknesses in cattle testing regimes mean that cattle themselves contribute significantly to the persistence and spread of disease in all areas where TB occurs, and in some parts of Britain are likely to be the main source of infection. Scientific findings indicate that the rising incidence of disease can be reversed, and geographical spread contained, by the rigid application of cattle-based control measures alone.*"

TeamBadger.org is a coalition of groups opposed to the badger cull, and they have set up a petition aimed at ensuring this controversial policy is debated again by MP's at

The Field Studies Council run a wide range of courses for individuals, families and professionals at their centres around the UK. Courses of interest to woodland owners include tree identification, woodland management and woodland ecology, and wildlife surveying and recording techniques. See their web site for details of all courses

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

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>

Coastal Survival and Bushcraft Courses

Available from the Coastal Survival School in North West Wales. Courses include 1-day, 2-day and 5-day survival skills courses for individuals and families. See web site for more details.

<http://www.coastalsurvival.com/>

Permaculture Courses from Patrick Whitefield, including how to read the landscape

http://www.patrickwhitefield.co.uk/reading_the_landscape_info.htm

<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/38257>—at the time of writing this had 99,000 signatories, with 100,000 needed to trigger a debate.

Looking for Woodland Neighbours?

There is a new section on the SWOG forum to help you find your woodland neighbours. If you would like to contact your neighbours, and don't know how to find them, please use the forum. You don't have to have purchased your woodland through woodlands.co.uk – any woodlands, or any landowners looking to contact their neighbours can do so through the forum. See <http://www.swog.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=34&t=1286> and <http://www.swog.org.uk/forum/viewforum.php?f=34>

Do you want to arrange a meeting or walk for SWOG members in your woodland?

You can now do this via the SWOG forum – a great way for people to get in touch, offer a walk through their woodlands, and share experiences. <http://www.swog.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=35&t=1273>

More information about landscape-scale conservation in Kent from Mark Pritchard.

As a follow-up to the August newsletter, Mark Pritchard writes

“A good newsletter as always. I was particularly interested in the piece on adopting a landscape scale approach to conservation as it echoes our approach and ethos; indeed it may well be that the connecting “not that special” pieces of land are the vital ones.

With that in mind we and our sister partnerships across Kent have excellent contacts into many such landscape schemes already. Not only are there the AONBs (and the RHI scheme in Kent for example) but most district councils are now working on Green Infrastructure plans. We, for instance, work closely with Sevenoaks DC, KWT and the Sevenoaks Living Landscapes Project, and have also made +ve contact with the Highways Agency whose 'soft estate', while a barrier for some species can be a corridor for others. We are closely tied to Parish councils who own many parcels of land and are often happy to be involved in wider schemes (and can often front up funding bids). Finally we have significant landowner knowledge (which we can sometimes share) and would also advocate using <http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/> which can be a good starting point for tracking down landowners through agri-environment schemes”

If you are in Kent, and interested in landscape scale conservation, please see <http://www.kentcountryside.org.uk/>

Courses and Events

Get Your Woodland Working for You

Amanda Ingham, Land Advice Projects Manager in North Hampshire has written to us with news of two interesting workshops coming up in October looking at how to maximise the economic benefits of your woodland. Using recognised experts from a range of backgrounds the workshops will help provide delegates with the confidence to make and implement the right management decisions for their particular woodlands.

Woodland is a valuable habitat for wildlife as well as a source of timber, fuel and prod-



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

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

BTCV London are running courses on woodland management and coppicing.

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

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

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

<http://www.woodlandskills.com/#/courses/4530829941>

Abbots Living Wood offers a range of green woodworking courses

http://www.living-wood.co.uk/2011_course_dates.html

First Responder Course from Emergency Life Support Team—as reviewed by Tracy and Mike. Learn first aid in the outdoor environment and get HSE accreditation as a First Aider too.

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

ucts. Added value can also come in the form of social forestry enterprises, recreation and education. However, research shows that only 44% of woodland in the AONB is under active management. This workshop looks at maximising the economic benefits in woodland in order to promote long term economically and environmentally sustainable management.

In order to cover the most relevant material for various audiences the topic will be covered in two workshops;

- Wednesday 10th October is particularly suitable for those involved in the management of larger or more commercial woodlands
- Thursday 11th October is suited to those managing smaller or more community led woodlands.

This workshop is part of a series of workshops North Wessex Downs AONB has contracted the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to deliver in order to promote environmentally and economically sustainable woodland management.

We are keen to involve as many woodland owners and managers from across the AONB as possible so please forward this email to relevant contacts, woodland owners and contractors. If you would like to attend please reply by Wednesday 3rd October, you can download the flyer [here](#) or see <http://www.swog.org.uk/events/get-your-woodland-working-for-you/>

Phil Hopkinson Malvern Coppicing Courses

Phil Hopkinson at Malvern Coppicing has written to us with news of some coppicing courses coming up for those in the area who want to learn new woodland skills.

2 day coppicing courses

20-21st October,

10-11 November

The two day coppicing courses I run are an introduction to coppicing. They are a mixture of theory sessions which include tree identification but mainly practical sessions.

The training courses start with a walk through the woods looking at various compartments that have been coppiced over the last twelve years, over-stood coppice, and some coniferous blocks. The benefits of coppicing, ring barking and the importance of glades and rides are shown. We look at the differences between native deciduous woodland and conifer habitats and learning tree ID. Aspects covered on the course include planning the work area, looking at various devices, building work breaks and stacks.

Please visit the [website](#) to find out more

Introduction to Small Woodland Management

Venue: Green Wood Centre, Coalbrookdale, Shropshire Dates: 10 & 11 November 2012

Cost: £60

Heartwoods are offering subsidised places on this two day Introduction to Small Woodland Management course for woodland owners and forestry workers in the West Midlands region. The course is designed for woodland owners and managers who want to create a woodland management plan. The course investigates the different woodland attributes which effect woodland management decisions and covers the following main areas.



Greenwood Centre

The Greenwood Centre offers a wide range of woodland management and wood craft courses the whole year round. Based in Shropshire.

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

Black Country Living Landscape –

courses including wild-flower plug planting and rustic fence-building
http://www.bcll.org.uk/whats_happening/events.html

The Bulworth Project

These SWOG members offer a range of courses to suit your own needs on the subject of charcoal burning.

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

Greenwood Days

Offer courses to public and corporate groups on green woodworking and a wide range of creative arts in Leicestershire

<http://www.greenwood-days.co.uk/>

Woodland Skills Centre

Courses in coppice and greenwood crafts- Woodland management, basket-making, Chair-making, timber-frame building, Wood carving, coracles, oak swill baskets, Make and use pole-lathe and shave-horse, Charcoal, home chain-saw, hedge-laying. Bushcraft courses and Family Holidays.

www.woodlandskillscentre.co.uk or 01745710626

Mark Fisher Art

Woodland-based art days for all abilities

www.markfisherart.co.uk

- Physical characteristics of small woodlands
- Woodland types and management systems
- Legal issues relating to small woodlands
- Woodland grants
- Wildlife and woodland resources

The course is classroom based at the Green Wood Centre with visits to different local woodlands. The tutor Jim Waterson has many years' experience as a woodland manager and lectures at Harper Adams University. The course will be tailored to individuals needs and participants are encouraged to bring and share details of woodlands they are familiar with. Refreshments and lunch are provided. Limited places available so booking is essential

Contact Harriet Wood for more information or booking on T: 01952 435860 harrietwood@smallwoods.org.uk

Field Studies Council Courses—at Flatford Mill and Epping Forest

EPPING FOREST FSC Courses

A variety of courses including Fungi Identification, a History of British Woodlands, and Hedge Laying – see <http://www.field-studies-council.org/centres/eppingforest/leisurelearning/natural-history-courses.aspx>

FLATFORD MILL FSC Courses

Including Fungi ID – from Geoff Kibby himself. Also birdwatching courses and winter tree ID. See <http://www.field-studies-council.org/centres/flatfordmill/leisurelearning/natural-history-courses.aspx>

Fungi ID course from NE Wales Wildlife Trust

This course runs over two days, first on fungal ID, second a foray 6/7th October <http://www.newwildlife.org.uk/events/2012-10/>

Fungi Walk in Combwell Woods, Kent High Weald AONB

13th Oct: Fungi walk: A morning presentation on fungi identification and biological recording by expert Bryan Bullen followed by an afternoon walk through Combwell Wood to identify and record species.

You need to book your place online directly with the KHW, which you can do here:

<http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/org/1839050869?s=9762714>

Warning about eating foraged fungi

If you go on fungal forays, please make sure you follow the advice on safety regarding eating the fungi you have collected http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/N11/Newsroom/DG_191079

Sustainable horticulture courses

Ecological courses from general interest to postgraduate level are available at Schumacher College – includes courses on natural well-being, sustainable horticulture and natural building <http://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/>

Photography Courses

Two courses on Sunday 7th October. If you live in the South East, there is a course from FSC Epping Forest entitled Autumn Photography running on Sunday 7th October <http://www.field-studies-council.org/individuals-and-families/courses/2012/ef/photography-in-epping-forest-in-autumn-34889.aspx>

If you live in the Midlands, we have a course at Alvecote Wood entitled Introduction to Photography Sunday 7th October. The course is only £20 per person including tea and biscuits. See www.alvecotewood.co.uk for more details.

Scottish Ornithologists Club Annual Conference

Will take place on 26-28th November at Aviemore—for Scottish birdwatchers. See <http://www.the-soc.org.uk/conferences.htm>

Species Recovery Trust—Winter Tree ID Courses

Courses on winter tree identification in Salisbury, 4th December, and Natural History Museum, London on 31st January 2013. Details on <http://www.speciesrecoverytrust.org.uk/Events.html>



Ancient Woodland Restoration at Brede High Wood, 12th October

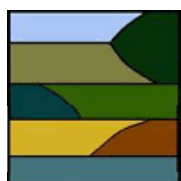
Matt Pitts, Woodland Officer from the High Weald AONB has some more great workshops available for those in the High Weald area. This one looks at the process of restoring and ancient woodland with Tim Hodges and Dave Bonsall. See the flyer on the SWOG web site for more details.

http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Flyer_A4_detailed_paws_event.pdf

Deer Management Workshop

Bedgebury Forest Visitor Centre, Thursday 8th November—a course by High Weald AONB, with talks from Forestry Commission and The Deer Initiative, including information about FC grants for deer management. Details and flyer on the SWOG web site at http://www.swog.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Flyer_A4_detailed_deer_event.pdf

ForestComms.org—A new social network for tree people



Forest Communications

ForestComms.org is a completely new social network for people who loves forests, woods and trees that has been recently launched in the UK, a collaboration between SaveOurWoods and European Trees.

It is a mixture between a forum, a status-updating site (such as Facebook and Twitter, and can link and synchronise status between both), a photo sharing site, a site to obtain advice, a blog and a sort of online party by virtue of the embedded Folk Radio function. The front page pulls together all the feeds, showing up the most interesting photos, blog posts, discussions, videos, and

If you sign up to the network, the first thing you are invited to do is to set up your own home page, with a photo, if you want, a profile, if you want. Your own page is sort of a mixture of Facebook, Twitter and something else—since you can update your ForestComms, Facebook and Twitter status from the same status box. The page displays something akin to a Facebook timeline, but also different. You can upload photos for public viewing, and organise them into albums in a process similar to Facebook.

There are other things on here too. The site includes a library, with links to articles and PDF's on the subject of forestry and trees, a general forum, a chat-room (which has the ability to set up different rooms, for chats on different topics), and the ability to join groups (some by invitation, some open to all).

There is also a blogger: you can set up your own blog, share your posts on Facebook, and follow blogs from other network members. This facility is open to all, so you can share anything you like with fellow woodland folk via this blogger. At the moment, it doesn't link to other blogs, such as WordPress or Blogger, and that is a weakness, as I already have an established blog on Blogger, and don't really want to transfer, or have to make posts onto both. If a networked blogs feature was added, so these blogs could be pulled in if you would like, that would significantly enhance the site.

You can also upload and promote your events to the network in a similar manner to that of a Facebook page—indeed, you can also share events to Facebook.

And you can do all of this while listening to the Folk Radio stream: and if you like the tunes, you can buy them via Amazon, as well as rate them.

The site is in its very early days, but looks like becoming a great community for those involved in woodlands, forests and trees. It isn't just for small woodland owners, so will attract a wider variety of people from the SWOG forum, but some of the members are extremely knowledgeable, and some of the blog posts are already looking very interesting.

Yes, you can use other networks, but I often find that requests for information get lost in the other noise among friends (on Facebook) or followers (on Twitter). I also find that I have missed tweets containing very useful and informative links, particularly to reports or journal articles, because my timeline is busy. This network seems to get over all of that, and give you a way to pull in information, participate, share expertise, and join a like-minded community. It has been very professionally put together, and is definitely worth checking out.

Woodfairs in 2012

Only a few left in 2012—an up to date list is available at woodfairs.co.uk

Woodfairs in Scotland

Peebles Wood Market

21st and 22nd October 2012

Tweed Valley

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

Woodfairs in England

Ickworth House Suffolk, woodfair

6th and 7th October 2012

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ickworth>

Surrey Hills woodfair

6th and 7th October

Birtley House, Bramley, Guildford, GU5 0LB

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

On the blogs at woodlands.co.uk and woodlandsTV

These are the latest blogs from Woodlands.co.uk and videos on woodlandsTV. Please have a look and comment upon them, as they make very interesting reading.

[Butterflies and winter temperatures](#) ~ by Lewis

Lewis discusses the potential impact of climate change on butterfly species distribution, particularly on the balance between two-brood and one-brood butterfly species. Interesting post.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/butterflies-and-winter-temperatures/>

[Cooking pizza on a campfire in a woodland](#) ~ by Angus

Well, if you can't do without that pizza and the delivery van can't get into your wood, what do you do? Follow this post to find out how you can make your own on your camp fire!

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/cooking-pizza-on-a-campfire-in-a-woodland/>

[The Natural History Museum – a summer walk](#) ~ by Chris

This blog post describes two new videos from the Natural History Museum—The Summer Walk and The Bee Orchid.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/films-videos-from-the-natural-history-museum/>

[Open day at Butterbeare Wood](#) ~ by Mike S

Mike describes an open day for family, friends and neighbouring woodland owners in his woodland.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/open-day-at-butterbeare-wood/>

[Making an exercise trail in your woodland for “parcours” in the forest](#) ~ by Angus

Angus describes a wonderful initiative to provide exercise trails through your wood—an outdoor gymnasium.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/making-an-exercise-trail-in-your-woodland-for-parcours-in-the-forest/>

[The loss of arable plants](#) ~ by Chris

A previous blog commented on the loss of roadside plants, but arable plants are being lost too. Chris comments on the loss of

arable plants, and the impact this has on bird species. The problem is particularly acute in the north of England and Scotland. A good post to read.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/the-loss-of-arable-plants/>

[Horse chestnut leaf miner moth – help needed](#) ~ by Lewis

The CONKER TREE SCIENCE project [http://](http://www.conkertreescience.org.uk/)

www.conkertreescience.org.uk/ is asking for volunteers to take part in a nationwide survey. This project is run from the NERC's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the University of Hull. All that is involved is checking a conker tree near you for the characteristic damage that birds make when they peck out the larvae from the leaf – leaving a 'gash' in the leaf surface.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/horse-chestnut-leaf-miner-moth-help-needed/>

[Make your own 'bug hotel'](#) ~ by Stuart

A fabulous activity for children, Stuart takes you through the steps needed to make a bug hotel, and provide habitat for a whole variety of important but unsung little creatures.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-activities/make-your-own-bug-hotel/>

[Wetlands, woodlands and watery animals](#) ~ by Angus

Angus describes a visit to the London Wetlands Centre, and how this has been transformed from a sewage farm into an important habitat for a large range of creatures.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/wetlands-woodlands-and-watery-animals/>



SWOG Meeting—Kent Wildlife Trust, 28th October 2012

Kent Wildlife Trust will be running an exciting 2 partcourse which is free to SWOG members.

The first one is on Sunday 28th October at Tyland Barn in Maidstone. It will take a look at the broad principles of woodland in Kent: types of woodland, why they're special, ancient woodland, designations/ BAP habitats, key wildlife groups. Then cover the general principles of woodland management such as coppicing, retention of dead wood habitats, creation of glades and path management, woodland restoration



It will also explain how to write a simple management plan and which grants are available and felling licences are needed to help you manage your woodland.

Important for small woodland owners, it will look at Opportunities and common issues in plotted woods: sharing contractor costs, joint tasks, access rights, tracing owners and lesson learnt by groups such as BWAG Bredhurst Woodland Action group.

There will then be a site visit to a woodland where there is woodland management in progress.

<http://www.swog.org.uk/swog-events/swog-meeting-kent-wildlife-trust-sunday-28th-october-maidstone/>

Contributions Gratefully Received

This newsletter is YOUR newsletter, not Sarah's blog (*Editor: I already have one of those!*), so we would very much welcome your contributions to it. You don't have to write a lot—nor do you have to be a literary genius. But what we WOULD like is some of your enthusiasm for your woods, and the things you do there, to come over to others. Have you recently staged an event at your woods? Have you recently come across a solution to a problem and would like to share it with others? Do you run any courses in your woods?

Or have you attended something elsewhere—a woodfair, a SWOG meeting, a woodland management or crafts course? Are you creative? Do you write poetry or music based on your woods—you are welcome to share links to videos and write something about your work.

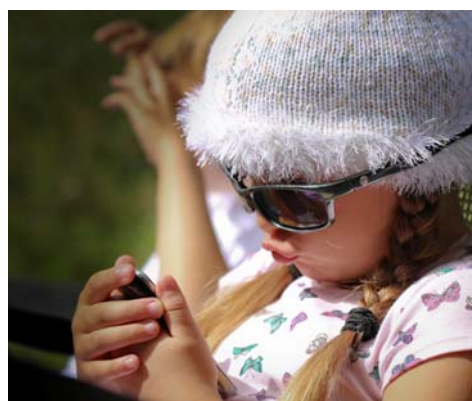
And we would LOVE your photographs—of your wood, people enjoying the woods, people working in the woods, the wildlife, the trees, the plants....really, anything!

Or do you have a professional skill you'd like to describe and pass on? Or have you bought any really bling new kit recently, and would like to review it for the Newsletter. Book reviews are also very much welcomed—if you read something you loved, or alternatively something you thought was a waste of money, then let us know and pass it on.

If you are running any future events in your woods, and would like to drum up support, please tell us—we'll feature it in the newsletter for you.

Please send any contributions to sarah@swog.org.uk

The photo is my sister in law's granddaughter enjoying our open day and texting about it too!



Newsletter - October 2012

About SWOG

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

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

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

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www.swog.org.uk

Small Woodland Owners' Group Forum

On the SWOG Forum



We welcomed the new members **carnog**, who is a horselogger, and **bearwood** to the forum this month. **Chuckypig** also joined, and is still looking for a woodland.

Bushcraftneil is looking for woodland in Bristol/South Wales where he can run bushcraft courses—pay by the day. See the forum if you can help.

Pithillquarry posted about yet another planning difficulty regarding a wooden tool-shed—it does seem as if planning issues are a perennial problem, with inconsistency between planning authorities.

Mattwebster asked for advice on the construction of woodland ponds. If you can help, visit the forum.

Tomds asked about value of woodland, and in particular a plot that he is viewing. Seems value depends on a lot of things, particularly location and privacy.

Tgsands wrote about difficulties with his neighbours. Another perennial topic. Particularly when combined with a prior notification planning application—advice on how to deal with twitchy neighbours would be appreciated on the forum.

The area of the forum where you can meet your woodland neighbours (particularly relevant for lotted woods) has had a quiet start. If you have a small plot in a larger woodland, this is a great way to seek out and meet your neighbours. Please visit it!

Rich has also posted a section in the forum

about how to organize a SWOG meeting—so now you can organize less formal meetings, or a formal overnight camping weekend or course, or anything in between. Please read the advice, and get started—2013 will be upon us before we know it.

Brian Mitchell has posted a long post about problems with tree diseases in his newly-planted wood. He has given some detailed descriptions of the problems, so if you have any experience, or can help, then please visit the forum.

The Bramble Wars thread rumbles on—if you can share your technique for dealing with them, then please contribute—they are a perennial and thorny problem.

Oldclaypaws asked about coppicing oak. Can you do it, and how successful is it, particularly with sessile oak? If you have any experience you can share, then please visit the forum.

Tomds asked whether we could identify some trees for him—coppiced hornbeam was the rapid answer. The forum works, so if you have a question, give it a go!

Tomds also asked about fencing—should he fence his plot? There are arguments for and against, particularly if it has not been fenced in the past. What is your experience? How do make sure all your visitors are the ones you want, and treat your woodland and property with respect? Have your say on the forum.

Tracy has a FREE BOOK for anybody who will review it. On Scottish Hazel. PLEASE visit the forum and offer to review this book. Also if you haven't received Tracy's recent e-mails, then please get in touch and help her update the list.

Splodger has some self-set birch saplings on offer—if you could use some, please contact via the forum.

Next Newsletter: November 2012

Contributions for the November Newsletter need to be with me by Thursday 25th October. Please send contributions to sarah@swog.org.uk. Thank you.