

LEAF!

COMMUNITY WOODLAND ISSUE | WINTER 2017 | FREE



Charter
for Trees, Woods
and People

THE NEWSPAPER FOR TREES, WOODS AND PEOPLE

HIBERNATION, TREE OF THE YEAR, WINTER TREES,
FOREST COMMONS, TREE DISEASE, PLANTING,
COMMUNITY WOODLANDS AND MORE!



Leaf Calendar by Tom Frost

LEAF!

THE NEWSPAPER FOR TREES, WOODS AND PEOPLE

Winter – a time of rest and hibernation, when woodland life slows down to a suspended heartbeat. Oak, ash and beech are bare, having thrown off their leaves to still the cycle of growth through months of wind and wet, cold and dark. ‘The world’s whole sap is sunk’ as John Donne wrote in his winter solstice poem, ‘A Nocturnal upon St Lucy’s Day’.

Yet nothing in nature stands still. We are now past the shortest day and if you listen, the deep heartbeat of the woods is pulsing strong. Hazel and alder catkins have already formed and will gradually stretch out and shake their pollen. In the next few weeks, tiny green spears of wild garlic will appear in sheltered places. By the end of January the days will be noticeably longer and robins, blackbirds and thrushes will sing on street corners. It will still be winter with days of ice and slush and freezing nights when Orion’s hair streams sparkling by and tawny owls call ‘hoo-hoo’ in the deep woods. But the underlying rhythm beats on.

Now is the ideal time to think ahead, to plan and to plant. Climate change, along with globalised pests and diseases, has made planting choices more complex. How do we plant for the present and the future? Can we create more sustainable gardens that mimic the structure of a forest? What can we do to nurture the natural regeneration of trees and hedges?

We British care deeply about our woods; when the Government proposed to sell off tracts of publicly owned Forestry Commission woods there was public uproar and the policy was scrapped. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in woodland culture and the number of community woodlands has grown. These are woods managed and sometimes owned by groups of local people. In some ways they hark back to the rights established by the Charter of the Forest, less famous than Magna Carta but equally important.

This year, 2017, is the 800th anniversary of the Charter of the Forest and to mark this event, the Woodland Trust will be launching its Charter for Trees, Woods and People. We have collected more than 40,000 tree stories, expressing what trees and woods mean to people all over the UK. They will provide the inspiration and contents for the new Charter, which will be unveiled in November. It is the last chance to share your stories, which will be collected until the end of February; so do please keep sending them in. These stories are the seeds that will help us create the forests of the future.



Trees are central characters in the landscape paintings of Mary Anne Aytoun-Ellis. This work, called *Dewpond – winter*, is made from egg tempera, pencil and black ink on paper mounted on gessoed board.

Artist Mary Anne Aytoun-Ellis has long been mesmerised by the character of trees without leaves

WINTER TREES

Most Sunday afternoons my mother and I would drive in our battered Austin Allegro around the lanes of Sussex in search of trees. We had no destination in mind but would go as our fancy took us, picking a tree species for that day with the aim of comparing as many different examples as possible. Winter drives were the best. My mother had a deep and abiding love of trees in all seasons, but she loved them most without leaves when they were stripped down to their essence.

The legacy of those drives is that I now spend huge amounts of my time drawing, painting and looking at trees and I too find them most compelling in winter.

The great woodland ecologist Oliver Rackham insisted on the individuality of every tree so that even within a single species each tree is subject to its own unique growing conditions – moisture and light levels, exposure to wind and rain, proximity of other trees, susceptibility to disease, etc. And all these elements result in a unique individual. In summer it is much harder to identify the features that make one tree different from the next, other than the general form of its outline or its size. But once winter sets in after those magical weeks of leaf drop which start almost imperceptibly with a solitary leaf falling and end in a great swirling mass of damp foliage, the personality of each and every tree becomes suddenly exposed in all its stark particularity.

The hawthorn is so ubiquitous that it is easy to overlook and yet in winter, devoid of leaves, these trees have an extraordinary presence all their own. As I climb the chalk paths on to the Downs, the hills are studded right and left with hawthorns. On the high exposed ground they are diminutive, hunkering down from the icy prevailing wind and visibly formed by it into a myriad wonderful diverse sculptural forms, some tapering to a point as if their thorny twigs have been whipped into mere wisps, others an impossibly dense and intricate thicket. Somehow in summer the extreme nature of their growth isn’t obvious in the same way. Only now, visible in the trees’ nakedness are the quite unexpected points of jewel-like colour from the lichens and mosses covering the twigs and branches. I have been painting one particular hawthorn tree for a year now. In the painting it is winter, but far from presenting a black and graphic silhouette, there are subtle earth greens dotted amongst brighter acid green, mustard yellows and tiny patches of rose madder – even a miraculous pale icy blue lichen on the lower trunk.

I always fill a bowl of blood-red haws in November to make a strange smoky-flavoured jelly that seems to capture the essence of the tree in winter.

At the foot of the Downs below ‘my’ hawthorn is a shaw (a narrow strip of woodland), made up mostly of ash which acts as a boundary between fields. When I first came across it two years ago on a bright, freezing morning, the sight stopped me in my tracks, every twig and branch illuminated with absolute pinpoint clarity and precision by the winter sun. This shaw is interspersed with field maples and the odd hawthorn, but it’s the enormous character of one particular ash tree that has come to define my winter. 🌿

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COMMON GROUND is an arts and environmental charity working both locally and nationally to seek new, imaginative ways to engage people with their local environment and celebrate the intimate connections communities have with the landscape that surrounds them.

THE WOODLAND TRUST is the UK’s largest woodland conservation charity, and the leading voice for woods and trees. We inspire people to visit woods, plant trees, treasure wildlife and enjoy the overwhelming benefits that woods and trees offer to our landscape and lives. The Woodland Trust is leading the call for a Charter for Trees, Woods and People. For more information on the Charter visit treecharter.uk

Views expressed are those of the writers.

The Woodland Trust is a registered charity, Nos. 294344 and SC033835.

WHAT’S YOUR TREE STORY?

MIRANDA SHARES HER TREE STORY:

‘Trees are with me all year, they are a part of my world that I can watch change with the seasons while other plants and animals only appear fleetingly throughout the year. They are solid and tangible but I can explore them just as well by closing my eyes and listening to their sway!’

This year is the 800th anniversary of the Charter of the Forest. **Julie Timbrell** explains why it is still so essential to our lives

CHARTER OF THE FOREST

While the Magna Carta of 1215 is now much more famous, the 1217 Charter of the Forest was equally important, perhaps even more so. It gave commoners rights and protection against the king, his sheriffs and the aristocracy.

From the time of William the Conqueror, the Norman kings had enclosed more and more land for hunting and levying tax. Tracts of land were turned into Royal Forest, including New Forest in Hampshire and most of Essex. Before the Charter of the Forest hunting for deer was punishable by death, and poachers could be castrated and blinded. Little wonder the Robin Hood legends emerge from this period.

At a time when the forests were the most important source of food, fuel and wood for the production of craft items, the Charter of the Forest guaranteed access to the land for common

‘The Charter guaranteed access to the land for common people’

people. It upheld their rights to herbage (foraging berries and herbs), pannage (pasture for pigs), agistment (grazing), turbarry (cutting of turf for fuel), estover (take timber for building repair or fuel) and the collecting of honey.

Once the Charter had established the rule of law within the Royal Forests, special Swanimote Courts enabled common people to seek justice and built a local system of governance which maintained the common stewardship of these shared resources. It also prevented the king and his agents from continuously enclosing the common land, and required King Henry III to give up the parts of the Royal Forest lands that had been seized by the previous kings.

The introduction of the Charter did not, however, end land disputes in the British Isles. Legal research indicates that conflicts continued to cause widespread unrest and that both charters had to be revised and reissued several times throughout the 13th century, to settle civil discontent.

The fight for common land spans centuries. It is certain that many of the large, open spaces in our

Graham Bathe explores the history of commonwealth rights

THE WOODED COMMONS

We tend to think of woodland as shady stands of straight-growing timber, with a dense canopy above. But in the Middle Ages they could be huge glades with a thin scatter of open-grown trees, which often formed part of the common of a manor. In addition to grazing their animals, commoners made use of other woodland products.

Most common rights grew spontaneously. They did not arise because a magnanimous lord granted them to his tenants, but because people had adopted long-standing practices of using the countryside in particular ways; practices became enshrined as ‘rights’, long before parliament



The Victorian artist Charles Sillem Lidderdale's portrait, *The young faggot-gatherer*, 1894.

cities and towns exist because of a combination of direct action, community organisation and legal action taken by thousands of local people mobilising during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Epping Forest, for example, was saved in the late 1800s from a landowner seeking to enclose portions for private profit: the insistence of local commoners on practising their ancient lopping rights were instrumental in this struggle (‘lopping’ was the practice of cutting the boughs and branches for woodfuel).

This kind of battle for land is not confined to London, or even to Britain. Nor is it a story of the past. Across the UK, the idea of community

existed. Some rights were called ‘botes’, from an Old English term for ‘good’ (from which the word ‘better’ derives). For example, people might be permitted to take sufficient housebote, cartbote and ploughbote (small-wood for maintenance), haybote or hedgebote (fencing or thorns for hedges).

Generally, such rights involved taking products, such as branches (shroud wood or pollard limbs), sticks, windfalls and fodder, and not whole trees. If they took maiden trees the consequences could be serious. Shrouding involved cutting branches at various heights where they emerged from trunks. Shrouds could provide fuel, fodder and small timber. The advantage of pollards and shrouds was that they could be grown within the unenclosed, grazed forest. The right of *estover* (from an Old French word meaning ‘necessary’) is the right to take products from the forest for self-consumption (not for sale). This may include bracken and heath for animal bedding or thatching and sticks for fuel. Whole communities might survive from such

woodlands – for well-being, education, wood fuel, local wildlife – is spreading in neglected woods. In Detroit, USA, a community food-growing revolution has transformed the parts of the city abandoned by industry and bankrupt city authorities. Worldwide, people are developing food forests, using the principles of commoning and of permaculture.

The anniversary of the Charter of the Forest is an opportunity to remember the struggles to conserve common land and to think what the principles of this mediaeval charter mean for common rights and access to woodland in the 21st century. 🌱

products, and the number of people exercising rights increased through mediaeval times as settlements grew.

With the enclosures of 17th and 18th centuries came the privatisation of property and rights; people were excluded from their former commons. The gentry took an increasingly harsh line against trespassers and anyone causing damage to game or woodland. Following some exceptionally harsh winters in the 18th century, women found guilty of stealing fuel from their former common were all sentenced to public whippings. At its most extreme, the Black Act of 1723 introduced the death penalty for poaching or felling an oak.

The countryside was transformed from a shared community to a place of division and intolerance, with echoes that percolate into current times. Today, there are just a few wooded commons where the right of *estovers* persist, all relics of a time when people survived by taking their share of a commonwealth. 🌱

Julie Timbrell is an activist, community artist and democracy practitioner.



WILDWOOD 5,000BCE

Trees, trees and more trees!
A dynamic patchwork of woodland and areas of grassland in which the grazing of deer and auroch (wild oxen) play an important part. In the fifth millennium BCE, in the late Mesolithic, wildwood is dominated by lime in Lowland England, by oak and hazel in Wales, western England, and south Scotland, by elm and hazel in most of Ireland, and birch and pine in the Scottish Highlands.

Graham Bathe has 40 years of experience in access rights and countryside, working for government agencies, local authorities and charities. He is the Chairman of the Open Spaces Society.

Sara Hudston is a writer living in rural west Dorset. She contributes to the *Guardian Country Diary* and has just finished a novel set in the remote Marshwood Vale.



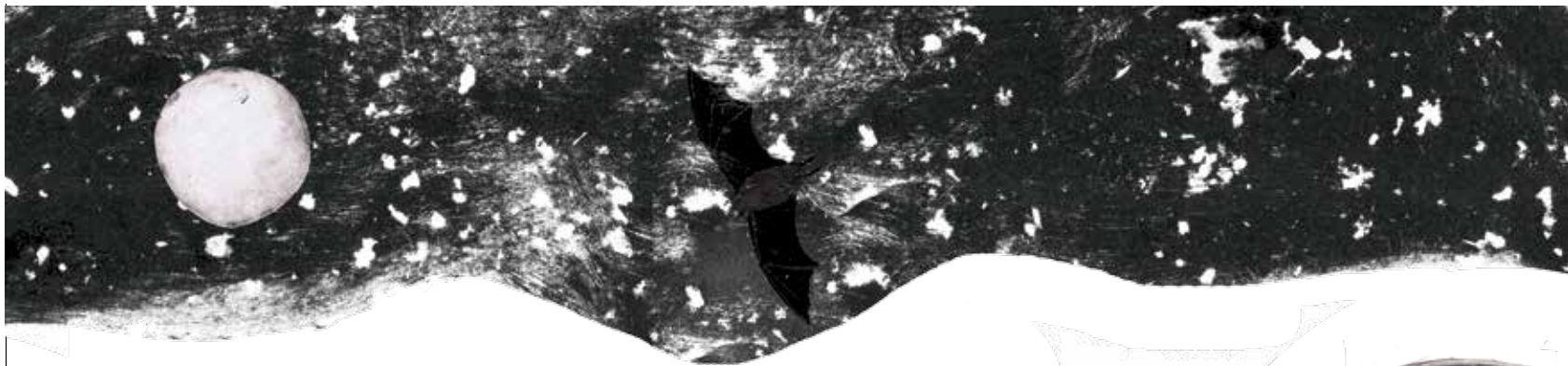
NEOLITHIC FARMING 4,000BCE

Neolithic people begin slowly converting wildwood, or the open areas within wildwood, into fields, pastures, heaths and moorland. The British Isles passes the stage of being half forest probably at some time in the Bronze or early Iron Age, roughly between 1,300 and 700BCE.



BRONZE AGE HEADACHES 2,000BCE

Tree bark of the white willow contains salicin, a chemical similar to that found in modern aspirin. Making tea from the bark of willow trees is known to release a medicine that is effective against minor aches and pains. The first recorded use of salicin is 2,000BCE, and it was used in the ancient worlds of Sumeria, Egypt and Rome.



Sara Hudston tells of a venerable hollow oak that provides an ideal hibernation place for bats

WINTER ROOST

Deep in the coppice behind our house is an old, hollow oak that shelters a kingdom of creatures. It's a 'stag oak', which is a venerable oak with a couple of dead, bare branches that rise like kingly antlers. I call it the Hornet Oak though because one summer a colony of European hornets nested inside, zipping in and out hunting insects and gathering honeydew sap. In spring when the first foliage flushes gold, woodpeckers peck the trunk for grubs. In autumn when the leaves turn bronze, it scatters acorns for the jays.

In winter, life retreats inside. Poke your head into the narrow opening between crumbly, wormy bark and you sense a still, cold space. It smells of loam and leaf mould. Shine a torch around and the light catches a silver pattern of snail trails, thick swags of spiders' web and the bitten evidence of a myriad scuttling, creeping, crawling things.

It's an ideal place for bats to hibernate. During hibernation, bats need roosts that are cool and stay at a steady temperature. Small tree holes or even cracks under thick bark are ideal as they are well insulated, dark and dry. Oak, ash and beech trees are particularly suitable but any large tree with cavities and splits is a potential bat roost.

I don't know for sure whether bats hibernate in the Hornet Oak – it would disturb them too much to find out. But I have walked there in summer with a bat detector and heard the calls of three different species – long-eared, soprano pipistrelle and whiskered – and seen them flitting through the dusk. I know they could be hibernating somewhere in those woods, tucked away in their secret crevices, cracks and holes, sleeping like the trees and waiting for spring.

Bat Conservation

Bats play a vital role in our environment but during the last century populations have suffered severe declines. Since 1991, the Bat Conservation Trust has been working to secure the future of bats by tackling the threats and persecution to loss of roosts and changing land use. Find out more by visiting treecharter.uk search bats.

BEA FORSHALL'S BATS



WHAT'S YOUR TREE STORY ?

JOHNNY SHARES HIS TREE STORY:

'As a young girl, spirited and wild - and moving around quite a bit due to being in a military family - trees were (and remain) my comrades in arms. Often arriving at a new home, school, environment, I would scout out the best and finest branched tree, slip up and find myself nestled in its highest branches reading a book or just hanging out with the 'wild life' (urban insects, squirrels, various birds). I got never tired of finding an excellent tree to discuss the various aspects of life and love, and the trees never seemed to get tired of listening.'



Brimmon Oak, Newtown, Powys, Wales: This giant oak, with a girth of over 6m, hit the headlines in 2009 when plans emerged to fell it to make way for the planned Newtown Bypass. After a long campaign initiated by the landowner Mervyn Jones, the Welsh Government eventually agreed to adjust the route and save the tree. It won 565 of 1,772 votes.

The winners of 2016 Tree of the Year competition

TREE OF THE YEAR

Last year more than 18,000 people across the UK voted for the tree they felt should be crowned 'Tree of the Year'. A total of 28 trees were shortlisted across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in the contest organised by the Woodland Trust and supported by People's Postcode Lottery. One tree from each country will now represent the UK in the European Tree of

the Year contest, which takes place this February. The four winning trees will each receive a care grant of £1,000 which can be used towards their upkeep and celebration.

Old trees are living monuments that make an important contribution to the environment and culture of the UK. They ought to be celebrated and protected more, just as our historic buildings are. Some specimens can live for hundreds, sometimes thousands of years, creating a unique bond with people, wildlife and the landscape.

The Woodland Trust's V.I. Trees campaign seeks to create a register for Trees of National Special Interest around the UK. For more information and to get involved visit woodlandtrust.org.uk/VItrees



Left: Sycamore Gap tree, Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland, England: One of the most photographed trees in the UK, growing in a dramatic dip alongside Hadrian's Wall. It is most famous for being filmed in *Robin Hood Prince of Thieves* in 1991. It won 2,542 of 11,913 votes.

Top right: The Holm Oak, Rostrevor Park, Northern Ireland: This wonderful evergreen Holm Oak has been much loved by many generations of Rostrevor locals. It has a girth of 3.6 metres with a typical snakeskin bark, and is distinctive because of the 45° angle at which it leans. It won 1,192 of 2,280 votes.

Bottom right: Ding Dong tree, Prestonpans Primary School, East Lothian, Scotland: The Ding Dong tree gets its name from a game invented by pupils who compete to touch its trunk shouting 'ding dong!'. The tree's protecting canopy makes it an ideal outdoor classroom. Beloved by generations of pupils, the Ding Dong tree has become central to the life and identity of the school, appearing on the banner of its website. It won 1,023 of 2,671 votes.



Retold by Martin Maudsley

THE FATHER OF THE FOREST

Once there was a young farmer called Jack who lived in a cottage that was pleasant and cool in summer time, but in winter time was terribly cold. So each day Jack gathered wood for the fire to keep himself warm. One day, as Jack was walking through the woods, he came across a slender silver birch. He was just about to chop down the tree when the bare branches began to shake and he heard a soft voice whispering: 'Please, please! Don't chop me.'

Well, Jack was surprised, to say the least, to hear a talking tree! But he still needed firewood. 'Why shouldn't I chop you down?' he said.

'Because with my branches you can make brooms and baskets.'

With that reply, Jack left the birch standing and wandered a little further into the forest. Soon he came across a hazel tree. Once more he raised his axe, but once more the tree spoke: 'Don't chop me! My stems are useful for fences and in autumn I'm covered with tasty nuts'.

And so it continued, tree after tree. Soon Jack was wondering how on earth he would find any firewood to keep warm that winter.

Eventually he came to an old twisted pine tree. 'Surely I can chop down this tree' He raised his axe, but once he heard a voice: 'Don't chop me - gather my pinecones as fuel for your fire instead.' At last this was what Jack needed! So he gathered sackfuls of pinecones and began to walk home. Suddenly there was a flash of light. Standing right in front of him was a strange little man: short and squat, all dressed in green with a long, grey beard.

'I'm the Father of the Forest. And for your kindness, in listening to my trees, I give you this gift.' He gave Jack a little wooden wand. 'Wave this wand and the plants and animals will provide you with everything you need. But make sure you use it wisely!'

With another flash the little green man disappeared into thin air. Jack was amazed, but very pleased with his magic wand. Feeling hungry he immediately used the wand to wish for food. Birds fluttered from the bushes carrying berries in their beaks which they dropped into Jack's hands, followed by bees with little drops of sweet honey.

At first Jack only used his magic wand sparingly; when he really needed something. But after a while, he wondered what else it could do: 'Maybe the wand could help me work the farm!' He waved his wand and dozens of moles began ploughing through the soil, then an army of ants appeared with seeds in their tiny jaws, which they sowed across the fields.

Soon Jack was using the wand for everything, but as he did so he became greedy, lazy and arrogant. One day, in the middle of winter, he looked up at the cold grey sky and shivered. 'I wish it to be summer,' he commanded whilst waving the wand at the sky. Immediately the clouds parted and the sun began to shine. But this was the wrong season for so much sunshine - plants began to shrivel and hibernating animals woke-up early to find there was nothing to eat.

Suddenly, in a flash of green light the Father of the Forest appeared again. Angrily he snatched the wand from Jack's hand: 'I warned you to use it wisely!' As he waved the wand towards the sky the clouds re-appeared and gentle rain began to fall on the parched earth. Then he stamped his little foot and disappeared, taking the wand with him.

From that day on Jack had to do all the farming for himself - it was hard work and long hours. He didn't have a magic wand anymore, but gradually he realised nature was still helping him: bees pollinating the crops, worms digging the earth, and the trees of the forest providing everything from brooms and baskets, nuts and poles, firewood and fruit, and much else besides. And sometimes Jack thought he could hear the voices of trees whispering in the branches.



Find a tree in the forest - one that you like. One that likes you. Spend a little time with your tree - looking at it from different angles, feeling the bark, smelling the branches, listening to it with your ears pressed against its trunk. Allow your senses to mingle with your imagination to reveal its 'numen' - the spirit of the tree, the personification of its true tree character. Imagine what secrets or stories it would tell.

What does your tree spirit look like?

How does it feel?

Is it friendly or frightening?

Who are its friends and foes in the forest?

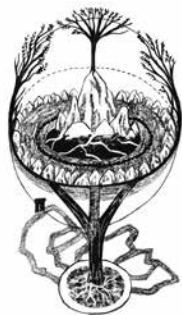
Formerly a maths teacher, Nigel Coates is currently the Residentiary Canon at the Cathedral and Parish Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Southwell.

Serena Inskip lives near the Blyth Estuary on Suffolk's east coast. She has tended trees, woods and hedges all round the UK, and is now creating 'Blyth Woods', a community woodland in Suffolk.



SWEET CHESTNUT 55BCE

Originally from southern Europe, western Asia and north Africa, this broadleaf tree arrived on these shores with the Roman Empire, perhaps brought with the legions who breakfasted on porridge made from sweet chestnut.



VIKING BRITAIN 793BCE

Yggdrasil (the World Tree or Tree of Life) plays a prominent role in Norse mythology, which travelled to the British Isles with the Viking invasions, connecting the existing Romano-British culture with Norse cosmology. The branches of this ash tree extend into the heavens.



THE ANKERWYCKE YEW

Rivers and trees were sacred to the Celts and the tribes of invaders who came to Britain after the Romans left. Over time, the Anglo-Saxons became Christianised, but retained a respect for many natural landmarks. Alfred the Great (Wessex King 871-899BCE) held councils at Runnymede, possibly under the branches of the Ankerwycke Yew, which took root at Runnymede around 2,000 years ago. This tree still stands at Runnymede by the Thames in Surrey.



'Southwell Minster's Chapter House are regarded as some of the finest examples of mediaeval craftsmanship.'

Residentiary Canon, Nigel Coates, on the enduring meaning of the carvings at Southwell Minster

LEAVES THAT DO NOT WITHER

The exquisite carvings at Southwell Minster's Chapter House are regarded as some of the finest examples of mediaeval craftsmanship. Described by the art historian Nikolaus Pevsner as 'The Leaves of Southwell', they are vividly observed study of local hedgerows. At least a dozen species of leaf have been identified by botanists including apple, buttercup, geranium, hawthorn, hop, ivy, maple, oak, rose, vine and wormwood. Simple leaves such as birch, hazel, and lime are notable by their absence and it is clear that the carvers are not offering an exhaustive taxonomy. They were selective and used botany for a different purpose.

Perhaps this should not come as a surprise since the carvings date, not from the era of modern scientific classification, but rather from the 13th century. When Archbishop John Le Romaine of York issued instructions on 25 January 1288 for the building of the Chapter House by a baptismal pool, he was concerned to create a meeting place for the College of Canons who oversaw the life of the Minster and its local estates. The profusion of

vegetation, green men, animals real and imaginary, contributed to a leafy bower in which the business and administration of the Minster was conducted. In her novel, *Wolf Hall*, Hilary Mantel pictures Cardinal Wolsey himself among the canons at Southwell in the Chapter house, 'presiding beneath the high vaulting like a prince at his ease in some forest glade, wreathed by carvings of leaves and flowers.'

What is it about the leaves of Southwell that inspires writers, artists and scientists alike? Who were the carvers and what were they seeking to express? At Southwell Minster we hope to explore multiple layers of interpretation and also improve the heating, lighting and accessibility of the Chapter House. A new project based on recent historical and architectural research is planned to investigate how the leaves relate to the life of the region and their use as symbols and metaphors. In his recent book on English cathedrals Simon Jenkins writes; 'For a moment in history, it (Southwell Minster) played host to a burst of genius. A corner of Nottinghamshire was seized by a collective magic.'

The Psalmist describes the one who is blessed 'as like a tree planted by rivers of water, that bringeth forth fruit in due season: his leaf also shall not wither.' In thinking about how trees have featured in history, art, sculpture, commerce, culture, folklore and religion, the 'Leaves of Southwell' offer a beautiful and profound example. 🌿

Mary Powell is a curator at Lincoln Castle, where the Charter of the Forest is kept. What does the mediaeval manuscript mean to her?

A CUSTODIAN OF THE CHARTER

For ten years my life was ruled by the incredibly complex restoration of Lincoln Castle and its centrepiece, the creation of a secure vault to house Magna Carta (1215) and the Charter of the Forest (1217). They are displayed together, the only place in the world where these two original documents can be seen side-by-side.

Magna Carta is often studied in schools but the Charter of the Forest is little known and under

appreciated. Produced two years after Magna Carta, Charter of the Forest is an addition to it, containing all the things they forgot to put in Magna Carta!

Under the Normans and Plantagenets, Royal Forests covered almost a third of England and included not just woodland, but marsh, heath and scrubland. It was subject to draconian 'forest law', and under King John's iron-fisted rule, large fines were levied for a host of offences within these extensive Royal Forests.

The Charter gave more liberty to 'freemen' (those who held land) and the 'common man'. Some clauses in the Charter of the Forest remained in force until the 1970s and three clauses in Magna Carta are still in law. These two, small, closely written pieces of parchment – even 800 years on – still have such resonance, representing our freedoms and establishing that no one person is ever above the law of the land, and no person can be persecuted by the power of the ruling elite. 🌿

Serena Inskip tells the story of the Blyth Woods in north-east Suffolk

PLANTING, STAKING, MULCHING

Blyth Woods is a group of local people who have come together to plan, plant and maintain community woods in the Blyth valley. In 2012, the parish council of Wenhaston-with-Mells, in north-east Suffolk, started talking about planting a new woodland to link the existing network of wildlife corridors, woods and heathland. In the area. It was Blyth Woods that started developing the idea with the help of the village school.

During our first outing, 20 children collected acorns from the hedge oaks round the playing field and dipped them into a bowl of water – if they sank we planted them in a nursery bed prepared in the school playground. Three years later, the saplings which grew from these acorns were planted out at Blower's Common by the same school children. Throughout those years, these children were repeatedly involved – with parents and our supporters – in planting hedges, an orchard and more, digging holes in frosty ground, planting, staking, weeding and mulching. They also began generally tuning into the lives and roles of trees in our area; identifying leaves, hunting for creatures and creating bug hotels. It was lovely to witness this young generation making their gentle marks on the future of their village.

Earlier this year, a 500-year-old village church trust granted us one year's Licence to Occupy Grove Piece. This is 2.2 acres of charming meadow hedged all round with mature maples, oaks, hawthorn, ash, blackthorn, wild apple and plum adjoining Vicarage Grove, a bluebell wood of hornbeam and oak. A week after hearing the good news from the church, we led all the children and families that we had worked with from the school along nearby footpaths, to imagine the future of Grove Piece with them, planting and growing up together. Already we've raised half the funds to buy the plot for the community.

On a hot, bright morning last December we marked out rides, new planting plans, wide margins and a pond to dig in the wet clay. We also celebrated Tree Dressing Day by adorning the oak by the Village Hall – and on the last Friday of 2016 we brought cheer to Grove Piece, toasting the land and trees with apple juice, song and a small bonfire. 🌿



2017 is the 800th anniversary of the charter.

Tim Dee finds music in the depths of a winter woodland

A MISTLE THRUSH SINGS IN A WINTER WOOD

It stands to reason, but it is still striking for us rootless and shifting human types to learn that it is possible to see, and so believe, that the life living in a place is made from that place, built from it, made literally out of it. If you catch a great reed warbler on migration in an Italian reed bed and scrutinise the stable isotope constitution of its feathers you can read back in time to another place with astonishing pinpoint accuracy – the place on the bird's wintering and moulting grounds in sub-Saharan Africa where the warbler grew the feathers that it wears through its European summer. The chemistry of the earth that fed the vegetation that fed the insects that fed the bird is written into its plumage. The warbler can only have come from one place and, wherever it goes, it is marked with this home scar. And if you know how to scan the codes there can be no doubt.

Released into our minds this knowledge must feed our imagination.

I was today running through a winter wood, threadbare and stark, at the lip of the Avon Gorge in west Bristol. Trees, famous rare and endemic whitebeams, climb down the limestone cliffs, when the wood slides and then tumbles and then falls apart towards the muddy river, but I am at the flat top next to a stand of a few more regular specimens, limes mostly. Their leaves have all dropped and their branches and twigs are once more scratching a winter living from grey skies. The wood seems entirely empty of warm life and there is little to report save this one scrap: at the top of the tallest lime is a mistle thrush. It is colourless in the dull afternoon light; even when it turns (what I know to be) its pale breast, I can see only that its shape looks softer than when it was facing away. But that is incidental and tiny somehow compared to the noise the thrush is



'The thrush is singing the past and the present towards the future. I hear long phrases of a thrown song that seems to have gathered all of the dead season together into a beautiful grey music.' Artwork by Bea Forshall

making. And this is what all this is about. It is singing. A male declaring himself and his plot. And his song sounds like everything old and cold in the wood made into music, tempered just a little by a frosted memory of sweeter, warmer times. It comes from now, and then, but it looks ahead. Long before the winter solstice, long before the coldest nights and the shortest days, it is sending itself on, together with everything that has made it, sounding around the corners of the earth, beyond the tilt of the world, chanting the dozen trees of the twiggy wood on toward a deeper time. What will be tomorrow.

This is a time that we might share but rarely feel, in part because of the hectic now which our species specialises in, in part because tomorrow can only be made by the burning of today, and though this is how life lives we find it hard to take. All the time we feel it passing. The thrush is singing the past and the present towards the future. I hear long phrases of a thrown song that seems to have gathered all of the dead season together into a beautiful grey music: an account of what was and what is. But the thrush's singing means what will be: a defended territory, a mate, a nest, eggs, young, and then singing it all, all over again. 🌿

People in Aston-on-Clun have celebrated a black poplar tree for hundreds of years. Kirsty Stevens hopes the next generation will too

THE ARBOR TREE

At the centre of the quiet Shropshire village of Aston-on-Clun stands a black poplar tree bedecked in flags. Its silhouette at this time of year is black and bristling, its pollarded limbs standing stiffly out from its trunk. This is the Arbor Tree and it has stories to tell.

The first records of this tree being decorated date back to a bright May morning in 1786 when the local squire and his new bride passed by on their wedding day. Reputedly they were so charmed by the fluttering flags that they left monies for the celebration to continue in perpetuity. However, it would be naive to assume that this was the first time the tree had been dressed and its location, standing at the junction of several lanes and adjacent to a stream suggests much older pre-Christian connections.

Local folklore records the tree as a potent symbol of fertility: 'You may not be able to see them but this tree is full of storks'. As late as the 1950s and 60s every new bride married in the parish was

presented with a scion (cutting) from the Arbor Tree on her wedding day as a portent of a fruitful marriage. If that failed to work there was a back-up plan: childless women could wear a white cloth flag against their breast for 30 days and then apply to the parish council to have it hung on the tree. Apparently the council recorded a 90% success rate with this method: a rare case of 'official magic'.

The current Arbor Tree is relatively young, propagated from one of those wedding day cuttings. Its grizzled forebear with its giant, hollow trunk filled solid with concrete, finally toppled across the main road one gusty night in September 1995. The cold light of the following morning saw local people clustered around the fallen giant gathering cuttings to replant. Perhaps this reflects the Forestry Commission records which show that although the black poplar is our most endangered native timber tree its greatest stronghold is in Shropshire.

Over the years the Arbor Day celebration has taken many different forms. Sometimes the ceremony takes the form of a gentle re-enactment of the original wedding ceremony. On other occasions it has been a rather more riotous affair with a sparky St Brigit chasing off the Puritans. The remarkable thing is that the celebration has continued with each new generation writing songs and poems, creating books and artwork in homage to this tree. 🌿

For further information email kirsty.stevens@orange.net



'The first records of this tree being decorated date back to a bright May morning in 1786 when the local squire and his new bride passed by on their wedding day.'



NEW FOREST 1079

Following the Norman Conquest, the New Forest was proclaimed a royal forest by William the Conqueror. It was created from more over 20 hamlets and isolated farmsteads, becoming a single, 'new' area.

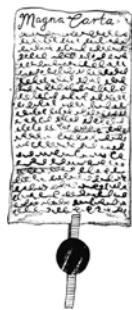


ROBIN HOOD

Nobody knows who this 13th-century figure really was. Maybe his Lincoln Green clothes stood for the Green Man. Maybe 'Hood' meant 'wood', or the name 'Robin' a nature spirit. He has entered our culture as a free man fighting over the rights to woodland. The Major Oak in Sherwood Forest is said to have hidden Robin Hood from his enemies.

Kirsty Stevens is a Landscape Architect and printmaker with an interest in folklore. She lives in Shropshire with her family.

Rob Penn presented the television series *Tales from the Wild Wood* and recently published *The Man Who Made Things Out of Trees*. He is also a Champion of the Charter for Trees, Wood and People.



THE MAGNA CARTA & CHARTER OF THE FOREST

English Barons force King John to sign the Magna Carta at Runnymede in 1215, a fundamental Charter of Liberties.

In 1217 John's heir, Henry III, signs a Charter of the Forest at Runnymede. Clauses of the Magna Carta relating to the forests are expanded and made into their own Charter, setting out freedoms and liberties of all those living in forest areas. It re-establishes rights of access to the Royal Forests for free men.



HORSE CHESTNUT 1600

From its natural range in the Balkans, specimens of this broadleaf tree are brought into England for their amazing blossom, to decorate the parks and gardens of the wealthy.

Robin Walter is a forester who has also worked as an arboricultural climber, 'on the saws' in Dorset and for the Woodland Trust. Since 2010 he has been working independently.



Community woodland and social forestry initiatives are spreading all over the country, creating more access to woodlands for a wider variety of people.

Rob Penn savours the 'kingdom free from time and sky'.

OUR WOOD

I am lucky enough to be involved in two community woodland groups. The first, conventional group meets twice a month to physically 'manage' Court Wood, an 11-acre, mixed broadleaf woodland on the edge of the Black Mountains, South Wales. We coppice ash and wild cherry, which we process and sell as firewood; we make charcoal; from time-to-time we sell a bit of timber and we run green woodworking courses. Once a year, we host a knees-up in the woods, to spread the word about what we are doing, and why. We are a not-for-profit group and all the members are volunteers. So far, so normal.

The other group is nuanced differently. We set up The Woodlanders 18 months ago, to try to attract the next generation into the woods. Twenty or so extended families have joined and we meet once a month in Court Wood, on Sunday mornings. There is always some sort of activity for the kids, but it is entirely optional. Often, all they want to do is muck around on the tyre swing and the climbing rope, build a new den, eat sausages and toast marshmallows on the fire.

Some of the activities are seasonal. We plant trees in winter, organise wild flower walks in spring and forage for mushrooms in autumn. We have also made wild flower seed balls (properly muddy), a bug hotel (christened 'Court Gasthof'), leaf sculptures (inspired by Andy Goldsworthy) and bird boxes (which fell apart). This is not Forest School, though. Fundamentally, The Woodlanders is about sharing the experience of being in the woods with other members of your family; it's about discovering that your Dad can

identify a tree creeper and Granny knows a lot about autumn berries. It's also about children developing the confidence to disappear out of the clearing and into the trees, to a secret place, beneath an ancient yew or behind a decaying sweet chestnut trunk, to savour the 'kingdom free from time and sky,' as Louis MacNiece wrote.

On a sunny morning in spring, there might be 60 of us gathered in the clearing. On a cold Sunday at the end of autumn, with a fierce wind crashing through the trees, we're lucky if 20 show up. Often both woodland groups are in Court Wood at the same time, but in different locations, and there is some synergy: adults with older kids leave them doing leaf sculptures while they head off to split cordwood. It is a matter of great delight to me when this happens. After all, the underlying purpose of both groups – to nurture a sense of ownership and responsibility not just for Court Wood but for all woodlands – is exactly the same. 🌿

Robin Walter introduces the benefits of community woodlands

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY WOODLAND?

We British have had a rather passive relationship with woods over recent decades. We like to visit them, walk in them, play and picnic in them, but they usually belong to someone else and so we dip in and out without thinking too much about them.

Not any longer.

When the Government proposed in 2010 to sell off tracts of publicly owned Forestry Commission woods, there was uproar and widespread opposition from the public, leading to the policy being scrapped. It seems we do care deeply about our woods.

Since then there has been renewed interest in developing a 'woodland culture' in Britain, including interest in community woodlands. These are woods where local people have a particular stake in the

management, or even ownership, of the wood. This is a higher degree of engagement than seen before. We already have public forests which are managed by the state agency of the Forestry Commission, and also the National Forest and Community Forests dating from the 1990s set up by the state and local authorities. However, these forests were designed specifically for public benefit and they are large-scale professionally run enterprises. Recent years have seen the growth of more small-scale initiatives, from firewood groups to full woodland management, run by local people for local benefit – genuine community woods in other words.

This is not about the money. If you want to heat your house, it is probably cheaper and easier to use gas than firewood. And even if you do have a wood burner, why not just get some seasoned logs delivered?

You may as well ask why play a musical instrument, or grow your own vegetables, or keep a pet? Most of us do these things not because we have to or for financial reasons, but because we choose to, because they enrich our lives and because it is an essential part of being human to engage in creative and caring work.

So working in a community wood cutting

firewood, or making beanpoles, or clearing brambles is one of these vital arenas of creative work and, yes, it may result in something to take home at the end as well.

Conversely, woodlands are unique, rich, living places which require our attention. We have lost sight of the value of woods, but this should not be restored by putting a price tag on them, nor should we take them for granted. Woodlands need our attention if they are to thrive in the face of pressure from development, pollution, degradation and neglect.

A new woodland culture would seek to understand woods better, respect their special qualities, find a balanced way of working with woods, integrate them into our lives and make this specialist knowledge common knowledge.

Giving woods our attention is the first step – then we will begin to see the care they require and the opportunities they offer. Community woodlands provide a unique opportunity for us to participate in this process; it is our chance to take collective responsibility for a piece of our neighbourhood. 🌿

Get Involved

To find out more and to get involved in community woodlands visit communitywoods.org.uk

With the help of his Dorset neighbours, **Kit Vaughan** is reviving an ancient coppice

THE NEW WOODLANDERS

Prime Coppice is a 21-hectare ancient woodland in the heart of the Marshwood Vale, Dorset. Since 2011 we've been working hard to introduce sustainable management to this neglected site: restoring coppice, thinning unmanaged areas, improving the ride and path network, expanding glades and open space, managing the woodland edge for biodiversity, restoring woodland ponds and increasing the structural diversity in the wood. We also use sympathetic management practices such as horse extraction of timber, brushwood piles and 'layering' coppice and have also fenced coppiced areas to ensure protection from deer damage.

It is not just about the woodland though, it is also about people. We are working with skilled local woodspeople as well as volunteers and trainees, providing employment, training opportunities and forestry experience. We want Prime Coppice to be open to the community and become a model for other small woodlands, demonstrating the value that accumulates from working woodlands again.

In 2014, Prime Coppice joined the burgeoning Community Woodland Network, which is supported by Communities Living Sustainably (CLS) in Dorset. Over this time we have held a number of training events and courses, both at a national and local level, including green woodwork skills, sustainable firewood production, coppicing, working woodlands



The Working Woodlanders community group hard at work in Prime Coppice, helping to revive this Dorset coppice in return for firewood, new skills and plenty of tea.

with horses and climate resilient woodlands. Opportunities have been provided for different groups to get involved in the wood, from those looking to learn on courses and events, to volunteers developing rural skills, to mother and baby groups keen to introduce their children to the woodland... We also offer access to the wider community and they run regular volunteer work parties where people can get actively involved in woodland management. In return, these 'working woodlanders' are rewarded with local, sustainable wood fuel that will offset their use of oil or gas heating.

We hope that Prime Coppice provides a space where people can reconnect with nature; learn about the changing natural environment and human impacts on it and, importantly, what we can do about it. 🌱

Woodland Portraits

Common Ground are producing a series of short films that explore why woods and trees matter to 21st-century life, and how community woodlands can become our cultural and economic life again. Watch what has been made so far: commonground.org.uk/prime-coppice



LONDON PLANE 1650

John Tradescant the younger an English naturalist, gardener, collector and traveller, is the first person to record the London Plane, which is most likely to be a hybrid of the American sycamore and the Oriental plane, which was growing in his garden - known as 'The Ark' - in Vauxhall, London.

Jon Clark is helping establishing a community forest for the South West

COMMUNITY FORESTS

I have a long-held passion for showing how people's health and wellbeing benefits from trees and woodlands. That's why I established the Forest of Avon Trust with others in 2008. Initially it was not easy and we started with just £3,000 and a couple of offers of local authority funding.

But when I look back, I'm really proud of what we have achieved, especially the contributions we have made to outdoor learning: providing accredited training for nearly 400 Forest School practitioners in the area and providing woodland activities for adults with learning difficulties, mental health needs and those with dementia.

We have also brought over 2,000 acres of local woodland back into active management - and we have set ourselves the target of bringing at least half of these woods into Forestry Commission approved management plans by 2020 (providing public access, biodiversity, landscape, environmental management and economic benefits). Our hope is that the Forest of Avon Community Forest will give people here a local, sustainable woodland economy based on the urban markets of Bristol and Bath. 🌱

New Community Forests

The Community Forest programme was established in 1990. The aim is to stimulate economic and social regeneration by revitalising derelict land. For more information visit communityforest.org.uk



The green woodworking school at Cherry Wood gives people a break from the hustle and bustle of life.

Tim Gatfield has stimulated a new woodland culture near Bristol

CHERRY WOOD

Owning my own woodland was a long-held dream. For many years I have had a keen interest in conservation, rural and craft skills. I have also wanted to live in a way that is more sustainable and sympathetic with nature.

I purchased Cherry Wood near Bath in 2005 with the intention of improving and managing the wood and setting up a 'school' to teach green woodworking skills to others, and pass on the pleasure of living and working in the woods. A previous career in the army gave me valuable knowledge of bushcraft and living outdoors, which I aim to pass on to students.

All abilities are catered for - from the complete novice to those who are quite familiar with green or seasoned woodworking.

The working day is busy with many new skills to learn, such as making green furniture, turning bowls, pole lathing, bushcraft, leatherwork and elm bark weaving. Cherry wood is off-grid, so no power tools, only hand tools and hand working. There is also lots of time for socialising, making new friends and sharing experiences. Teamwork is an important element of the courses and communal cooking in the evening goes a long way to promoting this!

I aim to give people a break from the hustle and bustle of 21st-century life. They leave with new skills as well as an artefact or piece of furniture to take home, a sense of achievement and feeling healthy and fulfilled after a unique experience.

When I came to the woods, they were made up of planted larch and spruce with some beech and ash, an industrial crop destined for a sawmill. Today, Cherry Wood is a place to live and work, rather than just a stock of timber. It is a new craft culture based on manual labour and native species, rather than an industrial culture based on machinery and exotic plantations. 🌱



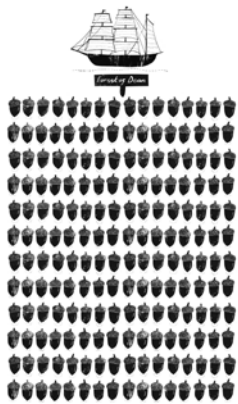
ENCLOSURE ACTS 1773-1882

A legal process in the English Parliament begins enclosing small landholdings and commons to create larger farms. Land - including woodland - becomes restricted to the owner and is no longer available for communal use. In England and Wales this process ends an ancient system of agriculture, becoming a widespread feature of the English landscape.

Tim Gatfield runs the greenwood workshops at Cherry Wood and was previously a cabinet-maker.

Jon Clark is the Director of the Forest of Avon Trust and has worked in community forestry for 25 years.

Matt Elliot left the army in 2004 to study Horticulture with Plantsmanship, then followed this with a PhD on tree disease epidemiology. He went on to work at Forest Research and joined the Woodland Trust in 2016.



FOREST OF DEAN 1802

'The State of the Forest at this moment is deplorable,' wrote Horatio Nelson in a ten-page memorandum. 'The Forest of Dean,' he continued, 'contains about 23,000 acres of the finest Land in the Kingdom, which I am informed, if in high cultivation of Oak, would produce about 9,200 loads of timber fit for building Ships of the Line every year.' As a result of Nelson's intervention, 30 million acorns were planted in the Forest.



DOUGLAS FIR 1827

With purple-brown bark, this evergreen tree which can grow to 55m and live for more than 1,000 years, is introduced to the UK from the Pacific Northwest by Scottish botanist David Douglas.

Nick Atkinson is a Senior Advisor for Conservation and External Affairs at the Woodland Trust.

Matt Elliot explores the issues of tree disease in the 21st century

GLOBALISATION OF TREE DISEASE

Trees, pests and pathogens have evolved together and are part of a healthy woodland ecosystem. Tree decline is important within this ecosystem because the resulting deadwood provides an irreplaceable habitat for many species of invertebrates and fungi. However, the balance is fragile and can be tipped in favour of disease in a number of ways. If a pathogen is introduced into an area where the trees have not evolved alongside it, the trees will not have evolved a defence against it.

Tree pests and pathogens move into new areas largely because of the international trade in live plants and wood products. There have been a number of examples of this occurring in the UK: Dutch Elm Disease (*Ophiostoma novo-ulmi*) was introduced in wooden crates; Ash Dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) in ash trees for planting from Europe; and *Phytophthora ramorum*, in ornamental nursery stock. These man-made pressures, along with climate change and industrialised agricultural practices, mean that trees in the 21st century face more disease than ever before.

One particular group of pathogens that are well suited to spread within the plant trade are *Phytophthora* species. These fungal-like organisms thrive in the wet and relatively warm conditions provided in nurseries. They are also microscopic so can't be seen by eye. Perhaps the best known example is *Phytophthora ramorum* which can kill many tree species including beech, larch, sweet chestnut and oak.

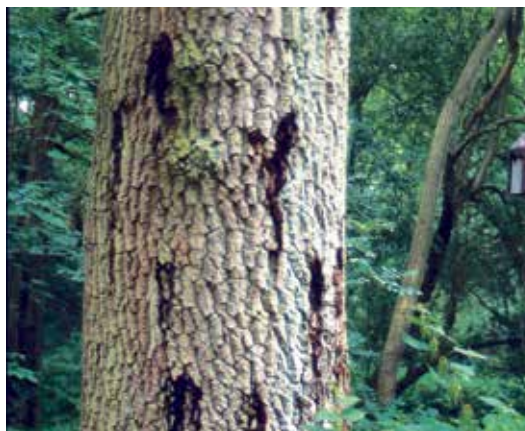
Phytophthora ramorum was initially thought to be a disease of garden ornamentals because the first outbreaks (in the early 2000s) were in gardens which contained ornamental trees and shrubs such as rhododendron, magnolia, pieris and viburnum. However, the true scale of the problem soon came to light as it was realised that *P. ramorum* could infect *Rhododendron ponticum* which is itself a widespread shrubby weed species. This meant that this disease was able to spread quickly throughout the country, particularly in the west because of the wetter weather. *Phytophthora* diseases are difficult to identify but shoot tips of infected plants often go black and die back, and bleeding black cankers

Nick Atkinson explains how climate change is affecting trees and people

WEATHERING THE STORM

Like the hundreds of thousands of other ancient trees in the UK the Ankerwycke Yew, under which both Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest were signed, has lived through both the Mediaeval Warm Period and the Little Ice Age, but now faces the greatest climate challenge yet. Driven mainly by human activity, global temperatures are rising faster than at any time in at least the past million years, and no one knows how that will impact on wildlife, especially long-lived wildlife.

Global warming causes local changes in weather at multiple scales. There can be more extreme 'point' events such as storms, events that last weeks or months (even years) such as droughts, and changes that persist over longer periods, such as increased winter rainfall.



Ash Dieback (top left) is characterised by diamond shaped lesions on the trunks of infected plants and dieback of the foliage. The micro-moth *Cameraria ohridella* (top right), which mines the leaves of the horse chestnut tree, is said to be from around the city of Ohrid in the Republic of Macedonia, which is also where the horse chestnut itself originated from. Bleeding black cankers on an oak (bottom left) is associated with the still mysterious Acute Oak Decline. 'One of the most feared beetles on earth', the Emerald Ash Borer, (bottom right) is exterminating ash across the United States and could well arrive in the UK. For further information on pests, diseases and on how you can report infected trees in your area, visit woodlandtrust.org.uk/treedisease

can also be seen on the trunks of infected trees.

Another severe disease which is currently sweeping through the country is Ash Dieback, sometimes known as *Chalara*. This is caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* which infects and kills ash trees. It was first reported in Poland in 1991 and has since spread throughout Europe on infected stock which went on to be planted thereby initiating the epidemic. This disease is now putting millions of ash trees across the UK at risk. Ash is a very important species for biodiversity – irreplaceable for many invertebrates and lichens.

Oak trees, particularly in the south of England, have been in decline for some time. It is not fully understood why this is, but the phenomena does have a name: Acute Oak Decline. This is different

from other tree diseases because the causes are not from a single organism but rather from a number of issues. Declining oak trees often have bleeding patches on them that contain bacteria and bark beetles, which are sometimes associated with declining trees. Historic drought events are also thought to play a part in the decline, with oak trees taking many years to exhibit the physical effects of a severe drought.

Climate change could well exacerbate these issues. The number of diseases that are able to survive in the UK may well also increase as the environmental conditions change. The relationship between trees and pathogens is complicated and not fully understood so what will happen to the frequency and severity of tree diseases in the future is currently unknown. 🌱

Species are expected to adapt to these climate changes in two main ways, by altering their distribution and through genetic adaptation. Trees do both things very slowly: they can't physically move so rely on the dispersal of their seeds (by wind or animals) to shift their ranges. By producing copious quantities of seed, however, they create huge amounts of genetic variability, which is the raw material of evolution.

There's another aspect to adaptation, which is how trees might help us to deal with climate change. For a start, woodland is the most cost effective and readily scalable form of carbon sequestration there is: a tree's weight pretty much represents the amount of carbon dioxide it has removed from the atmosphere. Creating new woodland is the best way to reverse the effects of carbon emissions.

Once turned into lignin, that carbon stays put until the tree either rots away or is burnt. If used for fuel, the released carbon is then re-absorbed by the trees growing as replacements. The important thing is that no fossil carbon is being released.

Trees can help in lots of other ways too. They can slow flood waters, helping offset the arrival of

peak flows at river confluences. They can reduce soil erosion, maintaining agricultural productivity without the need for chemical fertilisers. They can provide shade and shelter for crops and livestock alike. In towns, they help reduce both ground and air temperatures, shade buildings in summer and shield them from winter winds.

People love trees for their beauty. How wonderful it is that such aesthetically appealing things can also deliver so many benefits in such troubling times, if only given the chance. Their steadfast nature is most welcome: in adapting to climate change, we need trees more than they need us. 🌱

#ShowTheLove

This Valentine's Day show your love for trees as part of the Climate Coalition's annual campaign to remember what is at stake as our climate changes. Download the community action pack from treecharter.uk/showtheLove and request a #ShowTheLove pack to help spread the word about the importance of trees in a changing world.



Horse chestnut originated from a small part of the Balkans, around the city of Ohrid, and in the wild is a small tree confined to cliffs. It was introduced to western Europe four centuries ago. Photograph by Bob Gibbons.

Keith Alexander, Ted Green and Roger Morris argue that we need to rethink the role of non-native trees

TREES FROM OVERSEAS

In the wrong places 'non-natives' can be a problem, but there may be reason to re-appraise the role of non-natives in conservation, particularly in the aftermath of devastation by new pathogens and in the ongoing response to climate change.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature has a pragmatic approach to nativeness: it requires a species to have been present since at least 1500. Yet, it is a matter of perception rather than strict science that determines whether we accept non-natives and recognises their contribution to Britain's biodiversity.

The issue of species choice becomes a serious matter at a time when various plant pathogens threaten several of our native trees, and many of the organisms that inhabit veteran trees are severely threatened by the loss of their indigenous host trees. Some of these threatened species also make use of naturalised trees, but conservation measures often lead to the removal of this alternative habitat. There is a need for a fresh view on the role

naturalised trees play in the ecology of woodland, wood pasture and in the wider countryside.

Climate change is already forcing us to rethink our assumptions, and the regular appearance of new pests and diseases also requires us to evaluate ways of responding. In the face of such changes it may be unwise to stick to a fixed view of the role non-natives might play in the wider countryside and therefore policy and practice needs to become more dynamic.

'There is a need for a fresh view on the role naturalised trees play in the ecology of woodland'

The arrival of Ash Dieback has highlighted the way in which the British countryside can be seriously affected by imported pathogens. There are strong grounds for concern, as it is entirely possible that ash will cease to be a major component of woodland and wood pasture ecosystems and in the wider landscape. If this happens, how can we make sure that the impact of its demise is minimised?

In some parts of Britain, such as limestone areas of Yorkshire, sycamore may literally end up the only remaining tree; [removal of sycamore in such

areas would seem to be very unwise.]

Climate change brings a further conundrum. Computer modelling suggests that south-east England, where beech is considered to be native, could become unsuitable for this species. Indeed, there are already problems as beech was heavily affected by the 1987 storm and in subsequent storms we have seen a further loss of veteran beeches. Bearing in mind the exceptional importance of beech as the host of a range of important fungi and invertebrates, there is a need to think strategically about what will happen as ancient beeches are lost to changing climate and to extreme events. Ageing beech should be treasured wherever they occur in Britain.

It is very easy to think about the natural environment as something that can be categorised as 'good' or 'bad'. We overlook the fact that mankind has been responsible for manipulating much of the landscape and natural features that we treasure. Some of these species are non-native but accepted; others are demonised without a proper analysis of the contribution that they might make in the aftermath of pathogens that threaten not only ash but also oak and other species.

There is a serious conservation argument in favour of maintaining or even encouraging non-native tree species across lowland Britain, especially sycamore, horse chestnut, sweet chestnut, walnut and London plane. Dismissing non-natives from the toolbox of conservation solutions would be unwise. 🌱

Julian Rollins has started a tree nursery in his garden, collecting seeds and growing saplings that are from his local area

GAPS IN THE HEDGEROW

I noticed shrivelled leaves, just after the big, black buds on our garden's hedgerow ashes had burst into life. Here and there shoots looked scorched. At first, I shook my head and decided to look away. I'm something of a hypochondriac and it's an anxiety that extends to my garden.

By midsummer it was impossible to ignore. Blackened ash leaves drooped from every other branch and twigs were stained and marked.

The symptoms matched photos I found on

the Forestry Commission's website; I filled out a report form and sent photos.

The email that came back confirmed that yes, it was Ash Dieback. I shouldn't have been surprised; by late 2015 dieback had reached Carmarthenshire, just a few miles from our Pembrokeshire valley. But I had not expected to be so moved. As a child I'd heard adults talk about Dutch Elm Disease, mourning the passing of much-loved trees, but had been puzzled by how much they cared.

Now I understand. *Chalara* is expected to kill most ash trees, transforming landscapes. Ash is a tree that tends to be overlooked, a support player rather than a star, but we will miss it when it's gone.

My hedges pre-date our house, which the deeds tell me was built in 1859. In places the coppiced stumps, or stools, are huge. I see one as a hippo on its back, all folds of flesh and heavy legs; daft really, but I have become emotionally attached to these veterans. My hippo will eventually succumb. What can I do, other than watch and wait?

In the long-term ashes may build resistance to dieback, but before then there will be millions of new gaps in our woods and hedges. That will create opportunity in woodland, where other species will quickly fill newly-available space.

Hedgerow gaps will be different and will require human attention. Which is why I spent autumn with seeds in my pockets. The very best replacements won't come in bundles from a distant nursery, but will be saplings grown from seed collected from as near as possible to where they are needed.

Potential candidates for ash replacement vary from county to county; I'm trying hazel, sessile oak and blackthorn.

My 'tree nursery' is a bit basic. It's a mismatched collection of recycled plant pots under wire mesh (to keep out mice). A modest start, but at least I am doing something. Wouldn't it be great if everyone with a garden, or allotment, did the same? Perhaps schools and community groups could join in, too? Local nurseries to help fill those gaps in the hedge. 🌱

Keith Alexander is a freelance ecological consultant with an interest in tree ecology and invertebrates. Ted Green is an environmental campaigner with an interest in trees, fungi and birds. Roger Morris is a freelance ecological consultant interested in flies and coastal geomorphology.



GIANT SEQUOIA 1852

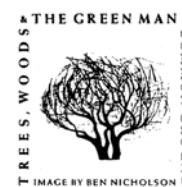
William Lobb visits San Francisco and is dazzled by the huge conifers in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. This 'vegetable monster' triggered an enormous craze in British horticultural circles when Mr Lobb returned with seeds, shoots and seedlings, which grew into the thousands of saplings that were bought to adorn the estates of Victorian Britain.



WOODLAND TRUST

THE WOODLAND TRUST 1972

Spiralling threats to our precious woods and trees leads to the founding of the Woodland Trust, which remains at the forefront of the fight to protect, restore and create UK woodland. The Woodland Trust now owns and manages more than 1,000 wildlife-rich native woods across the UK, including many ancient woodlands and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.



COMMON GROUND 1983

Common Ground is founded and its first major project is 'Trees, Woods and the Green Man' - from 1986 to 1989 it explores the cultural relationship between trees and people, publishing various books and initiating several art exhibitions, including 'The Tree of Life' with the South Bank Centre, 'Out of the Wood' with the Crafts Council, and Andy Goldsworthy's 'Leaves' show at the Natural History Museum.

Julian Rollins is an author and journalist who specialises in the environment, conservation and rural affairs.



THE GREAT STORM 1987

A powerful storm ravages the UK in the middle of October. Winds gust up to 100mph, 18 people lose their lives, and of the 15 million trees said to have blown over in the night, most are chainsawed and removed, even if they are still rooted and alive. This reaction in the aftermath of the storm reveals our estranged relationship with trees.



'Diversity is key to the resilience and stability of forest gardens – diversity in structure and diversity of species.'

Martin Crawford is Director of the Agroforestry Research Trust and author of *Creating a Forest Garden*.

Martin Crawford explains the resilience of creating gardens that are both edible and sustainable

FOREST GARDENS

Forest gardens are a type of land use common in many parts of the world, and fast becoming more popular in Britain, for growing a wide variety of edible and other crops in a sustainable and low-input system.

This diverse system involves mixing trees, shrub and ground-level plants in an integrated system which provides food and other crops, mimicking the structure of a forest but using plants of direct or indirect use to people. So as well as the obvious fruit and nut trees, there will usually also be many perennial vegetables, trees and shrubs for edible leaf crops, fibre plants used for tying, construction materials like bamboos, medicinal plants and dye plants. Plants of indirect use include nitrogen-fixing plants and mineral accumulators (deep rooted plants which efficiently raise nutrients into the topsoil layers) which help feed the whole system.

Although annual plants may be included in forest gardens, the majority of plants are perennial and the majority of the soil is not cultivated, which gives tremendous benefits, the most significant of which is that a healthy mat of beneficial fungi (called mycorrhizae) grows throughout the topsoil. These beneficial fungi have many important functions. They form

'Diversity is key to the resilience and stability of forest gardens – diversity in structure and diversity of species.'

symbiotic associations with most plant roots, giving the plants difficult-to-find nutrients in return for some sugars. They protect plant roots from pathogens. They move nutrients around from areas where they are abundant to where they are lacking. And perhaps most important of all, they are a vital part of the process of carbon sequestration, where carbon is locked into the soil in stable forms.

In this country the spacing of trees needs to be wider than in the tropics to allow enough sun energy to filter down to crops below. Most forest gardens here contain fruit trees (like apple, pear, and plum), nut trees (hazel, sweet chestnut), perennial vegetables (alliums, purslane, hostas, Solomon's seal, pokeroor, herbs), tying materials (New Zealand flax), leaf crops (lime trees), and nitrogen fixing trees and shrubs (alders, *Elaeagnus*).

Diversity is key to the resilience and stability of forest gardens – diversity in structure and diversity of species. Most forest gardens in different parts of the world contain 150-250 species, sometimes more. This sounds a lot compared with the few dozen food plants that most people in the 'developed' world eat, but it isn't really.

Most forest gardens achieve diversity through using a mixture of native and non-native plants. The likelihood of continued climate change underlines the importance of diversity. Forest garden and similar agroforestry systems offer a sustainable and low carbon alternative for growing crops for people, which also protects the soil, stores carbon, and is excellent for wildlife. Oh yes, and forest gardens are also beautiful! 🌿



SELL THE FOREST! 2010

The coalition government announces plans to sell part of the Public Forest estate in England, including ancient woodland, into private hands. Hundreds of thousands of people object, and in 2011 the government abandons the plan.

Emma Tomlin on the importance of hedges for wildlife and woodfuel

NATURAL REGENERATION

Natural regeneration describes the creation of trees and woodlands from seeds produced and germinated in situ. Natural regeneration covers the restocking of existing woodland and the extension of woodlands onto previously unwooded areas.

Before the Government's Broadleaved Policy in 1985 the use of natural regeneration was mainly confined to established estates such as Ebworth, Longleat and Cirencester Park, and informal colonisation of waste ground. This meant that few British foresters had extensive

practical experience and knowledge of natural regeneration. However, since the Broadleaved Policy, there has been a shift in management practices which favour natural regeneration, such as continuous cover forestry and the use of uneven-aged silvicultural systems.

Natural regeneration can be more desirable than planting because it can conserve local genotypes, creates more diverse woodlands, give assurance that species are suited to the site (which will include the evolutionary adaptation of forest trees) and produces a wide choice of stems for selection.

There are five requirements for successful natural regeneration:

1. A suitable seed source nearby – most trees will not start to produce seed until they are 30-40 years old and most seed will fall within 2-3m of the trees length with the exceptions of some species such as birch and willow.
2. A suitable seed bed to enable germination

– the best surface for seed to germinate is bare mineral soil as this will supply the seedling with moisture and nutrients. Thinning trees will lead to mineral soil being exposed, in combination with weed control a good seed bed should be established before seed fall.

3. A suitable microclimate, especially light, is needed for seed germination – establishing a good balance between canopy cover and vegetation growth by thinning trees will help.

4. Freedom from vegetation competition – in a fully stocked woodland the tree canopy can hold back the development of ground flora. However, when the canopy opens up, the ground flora could be dominated by undesirable weed growth which could inhibit natural regeneration.

5. Freedom from browsing – deer, sheep, rabbits and hares will like a nibble and control is essential for achieving natural regeneration. The use of fencing or individual tree protection are alternatives for reducing their impact on trees. 🌿

Emma Tomlin is a Conservation Officer for Dorset Wildlife Trust managing projects which help to conserve Dorset trees and woodlands.

1 Choosing the right tree for you

When planting trees, take the time to ensure you choose trees that will thrive in your conditions.

Look around locally to see which trees are doing well as a useful guide. We champion native broadleaf trees because they are better adapted to our climate and more likely to succeed. All trees provided through Woodland Trust schemes come from seeds gathered and grown in the UK.

PLANT SMALL SAPLINGS about 40-60 cm in size. This is because they are inexpensive to replace, quick to adapt to the new conditions and grow at a fast rate. Larger trees have a more developed root system and need LOTS of care after planting.

4 Caring for your trees

Now you've planted we want to help you ensure that your young trees **SURVIVE** and **THRIVE**.

Your trees will need care and attention during the first few years to help them achieve their full potential. If you have any questions or would like more info on maintaining your trees please contact the Woodland Creation Team at plant@woodlandtrust.org.uk or on 0330 333 5303. We'd also love to hear how your trees are getting on. Please send us your pictures and stories.

The Good Planting Guide

1. Put some stones at the bottom of the pot and fill it with compost almost to the top.
2. Plant seeds 2cm deep.
3. Put the pot outside in a shady corner.
4. Check it every week to make sure the soil hasn't dried out. **BE CAREFUL NOT TO OVER WATER IT.**
5. Re-pot the shoot into larger pots as it grows and once it reaches 40cm find a suitable place to transfer it into the ground.
6. As your seeds start to grow keep them sheltered during winter to protect them from frost.

2 How to grow a tree from a seed

1. USE A SPADE to take the turf out of the ground, turn it over and split it almost in half.
2. Dig a hole slightly wider & deeper than the roots of your tree, and loosen the soil around the edges.
3. PUT the tree in the hole and check the depth. Look for the "collar" - the mark on the tree from where it originally started to grow above ground. This should be level with the top of the soil.
4. Hold the tree upright and gently push back the soil. Don't compact the soil as this will stop water & air circulation.
5. Put the turf back over the hole with the split either side of the young tree, grass side down.
6. Cover the tree with a guard if necessary, using a cane or stick to provide extra support.

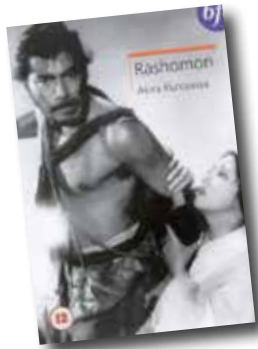
3 How to plant a tree

Community Tree Packs

Could your local area benefit from more trees? The Woodland Trust gives away thousands of tree packs to communities and schools every year. Sign up for yours and join the challenge to plant 64 million native trees by 2025. Take a look at woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant for tree planting advice, tree packs and free tree planting schemes.

Robin Baker, Head Curator at the British Film Institute, selects a season of films inspired by the trees.

VISION OF THE TREES



RASHOMON (1950)
Akira Kurosawa

THE REVENANT (2015)
Nejandro Inarritu

VERTIGO (1958)
Alfred Hitchcock

THE WOODLANDERS (1997)
Phil Aglund

THE COMPANY OF WOLVES (1984)
Neil Jordan

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (1935)
Daniel Myrick/Eduardo Sanchez

DAYS AND NIGHTS IN THE FOREST (1970)
Satyajit Ray

John Lewis-Stempel walks into a wood on a winter evening

THE WOOD IN WINTER

To get into the wood from the lane I climbed over the iron field gate; this had galvanized the cold of centuries in its bars. Some rooks flew overhead; not the usual ragged, weary flight to roost, but soaring deep and strong with their wings. They flew as straight as crows.

In the trees I felt safe from prying eyes, just another dark vertical shape among others: a human tree trunk. Anyway, no one comes looking for you in a wood.

I went to Pool Wood deliberately, so that I might find a certain thing. I followed the path hollowed into the pink clay by generations of badgers; it went on and on through the vast silence and the leafless trees. Their branches made for a perpetual wire cage overhead.

No birds sang. A solitary tree creeper searched an alder's bark, in much the same way a caretaker will check under the auditorium seats for rubbish after a concert.

God, life is hard for birds in winter. How dismal the jay's nest looked against the blank sky.

I reached the oak grove in rapidly descending dusk. Often oaks will keep their leaves until February. On that Christmas Eve the oaks were temple pillars of a lost civilisation; they had no more botany than stone.

From one ivy clad ruin a wren, as small as a moth, peered at me. It was too feeble to risk its default alarm.



Angela Harding's wonderful vision of trees, plants and woodland wildlife captures the spirit of winter.

At the fork in the path by the beech stand I did not haver, I went left. The other path, down through the dingle, ends in the year AD 01, or thereabouts. It is a path back through time because at its terminus are clumped three wild service trees. The trio of *Sorbus torminalis* are a remnant of the original wildwood. Pool Wood existed when William conquered, it existed when the Romans trod their road to Hereford. Only brock has been resident longer.



Read the book

This is an extract from *The Wood in Winter* by John Lewis-Stempel (published by Candlewick Press). John is a farmer and writer. He won the 2015 Thwaites Wainwright Prize for Nature Writing.

WINTER HARVEST

Rhubarb Compote

700g of rhubarb cut into pieces

250g of sugar

A knuckle of ginger, finely grated

1. Put the rhubarb and sugar in a large saucepan and bring to the boil stirring occasionally
2. When the rhubarb breaks down remove from heat.
3. Add the ginger
4. Cool and it's ready to eat over ice cream, muesli or yogurt



CLARE'S STORY AS REIMAGINED BY ELLA BURFOOT

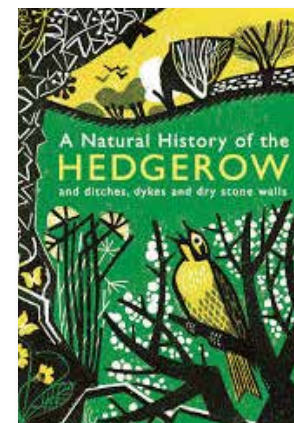
WHAT'S YOUR TREE STORY?

CLARE SHARES HER DAUGHTER'S TREE STORY:

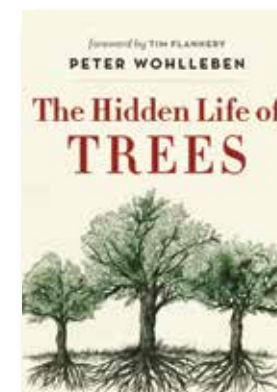
The other night whilst I was tucking my daughter in, she explained to me that she never actually sleeps at night. That in fact what happens is, at midnight, an owl and a badger and a squirrel and two foxes and three hedgehogs, some bats, a few rabbits and a hare appear at her window. They carry her out into the night to a tree that we pass every day on our walk to school. Tucked in-between the branches of this tree they share stories, climb, listen to the night sounds, play, eat nuts and berries, watch the different phases of the moon and chat. As dawn breaks they bring her back to her bed. 'And mummy, you never know!'

Share your tree story treecharter.uk/add-your-voice

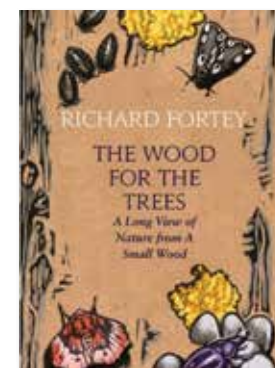
ON THE WOODSHELF



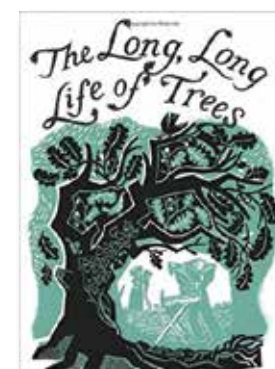
A NATURAL HISTORY OF THE HEDGEROW
by John Wright



THE HIDDEN LIFE OF TREES
by Peter Wohlleben



THE WOOD FOR THE TREES
by Richard Fortey



THE LONG, LONG LIFE OF TREES
by Fiona Stafford



Ellie Davies began taking photographs in forests in 2008, inspired by childhood memories of playing in the woods with her twin sister. Woodland has since become her studio, especially in Dorset and Hampshire, where she works alone responding to the landscape by building small structures, creating pools of light, or using materials like paint and wool. These interventions can seem, at first, to be part of the natural wooded landscape. But as we look closer, noticing something unusual about the trees, we step into an imaginary forest, one that is both personal to Ellie and also able to challenge our own perceptions of nature, asking to what extent our relationship with trees and woods is personal or constructed by cultural history.

In an extract from a new anthology of woodland writing, **Fiona Stafford** steps into a lost world

HIDDEN PLACES

There was no wardrobe, and no fur coats. Only the sliding metal door of the big garage that had once been a stable block. On the chalky walls you could just make out faded frescoes with *trompe l'oeil* frames: vanishing landscapes and faint portraits painted by the soldiers who had been billeted there during the Second World War. These blank faces unwittingly stood watch over the way into the woods. The door was heavy and instead of gliding, it stuck reluctantly in the overhead runner, but with a bit of determination and a good pull it would suddenly slide open enough to let the light in, and those inside, out.

Once through, it all depended on the season. The world beyond might be sky-blue bright with buds opening like the pincers of a crab, or thick with heavy August air and flecks of chaff from the harvested fields, or surging with the green of full leaves, rinsed by summer rain. Sometimes, the grey, dank air clung to the trees as if to drag their yellow rags down into the mud, at other times they stood resplendent still in the morning sun, as the first frost crisped the last fringes of gold. Rarely, but most memorably, the familiar shapes were so bloated with white that you could scarcely tell where one stopped and the next began, the air so quiet that even a cloud of breath threatened to wake these great, undefined forms from their deep winter sleep. Whatever the month, whatever the weather, the force field was overwhelming.

The paths through the woods were very different in character. One way led up the short, rubble track into the parallel line of yews where undergrowth never made any inroads. Here the ground was always covered in parched, rust-red needles, untouched by light or rain. Though perpetually shedding invisible showers of thin nail parings, the dense canopy never ran short – the thicker the bed

beneath, the darker the covering overhead. This was the place to seek refuge from a summer cloud burst, where you could listen to the rain swishing through the surrounding tree tops, but remain dry and quiet by the flaking trunks of the yews.

If you headed instead into the silver birch wood, crossing over to where the taller, smoother beeches seemed to step back and let you pass by, you came to a stream, clog-edged with willowherb and couch grass, but pouring on down its narrowed channel nevertheless. A fallen ash formed a slippery bridge over to the far woods, but here ferocious brambles tangled with blackthorn and holly. It seemed impenetrable at first, but a little way further along the bank, a pair of oaks kept the undergrowth down, making it possible to slip through. There the ground dipped suddenly into thicker leaf mould, half concealing the fungal-covered stumps of older trees. The smell was heavier here, and on the other side of the hollow were great, yawning holes, fanged by dirty roots. If it looked like the entrance to the underworld, closer inspection suggested that it must be a badger sett, though the residents were too shy or shrewd to confirm their place of abode during daylight hours. After dark, it was impossible to find.

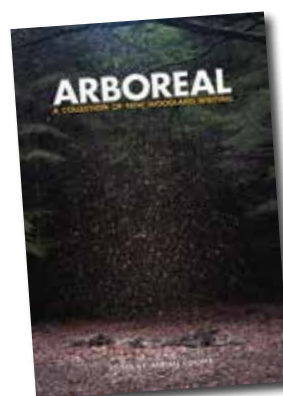
In early summer, unfamiliar birds of prey came together here, gliding silently from hidden places and then gone again, as if for ever. The dead leaves concealed deep hollows and rises, making this part of the wood rather hazardous on foot; like the great birds, the sudden dips were more visible in the neighbouring field, defying the plough and preserving the character of centuries past. This was known to be the site of a lost village, one of those utterly emptied during the Black Death and never revived. The long deserted forms were home to rabbits and thistles now.

There were other directions to follow. If you took a left turn from the garage door, the track led across a small yard towards a farm gate, which hung incongruously between a pair of grand, stone-capped columns, admittedly rather pitted and worn around the edges. The lower branches of the horse chestnuts

hugged at the green-stained stone as if to greet the ivy, as it crept higher and higher up the damp brick plinths. The surrounding ground was ankle-deep in wet ivy, though still the trees shot up, jostling for light. A little way in, you could just make out a leaf-covered platform, which marked the top of an air-raid shelter that had never been refilled. On the far side of the gate was a cobbled drive, mossed, blotched, but more or less intact, with low walls along one side to keep the woods in check, and, a few hundred feet further on, the ruins of a house.

The roof was long gone and many of the rooms, too, but some tall walls remained, oddly patched with old wallpaper, ragwort and wild poppies. A few of the roof timbers still balanced across the void for squirrels taking short cuts, and on what must once have been the polished slabs of a kitchen floor, broken slates lay in untidy heaps among the nettles. Bushes of elder burst from the corners and the doorless space in the far wall framed an ebullient sycamore. The empty windows seemed to stare down in surprise at what had happened to their house.

The woods concealed their secret well, for the house stood far from any road, come upon only by following the mossed cobbles at the rear, or the grander sweep that led to the stately portico. Far away down that grassy drive was another, larger archway, capped with petrified foxes, each supporting a chipped escutcheon in perfect symmetry. And all around, the ruins of a carefully planned garden tumbled about, at once liberated and suffering from severe neglect. 🌿



Words from the woods

Why do woods matter and mean so much to people? Bringing together the finest, contemporary writing, *Arboreal* is a new, landmark anthology exploring the enduring importance of trees and woods to the history, culture and ecology of the British Isles.



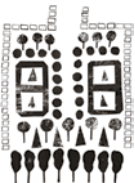
JAN



AN ALMANAC for Trees, Woods and People Winter 2016

HEDGELAYING
26 January
Learn the art of hedgelaying at the Community Centre, Rowan Tree Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent
khw.org.uk

EXHIBITION OF TREES BY DAVID HALL
Until 26 January
60 Threadneedle Street, London, EC2R 8HP
treecharter.uk/events-calendar



WOODLAND PLANTING
21 January
Countess of Chester Country Park
Help plant the trees to create another woodland in this community
n.mcmahon@tcv.org.uk



BURNS NIGHT
25 January

WHAT'S YOUR EVENT?
Share your local celebration or find out more about what's happening near you
treecharter.uk/events-calendar



CANDLEMAS
2 February

SNOWDROP SEASON
Open gardens throughout the country to see private snowdrop collections.
nsg.org.uk

FEB

STORYMAKING IN THE NATURAL WORLD
31 January
Upper Vert Woods, East Sussex
Story telling workshop with Jon Cree
treecharter.uk/events-calendar

CHINESE NEW YEAR
28 January

WASSALLING
27 January
Swan Barn Farm, Surrey
Learn the art of the wassail. Bring pots and pans!
nationaltrust.org.uk/event



SNOWDROPS GALORE!
1 February - 5 March
Welford park, Newbury
welfordpark.co.uk



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EVENTS
treecharter.uk/events-calendar



HALF TERM CHILDREN'S TRAIL
11 February
Claremont Landscape Garden, Surrey
Fun Garden & woodland trail
nationaltrust.org.uk/events

SHOW THE LOVE NATURE WALK
12 February
Heartwood Forest, Hertfordshire
Guided nature walk
woodlandtrust.org.uk/events

TREE PLANTING DAY
12 February
Bale Hill Wood, County Durham
Help plant more trees in County Durham
woodlandtrust.org.uk/events

ST VALENTINES DAY
14 February

FIREWOOD SALE
11, 21, 25 February and into March at Westonbirt Arboretum
Load up your car with firewood!
forestry.gov.uk

PANCAKES IN THE WOODS
24 February
Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, Hampshire
Cook your own tasty treats in the woods.
www.3.hants.gov.uk/events

HEDGELAYING COURSE
25 February
Fosse Cross, Gloucestershire
Learn the art of traditional hedgelaying
cotswoldsruralskills.org.uk



LITTLE FAMILY WORLDS
25 February
Yorkshire Sculpture Park
Make miniature worlds using photography
yssp.co.uk/events



TIME TRAVEL
5 March
Thoroughsale Woods, Corby
Embark on a time travelling walk through the woods
deeprootstalltrees.org/our-woods/events/

CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL
4 - 5 March
Wray Castle, Lake District
Programme of author talks and events
nationaltrust.org.uk/wray-castle

MAR

SHROVE TUESDAY
28 February

NATURAL PLAY
27 February
Upper Vert woods, East Sussex
Learn how to build a natural play structure
treecharter.uk/events-calendar

WHAT'S YOUR EVENT?
Share your local celebration or find out more about what's happening near you
treecharter.uk/events-calendar

SPIRIT OF PLACE
26 February
Kingswood Neighbourhood Centre, Corby
Discover the spirit of Corby with nature expert Matthew Oates
treecharter.uk/events-calendar



PAUL NASH EXHIBITION
Until 5 March
Tate Britain, London
Explore the mystical side of Paul Nash's landscape painting
tate.org.uk



SHARE YOUR TREE STORY!
champions@treecharter.uk
treecharter.uk/add-your-voice



WORM MOON
12 March

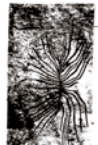
DAFFODIL & SPRING FLOWER WALKS
12 March
Hartland Abbey, Devon
Walk along stunning woodland paths through wildflowers
hartlandabbey.com

WILLOW WORKSHOP
17 - 19 March
Kingcombe Centre, West Dorset
The ancient craft of willow weaving
kingcombe.org

SPRING EQUINOX
20 March



EARTH HOUR STAR WALK
25 March
Grizedale Forest, Hankshead
Celebrate Earth Hour with astronomer Robert Ince
forestry.gov.uk



COMMON GROUND