



**Small Woodland Owners' Group
Newsletter September 2017**

Autumn courses

Tree tech – useful woodland apps

The Trump Forest

SWOG meeting at the Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari, North Wales 28 October 2017 10am-4pm

SWOG members in Wales may already be familiar with the **Woodland Skills Centre**, which offers a highly-regarded range of courses in coppice and greenwood crafts, as well as workshops on woodland management, bushcraft and many other traditional crafts.

Owner Rod Waterfield has kindly offered to host a day for SWOG members, which will



provide a taster of some of the courses on offer, and a chance to tour their award-winning woodland.

The day will be held at Warren Woods in the Clywdian Range AONB, in north-east Wales, where the Woodland Skills Centre has 50 acres of woodland and a permanent forest school site.



In 2015 the Warren, which has been owned by the Waterfield family for more than 30 years, earned the RFS Excellence in Forestry Community Woodlands Gold Award. The Woodland Skills Centre is a not-for-profit enterprise and provides a wide range of resources for individuals and groups.

SWOG members are invited to visit the centre on 28 October. There will be

- A tour of the woodland to learn how it is managed for wildlife, people and profit
- A chance to visit the facilities of the timber enterprises
- A tour of the heritage orchard, vineyard and allotments

This is a free event and participants are asked to bring their own lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided. If you would like to make a week-end of it, there is camping available on site for £5 a night, with access to kitchen, shower, w.c. and meeting room in the new timber-framed Centre building.

It's a lovely part of the world and if you would like to attend, please email judith@swog.org.uk.

Last chance to take part . . .

The Sylva Foundation developed the British Woodlands Survey to provide a voice to the thousands of woodland owners and forestry professionals in Britain, with the aim of influencing the development of policy, practice and research which is fit for purpose.

The views and opinions of woodland owners are critical and we hope as many owners as possible will take part.

The survey is open *until the end of September*. BWS2017 is led by researchers from Forest Research, Sylva Foundation, University of Oxford and the Woodland Trust. Take the survey here: www.sylva.org.uk/bws2017





Bentley Woodfair 15–17 September

We're looking forward to seeing lots of SWOG members at the **Bentley Woodfair** at the Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum near Halland in Sussex.

WoodFair is Bentley's biggest annual event. It has a great range of exhibits, activities, demonstrations and seminars, all within or related to the woodland and timber industry. There is a wide range of demonstrations, exhibitors and stalls from traditional woodland crafts, educational activities, trade exhibits to forestry demos. Regular prices are listed below, but SWOG members can obtain discounted entry for only **£10 per person by downloading this voucher.**

Gate prices: Adults £14

Senior citizen £12

Children (3-15 years) £10

Family Ticket (2 adults plus up to 3 children) £47



Unmanaged woodlands: the hidden threat

The latest update of **Forestry Commission England's Corporate Plan Performance Indicators** (30 June), published this month, shows the figure for woodlands under management has remained at 58 out of every 100 hectares for three years. In other words, the area of woodland under management has not increased and the Royal Forestry Society (RFS) believes that this could threaten the health of our woodlands.

‘Managed woodlands are healthy woodlands,’ says Chief Executive Simon Lloyd, ‘Good

management promotes biodiversity, helps prevent the spread of diseases to neighbouring woodlands, and can mitigate against damage by pests such as grey squirrels and deer.

‘Headlines tend to linger on the lamentable lack of new plantings – which fall well short of Government targets, but it is also important that we do not overlook the potential timber and wood fuel resource locked up in those 42 % of woodlands not in management and that we value what they could bring to the environment and local economies.’

The RFS has called for more effective incentives for landowners to bring existing woodlands into management.

Winter courses

Autumn courses at the Woodland Skills Centre, north Wales

A complete list of courses and prices are available on the **Woodland Skills Centre** website. SWOG members can claim a discount of 10% off the advertised cost or 15% if booking more than one place.

September

- 2–3 Growing and using medicinal herbs
- 9–10 OCN Level 3 Social Forestry Practitioner (Part 1)
- 23–24 OCN Level 3 Social Forestry Practitioner (Part 2)
- 27–30 OCN level 3 Mindfulness in a Woodland Setting

October

- 1 Rush baskets
- 1 Make a shave horse
- 7–8 Home chainsaw usage
- 13–15 Make a rustic chair
- 14–15 Make a pole lathe
- 14–15 Make willow masks



- 21–22 Make a traditional shave horse
- 21 Make a rustic stool
- 28 Gypsy crafts 1
- 29 Gypsy crafts 2
- 28–29 Introduction to green woodwork (£125; two-day)

November

- 4 Make bird feeders
- 5 Make nest boxes
- 4–5 Hedge-laying
- 11 Managing a small woodland
- 12 Practical woodland tasks
- 18–19 Coppice crafts

All these courses are run at the Woodland Skills Centre in Bodfari, north Wales. There is free camping with access to the Centre (kitchen, w.c, shower, heated meeting room) or various local B&Bs. The programme is regularly reviewed and the fully updated programme is at www.woodlandskillscentre.uk



PROMOTING THE WISE MANAGEMENT OF TREES AND WOODS

Royal Forestry Society (RFS) 'Wise about Woods' training courses return in September with a new two-day course on continuous cover forestry in the uplands.

Back by popular demand but in new locations are one-day courses on measuring trees and woodlands, grading timber and an essential guide to caring for your woods.

Spaces are limited to ensure small group sizes. For more information and booking details visit the **RFS website**.

Essentials for measuring trees and woods

Friday, 1 September 2017, Yewfield Baptist Chapel, Hawkshead Hill, Cumbria

Continuous cover forestry in the uplands

Two-day course 19 and 20 September 2017, Woodlands Hall, Llanfrwog, Ruthin

Grading and measuring your timber

Thursday, 21 September 2017, Whitney Sawmill, Old Station Yard, Hereford

Essential guide to caring for your wood

Wednesday, 27 September 2017, St Mary's Hall, Overton, Hampshire

The Ncfed Weekend Gathering & AGM



National Coppice
Federation
www.ncfed.org.uk

at

Ruskin Mill College, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire.

Saturday 21st - Sunday 22nd October 2017.

This year's event is being hosted by the Avon and South Cotswolds Coppice Group in the beautiful Horsley Valley in Nailsworth, South of Stroud. This year, the weekend will have a theme based on edge tools in the woods. There will be demonstrations / "have a go" sessions on:

- ~Scythes in the woods
- ~Repair and sharpening of billhooks
- ~Big tree felling with axes and crosscut saws
- ~Site visits
- ~Evening talk by Bob Burgess: *"A Load of Old Bill Hooks."*
- ~Axe hewing
- ~Coppicing with axes
- ~Large billhook display
- ~Tool sales
- ~Great food and pay bar

Cost will only be £35 for members of Ncfed and £50 for non members. This covers camping on site and all the weekend's food.



This promises to be a brilliant weekend where coppice workers, green woodworkers, and woodland managers etc can meet up to learn, talk and discuss the issues facing the industry, whilst also having a great time!

The full itinerary and information on bookings will be up on the Ncfed website in the early Summer.



Avon and
South
Cotswolds
Coppice
Group

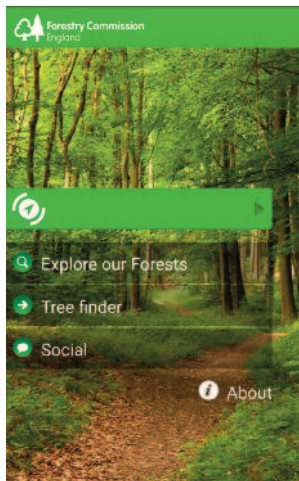


...custodians of our native woodlands and traditional crafts.

www.ascog.co.uk

Although many people relish their time in the woods as an opportunity to get away from screens and technology, few of us venture out without our smartphones, and they can prove very useful. There are many apps to help with the identification of trees, animals (both vertebrate and invertebrate), pests and diseases, as well as tree measurement and species recording.

Unless stated otherwise, all those listed below are available free via Apple's App Store for iPhones, and/or Google Play for Android phones. Click on the links or headings to visit the relevant websites.



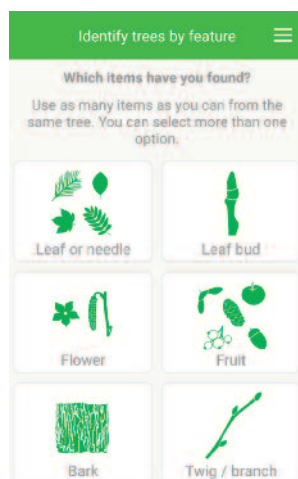
Forestry Commission Forest Xplorer

Billed as 'the forest in your pocket', this app locates Forestry Commission woodland sites and provides a comprehensive list of information about each site. Location, facilities, trail maps and opening times (and mobile

phone coverage) can be saved for use offline. The Tree Finder is a simple list of 28 common tree species, which allows ID by bark, leaf, needles or seeds. Users can also connect with the Forestry Commissions Twitter and Facebook pages.

Woodland Trust Tree ID

This is a useful app with a really extensive list of British trees. Clear photographs illustrate each species and taxonomic details are enhanced by useful facts from science, folklore and history. The app can either be used to browse the list of species or



as a tree identifier. Users are asked a series of questions about the characteristics of the tree or leaf they are trying to identify. By a process of elimination, the app should arrive at the correct species. There is a myriad of details about the usage of various timbers and the threats posed by pests and diseases. All in all, a comprehensive and useful app.

Forest Seedlings. £1.49

A guide to the identification of tree and shrub seedlings in Britain. The guide has been developed by scientists at Forest Research for the Forestry Commission and covers nearly 100 species commonly found in British forests and woodlands. This app will help owners and managers in identifying self-seeded shoots – a task which is often difficult, but is a key part of good woodland management. With excellent images, the app can be searched by characteristic and the location of seedlings noted using the 'field notes' feature and the phone's GPS.



Record habitat and wildlife

iRecord is a citizen science project from the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and is intended to make it easier for wildlife and environmental sightings to be collated, checked by experts and made available to support research and decision-making at local and national levels.

It works offline, so data and photographs can be uploaded when back within range of a wi-fi signal if necessary. The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology publishes several apps to record habitat, plants, grasshoppers and algae. Find the **Android versions here** and the **Apple versions here** and make a real contribution to science and conservation.

Measuring tree height

Foresters use a clinometer to measure the height of trees – a device which measures angles of elevation, tilt or depression. Astrolabes were one historic form of the device favoured by navigators, but these days you can simply download a clinometer app.



Measuring tree height is relatively straightforward once you have the correct measurements and are clear about the maths. Do not be put off – your phone can actually make the process simple. Gabriel Hemery has written a great blog about **measuring tree height using a mobile**

phone here.

Armed with a smartphone and the knowledge of how far you are from the tree to be measured, it is a reasonably simple calculation. Download the **iHandy Level app** or **Clinometer and bubble** from Google Play and follow Gabriel's instructions.

OPAL Bugs Count

This app enables users to record the bugs they have found, and more helpfully includes a useful identification feature. Backed by the Natural History Museum, it is a useful app but has not been updated since 2014 and there are formatting issues as words and text do not always adapt to the size of the phone screen.

Photography

Camera apps and indeed mobile phones vary in their capabilities, but the free **Open Camera** (Android) provides a host of extra features, including an excellent macro feature, that enables users to take close-ups of fine details such as leaves, berries or tiny creatures. For tips on wildlife photography, read this blog on the **Woodlands.co.uk** website.

The iPhone is universally praised for the quality of its camera and there does not seem to be a macro app. Maybe it doesn't need one? **Camera+** is a highly recommended app for fine-tuning the camera and is available for £2.99.

For hints and tips on woodland photography in general, the Woodland Trust has a **helpful webpage here.**



Gnarled and twisted trees

Blogs and TV

Click on the titles to be taken to the full blogs or videos on the **Woodlands.co.uk** website. The Woodlands team have surpassed themselves this month with a positive forest of interesting blogs.

Scythe training

Chris Colley tries to capture his inner Poldark and learns to scythe. He reports that it is efficient as a brushcutter on everything from long grass to bramble, but without the ear defenders, eye protection or noise and pollution.

Richard Mabey's Weeds and Beechcombings

A review of two of Mabey's books, *Beechcombings: The Narratives of Trees* (2007) and *Weeds: The Story of Outlaw Plants* (2010), which on some editions boasts the alternate subtitles, 'How Vagabond Plants Gatecrashed Civilisation and Changed the Way We Think About Nature' or 'In Defence of Nature's Most Unloved Plants'.

Beavers – reducing pollution?

Beavers were hunted to extinction in Britain by the 16th century, prized for their skins, as medicine and as food. Recently reintroduced in south-west England and Scotland, there are mixed reactions to their presence among scientists.

Woodlands TV

Backyard blacksmithing

Allan Course (the Backyard Blacksmith) demonstrates how to make a simple but effective hook from a six-inch nail using an inexpensive, mobile forge set-up – ideal for woodland working.

Bushcraft natural tools

Annette Stickler explains how she made two different types of hammers for different jobs

Moth trapping

Ben Driver, Conservation Officer with the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, led a moth-trapping evening in Cotgrave Forest, which yielded 27 species.

Another threat to bees – the Asian hornet

The Asian or yellow-legged hornet is an invasive species which feeds on honey bees, bumble bees and hover flies. Researchers believe that if its depredations continue, honey bee populations will be at risk within two decades.

Russian forestry and Siberian pine

The endless steppes of Siberia house a fifth of the world's wood reserves. Not surprisingly, Russian forestry is big business, although its share of the world market as a timber exporter has dropped over the last quarter century.

Why buy a small wood?

The owner of a tree-management company explains why he embarked on personal woodland ownership.

Siberian ideas for a log cabin

Log cabins in Siberia have developed over the centuries and are built with the materials available to deal with the extremes of temperature.

using branches from nearby trees. Not only is the process of making these tools great for honing your bushcraft skills but, they also last an incredibly long time and won't cost a penny!

Bat conservation

Jenny Clark MBE, founder of the Sussex Bat Hospital and dedicated bat conservationist and wildlife educator, shares her expertise and passion for her work in caring for grounded and injured bats.

*For those who despair of President Trump's environmental policies and attitude to climate change, the idea behind the **Trump Forest** may offer a small crumb of comfort. Working under the slogan 'Make Earth Great Again', the idea is to plant trees to offset the damage done by the president's plans.*

President Trump is concerned that the Paris Climate Agreement will damage the U.S economy, cost jobs and offer a competitive advantage to countries such as China and India. In consequence, he has said that the United States will leave the Paris Climate Agreement and he has also ordered a review of 'climate regulations' legacy from the Obama administration. The effect of these policies will be the release of greater quantities of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which will further exacerbate global warming and climate change.

A New Zealand-based organisation called Trump Forest wants to offset the extra CO₂ emissions – they are proposing to do this by encouraging the planting of millions of trees. An area the size of Kentucky (about 40000 sq miles – roughly five times the size of Wales) would need to be planted with trees to 'mop up' the extra carbon dioxide released. Trees use carbon dioxide in photosynthesis by fixing it into their biomass (in compounds such as

starch, cellulose and lignin).

The Trump Forest project was started in March this year (2017) by British climate scientist Dr Dan Price, American PhD candidate Jeff Willis and French-New Zealander Adrien Taylor (the founder of the sustainable cap company Offcut). Trump Forest was launched with an initial contribution of 1,000 native New Zealand trees funded by Offcut.

The project is gaining momentum and pledges from all around the world. In the first month some 15,000 trees were 'pledged' and the total at the end of August stands at 585,335 trees pledged. Some have paid for trees to be planted in forest restoration schemes in Madagascar, Nepal and Haiti, while others have bought and planted trees for themselves and sent a copy of the receipt (for the trees) to the project.

How to support the initiative.

The Trump Forest project would like you to pay for and plant trees anywhere in the world and then **send them the receipt** so that your contribution can be added to the global Trump Forest map. Alternatively, if you wish you can make a direct contribution to their partner **Eden Reforestation Projects via this link.**

This blog also appears on the Woodlands.co.uk website.



Woodfairs and events 2017

Confor Woodland Show

7–8 September 2017

Longleat, Wiltshire

www.confor.org.uk/about-confor

Belmont Woodfest & Country Fair

9–10 September 2017

Faversham, Kent

www.belmont-house.org

Bentley Weald Wood Fair

15–17 September 2017

Lewes, East Sussex

www.bentley.org.uk/woodfair

European Woodworking Show

16–17 September 2017

Cressing Temple Barns, Essex

www.ews2017.com

Surrey Hills Wood Fair

30 Sept–1 Oct 2017

Birtley House, Guildford

www.surreyhills.org/events



Grown in Britain Week

9–15 October 2017

www.growninbritain.org

Adding Value to Woodland Conference

12 October 2017

Blackstock Country Estate

www.growninbritain.org

European Woodworking Show 16-17 September, Cressing Temple Barns, Essex

Many regulars, who travel from all over the world, think this is the best woodworking show of its kind. Demonstration-led, with an eclectic mix of workers in wood from furniture makers to basket makers, chair makers to fabulous wood turners, carvers, bodgers, pyrographers, knife makers, marionette makers, Japanese joinery and toy makers to toolmakers, it is not to be missed.

Expect to see an eclectic mix of demonstrations and trade stalls with hand tools, small workshop machinery, sharpening supplies, finishes, tools, timber and much more including horse logging and storytelling.

For full details and advance tickets visit www.ews2017.com



Small Woods Association AGM

8 October The Sustainability Centre, Hants

The SWA's annual members' get together, AGM and tool swap will be held at the Sustainability Centre, a beautiful venue spread across 55 acres of Hampshire woodland .

The cost for both members and non-members is £15, which includes a full day of talks and activities, a light lunch and refreshments.

There will be plenty of opportunity to chat with fellow woodland enthusiasts, meet SWA staff and trustees, and discuss all things relating to woodland. For more details and to book, visit the **SWA website here**.

Grown in Britain Week 9–15 October

Woodland owners and supporters of the Grown in Britain campaign can now download promotional materials and ideas for this year's Grown in Britain Week from the campaign's website www.growninbritain.org.

Clicking on the 'Supporters' pack' link will open a document containing templates for stickers and emails, and a list of ideas for joining the celebration of 'Great British Wood'.

'It's important to us that all our supporters across the forestry sector get a chance to actively participate in Grown in Britain Week, alongside our partners in different wood-using industries and business sectors,' says campaign CEO Dougal Driver. 'We've compiled a range of information on how to take part, from ideas for

events to simple acts of support such as including a Grown in Britain Week e-mail footer on emails. There's something for everyone.'



Grown in Britain

A conference, *Adding Value to Woodland*, will be hosted jointly by Grown in Britain, the Country Land & Business Association and the Forestry Commission on 12 October. It will provide an informative, practical guide to woodland management for landowners and farmers, with a particular focus on opportunities to add value. For more details on all these events [click here](#).

Help for owners

One of the best ways to learn about local conditions in your area and to discuss matters of woodland maintenance is to share your experiences with other owners. If you would like to get in touch with your woodland neighbours, but never seem to bump into them while at your wood, SWOG can help. We only share email addresses with permission, but if you email judith@swog.org.uk, she can link you up.

Anyone who buys a wood from Woodlands.co.uk is given £300 towards a woodland course to help towards owners' enjoyment and knowledge. These courses can encompass anything from basket-weaving, green woodworking or pole lathe turning, to chainsaw tuition and woodland management. Buyers are asked to write a short resumé of their course, noting how effective they found it, and whether they would recommend it to others. View them on the SWOG website here: www.swog.org.uk/courses



The Small Woodland Owner's Group has been formed to aid the enjoyment, diversity and conservation of British woodlands. The company Woodlands.co.uk sponsors the group, so membership is completely free and events are free of charge unless otherwise stated. SWOG is open to anyone interested in the management or the enjoyment of woodland.

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SWOG website
rich@swog.org.uk

SWOG co-ordinator and newsletter editor
judith@swog.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter @_swog

