

# Small Woodland Owners' Group

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2013

The Vigilant - restoring a  
Thames barge

All I want for Christmas

Making hay rakes in Wales



# Small Woodland Owners' Group

The SWOG team wish all  
our members a very  
Merry Christmas and  
peaceful 2014

*Rich and Judith*



We have plenty of reading this month, so sit back and enjoy the articles on restoring an old Thames barge and making traditional wooden hay rakes in Wales. Find out exactly what SWOG members would like to find under their Christmas trees. There are also several individuals and institutions keen to hear the views of SWOG members on subjects ranging from squirrels to wood fuel. Please follow the links to share your thoughts.

We are always delighted to hear from SWOG members – please keep your stories and comments rolling in.

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 December 2013

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#### Website and forum

[rich@swog.org.uk](mailto:rich@swog.org.uk)

#### Swog co-ordinator and newsletter editor

[judith@swog.org.uk](mailto:judith@swog.org.uk)

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## Woodlands for Climate Change Award

The Royal Forestry Society has launched the Woodlands for Climate Change Award as part of the 2014 RFS Excellence in Forestry Awards, in association with Forestry Commission England and England's Climate Ready Support Service led by the Environment Agency. The award has been introduced alongside existing Excellence in Forestry categories to raise awareness, and promote the importance, of managing woods for resilience to increased threats from pests, disease and climate change. It will reward planting that uses more diverse native and novel tree species to ensure Britain continues to produce quality timber.

The Woodlands for Climate Change Award is free to enter and open to all woodlands throughout England where tree plantings over the past five years, both new and restocking, are creating sites that should be resilient to the predicted challenges of climate change and pests and diseases.

There are prizes of £1,000 and £500. Entries must be received by 31 March 2014.

### Encouraging diversity

Simon Lloyd, RFS Development Director, said: 'The RFS is delighted to partner with the Forestry Commission and England's Climate Ready Support Service to run the Excellence in Forestry Woodlands for Climate Change award. Currently 80 per cent of our timber is produced from just 10 species of broadleaf and conifer, and several of these – such as larch, Corsican

pine and ash – are severely threatened by disease. Many woodland owners are considering what species to plant and which silvicultural regime to adopt to better protect their woods against the risk of climate change. Encouraging owners who have been through this process in the past five years and are willing to share their experience will help all woodland owners make better informed decisions.'

John Weir, FC England Adviser, Woodland Creation and Resilience, says: 'A key strategy to



adapting to a changing climate and the increases in pests and diseases is to diversify the tree species used in forestry. Foresters should also be obtaining quality seed from locations more suited to our future climate. These are two criteria among many found within the climate change guidelines supporting the United Kingdom Forestry Standard.'

The Award envisages that the primary purpose of the plantings will be the production of sustainable timber. Plantings must demonstrate anticipatory

adaptation through selection of tree species suitable for the present, but also anticipating the future climate.

Woodlands planted during the past five years are eligible and must be no less than 5 hectares in size (although this could include several smaller compartments or mixed restocking and new planting).

*For further details and entry form, please go to [www.rfs.org.uk/involved/woodlands-for-climate-change-2014/](http://www.rfs.org.uk/involved/woodlands-for-climate-change-2014/), or contact Trefor Thompson [atrfscpetition@boyns.net](mailto:atrfscpetition@boyns.net) or call him on 01824 704230.*

## Seed clumps on ash trees not signs of disease, says Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission is reassuring the public that unusually large quantities of clumps of seeds hanging on ash trees this autumn do not mean the trees have Chalara ash dieback disease.

Dr John Morgan, Head of the Commission's Plant Health Service, said the disease can be difficult to recognise in the autumn, when ash leaves are changing colour anyway. He explained, 'What some people are mistaking for symptoms of disease are actually a sign of the exceptionally productive fruiting season, or "mast year", we've had. The clumps of seeds, known as keys, can sometimes look like the blackened and shrivelled leaves which are a symptom of the disease, so it is easy to see how the mistake can be made.'

'The best way to recognise Chalara in the autumn is by the elongated, diamond-shaped lesions, or discolouring, which it causes in the bark of stems and branches around the points where leaves, twigs and branches are attached. This discoloured bark often has splits in it.'

The disease is caused by the Chalara fraxinea fungus, and Forestry Commission monitoring has indicated that there has been little apparent spread of the disease in 2013. Most observed spread has been over short distances in local areas which have higher levels of the fungus in

'wider-environment' situations such as mature woodland. This means that new cases are more likely to appear in counties such as Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent and a small number of other areas.

Dr Morgan added, 'We welcome reports of suspected cases, especially in new areas. However, we do encourage people to check first that the tree really is an ash tree and the symptoms are Chalara symptoms, and we have published identification guides on our website [www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara).' Suspected cases can be reported with the Forestry Commission's Tree Alert smartphone app or online form.

Dr Morgan reminded park managers and garden owners in affected areas that they can help to slow the spread of the disease locally by burning (where permitted), burying or composting fallen ash leaves to break the fungus's lifecycle.



## Squirrel survey

Forestry Commission England is reviewing policy on squirrel control. Currently this is to protect red squirrels, rather than trees, however. In support of this policy review, the RFS is calling for evidence from woodland owners and managers of their experience and views of the impact of grey squirrels on trees and woods.

There are few woodland owners without a firm opinion on squirrels, and the Royal Forestry Society is keen to hear them. Your views are crucially important to help influence policy development. Please take a few minutes to respond to their short survey here: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/RFS-squirrels-survey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RFS-squirrels-survey)

## Wood fuel production – a study

Nottingham University PhD student Jeremy Rison is conducting a study into the changes that are taking place in Britain's woodlands caused by the growing use of firewood. He is interested in the changes to woodland management over the past decade or so in response to rising gas and oil prices, as well as the country's growing use of renewable energy. He will be exploring the extent to which woodland owners have altered the management of their woods to supply either themselves or others with wood fuel (logs, chips, pellets, etc.). Topics under consideration include whether this involves planting species that make for good firewood or undertaking more coppicing.

Jeremy is keen to hear from woodland owners about whether greater firewood production is a significant reason for owning woodland. However, it will be equally useful to hear from people who do not produce firewood and their reasons for this.

This study will also contribute to our understanding of how and why people alter the landscape through time. It is an opportunity to



document the successes and failures of increasing wood fuel production in Britain, and for woodland owners to voice their views on management and the challenges they face, such as conservation, finance, pests and diseases.

If you have time to speak to Jeremy about these issues, please contact him via e-mail at [lgxjrri@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:lgxjrri@nottingham.ac.uk) or by phone on 07910034719.

## Biosecurity for woodland owners

At a recent talk hosted by Sylva/Good Woods at the Forest of Marston Vale near Bedford, Steve Scott of the Forestry Commission noted that arboreal diseases are on the increase. Forestry professionals used to deal with about one new disease per decade; but in recent years, have been faced with ten or twelve new problems. Threats to our environment are a result of the vast increase in global change; pests and diseases may be hidden in plant products or wooden packaging. Some exotic pests are now able to survive in more northerly climes as a result of global warming.

Although this is depressing news, the key message from the Forestry Commission is 'Don't Panic'. Trees are resilient and will adapt to

survive. The FC is working with the Environment Agency and DEFRA among others in an effort to develop species resistance and encourage diverse replanting.

It is not possible to completely halt the spread of many arboreal pests and diseases, but it can be slowed in some instances by exercising sensible precautionary measures. Woodland owners should ensure that they remove soil and leaf litter from their boots and wash them between woodland visits. Vehicle tyres should also be cleaned. If you have been to an infected site, disinfect footwear. This link to the Forestry Commission website has a useful video. Gabriel Hemery of the Sylva Foundation also has a straightforward guide on his blog here [gabrielhemery.com/tag/arbiculture/](http://gabrielhemery.com/tag/arbiculture/)

# The *Vigilant*

## Reviving a Thames sailing barge

*In October, Stuart Brooking, the Woodlands.co.uk agent in the south-west contributed a blog about the restoration of an early 20th century Thames barge in Topsham, Devon. Woodlands.co.uk is helping with the supply of some materials for the restoration, but the project needs more wood and would appreciate contributions. The barge is the Vigilant, a 109-year-old Edwardian lady of the Thames, one of only about 30 still in existence.*

The object of the project, (which will be seeking help from the Heritage Lottery Fund), is to return *The Vigilant* to sailing condition, so that it serves as a living reminder of the part these trading vessels played in the building of Britain. In its cargo-carrying days, it could carry 120 tons.

The work being is being undertaken by local Devon shipwright, Dave MacCabe, together

with an army of volunteers from the community. They have pitched in to try to prevent this beautiful craft deteriorating beyond economic repair, and being lost to the nation. Time and tide have served to render much of *Vigilant's* wooden frames and planking beyond salvation, so much of the wood will have to be replaced with new. Woodlands.co.uk has offered to provide a supply of wood stock to keep the shipwrights equipped with essential materials.

‘This is a fantastic project which has captured the public’s enthusiasm and has provided a much needed and appropriate focus for this former ship building town. We are delighted to be associated with *Vigilant's* restoration. If we can help to make it a success, then that will ensure this important part of our maritime heritage is enjoyed by future generations. I look forward to seeing her when she returns to sea.’

*Benjamin Squirrell, the project co-ordinator, explains how the restoration is progressing.*

*Vigilant* was originally registered in Harwich, and in her time was a successful racing barge, winning the 1928 river barge match and becoming ‘Champion of the Thames’. She was the subject of a popular sailing book, *Sailorman*, written by Commander E G Martin in 1934. It was reviewed in *The Observer* by Arthur Ransome, who wrote,

‘Mr E G Martin, an experienced amateur mariner, spent a fortunate winter, not as an amateur, but as a working mate of a famous barge, the *Vigilant*, loading wheat, and shingle, and barley, and voyaging between London, Mistley, Woodbridge and Ipswich. He has known what questions to ask and how to answer them, and, in his book, the barge *Vigilant* will live for all men to see and know, long after every barge afloat to-day has become bare bone, rotted by the



*The Vigilant in her heyday.*

rain, or fuel for a longshoreman's fire.'

Since September of last year a team of shipwrights and volunteers in Topsham, Devon has worked hard to ensure that Ransome's prophecy is not fulfilled. Eventually the *Vigilant* will be restored to full sailing condition, and the public can be involved in the continuing story of this venerable maritime survivor.

The team hope to operate the *Vigilant* as a sail training vessel to ensure that she not only survives, but thrives.

Without a small woodland and a visionary owner – East Hoathley Parish Council – this story would have ended all too abruptly. *Vigilant* was sinking into the mud and oblivion in Essex, when East Hoathley Parish Council generously donated their surplus of recently felled fine oak. They decided that they would prefer to use their felled trees to save a piece of maritime heritage rather than just turn it into fence posts. With a source of wood secured, the project to save *Vigilant* could begin and it culminated in the extraordinary feat of re-floating the barge and motoring her out to sea



and down the Channel to her new home in Topsham, Devon.

Since her arrival in Topsham, the team has worked hard to save the ship from collapse by replacing all of the oak side ribs or 'futtocks'. In less than a year, they have replaced virtually every rib and repaired the inner linking ring – known as the 'inner wale'. With her skeleton restored, the next phase will be to metaphorically put some flesh on the bones by re-planking the sides and replacing the deck. The *Vigilant* has become something of a tourist attraction, drawing visitors to the quay to see the rebuilding of this historic vessel.

Although the team will be applying for Heritage Lottery Funding to help, they hope that other forms of assistance will follow as the project gathers momentum. *To that end if you are a visionary and would like to become involved in any capacity – particularly if you are at a loss with what to do with that large oak tree – then contact Benjamin Squirrell at [info@vigilantbarge.com](mailto:info@vigilantbarge.com). You can read more about the project here: [www.topsham.org.uk](http://www.topsham.org.uk)*





# All I want for Christmas . . .



Everyone has their favourite piece of equipment or gadgetry for use in the woods. We have asked a few SWOG members to tell us what they'd like to find under the Christmas tree this year, or to recommend the things they have found most useful.

## Mike Pepler, Chestnut Coppice

*Mike saw a Truncator at the Bentley wood fair and simply couldn't wait until Christmas.*

A couple of weeks ago at the Weald Wood Fair I saw a logging system being demonstrated, and pretty quickly realised I had to have one! It's the 'Truncator', which has apparently been on the BBC programme Dragon's Den. It's a multiple log saw horse, which enables you to cut several logs at once, and then tip them straight into a barrow or trailer – simple yet efficient.

You can see a video of Mike's experiences with the Truncator on the Peplers' blog [here](#).



## Stephen and Sam Stubbs, owners of Goose Wood

*As relatively new owners, Stephen and Sam have purchased a few items this year and their recommendations may prove useful to others new to the joys of woodland ownership.*

My first thought would be the 4x4 Freelanders, which has on every occasion got us into and out of our woods, whatever the conditions. Without this, would we have spent so much time in our woodland management?

My other choice is my imported Ebay strimmer – no brand names, just a great tool, which is still going strong 11 months after purchase.

DD hammocks are excellent for those who want an alternative to a tent. They can be set up and hung between a couple of trees in minutes, and packed away just as quickly. On waking in the early hours as the sun is rising, you can look out into the woodland and see and hear all the surrounding wildlife, without the need to move from your sleeping bag.

Lastly, a good camera. On every visit, no matter what month of the year, we always see something of beauty that we want to remember.







**Patricia Ockenden PR for Woodlands.co.uk**

A good squirrel-proof bird feeder for my garden that doesn't need complex installation. Squirrels find themselves unpopular in woodlands and gardens but have to be admired for their rat-like cunning and amazing acrobatic skills. Cage-style bird feeders might deter them for a while.

**Angus Hanton, Woodlands.co.uk**

*Angus has recently taken delivery of a wood-burning stove, and now has a renewed interest in chopping wood.*

We are all familiar with splitting logs using an axe but here are two ideas for easier splitting.

The Logmatic hand-held log splitter is a

device which only costs £60 and can split logs much more safely than an axe. You put the tip of it where you want the log to split and you ram down the handle. The force of this downward thrust is transferred within the Logmatic splitter so that the tip of the device splits the log. It avoids the risk of severed limbs and is easier to use than an axe. Personally I use it regularly, especially for making thin slivers for kindling.

The Logmatic is available via their website [www.logmatic.co.uk](http://www.logmatic.co.uk)

The second 'gift' is probably free. In splitting logs with an axe the hardest part of the work is getting the logs ready to be split and then

gathering up the pieces which may have jumped some distance away. One technique that works well is to gather them all into the centre of an old tyre and this way you can split several at once.

Me? I'd like a Biolite stove which will charge my mobile phone while brewing the tea (yes, I know it's a bit of a gimmick, but I just want to try one out). Or a new hand axe that won't fall apart on the second chop.

And a pair of steel-toe capped boots for when I play log jenga in the wood store.

Merry Christmas!



## Making hay rakes in Wales

*Paul Thornton, Senior Wildlife Trust Officer with the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales, reports on a course for making traditional hay rakes.*



First there was a request for help: when cutting our glades and meadows the rakes take a hammering and knowing I was a green wood-worker Em (Wildlife Trust Officer for Ceredigion)

asked whether I could repair some snapped tines on her wooden rakes. My flippant response was that she should find funding to get us on a rake-making course so we could all make and repair our own rakes. Em rose to the challenge and a few months after receiving a grant from the Radcliffe Trust, six of us from the Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales reserves team were at Bob Shaw's woodland workshop outside Aberystwyth learning how to make traditional hay rakes.

Bob has been working the land all his life and is a true woodsman with a thorough understanding of woodland cycles, conservation, wood craft and sustainability and his enthusiasm for sharing his skills and knowledge was apparent throughout the day. Bob works with many groups in mid-Wales including youth groups, those with learning difficulties and the socially excluded. 'All I can hope to do is inspire people' Bob said, and I would say he is successful.

### Welsh rakes vs. English rakes

Let's get on with making rakes. After a cup of tea and a discussion about the difference between English and Welsh style rakes (we made

Welsh style) we gathered around the outdoor work bench and Bob first explained there were a variety of materials we could use for the rake handle. Round wood – simply a coppiced pole of ash, willow or hazel about an inch and a quarter diameter, preferably de-barked to make it more durable and easier on the hands; or we could use sawn ash or riven ash, which would be the stronger as the fibres had not been severed as when sawn. We would work this to remove volume until we had a round handle. Bob then ran through the processes involved for making the tines and cleaving a larger ash log to provide material for the heads.

Then we were off, each of us cleaving a suitable piece of timber and axing the bulk of the excess volume away then shaping it on the bench to approx. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 1" with a plane and spoke shave, being certain to remember to put a 5 degree angle on one side. We each shaped our sawn or riven handle material to nearly round with drawknives and planes and then clamped them into the vice for several passes through a





help 'eye' the drill. After driving in the tines and trimming them to length, we used a chisel to put a 45 degree chamfer on the outside edge of the tine which would prevent judder when pulling the rake. We bored a 1" hole through the centre of the head and used a rounding plane to put an equal-sized tenon on the handle. Bob then showed us how to check the balance of the rake – you hold it as you would for work but just above the ground and keep adjusting the head, twisting it on the

stail engine – a kind of adjustable rounding plane. Bob fired up the steamer so we could remove any major bends in our handles. We tied string around logs about 4" diameter marked out  $\frac{3}{8}$ " squares and split these into a dozen or so pegs which we then hammered through the tine cutter. After a satisfying and arm-aching session of bashing these through the cutter, Bob then told us we wouldn't be using our tines. He would keep these in stock and we would use pegs made by others before us which had dried out and would not shrink once hammered into the head. The green head would shrink tight onto these dry tines, making a strong joint. Each of us worked at our own pace and on different components so there were plenty of tools to go round.

### Assembling the rakes

With our materials prepared we were ready to begin assembly of the rakes. First, we had to mark out and drill holes in the head to receive the  $\frac{1}{2}$ " tines – good clean holes were needed so the head didn't split as the tines were hammered in. Bob showed us a technique to getting good vertically aligned and parallel holes (and subsequent tines) by putting the two outside pegs in first, and tying a loop of twine around to

handle until it rests perfectly horizontally, then you drive it on tight. Then we added a hazel hoop which adds strength and support between the handle and head. In the entire construction only four nails were used, three of these to help hold the hoop, and one to prevent the head twisting on the handle.

Some of us had green wood-working skills before this course; others had never done anything like it. After a full and fun day we all left with a hay rake and we had all learned a lot. Being able to take material cut from the woods as part of active management, and using a variety of hand tools to transform it into a tool to be used elsewhere on our reserves must surely be true sustainability? Also, to the best of our knowledge there is no one making traditional hay rakes in our area. Thanks to Bob Shaw sharing his expertise, there are six more people with knowledge of the techniques who can help keep the old skills alive. I for one know that raking is going to be far more satisfying now using the rake that I made!

*The course was made possible by a grant from the Radcliffe Trust, [www.theradcliffetrust.org](http://www.theradcliffetrust.org).*



### **Abbotts Living Wood**

A range of green woodworking courses.  
[www.living-wood.co.uk](http://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](http://www.acornecology.co.uk)

### **Acres Wild Woodland**

2013 timetable of woodland and woodcrafts courses available. [www.acreswildwoodlands.co.uk](http://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](http://www.ajscrafts.co.uk)

### **Bat Conservation Trust**

The full brochure of courses is available at  
[www.bats.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://www.brightonpermaculture.org.uk)

### **British Dragonfly Society**

The society runs a programme of field visits and educational events.  
[www.british-dragonflies.org.uk](http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk)

### **British Trust for Conservation Volunteers**

A large range of courses for woodland owners.  
[www.tcv.org.uk](http://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/](http://www.bulworthyproject.org.uk/)

### **Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)**

To see upcoming courses for 2013 visit.  
[www.cat.org.uk](http://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](http://www.coastalsurvival.com)

### **Cotswolds Rural Skills Courses**

Grassland management and drystone walling.  
[www.cotswoldsruralskills.org.uk](http://www.cotswoldsruralskills.org.uk)

### **Dorset Centre for Rural Skills**

Courses include hurdlemaking and green woodworking.  
[www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk/courses.htm](http://www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk/courses.htm)

### **DWWP**

A range of woodland activity and traditional woodcraft courses in Yorkshire. [www.dwwp.co.uk](http://www.dwwp.co.uk)

### **Mark Fisher Art**

Woodland-based art days for all abilities.  
[www.markfisherart.co.uk](http://www.markfisherart.co.uk)

**FloraLocale**

A wide range of courses of interest to woodland owners.  
[www.floralocale.org](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.greenwood-days.co.uk)

**Institute of Chartered Foresters**

Forthcoming events are on  
[www.charteredforesters.org](http://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](http://www.ieem.net)

**Kingcombe Environmental Studies Centre**

Courses on wildlife, livestock and lifestyle management.  
[www.kingcombe.org](http://www.kingcombe.org)

**Ben Law**

Runs a wide range of woodland management and woodcraft courses in Sussex. [www.ben-law.co.uk](http://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](http://www.lowimpact.org)

**Malvern Coppicing**

Phil Hopkinson offers practical coppicing courses  
[www.malverncoppicing.co.uk](http://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](http://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](http://www.moelyci.org)

**Monkton Wyld Court in Dorset**

Courses in sustainable living.  
[www.monktonwyldcourt.co.uk](http://www.monktonwyldcourt.co.uk)

**Plantlife**

Wildflowers and wild plants, as well as a programme of educational activities [www.plantlife.org.uk](http://www.plantlife.org.uk)

**Royal Forestry Society Divisional Events**

The programmes for 2013 can be seen at [www.rfs.org.uk](http://www.rfs.org.uk)

**Royal Society for the Protection of Birds**

To see courses for the coming year, visit  
[www.rspb.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://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/](http://www.underwoodsman.co.uk/)

### Patrick Whitefield Associates

Permaculture courses, including how to read the landscape. [www.patrickwhitefield.co.uk](http://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](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/whats-on)

### Woodcraft School

Timetable for woodcraft and bushcraft courses

[www.woodcraftschool.co.uk/](http://www.woodcraftschool.co.uk/)

### 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/](http://www.willowcraftandwoodlands.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](http://www.woodlandskills.com)

### Yorwoods

Courses for woodland owners and managers in the Yorkshire area [www.yorwoods.org.uk](http://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>

### Woodland work or woodland worker?

We are contacted several times a month by people who would like to work in a wood, either to improve their skills, to learn from others, or just for the sheer joy of being outdoors. Some simply want to see what being a woodland owner entails. At the same time, woodland owners often need a bit of muscle to help with big jobs in their own woods, so we wondered whether it might be worth having a column within the newsletter where you could either offer your services, or advertise for help.

Email Judith or Rich and we will try to put people in touch with each other.

The **Oxfordshire Woodland Group** is in search of carpenters, both experienced and inexperienced, to work on a timber-framed building. Click on the link below for more details [oxfordshirewoodlandgroup.co.uk](http://oxfordshirewoodlandgroup.co.uk)



## New blogs from Woodlands.co.uk

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

### The management of Swiss forests – continuous cover

#### Swiss forestry is growing, especially in the alps

In two blogs, Angus explores the differences between Swiss and British forestry management including its importance to the economy.

### The Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail

Dick explores the spectacular ancient woodland in the Forest of Dean.

### Huts and hutting in Scottish Woodlands – time for change?

The perennial problem of erecting a hut in woodlands, and the legacy of ‘hutting’ in Scotland.

## Woodlands TV

Follow the links on the titles to see the latest videos. or visit [www.woodlands.co.uk/tv](http://www.woodlands.co.uk/tv)

## Medicinal trees

Medical herbalist Julia Behrens shares her expert knowledge of the medicinal properties of certain trees. Julia tells us how she draws both on



## Butterfly numbers – summer 2013

The Big Butterfly Count records a revival in butterfly numbers after a series of dismal summer.



*A speckled wood butterfly*

## An old tyre, an aid to log splitting?

Using an old tyre to keep your chopped firewood in one place.

## Access to maps for the woodland owner

Online resources are a boon for those in search of maps, ancient and modern.

traditional medical beliefs and modern scientific research to help heal patients using specific parts of trees such as lime flowers, oak bark and hawthorn berries

## Long ago in the woodlands

Six things for kids to do in the Woodlands... bug hunting, leaf printing, story telling and more. All free in the woodlands.

## Making Elderberry Tonic

Julia Behrens takes us for a woodland walk, seeking out elder trees. She harvests some ripe autumn elderberries and, over an open-fire, shows us how to make elderberry tonic.

## Making and Sailing Coracles

Dave Purvis, with the help of Ian Welford, describes how to make, carry and sail a coracle at the Wild About Wood fair at the Yorkshire Arboretum. Dave describes a coracle as, ‘Just a basket to hold water out’, and believes practicality not aesthetics to be the key to a successful coracle.