

A close-up photograph of several green oak acorns and their caps, surrounded by large, vibrant green oak leaves. The acorns are in various stages of development, with some showing the textured, scaly surface of their caps. The leaves have prominent veins and some minor blemishes, suggesting a natural woodland setting.

Small Woodland Owners' Group

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2013

Horse-logging in the Weald

Good Woods project

Woodfair round-up

Small Woodland Owners' Group



Rich and Judith on the SWOG stand at Bentley.

A big welcome to all our new members, many of whom are new woodland owners, and others who signed up at the woodfairs – we're delighted you've joined!

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Get involved!

It was really great to talk to so many SWOG members recently, and several people have requested more SWOG activity in areas other than the south-east of England. So this is a call to arms for woodland owners north of the River Thames. (But please don't think we are about to neglect everyone in the south!) There are about 700 of you out there and it is clear that you are a wonderfully keen and sociable bunch, so how about getting together?

SWOG meetings need not be anything more complicated than an arrangement to meet other members in one wood for a chat and maybe a cup of tea. A guided walk around the woodland is always appreciated and if you would care for more structure, we can arrange a visit from a speaker or woodland professional. An average SWOG meeting numbers between 10 and 20 people. Owners specify how many visitors can be accommodated and the timetable for the whole visit. It's my job to co-ordinate people and places – all the owner has to do is turn up. And maybe light a fire, or bring a thermos!

The Small Woodland Owner's Group has been formed to aid the enjoyment, diversity and conservation of British woodland. 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.

Newsletter October 2013

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Picture credits

Judith Millidge – cover, pages 2, 10, 11, 15; Dave Eldred – page 3 (top & bottom) Mike Keeling – page 3 (middle); Woodlands.co.uk – pages 4, 5, 6, 7; Becky Lupton – pages 8–9; Sarah Walters – pages 13, 14.

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MEETINGS

It was a SWOG meeting with a difference – ten members took up Andy Brown's invitation to visit his woodland and alpaca farm in north Kent in August. Dave Eldred and Mike Keeling have been kind enough to share their photos, and Dave has written his impressions of the day.

Andy Brown and his micro pigs welcomed the SWOG members to his 20-acre woodland and smallholding with views over the Medway Estuary, before introducing us to Bob the Beekeeper.

Bob gave a very informative talk on bee-keeping and a practical demonstration of the component parts of a modern beehive. After a coffee break we set off on the first part of our tour around the farm. Skirting round the southern perimeter, we were able to admire the tree plantings that Andy has so far undertaken, as well as meet the first of his alpacas including his 'super-stud'!

This led us to the western edge, where we found Bob with two working beehives. Suitably swathed in protective gear, three of us got a



close-up view of the inner workings of Bob's beehives while he carried out his weekly inspections. We were able to view the queen bee in one hive going about her business, as the other members of the group looked on from a safe distance and took their pictures. Bob's bees were all calm and content, so no-one was stung.

Our walk took us through the remainder of the Alpaca herd, who eyed us with curiosity, before we arrived at the home of Andy's full sized saddleback pigs and lastly his sheep.

After a picnic lunch, a question and answer session concluded a thoroughly enjoyable day.

Thanks to Andy for organising such a great day. See more of his alpacas on his website [Valley Alpacas](#).



Biodiversity offsetting

On 5 September the government released 'Biodiversity Offsetting in England', a consultation document which sets out options for the operation of a new biodiversity offsetting system.

For woodland owners, the importance is two-fold. First, woodland habitat, both ancient and otherwise, should be protected, and second, woodland owners may be potential providers of offsetting services.

An online survey is your chance to provide feedback on the document, which is summarised below from the DEFRA website.

Twin challenges

England faces the twin challenges of growing its economy and improving its natural environment. We will not achieve these goals unless our planning system is fit-for-purpose.

Our economy cannot afford expensive and inefficient planning processes that unnecessarily delay or block the housing and infrastructure our economy needs to grow.

Our environment cannot afford development which continues to eat away at nature. So we must maintain and improve our ecosystems, air, water and soils as they underpin sustainable economic growth in the long-term.

However, as the Ecosystems Market Task Force and Natural Capital Committee have both said, there is a way we can make our planning system better: biodiversity offsetting.

What is biodiversity offsetting?

Biodiversity offsetting is a measurable way to ensure we make good the residual damage to nature caused by development which cannot be avoided or mitigated. This guarantees there is no net loss to biodiversity from development and can often lead to net gain for nature. It will not change existing safeguards in the planning system, but makes it quicker and simpler to agree a development's impacts to ensure losses

are properly compensated for. Offsetting can also help create a ready market to supply compensation for residual damage to nature. Countries as diverse as Australia, Germany, India and the United States and more than 20 others are already using offsetting.

In May 2013, the Secretary of State for Defra held an offsetting summit at which he heard the views of developers, conservation bodies, planning professionals, economists and others. This confirmed the level of interest in the concept and that the success, or failure, of offsetting will depend on the detail of the scheme adopted in the UK.

This feedback, evidence from the Biodiversity Offsetting Pilots and offsetting systems abroad, will form the basis of the consultation document.

An alternative view

Sarah Walters has written a thoughtful blog on the subject, that highlights the challenges for the environment and for small woodland owners in particular. Read it here: alvecotewood.wordpress.com



Planting for the future – choosing adaptable trees

Faced with many challenges thrown up by our changing climate, woodland owners often wonder which tree species to plant in order to guard against the ecological changes wrought by global warming.

The traditional advice has been to plant saplings with a reasonably local provenance, as they will be best adapted to local conditions. However, 'local' conditions may alter and in Kent the Forestry Commission's Forestry Research agency has begun to plant a trial area of saplings of traditional species native to Britain, but sourced from elsewhere in Europe. It is hoped that they will be better adapted to our likely future climate, and they will also broaden the genetic stock of the local area.

The saplings are being grown on the Woodland Trust's Hucking Estate, near Maidstone. More than 3,700 saplings including oak, ash, sweet chestnut and wild cherry have been planted, which originated from locations in northern France and central Italy. This is because these areas of Europe currently have the sorts of climates which, with the effects of climate change, are predicted for Kent between 2050 and 2080.

Laura Henderson, the Forest Research trial manager, hopes that the findings will help woodland owners to plan future planting. She said, 'Trials like this are important. Many of our tree species might not survive if climate change continues at its predicted rate, and we urgently need solutions which dilute the risk and increase resilience.'

'Trees from other regions could be part of the answer, because we believe they might be better adapted to our future climate. Our findings at Hucking will help us develop guidance which could help woodland managers to ensure their woodlands thrive now and in the future.'

The trees, which were first checked to be free of pests and diseases, were planted in 2011,



(before the ban on the movement of ash plants) and the trials are expected to continue for at least 10 years. Scientists are studying the survival and growth rates of each tree. They also note their growth periods and the times at which buds develop in spring – life-cycle factors which are greatly influenced by climatic conditions.

Previous Forest Research studies have shown that trees are adapted to their local conditions. For example, acorns from Italian oaks germinate several weeks earlier than their English counterparts, even when planted in the same conditions. Although this means that Italian seedlings might be affected by the late frosts which can occur in Britain, they might benefit from an extended growing period. Choosing the best planting stock to get the balance right in the future will be critical.

Meanwhile, woodland owners are still advised to plant trees from UK sources, but to consider diversifying their stock to broader UK zones.

The research will help to verify whether suitable stock from Europe could be recommended in the future.

More information on this project, with other resources to help woodland managers choose species suitable for planting in changing conditions, is on the Forest Research website.

Amazing autumn

The Forestry Commission is predicting a riot of colour this autumn as trees have benefited from near perfect conditions this year, with plenty of rain and good amounts of sun. Simon Toomer, director of the National Arboretum at Westonbirt, said: 'It's been a fantastic year for our trees, with a balance of warm sunny conditions coupled with a fair amount of rainfall helping photosynthesis and growth.'

'Because it was such a wet summer last year, trees began this summer with plenty of water and have not dried out too much despite the summer heat. This recipe of plenty of sunshine and rain in equal measure means we can expect a magnificent array of colour.'

'Our forests are very diverse; they have different altitudes, climates and soil conditions which contribute to the rich variety of tree species and colour in the forests and trees.'

'At the beginning of October you'll be able to see the early waves of colour emerging and we're predicting that it'll reach its peak by the third week in October, through to the first week of November.'

'There's only a very short window to see these beautiful changes occurring so we're encouraging people to get out and see what the forests and trees have on offer this autumn.'

Many people have already noticed the fantastic crop from forest fruits, with 2013 being described as a 'mast year'. In mast years,



trees and other plants produce a bumper crop, and this year oaks, sweet chestnut, ash, hawthorns, beeches and hornbeam are producing a terrific amount of fruits and nuts.

This may not be news to many of you, but we would love to see a few pictures of what promises to be a fabulous autumn display from your woodlands.



Woodfairs

The woodfair season is nearly over, but there are a couple to enjoy in early October.

Cranborne Chase Woodfair

5–6 October 2013 Fordingbridge
www.woodfair.org.uk

Surrey Hills Woodfair 2013

5–6 October 2013 Birtley House, Bramley
www.surreyhills.org

Fraxinus – save the trees online

Perhaps the only good news to come out of the continuing bad news about ash die back is that scientists and foresters are using every resource at their disposal in an effort to find a resistant strain. Sequencing and analysing the genomes for both the fungus *chalara fraxinea* and the common ash tree, *fraxinus excelsior*, which consist of about 60 million and one billion letters respectively, is a long process of data crunching by computer. The enterprise has been opened up to the scientific community via an open source project, but since December 2012 the whole process has been speeded up by a computer game.

Scientists from the Sainsbury Laboratory hired Sheffield-based gaming company Team Cooper to develop **Fraxinus**. The online Facebook game uses real genetic data and users have to match and rearrange leaf-shapes which represent nucleotides – the letters which make up the genome sequence. The human eye often recognises patterns that computers miss, so gamers can make a real contribution to the ongoing research. The data from each game is fed back to the lab. ‘Each play of the game will

contribute a small but useful analysis,’ said Dr Dan MacLean from the Sainsbury Laboratory, who conceived the idea.

‘The more people who play it, the more accurate the results will be for us and the quicker we can generate the information needed to help our woodlands recover from the current epidemic.’

The game incorporates an extensive but user-friendly explanation of the problem. So if you fancy a change from Candy Crush Saga, try Fraxinus and play a small part in solving the problem of ash die back.

Click here to learn more about the project and click on the image below to link to the game.



Grown in Britain Week 14–21 October

Grown in Britain brings together everyone who values our forests, woods and trees and the products that can be made from the wood they produce. It is a positive movement that is uniting environmentalists and woodland owners; contractors, builders and retailers who want to buy, use and sell more British timber and wood-based products; woodland managers, and public and private agencies who want to see many more of our woods managed to produce sustainable and legal sources of wood.

SWOG and Woodlands.co.uk are proud to be part of it, as it is all about creating a sustainable future for the forests and woodlands of Britain. To promote this ideal, Grown in Britain is running a number of events around the country between 14 and 21 October, ranging from guided woodland walks, to art exhibitions and bushcraft days, as well as talks and presentations. Take a look at the Grown in Britain website for more details.

Horse-logging in the Weald of Kent

SWOG member Becky Lupton has recently attended a horse-logging course run by Plumpton College and taught by an experienced horse logger, Frankie Woodgate.

Frankie has been a horse logger for 17 years and is one of the few horse loggers in this country who works full time on a commercial basis, felling the timber, extracting it by using horses, and then marketing it.

The course lasted three days and was held at Frankie's ancient semi-natural woodland in Kent. The course was aimed at horse owners who were interested in driving their horses and using them to extract timber, or people (like myself) who were interested in horse logging as a low-impact system of extracting timber.

Until the 1950s horses were often seen extracting timber in British woodlands. With the mechanisation of forestry, numbers dropped but we are seeing a resurgence now, thanks



partly to the technical advances of the equipment they use, which has increased output making it more cost-effective. More importantly, using horses has little negative impact on the woodland – in fact, horse logging can benefit the woodland by gently scarifying the woodland floor, thus promoting natural regeneration. This is especially important on PAWS sites, as horses are very adept at moving around new broadleaf growth and coppice stools, and do not compact or rut the woodland floor.

We began by discussing the health and safety aspects of horse logging, looking at site risk assessments and emergency plans, which is essential when undertaking any forestry work. Frankie used to run health and safety courses for the British Horse Loggers Association and was clearly very knowledgeable.

After coffee, we met Frankie's horses, Tobias, Jeton and Yser, three very gentle, calm animals. We discussed the advantages of different breeds, what to look for when choosing a horse, and where you might buy one. Interestingly, many heavy horses come from the continent where there is a greater number of horse loggers.

We were all keen to work with the horses, so harnesses were put on and we practised long reining by learning how to guide the horses round a course and using some simple voice commands.

Swingles and traces

After lunch we took the horses into the woods (lovely hornbeam coppice) and looked at extraction routes. One important aspect of horse logging is working out how to extract the timber while avoiding the stumps, coppice stools and saplings. Then we practised driving the horses around the wood to develop our driving skills. When we felt more confident we began to extract some timber using a swingle tree (also known as a draft bar). The swingle tree

is attached to traces and we learnt how to choker the timber with a chain in order to attach it to the swingle tree. This is the most simple piece of horse logging equipment and is suitable for extracting timber over shorter distances. After the log pile had trebled in size, we called it a day and led the horses back to the yard. It was very rewarding to see how quickly we could amass a large stack of wood with seemingly very little effort.

On day two we spent a couple of hours looking at harnesses and how to fit them correctly. Ill-fitting harnesses can injure a horse, so it is crucial to do it properly. A lot of horse logging equipment comes from Sweden where the number of horse loggers never really declined.

As it was a scorching day we led the horses into the woods for some more practice at extracting the timber. Taking the horses into tight spaces, we immediately understood how the horses have such a low impact on the wood as they can turn around in very small area. Feeling very much at peace with ourselves following an afternoon in the woods with the horses, we returned to the yard where we practised taking the harnesses off and gave the horses a groom, paying attention to the hooves, and any areas the harness might rub. Throughout the course we received a lot of useful information about care of the working horse, a lot of it from an holistic point of view.

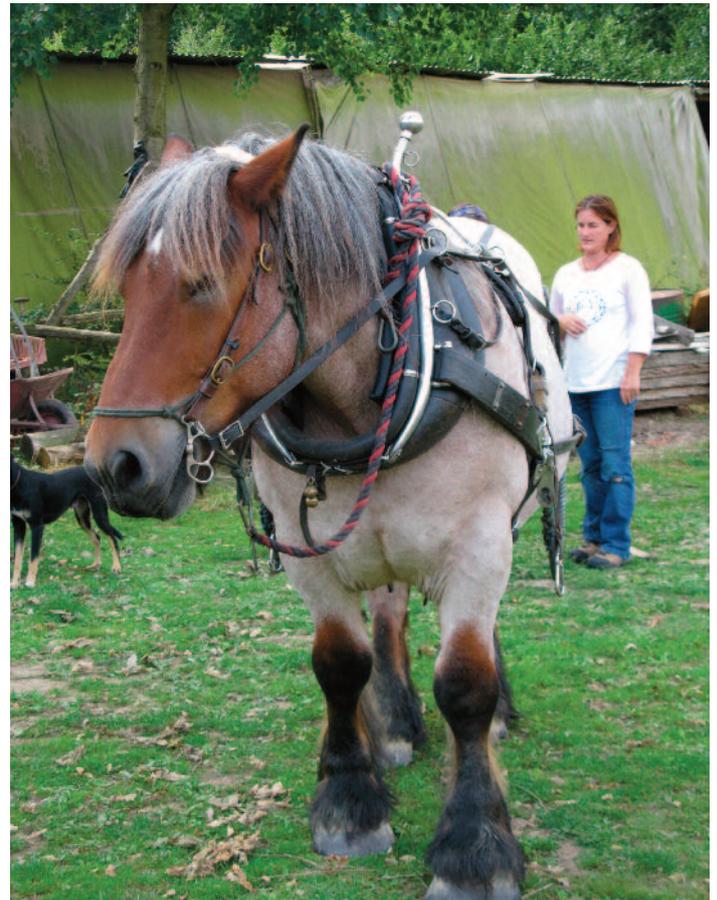
Learning to drive

On day three we looked at equipment such as timber arches and forwarders and how to attach this to the horses. Timber arches can carry more logs over longer distances than a swingle tree.

We then harnessed the horses (relieved that we were starting to get the hang of it) and set off into the woods. Before using the timber arches we practised our driving skills, taking the horses around a course and learning how to ask the horse to move one step to the left/right, etc,

useful techniques as you have to be precise when using a timber arch. Working as teams, we used the timber arches to move the wood to the ride. It was initially difficult to get the hang of the timber arch, but thanks to a very patient and encouraging Frankie, and the tolerant horse, Yser, I began to master it.

Having gathered an even larger wood pile using timber arches, it was time to head back to the yard for the final time to say our goodbyes. Never have I felt so sad to be finishing a course.



Horses and woods are a winning combination and very good for the soul. I now have the utmost respect for working horses and their generous natures, and I admire horse loggers who do a very important, rewarding, but undoubtedly tough job. It would be great to see horse logging become more widespread, as it is cost competitive and much better for the woodland and the environment as a whole. *For more details of Frankie's horse-logging operation, please see her website, www.weald-woodscapes.co.uk*

Woodfair round-up

SWOG attended four well-established woodfairs, which celebrate not only Britain's woodland heritage, but also the traditional crafts and small industries that depend on managed forests and woods. Stall holders range from national institutions such as the National Trust and Forestry Commission, to much smaller concerns – woodworkers, clog-makers, tool sellers, and charcoal burners. Many of the exhibitors travel the country and follow a well-marked trail between May and October, and it is good to see familiar faces. But one of the real joys is the strength of local influence, and at each show a good proportion of traders and exhibitors are based nearby. Their presence helps to give each show an individual flavour.

Location also helps. Woodfest Wales, for example, is set on the breezy Kinmel Estate just outside Rhyl, with glorious views over the Irish Sea. A funfair provides entertainment for younger visitors, but the rest of the woodfair pulsates with an incredible energy. With the pole climbers, the axe-men and the chainsaw carvers, not to mention the charcoal burning and the sizable steam engine saw mill, it is noisy, lively and really fun.

Westonbirt Treefest, held in the beautiful surroundings of the National Arboretum, is a

Rich chats to SWOG members Teresa, Bernie, Pam and Freddie at Bentley.



wonderful mix of traditional craft and wood products together with attractions such as human-powered fairground rides and a camera obscura. Highlights of the arboretum include the magnificent giant Redwoods and the 2000-year-old lime coppice stool which was cut on its 20 year rotation only last year and is putting on a healthy regrowth.

Wild About Wood, held at the Yorkshire Arboretum in the grounds of Castle Howard, seemed a more gracious laid-back affair. The stalls are spread out among the trees of the arboretum, so visitors can appreciate the arboreal display as much as the stalls and activities. Children are really well catered for, with activities ranging from willow weaving to coracle-making to tree and bug



identification. And there was even a real woodland fairy to lead them through the trees.

Everyone told me that Bentley was the big one, and they were right. It's a well-established show held at the Bentley Wildfowl Trust near Lewes in East Sussex, and many exhibitors and visitors look forward to meeting up there every year. The friendly atmosphere is what stands out, next to the incredible array of activities and displays. Best of all, SWOG had its own tent, which Rich furnished with woodland products and his now famous rocket stoves for brewing the tea.

Woodfairs give the SWOG team a chance to catch up with SWOG members and to recruit new ones. We were especially grateful to Heather and Rodney and Mike and Tracy for their help on the stall at Bentley. See you all next year!



Above & right: Bentley exhibitors. Canoe maker, the show-ground and woodland artefacts on sale. Left and below: Wild About Wood, Yorkshire Arboretum. A pole lathe, the view across the arboretum and the team from Woodlands.co.uk.



Good Woods

for people, for nature

Paul Orsi, Director for Forestry and Rural Enterprise with the Sylva Foundation, explains how woodland owners can get free advice from professional foresters thanks to a new scheme.

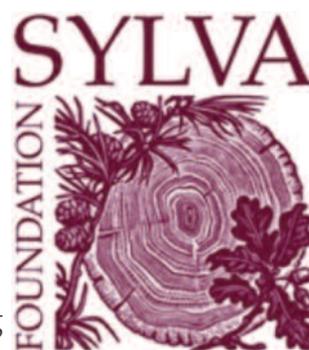
Good Woods is a ground-breaking project aiming to breathe new life into UK woodlands that was launched in January 2013. Woodland owners in southeast and eastern England may be eligible for a free advisory visit from a professional forester under the Good Woods project. The aim of the 2013 project is to improve levels of woodland stewardship by

- Providing 200 woodland owners with tools and training in woodland management, linked to Sylva's freely-available myForest service
- Creating the new Woodland Star Rating to encourage sustainable forest management in all woodlands, and promote greater understanding of good woodland stewardship among the general public
- Development of a Community Engagement Toolkit – guidance to help woodland managers communicate forestry activities to the public
- Supporting community woodland groups;
- Helping owners to understand wood supply chain opportunities both locally and nationally.

Good Woods operates in a unique way, harnessing the financial support of the retailer B&Q to support existing networks. Across the southeast and east of England, Network Advisors have been appointed from bodies such as local county councils, the Trust for Conservation Volunteers and the Wildlife Trusts, to provide regional oversight. Each one co-ordinates local Woodland Advisors to carry out the advisory visits. These consist of qualified local forestry professionals from a range of organisations and businesses.

Each free advisory visit has been designed as light-touch to encourage owners to engage in woodland management. This advice includes:

- An introduction to online woodland mapping and management planning tools through myForest
- One-to-one guidance on woodland management
- A report detailing woodland characteristics and next steps for sustainable woodland management.



For more information about the project, and to discuss your eligibility for a visit from a woodland advisor, please see www.myforest.org.uk/goodwoods or email amy@lantern.uk.com



Abbotts Living Wood

A range of green woodworking courses.
www.living-wood.co.uk

Acorn Ecology in Exeter

A range of courses including a Phase 1 habitat survey course, and courses on surveying and handling protected species. They also run online ecology courses.
www.acornecology.co.uk

Acres Wild Woodland

2013 timetable of woodland and woodcrafts courses available. www.acreswildwoodlands.co.uk

AJS Crafts

A wide range of courses covering many different crafts, such as spoon-making, charcoal-burning, willow basketry and sweet chestnut gates and hurdles.
www.ajscrafts.co.uk

Bat Conservation Trust

The full brochure of courses is available at
www.bats.org.uk

**Bishops Wood Centre, Stourport-on-Severn**

A wide range of courses of interest to woodland owners, including bushcrafts, photography, pole lathe and other woodland crafts, as well as forest school leader training and CPD.
www.worcestershire.gov.uk

Brighton Permaculture Trust

Courses include pruning old fruit trees, introduction to permaculture and building with straw bales.
www.brightonpermaculture.org.uk

British Dragonfly Society

The society runs a programme of field visits and educational events.
www.british-dragonflies.org.uk

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

A large range of courses for woodland owners.
www.tcv.org.uk

Bulworthy Project

A multitude of courses, including guided walks, as well as one-day introductions to charcoal burning.
www.bulworthyproject.org.uk/

Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

To see upcoming courses for 2013 visit.
www.cat.org.uk

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.
www.coastalsurvival.com

Cotswolds Rural Skills Courses

Grassland management and drystone walling.
www.cotswoldsruralskills.org.uk

Dorset Centre for Rural Skills

Courses include hurdlemaking and green woodworking.
www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk/courses.htm

DWWP

A range of woodland activity and traditional woodcraft courses in Yorkshire. www.dwwp.co.uk

Mark Fisher Art

Woodland-based art days for all abilities.
www.markfisherart.co.uk

FloraLocale

A wide range of courses of interest to woodland owners.
www.floralocale.org

Forest Garden Shovelstrode

Practical woodland courses and yurt camping.
Upcoming courses include green wood-working, hurdle-making, beekeeping for adults and children.
www.floralocale.org

The Field Studies Council

Courses of interest to woodland owners include tree identification, woodland management and woodland ecology; and wildlife surveying and recording techniques. www.field-studies-council.org

First Responder Course

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. Based in Kent/Sussex. www.elst.co.uk

Greenwood Centre

Run by Smallwoods, the Greenwood Centre offers a wide range of woodland management and woodcraft courses the whole year round. Based in Shropshire.
www.greenwoodcentre.org.uk

Greenwood Days

Offers courses to public and corporate groups on green woodworking and a wide range of creative arts in Leicestershire. www.greenwood-days.co.uk

Institute of Chartered Foresters

Forthcoming events are on
www.charteredforesters.org

Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

A wide range of courses, some of which are of interest to woodland owners. www.ieem.net

Kingcombe Environmental Studies Centre

Courses on wildlife, livestock and lifestyle management. www.kingcombe.org

Ben Law

Runs a wide range of woodland management and woodcraft courses in Sussex. www.ben-law.co.uk

Low Impact Living Initiative (LILI) Courses

For the full range of courses from the Low Impact Living Initiative, please see www.lowimpact.org



Malvern Coppicing

Phil Hopkinson offers practical coppicing courses
www.malverncoppicing.co.uk

The Mammal Society

A wide variety of courses, at various venues and dates.
2013 dates now announced.
www.mammal.org.uk

Moelyci Environmental Training Centre

Welsh environmental centre that offers a wide variety of courses, including Phase 1 habitat surveys, national vegetation classification and wildlife surveys.
www.moelyci.org

Monkton Wyld Court in Dorset

Courses in sustainable living.
www.monktonwyldcourt.co.uk

Plantlife

Wildflowers and wild plants, as well as a programme of educational activities www.plantlife.org.uk

Royal Forestry Society Divisional Events

The programmes for 2013 can be seen at
www.rfs.org.uk

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

To see courses for the coming year, visit www.rspb.org.uk

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

An experienced provider of training in practical conservation and environmental education, plus other courses for 2013

www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/page/training-courses

The Sustainability Centre

Lots of courses around the theme of sustainable living, including green woodworking, permaculture and bushcraft. www.sustainability-centre.org

John Waller, Underwoodsman

An extensive programme of courses available: green woodworking, coppice management, charcoal making, living willow and introductory blacksmithing. www.underwoodsman.co.uk/

Patrick Whitefield Associates

Permaculture courses, including how to read the landscape. www.patrickwhitefield.co.uk

Wildlife Trusts

All 47 UK Wildlife Trusts run events of potential interest to woodland owners. For further details please see www.wildlifetrusts.org/whats-on

Willowcraft and Woodlands

A social enterprise doing woodcrafts and woodland management based in Worcestershire. They run a number of courses of potential interest, including living willow structures, coppice management and treebog construction. www.willowcraftandwoodlands.co.uk/

Woodcraft School

Timetable for woodcraft and bushcraft courses www.woodcraftschool.co.uk/

Woodlandskills.com

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

Yorwoods

Courses for woodland owners and managers in the Yorkshire area www.yorwoods.org.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. Denbighshire <http://www.woodlandskillscentre.co.uk>



New blogs from Woodlands.co.uk

(Click on the blog title to link to the website.)

Christmas Tree plantation in the wilderness

Angus visits the Christmas tree plantation at Wilderness Wood in Sussex, and learns about its value to the business.

Knight Tree Services – growing their tree surgery business

Business is booming for these Welsh tree surgeons, who discuss their training and their work.

If you go down into the woods, walk the woods...

Patricia recounts her holiday in the woods – the spa, the archery, the chef-cooked food . . . and almost at the last minute remembered to take a walk in the woods.

Splitting firewood using a hand-held logsplitter

Angus tries out a handheld logsplitter for processing firewood.

Woodlands TV

The Woodlands TV team have been busy, with seven new videos uploaded this month.

Elm Trees

Rob Greenland talks authoritatively about the importance of safeguarding the National Elm Collection in Brighton and shares his expertise in elm tree disease management.



Oak Shingles

At the Forestry Commission's Treefest in Westonbirt Arboretum, Ruth Goodfellow shows us her skills in making durable shingles for roofs using wood from the coppice restoration.

Campsite in the Woodlands

Lauretta Sutherland from Haybrow Campsite in Scarborough, has set up a campsite in her woodland to help sustain the cost of maintaining it, and explains what is involved.

Oak Framed Buildings

Tim Potts talks about his work specialising in the design and construction of timber-framed buildings.

Bees, Trees and Disease Colonies and Queens

In two videos, beekeeper Alec Harden gives an insight into the lives and behaviour of his bees at Wiston House, East Sussex. Alec explains the importance of honey bee pollination and the problem of disease. In *Colonies and Queens*, he describes what he did when he noticed several queen bee cells within his hive.

All About Apples

Andy Howard shares his extensive knowledge of traditional varieties of apple.

Competition Axe and Saw

An enthusiastic team of Welsh chainsaw and axe-handlers demonstrates skill, strength and speed at Westonbirt's Treefest. They explain the different methods of chopping wood, show the speed of a modified chainsaw engine against a more common version, and impress the crowds with their axe-wielding knowledge and expertise.

Carve a spoon in the woodlands

Craftsman David Alty describes the nine steps to carve a wooden spoon in the woodlands.