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Living Woods MAGAZINE

5 FORAGING MUST-HAVES

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GREAT STORM 1987 30 YEARS ON

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Editor's note

Britons are passionate about planting trees. But do many trees equal a woodland? Expert Julian Evans (p 8) explains the complexity of the forest system and makes the case for more management. Felix Dennis (p 12) had no doubt – he arranged for forest planting to continue after his death. Feast on the abundance of autumn with our Wild Food pages (p 20), maybe after tying the knot in the woods with our Woodland Wedding guide (p 32). Win a classic read (p 44) for your woodland library. And, as always, let us know what you think.

Nancy Wood Editor
nancy@livingwoodsmagazine.co.uk

COVER Planting broadleaves on a new native woodland site above Loch Katrine.
CREDIT: FORESTRY COMMISSION/ JOHN MCFARLANE

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@Woodland News

NOT SO SWEET

The Forestry Commissioned this summer announced that sweet chestnut blight has been found in South East London. The UK is home to about 12,000 hectares of woodland where sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) is the dominant tree species, mostly in southern England. The disease, caused by the fungus *Cryphonectria parasitica*, causes foliage to wilt and die and cankers to develop on the tree surface, which may eventually kill the tree. Chestnut blight does not pose any risk to people, pets or livestock, and is only known to seriously affect sweet chestnut species. If you suspect sweet chestnut blight, do contact the Forestry Commission via its Tree Alert tool at www.forestry.gov.uk/treealert.

RFS WISE ABOUT WOODS COURSES RETURN

The Royal Forestry Society (RFS) Wise About Woods Training Courses are back by popular demand. 'Continuous Cover Forestry in the Uplands', taught by Dr Jens Haufe, meets 19 – 20 September at Woodlands Hall in Ruthin. (£250 RFS members/£275 non-members). Gavin Munro's 'Grading and Measuring Your Timber' course on 21 September at Whitney Sawmill in Hereford appears to be sold out, but do double check. Prof Julian Evans (see article p 8) will be teaching 'Essential Guide to Caring for Your Wood' (£55 RFS members/£65 non-members) on 27 September at St Mary's Hall, Overton, Hants, which will include a tour of Northdown Plantation, Prof Evans's own woodland. www.rfs.org.uk/events/training-courses/

JENNY WATT

Diatom Digits by Kevin Blockey

SOMETHING NEW FOR FUTURE FORESTERS

The RFS *is* busy. On 20 October it will host – with the support of Sorbus International – the first forestry and arboriculture conference for college and university students, postgraduates and recent graduates, to expose the coming generation to top level speakers and the give them a chance to get their hands on the latest technology. Moulton College, Northampton NN3 7SY, £12 includes lunch. www.rfs.org.uk/events/future-foresters/

99%
OF A MATURE, DORMANT TREE IS MADE UP OF INACTIVE STRUCTURAL CELLS

WINDS OF CHANGE

Green woodworking icons Mike Abbot and Gudrun Leitz lead a weekend of green woodcraft and talks, 14 - 15 October, to mark the 30th anniversary of the Great Storm of 1987 (see p 26) at the Out of Nature Sculpture Show (see p 38). The show runs 30 September – 22 October and benefits The Cart Shed. www.outofnature.org.uk

COPPICERS UNITE!

The National Coppice Federation Weekend Gathering and AGM convenes 21/22 October at Ruskin Mill College in the lovely Horsley Valley in Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, hosted by the Avon and South Cotswolds Coppice Group. Activities will focus on 'edge tools in the woods' and welcomes coppice workers and green woodworkers to demonstrations and 'have a go' sessions. There will be felling, hewing and coppicing with axes, crosscut saws, tool sales, a great atmosphere, food and a cash bar, but most of all, there will be billhooks. £35 members of affiliated groups, £50 non-members, £28 coppice apprentices. www.ncfed.org.uk

@Woodland News

2017 WOODLAND AWARDS

A new set of annual awards was launched this year, sponsored by woodlands.co.uk, to recognise and celebrate the accomplishments, innovations and expertise of Britain's woodland practitioners and champions. Nominations closed at the end of July, judging is now taking place and we await announcement of the awards later this month with eager anticipation. For news as it breaks: www.woodlands.co.uk/awards/woodlands-awards-2017/ or join the mailing list: antony@woodlands.co.uk.

2017 BRITISH WOODLANDS SURVEY NEEDS YOU

Don't let your voice go unheard. As someone who cares about the future of Britain's woodlands, you can help shape the future of forestry in the UK by taking part in Britain's only dedicated national survey about our woodlands and forestry. The British Woodlands Survey 2017 is led by researchers from Forest Research, the Sylva Foundation, University of Oxford and the Woodland Trust. Dr Gabriel Hemery, Chief Executive of the Sylva Foundation, says, 'We've worked really hard this year to create a survey which explores issues of high interest to woodland owners and foresters. Hundreds of people took part in early phases to help identify priority themes. Now we hope that anyone with an interest in our trees, woodlands and forestry practice will be keen to take part. After all, our aim is to give a voice to every person, not just the powerful few, in shaping the future of British forestry.' Go to sylva.org.uk/bws2017 before the end of September and have your say.

JOHN HESSE/BENTLEY WOOD FAIR

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BROOKHOUSE WOOD WILL RETURN

Will St Clair, who usually graces these pages with his Brookhouse Wood column, is busy in the woods and will return in the *Living Woods* December issue.

MARK YOUR DIARY

The Tree Council has plans for you. Seed Gathering Season begins on the autumn equinox, 23 September, and ends a month later. National Tree Week, 25 November – 3 December, is the UK's largest tree celebration, taking place at the beginning of the winter tree-planting season. Events are unfolding all over the country or you can create your own, perhaps inspired by concepts from past years. Use the online tool to locate events near you and to gather inspiration. www.treecouncil.org.uk. National Tree Week is also when the 10 Tree Charter Poles, one for each of the 10 Principles of the Charter, will be unveiled across the UK. This autumn is a great time for trees. treecharter.uk

FOREST BATHING WITH THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

Does strolling in woodlands improve your health? The Japanese think so. Their term for this simple activity is 'shinrin yoku', invented in the early '80s. In English it is known as 'forest bathing'. Beginning this month the Forestry Commission is offering Forest Bathing in two of its Forest Holiday locations, Blackwood Forest in Hampshire and Thorpe Forest in Norfolk. The three-hour sessions (£30) are led by Forest Rangers who are qualified Forest Therapy Guides. www.forestholidays.co.uk

Correction:
In our last issue, we rechristened Julia Goodfellow-Smith's husband as 'Matthew' (View Through the Woods, p 10). His name is Mike. Apologies.

HIGH SOCIETY LADIES

How we missed Jochen Raiss's first volume* Women in Trees *we'll never know. It is a charming collection of historical amateur photos of tree-climbing females that became an immediate bestseller. Now Raiss returns with more nimble ladies from his collection assembled over 25 years. Be sure not to miss* More Women in Trees*, pub Hatje Cantz, €15, out this month. www.hatjecantz.de

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The Kindest Cuts

New owner **Julia Goodfellow-Smith** discovers that woodland conservation can require radical decisions

I was shocked. I held onto the car and breathed deeply, determined not to be overwhelmed. 70%. We knew we needed to thin our trees and create glades in our woodland, but had no idea of the magnitude of the task.

Our trees have been growing for 60 years. It feels wrong to take the life of these beautiful trees, to change the nature of this beautiful woodland. I don't want to do it, but I know why we must.

Most of our beech trees are the same age and there's little diversity in this part of the wood. This increases the future risk of clearfelling, of disease wiping out the whole woodland and also of concentrating the effects of climate change in our woodland – beech is not expected to fare well.

We need to be strong and think of the future. 'Our mentor from the Royal Forestry Society – part of the year's free membership offered through woodlands.co.uk – has helped us to develop a strategy for managing the woods. We know how to choose the trees to keep and those to fell. We know how much we need to do and how to spread the work out. It will feel radical, but will benefit the life of the woodland as a whole, as well as providing a source of timber.

We have pests that we need to control if we want the next generation of trees to grow tall, straight and strong. Grey squirrels and Muntjac deer were not here when the trees were planted, and where there is regeneration, the damage is evident. As with the felling, it feels wrong to take the life of these animals, but we have to do something if our woodlands are to survive.

For the sake of the woodland and conservation of biodiversity, we will fell and we will kill. We will try to do both with respect and humanity. And I will certainly do both with a heavy heart.

But it's not all doom and gloom. In the woodland, I mainly feel deeply calm and happy. I have slept under the trees, gently swinging in a hammock, bathed in birdsong.

I have heard a butterfly's wing-beat for the first time and revelled in the exuberance of life, particularly where the trees cast less shade. I have even marvelled at the stripy belly of a mosquito that was trying to bite me through my trousers.

JULIA GOODFELLOW-SMITH

> ***We will fell and we will kill. We will try to do both with respect and humanity.***

JULIA GOODFELLOW-SMITH

JULIA GOODFELLOW-SMITH

The beeches to be thinned, the consolation of outdoor cooking

We have cleared a path to our camp, our pit latrine is dug and surrounded by dead-hedging and our social area is almost ready for guests. We have cooked over our fire pit and enjoyed numerous cups of tea, alone and with friends.

Over the last few months, I have spent a lot of time looking at our changing view through the trees. During this period, it has become darker as the leaves have fully unfurled and the responsibility of our guardianship has become clear. But it continues to fill me with joy, and with a profound sense of peace. We are still living our dream.

www.questforfuturesolutions.co.uk

Can you really PLANT A WOODLAND?

Living Woods poses the question to **Julian Evans**, retired professor of forestry, author and woodland owner

Living Woods: Right now, everyone is planting trees: the Forestry Commission of course, the UN, the Woodland Trust, Sylva Foundation, the Mayor of London, countless volunteer and community woodlands. With what we're beginning to understand, we know there is a big leap from planting trees to creating a woodland or a forest. Professor, is it possible to plant a forest?

Julian Evans: Why is there a big leap from planting a tree to planting a forest? It is because the act of planting a tree is only one element of what a forest ecosystem has. It is a very easy thing to do, to put the trees in. What is much harder to do is to create all that a forest soil environment is: the seeds that have accumulated, the micro-organisms, its other biota within soil, the woodland soil profile that has developed over many hundreds of years. You can't suddenly replicate that by planting a tree. What planting a tree does is initiate the process but does not bring you the end result.

But you can create a very simple kind of forest by simply putting in trees, because you are adding a third dimension to the structure. You've got a field; you add trees; you've added a third dimension.

LW: If it were your goal not just to plant trees, but to created a native woodland, would you have to choose native species?

JE: I'm hesitant on that. Yes, of course, if you're trying to create a native woodland in this country, which is what we're used to from medieval times.

But what we actually know from ecology is that the actual importance of 'native' or 'not native' is relatively minor in terms of biodiversity compared with making sure you've got structure. That is, that you've got very old trees, that you've got very young trees, deadwood, that you've got glades as well as dark areas, that you've got traditional management. Whether it's actually a native tree delivering the variety or an exotic is actually relatively unimportant.

Ideally, of course, go for the native, but all the studies have been done with conifer plantations, which are non-native, Nevertheless if you grow some of the trees to old age, to biological maturity, and you've got the glades and so on, you can massively increase the biodiversity in those ways.

LW Right now there's a spate of enthusiasm for planting trees. If we need diversity of ages, won't we need another spate of enthusiasm in 10 or 20 years?

JE You say there's a spate of planting trees, but actually the opposite is happening. In terms of meeting t he government's target of planting many millions of trees a year, it is not being met, particularly in England. In terms of the forest industries in this country, we are seriously worried about the decline in conifer planting, because there's been huge investment in saw mills, in board mills, in other processing plant, but the forecast now is that over the next 20 years there'll be a declining supply coming from UK forests because of the massive amount of planting in the 70s, 80s, 90s, which has tailed off hugely

FORESTRY COMMISSION / JOHN MCFARLANE

Planting broadleaves on a new native woodland site above Loch Katrine

in the last 10, 15, 20 years.

There's been an increase in broadleaf planting, which is really good news, particularly in the lowlands, but there's this imbalance now between what is being planted commercially and what is planted for aesthetic and amenity objectives.

The Woodland Trust and a lot of organisations are pushing tree planting and there is a lot of tree planting going ahead. But if you look at the actual government targets, of what the government would like to see in this country and what is actually happening, they're quite far apart.

LW: For readers of *Living Woods* who may want to extend a woodland that already exists, is that more possible than taking a field in agricultural use and trying to return it to woodland?

JE: Without a doubt. If you've got a bit of woodland on your land that has been there for some time, ideally never been under the plough, never been grazed, expand on that, yes. Provide the connectivity, put in your new planting, with your native species right next to it, so that you get some sort of corridor effect, or an opportunity for plants to spread into it, for wildlife to start colonising it.

Retain all existing woodland you've got on a patch of land. If you are presented with a bare field, which is the most difficult situation, there are a few things you can do to help. But that's a much, much longer-term thing.

LW: How long? 100 years?

JE: It depends on what your definition is of creating a forest. Doesn't it?

FORESTRY COMMISSION

The benefit of managed woodland: thinning of mature alder creates dappled shade

LW: To create a wooded place with all the complexities of planting and soil.

JE: That will take hundreds of years to recreate. Perhaps you'll never be able to get back to truly ancient woodland, the soil that in the last thousands of years has never been ploughed, never been sprayed, etc, etc. But obviously just by planting trees, straightaway you're creating some structure. So you're altering the humidity, the temperature, the environment and so on. You're beginning that process.

Back in the 1970's and '80s, I was working in south Wales, where a lot of our afforestation sites were restored open-cast spoil. Now you were beginning with no soil at all. If you walk around some of those areas that were planted in the '70s and '80s today, you've still got pretty lousy soil formation, but you've got larch stand, alders. There's birch growing; there's the beginnings of soil formation; there's a few wild plants in these woodlands and to all intents and purposes for people walking through them, they're like a woodland. They're certainly more diverse than they were in the past.

LW: When you are looking at a properly established complex woodland, do you find that there's a relationship between the trees, that where you find, for instance, an oak, will you find say hornbeam nearby? Do you see a pattern?

JE: If you look at the ecology of this country, and you try to establish what would have been the natural population of shrubs and trees on the different sorts of sites, the different soils, the different climates, that you've got in the British Isles, you'll find that there are clear groupings. And that's all been done in a work called the National Vegetation Classification, or the NVC.

So what an owner would do, reading an article in *Living Woods*, is to say, 'Right, I've got this piece of land, with a patch of woodland on it, and I want to build on that.' Let's establish what is the NVC classification for that area is and then use that as the end result of where you want your woodland to get to. It's easy, not difficult to find. That's the kind of natural woodland that would develop on that site.

Now, we British are great ones for introducing trees from all over the world in our wonderful arboreta, our great country parks, our private estates full of exotic things from all around the world, if that's the direction they want to go.

As important as planting is, in most woodlands, most owners of small, new

woodlands won't need to do any planting. Their main problem isn't planting. Their main problem is thinning and opening up and introducing light, but that's another article.

We in Britain have the mindset that if you cut a tree down you must plant one. If you are thinning woods, opening them up, you are increasing the biodiversity in all those options.

It's only when you start clearing an area, or you deliberately want to create the regeneration process, that you want to start planting trees. So in one sense, there is too much stress on tree planting.

LW: Would you like to see more woodlands in management?

JE: Very much so. The ideal would be for all woodlands to be in management. Neglect really does no great service to biodiversity and wildlife, unless you're talking about ancient woodland that has not been managed for hundreds if not thousands of years. Then it's got a particular ecology of it own, but all woodlands in Britain have had some management, whether it's coppicing or pollarding, or planting, thinning and felling. Much of the biodiversity we love so much, the bluebells, the primroses that come up, is because of the coppice system. Woodlands should be managed.

It's good to be sentimental about trees, but it's not good to assume that trees should never be cut down. It's a real challenge. You've got to hold two quite contrary views at the same time: you've really got to be sentimental about trees, care for the ones that are important and all the rest of it, but at the same time don't be so sentimental that you can't cut them down. Because the greatest disservice you're often doing to many woodlands and wildlife is not cutting a tree down. It's kind of counterintuitive.

LW: So by cutting down some trees, that is, by managing woodland, you are actually encouraging biodiversity. And if you want to create something that can be enjoyed as a woodland, planting trees is a good plan, but only if you've got time ahead of you.

JE: It only takes an enormous amount of time if you're wanting to get back to near a pristine forest. But if you're wanting a wooded area that 'feels' like a forest, that is entirely possible. By planting trees, you're beginning a process. If your take-home message is that you can't plant a forest overnight, that's a good take-home message. But if you want to begin the process, plant some trees on bare land.

PROTECTING YOUNG TREES

FORESTRY COMMISSION

British oak, British invention: a four-year-old oak protected by a Graham Tuley tree shelter

'Another element of planting trees in this country is that you have to protect them against rabbit and particularly against deer. We have more deer in Britain right now that we have had for a thousand years. So deer are a big problem.

'For somebody with a small woodland reading *Living Woods*, you'd have to supply tree protection. Plastic shelters are as good as anything. And you know they're a British invention! Graham Tuley worked opposite me in my research station. His first experiment was in 1978 and we all laughed at him, thinking that when the sun came out the following year, that inside these plastic sleeves the temperature would rise so much that the tree would die. He was using oak trees. The temperature certainly did rise into the 90s Farenheit and 30s centigrade, but because of the humidity and because of the loss of heat from the leaf surface, the leaf itself was not cooked and the tree grew rather well. And in the second year, some of these oaks were growing a metre! And it was amazing! The effect of these tree shelters in all the early research was that it protected the tree really well and it told you where the tree had been planted so you didn't lose them in amongst all the other vegetation. And it accelerated the height growth. It got the trees above browse height more rapidly. It's not meant that they actually grew faster for all of their life, but it got them growing. Now the plastic tree shelters are used all over the world.'

Julian Evans currently chairs the Forestry Commission's Expert Committee on Forest Science.

Planting for IMMORTALITY

The extraordinary Felix Dennis sowed an ambitious legacy, the Heart of England Forest, by **Charlotte Fleming**

Felix Dennis will be remembered by those of a certain age as one of the three publishers of *Oz* magazine prosecuted for 'conspiracy to corrupt public morals'. (In photos, he's the one with the beard and moustache.) He founded a publishing empire that included *Maxim, Personal Computer World, Fortean Times* and *The Week,* wrote and performed poetry, and planted trees.

That notorious trial may have killed *Oz* magazine, but Dennis's publishing career was just getting started. He was quick to spot trends and create publications that catered to them, launching the magazine *Kung-Fu Monthly* after he saw a queue for the film *Enter the Dragon*. It made £60,000 in its first year. Dennis was a successful early entrant in several other profitable publishing arenas, among them home electronics, lads' mags and digital publications.

As well as publishing others' words, Dennis was a prolific writer himself, producing two books about how to get rich as well as a dozen volumes of poetry. He wrote, he said, 'To discover who I am, to escape the carapace inherited from a life spent earning filthy lucre, to stave off a predilection for other addictions and, primarily, to experience the sheer joy of weaving words to shape ideas.'

His outsized personality found a home on stage, as he loved performing his poetry to a live audience. His first tour was named 'Did I Mention The Free Wine?' (the audience enjoyed fine wines and canapés while Dennis recited his poetry), while 'The Cut-Throat Tour' followed his first bout of the throat cancer that was to kill him in 2014.

It was in London, in the grimy urban setting of Golden Square, Soho, that Dennis discovered his passion for trees. Four hornbeams caught his eye one chilly day and he was hooked. As he wrote in the preface to *Silva: The Tree in Britain* by Archie Miles: 'Before then trees to me were part of the scenery, something to climb, shelter under or used to build houses, boats and furniture. All that changed that early January morning. Their branches reached out to me, swaying slightly, snow resting in every nook of their skeleton and the dark boughs glistening. From that day on I became obsessed by trees.'

His tree-planting began at his estate in Warwickshire, when he created a woodland wind-break to protect his sculpture garden. Discovering that England has one tenth of the average European plantings of broadleaf woodland, he decided to do something to redress the balance. Being a man of great

Autumn in the Forest

COURTESY OF THE HEART OF ENGLAND FOREST

CHARLOTTE WRIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

The late Felix Dennis at home in Warwickshire

ambition and, by then, great wealth, Dennis didn't envision a mere 20 or 100 acres. He wanted a forest that would cover the whole heart of England, 30,000 acres from the Forest of Arden to the Vale of Evesham. So he started buying land and planting trees.

Originally called the Forest of Dennis, it's now known as the Heart of England Forest and is a registered charity whose Chair is the broadcaster Jon Snow. The woodland currently covers around 3,500 acres, and the charity manages a further 2,500 acres (including mature and ancient woodland) that were left to the charity when Dennis died in 2014. The charity aims to plant 300 acres a year. So far, 1.6 million trees and several miles of hedges have been planted by staff, professional contractors, corporate groups and volunteers.

> ***"From that day on I became obsessed by trees***

Dennis didn't want wall-to-wall trees and the forest is anything but a plantation in the modern sense of the word (dark, single-species and wildlife-free). This woodland is designed to encourage biodiversity, with wide rides and open spaces so that wild flowers, butterflies, birds, mammals, insects and fungi can all flourish. There are also areas of heath, wetland and grassland, to provide as many habitats as possible. Not all parts of the Forest will be planted on a massive scale: smaller sections will serve as links between larger blocks, allowing wildlife to move around the country safely.

The trees are all native species appropriate to the area and the soil. Most are planted to

COURTESY OF THE HEART OF ENGLAND FOREST

A young area of the Heart of England Forest

> ***The whole thing is like a jigsaw puzzle, and we are gradually filling the picture, piece by piece***

mimic nature, in a random pattern of mixed varieties, though there are some coppice blocks. The charity has its own tree nursery and uses local seed whenever possible. They have in the past sown wildflower seeds, with limited success. Nowadays nature is left to take her course wherever possible, though they will help vulnerable species when they can. For instance, dormice were introduced into one ancient woodland in 2012. They are classed as 'rare and vulnerable to extinction' and introducing them into a new area will help make the dormouse population slightly safer by giving it space to increase. The Forest's butterfly habitat creation has been recognised with the March Lepidoptera Award from Butterfly Conservation.

Stratford Ramblers also awarded the Forest 'Footpath of the Year' in 2015. There are now six mapped walks around the various sections of the Forest and the Heart of England Way long-distance path runs through it. Plans for the future include bike trails, woodland play areas, camping and a café and arts centre. As the now-separate patches of woodland join up, more walking trails will be created, carefully avoiding the Forest's Site of Special Scientific Interest and protected-species habitats. Education is one of the organisation's charitable objectives. School parties from both rural and urban communities already make regular visits to learn how nature works and the Forest has become a useful resource for teaching young people the importance of respecting it.

The question on the cover of this issue is 'Is it really possible to plant a woodland?'

'Of course!' was Toby Fisher's response. He is the Heart of England Forest's Community Engagement Officer, 'The whole thing is like a jigsaw puzzle, and we are gradually filling the picture, piece by piece. We have the whole lifecycle of the forest, from volunteers gathering and planting local provenance seeds such as acorns, nurturing the saplings in our tree nursery, planting new trees, and watching them grow to join up with our mature and ancient woodlands to improve biodiversity and the value of the forest for both people and wildlife.' He invites all *Living Woods Magazine* readers to visit the Forest and see for themselves how it has developed and will continue to do so. Better still, consider volunteering on one of the regular tree-planting days.

To quote Dennis, again from his preface to *Silva: The Tree in Britain*, 'Nothing in the world gives me greater pleasure than to lay hands on a young sapling planted a few years ago, imagining the day it will reach maturity, its roots nourishing the earth, its leaves shading the ground, its fruits feeding wildlife and its beauty freezing the hearts of humans yet to be born.' The Heart of England Forest is fulfilling his vision for that future.

Heart of England Forest: www.heartofenglandforest.com

Put your woodland on the map

What does it take for the Ordnance Survey team to take notice?

We ran into Dan the other day, an old friend, tree propagator and secret tree planter. 'I have a story for you!' he said. 'A friend of mine wanted to give his wife a really special gift. So he bought half a hectare of land and planted it up with native broadleaf species. Then he went to the Ordnance Survey people and registered it in her name – Caroline's Copse – and it's on their maps now.'

'Why half a hectare?'

'It's the minimum size required by Ordnance Survey for a feature to appear on one of their maps,' he explained confidently.

We loved the story. But the half a hectare thing got us thinking. And is it really possible to have a small, private woodland marked on an OS map?

Keegan Wilson, from the Ordnance Survey press office, was terrifically helpful. He told us, 'We do not have a minimum size for a name per se, but we do have minimum size for topographic real world features, such as an area of vegetation. Assuming this query refers to a rural environment, an area of woodland would need to have a minimum area of 0.1 hectares and a minimum width of 10m to be captured in OS large-scale mapping. Once an area meets the size to be captured, we can then capture a name for it, if one exists.

'Note - our data capture rules do not allow all features to be named and we do require evidence that the name exists. For vegetation features, we require the topographic area to be captured before capturing a name, but within the limits of our specification, we capture names for a diverse range and size of feature types (from buildings to forests to ponds, waterfalls and rivers). Whether the name is depicted in OS mapping depends on the type and scale of the product. However, most names captured in large-scale data are published in OS MasterMap Topography Layer as text.'

Which led to more questions. Could someone fence off an area of a large, say 100ha woodland, name it and hope to register it with OS?

'As far as we're aware, there are no restrictions on members of the public naming features, including woodland, that are privately owned, with the caveat that renaming a feature that is already well-known wouldn't be expected. After all, most of the woodland names on OS mapping would have been confirmed through conversations with local landowners, parish officials and clergymen when the mapping was first created 150+ years ago. We expect a lot of 100ha woods are already named, e.g. plantations in the New Forest, so we would require evidence of the new name existing,' said Keegan.

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> ***As far as we're aware, there are no restrictions on members of the public naming features, including woodland, that are privately owned***

What sort of proof would be required that a woodland had a name? Would a photo of a sign suffice?

'For long-standing features in the public domain, e.g. named woodlands with large permanent signs, visual evidence of the sign is enough. However, for privately owned features, including woodlands, written evidence from the owner or a recognised agent is normally acceptable. Where the owner of a private dwelling or his agent is not readily accessible, the evidence of the occupier may be accepted. If there is any difference of opinion on the name, we'd also require documentary evidence from others to help resolve the conflict. To meet requirements for OS mapping, we'd expect a name to be permanent – defined as being or likely to be in existence for more than 10 years.'

So there you have it. A woodland as small as 0.1ha and 10m wide might be large enough to appear on an OS map.

Would you like a custom made map centred on your woodland or another feature? This is the place to order: www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop/custom-made-maps.html

SCOTLAND'S LOST COPPICE

Torquil Varty on a new endeavour to restore coppicing to a country that had nearly forgotten the art

Late Late Bronze Age weapons discovery the find of a lifetime,' roared the headlines last February. A 3,000-year-old bronze sword had been uncovered during council excavations in Carnoustie, and underneath it was a well-preserved wooden scabbard made of hazel. Clearly the scabbard had to be straight and clean-grained – a coppice-managed 'riven' hazel stick would have been ideal – supporting the belief that Scotland had had its own hazel coppice tradition for thousands of years.

The state of active hazel coppice in Scotland became bleak in the 20th century. By 1996 there was a near 99% absence of hazel from all but the steepest, deepest native wooded riversides or dens. Now a new effort is underway to restore the nation's coppicing traditions. A case in point is Angus in northeast Scotland. But first, a short history.

The basic feature of a coppiced wood is that it is cut down low to the ground and trees are allowed to regrow from the cut stumps. The word coppice is derived from the French 'couper' meaning 'to cut'. A hazel woodland would be divided into seven sections, each section to be cut in seven consecutive winters. The names given to these sections differs throughout the country and include cant, coupe, burrow and the Scottish term hagg.

From the early Middle Ages to the late 19th century, most woodland in lowland England was coppiced, either in a 'simple' coppice, a monoculture of either hazel or sweet chestnut, or a coppice with standards of semi-mature or mature oak or, in some instances, ash, providing substantial timber for construction purposes. The standards would have been harvested over a long cycle, between 25 and 40 years, whereas the hazel was usually coppiced over seven years. It is this latter coppice with standards that would have been the most prevalent across the British Isles. Coppice products were integral to all facets of medieval village life. Many buildings were constructed using wattle and daub, and the local coppicer produced charcoal and hazel hurdles to pen in animals. This cycle of production remained unchanged for centuries. The symbiotic relationship between humans and their woodland is something to look back on with envy, especially as we enter into potentially unstable times for our landscape with globalisation spreading tree disease at a terrifying rate.

A tipping point for change occurred in the historic coppice world in the 1800s. As industrialisation took hold, coppice gradually declined throughout the country until well into the mid-20th century when coppice of any scale was pretty much restricted to the south of England.

The traditions of industrialised coppice had spread to the north and west relatively late. Large areas of oak in central and western Scotland were first coppiced in the 18th century to satisfy the demands of tanneries for oak bark and of ironworks for charcoal.

As the country committed itself to widespread deforestation to feed its growing industries – and its growing workforce – more and more land was converted to farmland. Eventually the majority of coppice was consigned to history and was either replaced in the mid 20th century by the conifer factories we see today, or simply neglected.

But changes are beginning to stir. As part of the Angus Millennium Forest (AMF) led by urban forester Fred Conacher, a three-year project was initiated with the planting of around 6,335 hazel whips. Over the following 10 years an additional 11,245 whips were planted, creating two 100% hazel woodlands, but with no real means or knowledge of managing them as coppice. In 2008, the first coup, or hagg, was cut. A seven-year cycle was established and hazel is once again being produced in Angus, albeit on a small scale.

The rise in community woodland activity brings interest in resurrecting neglected coppice or the establishment of new coppice. Though this newfound enthusiasm is to be

Coppice plots in the Angus Millennium Forest

> ***Scotland had had its own hazel coppice tradition for thousands of years***

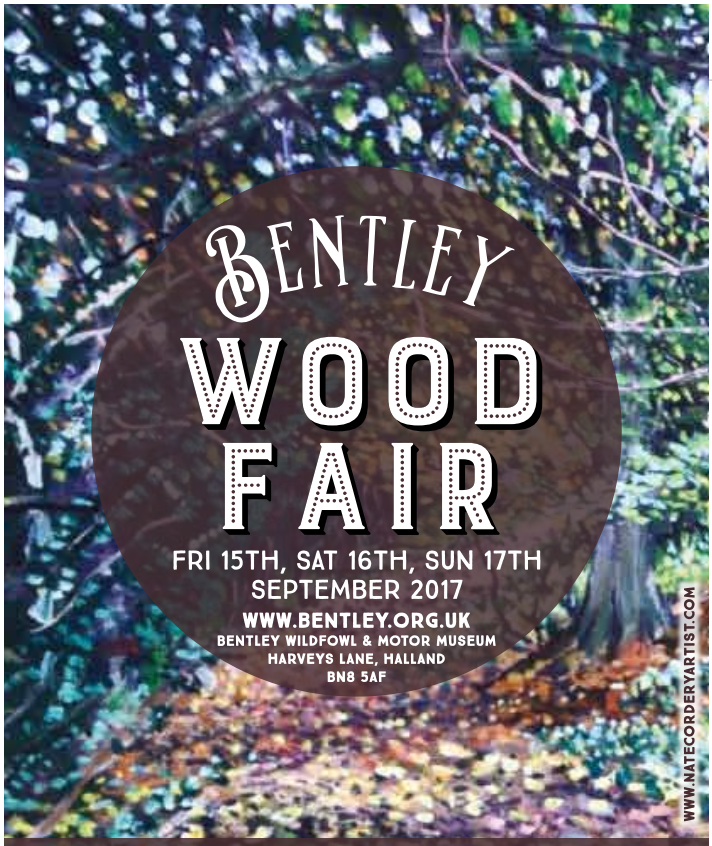
embraced, it must be also tempered with economic reality. It is a hard business to make coppicing pay as a lot of the traditional products and crafts that were supplied with hazel are in decline.

Nowadays, we must look at environmental benefits and decide as a society if they are worth paying for. Coppicing open woodland creates conditions suitable for many plants, insects and birds. The survival of some fritillary butterflies is dependent upon a return to more traditional methods of managing woodland. Birds such as the nightingale and garden warbler flourish in new coppice and would increase in number if conditions prevailed.

As farmers receive subsidies dependent upon environmental impact, so perhaps the coppice worker should become eligible for subsidy. The establishment of a coppice takes time and commitment and should be seen as a generational project. Although many volunteer groups will have an abundance of enthusiasm in the short term, it will only be additional funding of professionals that will provide the longevity required to re-launch a dormant industry.

As humankind persists in its relentless pursuit of progress, the time of the coppice worker has perhaps a limited shelf life. Though with priorities shifting and the importance of forest schooling gaining momentum across Scotland, future coppice may be utilised as tomorrow's classroom. Coppice products are, after all, the ultimate renewable commodity. If society can wean itself off cheap imports with a high carbon footprint, then maybe the new hazel plantations of Forfar can be a blueprint for other parts of Scotland.

For more info:*Coppiced woodlands: their management for wildlife by R J Fuller & M S Warren is available as a free download from DEFRA, http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-2640'*
Fred Conacher, *Tree officer with Angus Council, conacherf@angus.gov.uk*
To support coppice industries: *coppice-products.co.uk*
***Torquil Varty** is a professional hedgelayer and fencing contractor and is the Northern Scotland agent for woodlands.co.uk.*



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Haunting Celtic Rainforests

DAVID GENNEY

Atlantic hazel growing over a boulder

Scotland's hazel story is not restricted to the coppiced hazel that was lost. Away from Angus and over to the west coast there is the little-known 'Celtic rainforest'. The haunting Atlantic hazel woods are one of Scotland's most ancient woodlands. It is believed that when the last ice age receded more than 10,000 years ago, hazel was one of the first woody species to colonise along the west coast and there they have remained. The hazel forests are older than the Atlantic oak woods and older than some of the Caledonian pine woods.

These hazels have never been coppiced, yet retain the multi-stemmed shape of their coppiced kin. In Coppins and Coppins's study of Atlantic hazel, they state, 'Hazel is essentially a light-demanding pioneer species that will invade open ground and form self-perpetuating, pure, dense stands that can persist indefinitely, despite some grazing and certainly in the absence of coppicing.'

These Atlantic hazel woods form a distinct habitat of high conservation value, home to many rare fungi, moss and lichen. In the long term, the Atlantic hazel needs protection from coppicing. Sometimes the best management advice for any woodland is to leave it well alone and let nature take its course.

– Torquil Varty

DAVID GENNEY

Hazel gloves fungus (*Hypocreopsis rhododendri*)

For more information:
Atlantic Hazel Action Group: sites.google.com/site/atlantichazelgroup

DAVID GENNEY

Tree lungwort (*Lobaria pulmonaria*) grows on large, old hazel stems

WILD FOOD

The best of the foraging season is here. Our shortlist of must-have books, websites and apps will have you dining out in autumn's abundance.

© RAMONA HEIM/ADOBE STOCK

JOHN WRIGHT

Dining OUT

Five starter guides to identify, harvest and prepare woodland edibles

Book
Food for Free
by Richard Mabey (HarperCollins)

Food for Free is the classic what, where, why, when and how of foraging in the UK, the best friend of both converts and the wild food curious since 1972. On its 40th anniversary – *Food for Free* has never been out of print since its publication – it re-emerged from the publishing house in two versions, an update of the original pocket-friendly Collins Gem edition and a weightier, more detailed and wider-ranging hardback edition. More than 200 species of wild foods are identified across the seasons, including fruit, berries, leaves, flowers and even some shellfish as, Mabey says, 'From a picker's perspective, they are more like plants than animals.' Recipes and ruminations galore.

Book and App
Mushrooms: A comprehensive guide to mushroom identification
by Roger Phillips (Macmillan)

More than thirty years of research and study are here in this 400-page bible of mushroom identification. Mushrooms features more than 1,250 superb photographs depicting mushrooms in various stages of growth, concise descriptions and up-to-date information on endangered species. Phillips has dedicated his life to the study of plants both wild and of the garden variety and is able to distil his encyclopaedic knowledge into language for the interested amateur. He is widely known for his appearances on Radio 4 and BBC television shows, as well as for leading merry foraging adventures at festivals and events. Available in portable Kindle format. An app is available at rogersmushroomsapp.com.

Website
Hedgerow Harvest
The Tree Council sponsors www.hedgerowharvest.org.uk, a very good starter foraging website that offers seasonal guides to wild harvests, excellent general tips and good foraging practice. The 'oral histories' recordings are where this website sets itself apart from the others. You can hear people from across southern England (the searchable map helps pinpoint voices from your area) describe their own foraging experiences. 'David' on disgusting wartime nettle root coffee will save us all the trouble and 'Brian' on his father's find of a patch of mushrooms 'like a cobbled path' is a delight. Good recipes are mainly contributed by users of the site, with a page for you to add your own. And it's all free.

BRIAN HOFFMAN / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Blackberries are one of the great fruits of late summer and autumn

App
Foraging apps seem to appear and disappear with the regularity of the seasons, but one caught our eye for walkers and keen cooks. Kieran Creevy is a professional chef, forager and explorer. In partnership with Viewranger, the online and offline route map and GPS people, and Sidetracked magazine, Creevy has devised four walks in Wales to lead you to nature's larder and has supplied recipes to create a feast in the wilderness – or back in your own kitchen. Go to www.viewranger.com/en-gb, then find the blogpost for April 2016 and lace up your boots.

Book
Hedgerow (River Cottage Handbook No 7)
by John Wright

The River Cottage Handbook series is a super addition to the genre, and this portable volume is a good one to tuck into your rucksack for foraging not only in hedgerows but in meadows, moors and woodlands too. It covers 50 species and offers 30 recipes, but Wright's friendly, chatty, expert tone makes this a fine companion for even experienced foragers. There's a good section on kit. The illustrations are strong on showing the edibles in situ and the chapter on poisonous plants is a really useful first stop. Check out John Wright's books in the same series on Mushrooms, Edible Seashore and Booze.

Disclaimer: It is vitally important that you correctly identify what you are picking and follow an experienced guide if you are not a seasoned forager. You eat foraged plants at your own risk.

Forager's kit: boxwood berry-picker, knife, scissors, drainpipe picker and stick with crooked end, from *Hedgerow (River Cottage Handbook, No 7)* by John Wright

GIVE AND LEARN

Mark Papworth's years as a conservation volunteer have given him woodland expertise – and a circle of friends

Breckland heathland, rare habitat at Knettishall Heath, Suffolk Wildlife Trust

Whenever I look into my diary, there, locked into every Thursday, are two words: Knettishall Heath. Knettishall Heath is a 430-acre mixed habitat nature reserve with river meadows, heathland and woodland, owned and managed by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Every Thursday I am there as a conservation volunteer. This is the story of what conservation volunteering has given me, and what others might gain from the experience.

Eleven years ago, I took early retirement and at first developed my leatherworking into a small business (see box). But it is a solitary and sedentary occupation, involving long hours spent at a workbench with only the dog and radio for company. I needed something else, something with social contact and physical challenge. I had always loved the countryside, so decided to see what volunteering opportunities might lie there.

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) – now The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) – near my home gave me my first foray into the field. The BTCV brought together a wide variety of people with varying interests and needs to work as a subcontracted labour force to local landowners and authorities. Payment to BTCV funded ongoing work by the team. This volunteering model meant that we worked over a wide geographic area, visiting a particular site only once or twice a year.

I certainly got the physical exercise and interaction with people that I was looking for. I also learned a whole host of hand tool skills such as how to use a billhook and bow saw safely, and I learned to drive the BTCV minibus. Perhaps even more importantly, I learned how to brew up in the woods using a Kelly kettle.

I found that there are really only two seasons in the conservation world, winter, when birds aren't nesting and we are able to work in the woods without disturbing them, and summer, when they are nesting and coppicing isn't allowed. Winter was the best time, although sadly today its duration is much shorter than when I began.

Through BTCV I met Rob Sowter, a woodsman whose soul lived in the woods where he tried to be at every opportunity. I assisted Rob as he developed a commercial coppicing business (Croydon Charcoal) and with him I honed my under-woodsman skills and saw the coppicing cycle from one year to another. Eventually I found myself unable to physically keep up with Rob's ambitions, and reduced my regular commitment to ad hoc support.

But I had not fallen out of love with conservation volunteering. Even while working with BTCV and Croydon Charcoal, I had volunteered at green spaces on the London-Surrey-Kent border which are owned by the City of London and managed as 'breathing spaces' for local people, wildlife and plants.

As well as coppicing, the volunteers there undertook activities like litter-picking, path clearance, bench maintenance and perennial tasks like ragwort pulling. Dog walkers represented a large proportion of the 'public', so maintaining good fences and hedges was always a priority, and that provided me the chance to learn the art of hedgelaying.

Seeking a more rural life, my wife and I moved to a small northwest Suffolk village, which brought me to nearby Knettishall Heath and my unbreakable Thursday commitment.

Knettishall has been a public open space for many years, acquired by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust in 2012. Knettishall's multi-habitat nature means the management plan has to take account of many different needs, far more than I had experienced before.

In this part of East Anglia, the heathland is referred to as 'Breckland' or 'the Brecks', and it is quite a rare habitat, whose preservation is

MARK PAPWORTH

BTCV volunteers enjoying a woodland brew up around the Kelly kettle

FLPA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

important. The open heathland is grazed by a herd of Exmoor ponies, but still requires a lot of work by the volunteers to ensure that it isn't overrun by trees and other vegetation.

About a quarter of the site is woodland (more than 100 acres), primarily pine, oak and silver birch, as well as other species like ash and beech, requiring a heavy programme of winter work in the woods, especially as one of the Trust's aims is to open up woodland glades and develop the variety of habitat.

The Suffolk Wildlife Trust utilises volunteers as an extension of their paid staff so, while hand tools are very much the norm, volunteers are encouraged to use mechanised equipment as well. Some of us are chainsaw operators and others operate the wood chipping equipment or drive tractors. Not only does this add to volunteer satisfaction, but our output is significantly increased.

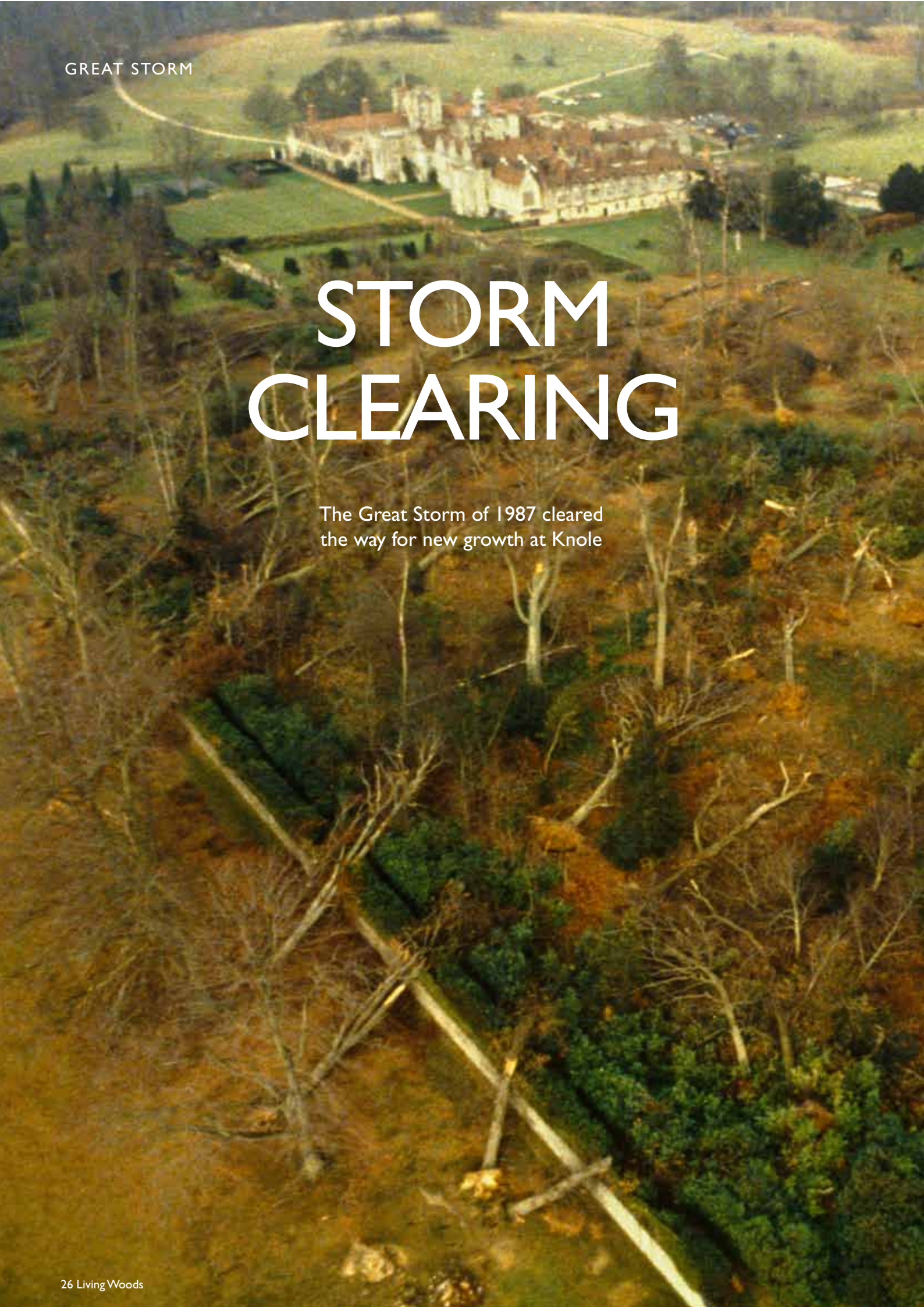
The Trust ethos embraces conservation, public access and learning. Interested volunteers have opportunities to help with the education programme and share their skills with a wider audience.

The great virtue of volunteering here is that there is a task for almost anyone willing to give a few hours of their time. There is no requirement to do any particular job, and the Trust makes sure each volunteer's capabilities and aspirations are catered for.

At the outset I wanted two things from conservation volunteering – exercise and social interaction. I certainly get all the exercise I can manage, but it is the friendships I have made over the years that have been even more important to me. Camaraderie comes from working together in the pouring rain, or sweating, pulling ragwort out on the heath under a blazing summer sun. Learning to drive a tractor or gaining a chainsaw licence is the cherry on the cake.

An Exmoor pony, an element of bracken control at Knettishall Heath

For more info:
Knettishall Heath: www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/knettishallheath
White Buffalo Crafts: www.whitebuffalocrafts.com
The Conservation Volunteers: www.tcv.org.uk



STORM CLEARING

The Great Storm of 1987 cleared the way for new growth at Knole

Aerial photograph of damage to Knole's Private Garden and Park, caused by the Great Storm of 1987.

©NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/DR MIKE HOWARTH

That furious night' is the name writer Richard Mabey has given to the five dark hours in October, 1987, when the most cataclysmic weather for 300 years battered Europe, killing 18 in Britain, causing £1.5b in damage and destroying more than 15m trees. When the shaken inhabitants of England unlatched their doors the following morning, they found an eerily altered landscape, with jagged stumps and upturned root balls where, the day before, landmark trees had stood.

Now, 30 years later, foresters and all who care for Britain's trees and forests have found that the storm brought opportunity as well as destruction, though it took some years to appreciate that fact.

Sited in the area worst-hit by the storm, Knole, the historic stately home at Sevenoaks in Kent – and yes, the joke went around the world that morning, that Sevenoaks was now 'Oneoak', reaching even one of Knole's estate workers on holiday in India – suffered terrible damage.

'We lost 70% of our trees. The wind took out most of the park,' says Matthew Bennison, estate manager for Knole. 'A few scarred veterans remained, but in strange, unique shapes.' Matthew was not on the estate when the Great Storm occurred, but said that much of the windthrow was cleared away, some burnt, and some left in situ. 'Natural England [overseeing body of Knole park] like natural habitat as it provides a home for all sorts of beetles, larvae and other insects. At Knole, we have a unique habitat with acidic grassland and therefore low nutrients in our soil. The range of species we find here is unique as well. It's an SSSI.'

The storm was a particularly egregious blow to the late Lionel Sackville-West, the 6th Baron Sackville. A dedicated lover of trees, he had undertaken to plant hundreds of thousands of broadleaf trees at Knole and nearby from 1960 onwards, all of which were wiped out in the storm. 'Blown to matchsticks,' as one newspaper had it. With great resilience, at

©NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/DR MIKE HOWARTH

Knole's Park and Private Gardens have been skilfully regenerated

age 74 he began the task of renewing the landscaping and replanting more than a quarter of a million trees, most with his own hands. Adhering to the natural, unplanned condition of the park before the storm, Lord Sackville came to believe that the Great Storm of 1987 had been, 'a good thing, because most of the old trees were past their best. I know it won't be me who thins these beeches in 20 years or so. Nevertheless it gives me great pleasure to think what the park will look like in 50 or 100 years' time". He died in 2004 and Knole passed to a nephew, Robert, now 7th Baron Sackville.

'The storm made a new canvas for the estate,' says Matthew. 'The replanting didn't follow the exact historic scheme, but the estate planted remaining historic views where it was feasible to reinstate them and it also created new view lines. We mainly planted oak and beech and sweet chestnut trees. No ash at all – a godsend.'

And there was the issue of protecting the trees. 'From a practical point of view, a 1000-acre deer park and trees don't go together.' For the first 15 to 20 years, the plantations had been fenced in to keep the deer out and tree guards had been employed against smaller pests. These forms of tree protection have now been removed.

'The biggest problem now is squirrels. There are very few trees at Knole with no damage from squirrels. There is an age when the tree is at its most susceptible, at about the 15 to 20 year mark. The squirrels are attracted to the sap as it rises, so we manage the squirrel population each year, particularly in the spring. No squirrel goes to waste.'

Within the vast Knole Park, there is a separate, private wooded garden, under different management from the park, where a mile of ragstone fencing encloses 26 acres of plantings and walks, reserved for the use of the Sackville family and friends for the past 500 years. Near the great house are the medieval formal gardens and orchard, rare walled gardens within a walled garden. But beyond those lies an area known as 'the wilderness', planted with native and exotic trees. The wilderness, too, suffered devastating damage 30 years ago and has also been thoughtfully restored, though not many mature trees can yet be found there. That the planting and planning in the aftermath of the Great Storm has been a success is not in doubt, as visitors to the 1,000-acre park should judge for themselves.

'We are now selectively – and sensitively – thinning woodlands, keeping the best parkland trees in a rolling programme of management,' says Matthew.

YON MARSH NATURAL HISTORY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Thirty years of growth: regeneration of side branches from a massive oak, a victim of the Great Storm of 1987

> ***We lost 70% of our trees. The wind took out most of the park***

As for the larger question of the future of Britain's forestry, Matthew shares the concerns of many. 'When you speak to other stakeholders in the forestry sector, they all say there's not enough soft woods being planted and they're worried about repercussions to the supply chain. For landowners, with Britain outside the EU, I do wonder how it's going to be. I think things will be very interesting going forward.'

Things have always been 'very interesting' at Knole, having weathered six centuries that included royal upheaval, the rise and fall of family fortunes and political alliances and two world wars, the Great Storm of 1987. Through expert management, foresightedness and some good luck, Knole Park is an emblem for the opportunities that can arise from disaster.

Knole has been acquired by the National Trust and is open to visitors, with many events and amenities for rewarding days out. Consult the website for house opening hours and more details. The Park is open daily from dawn to dusk, though parking hours are more limited. The Private Garden is open one day each month from spring through autumn. Its final opening day for 2017 is Tuesday, 26 September, 11am – 4pm. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/knole

BURNING LOVE

Charcoal is the foundation for **Anna** and **Pete Grugeon's** Bulworthy Project sustainable success

We have been in our woods, 12 acres of mixed Devon woodland, for eight years now, creating what we call an experiment in low-impact living and working. We have found several ways to make a living from the woods and would like to share a little of our experience in the hope that it will inspire other woodland enterprises. After all, 'A wood that pays is a wood that stays.'

Charcoal

The first income that Bulworthy Project ever earned came from making charcoal. Charcoal was only supposed to be a small part of our business, according to our original business plan. Then we discovered that, although hard work to make, charcoal was easy to sell. It became our main income and still is today.

Most people who like local food like to cook it over local, restaurant-quality charcoal, given the option, so it sells very well, particularly in farm shops that sell meat. Unlike most timber products, charcoal doesn't require straight wood and can be made from wood of any diameter from an inch wide and up. As such, it is an ideal product to produce when thinning a woodland or using up offcuts from planking. And environmentally, British charcoal supports habitat management, is free of chemicals and can be lit with some rolled up paper.

Having honed our skills and streamlined our systems over the last eight years, we can now earn £10 per hour. It's hard to see how you could ever earn more. We have a large kiln for charcoal production and a smaller one, with a much shorter burn time, for teaching charcoal making in a day.

Courses

As well as running charcoal making courses, we also host courses on green woodworking and bow making. When you live in the woods, you have to bring your social life to you. Running courses has introduced us to some fascinating people, several of whom are now good friends. And we have gained some great insights about woodland management and other aspects of our life from a variety of people with different areas of interest and expertise.

Teaching courses is not an easy option. You have to be on form. Even though, when teaching charcoal making, the people on the course do a lot of the physical work, we are always more exhausted after teaching charcoal making than if we made the charcoal ourselves. We take the afternoon off just before a course so that we can really give it 100% on the day.

A benefit of teaching is that it is a brilliant way to discover more about the subject you are teaching. Much of our knowledge of charcoal making has come from finding answers to the difficult questions our students ask.

Café

During the summer, we host Bulworthy Project Barbecue Café evenings in the woods on the last Saturday of the month and take private bookings for celebrations and club socials at other times. Having a pop-up café in your woods is a fantastic boost to your social life, but it demands a lot of organising. The kitchen must be registered with Environmental Health. We have a licence to sell alcohol, and that has a certain level of bureaucracy attached.

Sourcing our food locally from sustainable

> ***Although hard work to make, charcoal is easy to sell***

Top: Students learn to load the charcoal kiln. Left: Off-grid cabin in the woods, a haven for students and travellers. Above: Bulworthy Charcoal, bagged for sale. Right: Anna and Pete Grugeon on the porch of the home they built together.

producers – some is foraged on the day for absolute freshness – has built relationships with other local independent businesses, and some of these businesses are the farm shops that now sell our charcoal.

We don't require reservations for the Barbecue Café, so we never know how many people will turn up until the day. That means we have learned to plan to have enough food, with a strategy in place to use unsold food so that it is not wasted. The number of diners is bound to be affected by the English weather. We have mitigated this by investing in a marquee, meaning that people can always be warm and dry. As a result, we have had some fantastic pop-up restaurant evenings even in a downpour.

Cabin

This is our newest venture. Last summer, we built an off-grid cabin for people on our courses and for tourist accommodation. The cabin promises to provide us a reasonably good income without the manual work involved in making charcoal or running courses. It also opens up our woods for others to enjoy. Building the cabin was quite an investment of both time and money. We did the work ourselves, which made it cheaper, but it has left us with a debt to pay off. Before getting to the build stage, we had to deal with the planning process and then, of course, building regulations. And there is the issue of the loss of privacy. Clearly, if you want to have your woods all to yourself, don't build any tourist accommodation in it.

In addition, we raise chickens and pigs for our own table, make our own wine, host a forest school and have plans to erect a wind turbine and build a rainwater harvesting system. Our commitment is to sustainable living.

These are the ideas that have worked for us. Every wood and woodland owner is unique and most owners of small woodlands are not looking to make a full time living from their woods, though making a bit of money to cover some of the costs of woodland management is often welcome.

For information on courses, events, charcoal, pop-up café and to book the off-grid cabin: bulworthyproject.org.uk

WOODLAND WEDDINGS

Charlotte Fleming shares her top tips for tying the knot in the forest

How romantic, to get married in the woods under a tree-cathedral of greenery, your guests gathered round you in the dappled sunlight and a squirrel peeping at the proceedings from the spreading boughs of an ancient oak.

The reality is that you may have to adjust that picture. In England and Wales you may only have a wedding or Civil Partnership ceremony in a fixed, roofed and floored structure that is licensed for weddings. It can be open to the outdoors, but it has to be permanent. A trellis arbour or treehouse, provided it's licensed (and a surprising number are), would be fine. A marquee in your family's wood, sadly, wouldn't. The Registrar can also insist that the ceremony take place indoors if the temperature is too hot or cold for comfort. In Scotland and Northern Ireland, you can make your vows anywhere you like as long as the officiant is up for it. In Scotland that applies to both religious and humanist weddings, in Northern Ireland just to religious ones. However, even in England and Wales, once you've got the legal bit completed, you can celebrate your marriage in the woods and speak your own vows in a place of your choosing, in as relaxed or formal a ceremony as you like.

What should you consider when planning a woodland wedding? Plenty!

Whatever the weather, you and your guests will want to be comfortable. Have a supply of brollies, sun cream and midge repellent available. Tell them on the invitation that they'll be outdoors so they can dress accordingly. And, obviously, do the same yourselves. Scottish men can wear a kilt regardless of the weather or venue but other gents – and brides – need to consider how to dress in a woodland in all the vagaries of the British weather. This is not the place for a frock with a 20-foot train. Choose something that won't snag on twigs and maybe a pair of snazzy wellies.

Next, how many people can your wood accommodate comfortably and safely? How will people reach it? If you're all coming from a registry office, you can lay on transport; otherwise people will be coming by car. Think about where they can park and whether the parking area will be usable if it's rained before the wedding. Perhaps talk to a local farmer about having a tractor available. Give the police plenty of notice of the event if people park on the road. If you own a section of a larger wood you'll also need to inform neighbouring owners. If you never see them, put up a notice in a common area a month or two in advance to get the message out.

You'll probably need to provide some sort of

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HANNAH DUFFY PHOTOGRAPHY

THE CURRIES PHOTOGRAPHY

Woodland wedding planners and venues book up well in advance. This list is by no means comprehensive.
GreenAcres Woodland Weddings: www.greenacreswoodlandweddings.co.uk
The Natural Wedding Company: thenaturalweddingcompany.co.uk
Forestry Commission Weddings: woodlandweddingsevents.co.uk
Cornish Tipi Weddings: cornishtipiweddings.co.uk
Exclusive Woodland Weddings: exclusivewoodlandweddings.com
Coco Wedding Venues: cocoweddingvenues.co.uk/venue_type/woodland/
Woodland Weddings: woodland-weddings.com

Our wedding photographers:
The Curries Photography: www.thecurries.co
Shutter Go Click Photography: shuttergoclick.com
Hannah Duffy Photography: www.hannahduffy.com

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ELVA ETIENNE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

cover against both rain and excessive sun. Some people will want to sit for the ceremony or the refreshments or both. As chair legs can be a problem on soft ground, consider other options like log seating or bales of hay.

If you're providing a barrel of beer, make sure the stand is high enough to get a glass under the spigot without having to bend double. Wine boxes may be infra dig, but they are far more practical than bottles. They're lighter, don't break, don't have corks or screwcaps, can be flattened when they're finished, and the empty plastic insides can be blown up as balloons. Compostable or burnable plates and glasses made from leaves, wood or cornstarch are a sensible option. Avoid paper confetti – try flower-petals, lavender or rice instead, if people must throw something.

The other big challenge is loos. If you have a composting toilet, put instructions inside the door for those who've never used one. Ditto if you have a Porta Potti or similar, and make sure you have enough cassettes and chemicals. Loo hire companies deliver to rough worksites, so if your wood is accessible, that's another option. If you're inviting babies, have somewhere for nappy changing. It's also sensible to have a first aid kit handy, for scraped knees and twisted ankles.

If your party will go on after dark, tea lights in jam jars hung from trees look very pretty and are safe. Rather than amplified music requiring a noisy, smelly generator, you might opt for live music.

There is a lot to think about. Another option is to choose an established outdoor wedding venue to take care of arrangements and details. But keeping things simple will make your big day much less stressful, and memorable for all the right reasons.

Peter Lanyon FOLDING SHAVE HORSE KIT

And two hours later, **Rick Wheaton** has a brand new shave horse

RICK WHEATON

Peter Lanyon's background reveals a deep love of wood. Following an MA in Furniture Design from Bucks University College, Peter has been making exquisite wooden furniture and household objects for more than twenty years. He sells his work online, is a regular exhibitor at craft and design fairs, runs courses at his barn workshop in deeply rural South Devon, and, if there's any time left in his day, gets involved in many community projects.

For the last few years he's been concentrating on using sustainable coppiced or green timber, much preferring it to, as he calls it, 'dry plank timber'. Peter's greenwood furniture and lighting are quite beautiful, there is a strong artistic talent at work here. In fact, I met Peter when he and a team of volunteers were making an imposing outdoor sculpture/seat at the Sharpham Trust based in Dartington. Peter is the Trust's Artist in Residence this year.

With his background and particular interests, there's little Peter doesn't know about the ancient craft of shaping green timber. In his own words, his philosophy is, 'Minimum intervention, imposing as little as possible on the materials, and allowing the timber's gentle curves to remain – as nature intended.'

Now would be good time to write 'Hence Peter's Portable Shave Horse', but with characteristic modesty, Peter will tell you that this shave horse is not his own design, but one he borrowed and adapted for his own use. Some time ago in *Living Woods Magazine* he read a feature on the Japanese woodworker Masashi Kutsuwa and was sufficiently intrigued by the photos of Masashi's shave horse to find out where he lived in Japan, and to write to him.

Across the planet, the two men struck up a lively correspondence, and when Peter asked if he could use elements of the design for his own portable shave horse, his fellow greenwood enthusiast raised no objection.

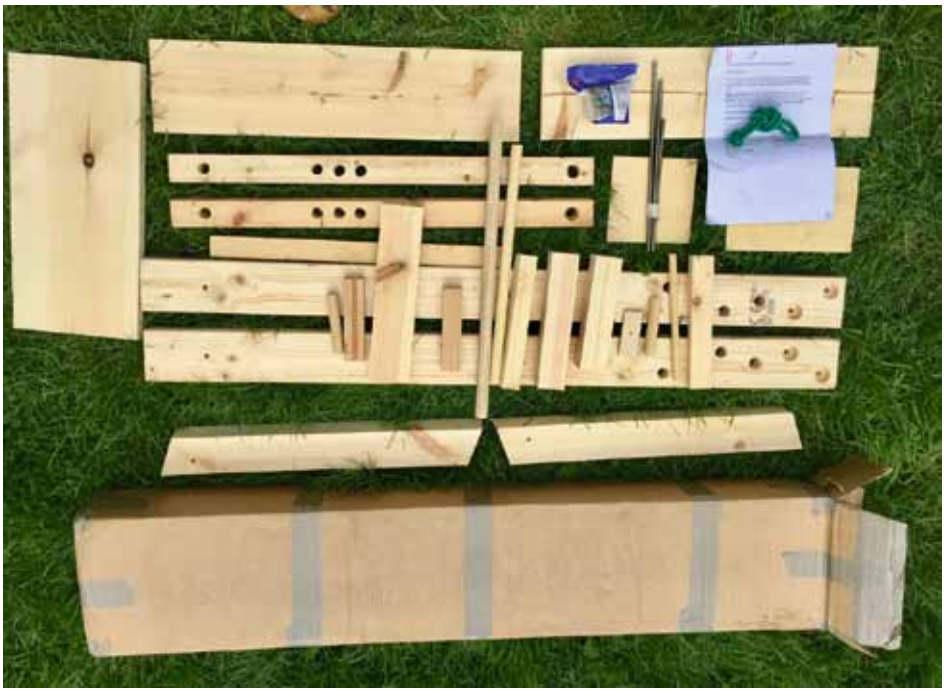
In 2013, Peter made his first folding shave horse. It was seen at the South West Forest School Conference that year and was an immediate hit. And why not? It's light, portable, goes easily in the back of a car, quick to set up and de-mount, and can be stored hung on a wall. Since then, pupils in a dozen or so of Peter's workshop courses have produced around 100 horses. They are sold online ready-assembled, or you can buy a kit to make at home. It is the kit that I'm reviewing here.

At this point I must explain that I'm completely new to the world of the shaving horse, and this may have been the reason I was asked to write this review. Basically it's one thing for an expert to report on a trouble-free assembly, quite another for someone who had literally never seen one before looking at the instructions.

So, the shave horse kit: It comes neatly packed and well protected in one heavy-duty cardboard box. Some of the pieces are quite small and I cleared my bench to avoid misplacing anything.

Peter's practical influence is immediately obvious: the instructions are simple, well illustrated and to the point, with a genuine-sounding invitation to call his mobile if any help is needed. I tested this. My call went to voice message, but Peter rang me back within an hour – impressive customer service.

A very few tools are needed, as detailed in the instructions: a pozi screwdriver (cordless,



RICK WHEATON

Above: All the parts right out of the box.
Left: Folding
Below: The finished object, unfolded, ready for use

> ***Peter's practical influence is immediately obvious***

RICK WHEATON

ideally), a drill or two, and a 13mm socket spanner or socket driver.

This isn't the sort of kit that slots together seamlessly like something from IKEA, but the small amount of drilling, threading and screwing will be zero problem to the least expert DIYer. Furthermore, when the finished horse stood handsomely on my bench, I felt a sense of achievement that I wouldn't have got from two hours assembling a Swedish bookcase.

From the outset the pieces fitted well. All the sections were robust and made from nice, straight-grained timber, the holes just cut the right size for the heavy dowels. The estimate for assembly time seemed about right: it took me around two hours and I must have spent fifteen minutes clearing my bench! The only difficulty I had was driving the nylon nuts onto the threaded bars (one of them has to be driven nyloc first), but Peter's nifty trick of using a cordless driver proved to be very handy — and a new skill was learned.

When fully assembled, the horse had a fine, solid look, it felt very stable, and the adjustments for different-sized greenwoods and for operators with different leg lengths all worked perfectly. Above all, it looked as if it had been designed by someone with years of knowledge and experience.

In summary, I found that this kit 'does what it says on the tin'. It was easy to make, it fitted together perfectly well, it's good value for money, and the end result is strong and stable. Anyone who wants a shaving horse that's easy to carry and store, solid enough to do a good job, and at a reasonable price, will not be disappointed with this kit.

Rick Wheaton is a retired boatbuilder living in South Devon.

Shave horse kit: £120 + delivery. Fully assembled: £160 + delivery. 'Build a Shave Horse' course: £110 inc materials.
Peter Lanyon Furniture: peterlanyonfurniture.co.uk
Masashi Kutsuwa 'Origami Bench' plans: www.facebook.com/GreenWoodworkLab/posts/505938072900994

Value Judgment

Carlton Boyce's guide to finding top tools for a bottom price

One of the things I love about forestry and woodland management is that it gives you the opportunity to buy an awful lot of shiny new stuff.

And yet, that shine has a finite life, measured in minutes rather than years; your chainsaw is transformed from a handsome piece of industrial art into a working tool with the first tree felled. So while I'm happy to pay £100 for a Gränsfors Bruk axe on the basis that it'll last me a lifetime, developing a patina that reflects my life and work, I baulk at paying over the odds for something less lasting.

As an amateur user, this gives me the choice of buying secondhand or budget brands. In this respect I am promiscuous: my everyday chainsaw is a Stihl 028 Wood Boss, lovingly rebuilt by a man whose hobby is stripping, restoring and tuning old chainsaws. It fires first time, every time, revs like a Japanese superbike and cost me less than £200 – about twice what you'd pay for a small, unbranded petrol chainsaw from B&Q.

I run it on the smallest bar I can (bought secondhand on eBay) and use Oregon chains that cost half that of a genuine Stihl. I also buy both two-stroke and bar oil by the gallon, which shaves a few more pounds off the running costs. I'm delighted with the results I get. My old Stihl 362 and 441 were both magnificent machines, but too heavy to use all day in the woods now that I'm getting on a bit, whereas the Wood Boss leaves me fresh as a daisy.

But before you laugh about that £105 B&Q chainsaw I mentioned earlier, you should know that customers who have actually bought and reviewed it award it an average score of 3.7 out of 5. Not a ringing endorsement – and quality control does seem to be a bit patchy – but the majority seem to be pleased with it. Which goes to show that you do not need to buy a pro quality chainsaw if you're just going to be limbing and chopping up the odd small tree.

And therein lies the rub. Researching chainsaws led me to one of the better-known internet forums in which the Stihl 028 Wood Boss – a chainsaw I love to bits, remember – is given a certain amount of love from some hard-core, Old School foresters, but the general consensus was that there are bigger, better chainsaws out there, almost all of which would have been hugely over-specced for the job I needed to do.

We should resist the urge to overcomplicate things. In my case the temptation is to buy a tool for the life I want to lead rather than the one I actually do. Regular readers will know that I set off down this very path by buying a hugely expensive (and heavy) hydraulic forwarder trailer that was gratuitously competent for the sort of jobs I needed it for. It sat rusting in the yard while I pottered about with the £500 logging arch that actually suited my needs.

Likewise, my cheap splitting axe gets the job done at a tenth of the cost of my expensive Swedish model and is invariably the one I throw in the back of the UTV if I'm heading out into the woods.

> ***My cheap splitting axe gets the job done at a tenth of the cost of my expensive Swedish model***

Of course, there are some pieces of equipment for which paying top dollar is essential. I'll always buy branded chainsaw leggings and safety boots, for example, and only from reputable dealers at that because the risk of inadvertently buying counterfeit stuff is otherwise too high. Similarly, I don't mind spending money on training courses, especially for equipment that could reduce me to my component

THOMAS SÖLLNER / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

parts in the blink of a distracted eye.

The way to save even more money is to search car boot sales for secondhand tools. People often claim 'they don't make 'em like that anymore' and I'd tend to agree when it comes to cutting tools in particular. Cheap steel makes tools cheaply, but it doesn't make them especially good and there are plenty of axes, chisels and saws that are still doing sterling work after half a century or more of hard use.

You can sometimes buy them and put them straight to work, but where's the fun in that? I'd rather while away a couple of hours in the workshop restoring my new-old tools to their former glory. A hand-held wire brush and some elbow grease will do the trick. If you've got access to a bench grinder, then fitting a wire wheel on one end will save an awful lot of time and effort.

I usually start by removing the handle (if there is one) before going over the whole thing with the wire brush or wheel to get rid of any rust. If it's an especially nice piece, I have been known to polish it up properly, starting with 180 grit paper, moving up the grades through 240, 400, and then 800. Flap-wheels work well and the key is to take your time and to sand each stage until the marks from the previous, coarser grade paper have disappeared. If you're determined to get a mirror finish, albeit one that will mark the first time you use it, then just keep going up through the finer grades until you end with a final polish of Brasso.

Replacement wooden handles are easily sourced online or through your local hardware shop. You want one made from ash and do check that the grain is running the length of the handle. Once I've found one I like the look of I sand it to remove any lacquer before fitting it and treating it with linseed oil.

The final stage is to sharpen it. Sharpening axes, knives, chisels and saws is an arcane subject and one that almost everyone has an opinion on. All I'll say – in addition to the fact that YouTube is a great resource – is not to get too hung up on the different processes and tools. Pick a method that you like the look of and accept that even a less-than-perfect DIY job will give you a better edge than anything you can buy off the shelf.

After that, little and often is the key. A few strokes on a sharpening stone should be enough to keep a decent edge and if you wipe it over after use with an oily rag – and apply linseed oil to the handle twice a year – you'll have something you can hand down to your children, and their children after that.

Out of the Woods

The Cart Shed charity's 'service without walls' offers mental health sufferers a woodland pathway to improved wellbeing, by CEO **Katie Eastaugh**

Tall, well presented, articulate and polite, Sebastian (not his real name) looked the picture of health the day he knocked at the door of The Cart Shed. He'd been told there was a veterans' programme, and he was desperate for someone to talk to.

The Cart Shed is a charity in north Herefordshire that uses its woodlands to allow participants to try something new, to improve well-being and find friendships and a place of calm in a supportive environment. Its primary focus is supporting adults with mental health issues, as well as those who experience poor physical health, learning disabilities, other forms of social exclusion and Armed Forces veterans who, for a variety of reasons, struggle to integrate into civilian life.

According to the Office of National Statistics, about 7,000 veterans live in Herefordshire. Add to this number those living at the Hereford Garrison, the Army Reservists and their families, it is estimated that within Herefordshire the armed forces community numbers about 20,000 representing approximately 15% of the population. Of these, as many as 4,000 individuals may experience mental health issues that have a dramatic effect on their lives. And of this total, 1,750 are veterans.

For the last three years, The Cart Shed has worked closely with veteran charities and the local armed forces community to create an environment where those who have witnessed some of the worst human atrocities imaginable can find solace.

While much is made of conditions such as PTSD, there seems to be little understanding or acceptance that depression, anxiety and substance misuse also have an impact on those who have served – and upon their partners, family members and children. Organisations like Combat Stress struggle to cope with referrals, leaving many veterans to wait months and, sometimes, years for treatment.

'Moving On' is The Cart Shed's current veteran programme funded by The Royal British Legion, Herefordshire Council's Adult Community Learning fund and the EF Bulmer Trust.

Participants are offered a range of training and learning opportunities, including coppicing, coppice crafts, greenwood work and horticulture. Some individuals are referred directly from hospital as part of their discharge plan, others through Soldiers, Sailors and Air Force Families Association, The Royal British Legion or simple word of mouth as confidence grows in The Cart Shed as a 'safe pair of hands'.

The Cart Shed does not claim to cure. Instead, highly qualified occupational therapists work closely with each participant to enable them to overcome and accept episodes in their lives they find difficult to live with. Everyone who attends sessions is given time. Time to sit, time to talk, time to be listened to, time to cry. There is time to try a new skill without fear of judgment or failure, time to share a meal and a cup of tea.

Out Of Nature is a sculpture show with more than 40 artists from all over the UK celebrating our link with nature. All proceeds go to The Cart Shed (www.thecartshed.co.uk), a charity which works with people with mental health issues (including PTSD) in the woods through green woodcraft.
Sept 30-Oct 22, 10.30am-5.30pm, £5 (children and students free).
'Winds of Change', October 14 and 15, is a celebration of green woodcraft and its revival after the Big Storm 30 years ago, with Mike Abbott, Gudrun Leitz, and many others.

Newport House, Almeley, Herefordshire, HR3 6LL
www.outofnature.org.uk

What does this mean in reality?

Sebastian had been out of the Army for 20 years, having enrolled at 16. His return to civilian life was not successful: for five years he drifted, used drugs, became homeless. His parents had cut ties with him. He says, 'I had just two carrier bags.' He narrowly avoided prison, but found the Salvation Army's Swindon Treatment Centre where he became clean and met someone who

The Cart Shed's participants enjoy a range of activities, including coppicing, coppice crafts and greenwood work.

inspired him to study ceramics.

For a while, Sebastian had success: a career in the arts, marriage and a young family. But in 2015, he realised that he was becoming unwell and was falling into familiar, negative behaviour patterns. His GP said Sebastian was 'fine'. Although he looked 'together' Sebastian was becoming increasingly distressed and fearful for his personal safety and that of his family.

That is when Sebastian knocked on The Cart Shed's door. The Armed Forces Integration Officer, an occupational therapist with a mental health specialism, supported Sebastian to become a voluntary inpatient at the mental health unit of a local hospital while attending Cart Shed once a week. He was diagnosed with PTSD. Having attended sessions for several months, Sebastian began looking for new career options. Then, one night in December 2015, he was arrested.

Sebastian says he can't remember what he was doing, though a neighbour said he was being threatening. He remembers helicopters, dogs, being dragged out of his shed. A judge immediately put him on remand where he was held on a psychiatric ward. He says, 'It was horrific, all sorts of weird people. I saw a psychiatrist once for five minutes. He said I was faking PTSD. I received no treatment.' He was then held with other 'normal' criminals. He endured the mental torment that he could have lost his family as well as his freedom. Six months later when he went on trial, a jury acquitted him in just 20 minutes.

Soon afterwards, Sebastian began to attend The Cart Shed's veterans' sessions, and quickly progressed to the Enterprise programme to regain employment skills. He has found a job in a charity in East Herefordshire that offers him a workshop and a place of peace, and he continues to be involved the The Cart Shed. He still suffers from flashbacks, blackouts and nightmares. He plans to exhibit at the Out of Nature sculpture show this October.

Contact details:
The Cart Shed
www.thecartshed.co.uk
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MULLER billhook with leather grip

Rod Waterfield finds a well-balanced billhook makes quick work of coppicing

We asked Rod Waterfield, Centre Manager of the award-winning Woodland Skills Centre in Denbigh, to take a billhook made by the Tool Forge Leonhard Müller & Sons (the company refers to these tools as 'brush hooks') of Austria into the woods and put it through its paces.

Design

The handle is made of leather discs. Though giving a comfortable grip, the circumference is only 12cm, which means that someone with large hands might find it difficult to grip firmly. We didn't try using the hook when the handle was wet and so can't comment on whether the leather would give a more secure grip than a wooden handle.

There is a leather guard disc between the handle and the blade which is a useful safety feature. The edge of the disc was quite rough but this should smooth off with use.

There is a brass tang at the end of the handle which projects some 4cm at right angles to the handle. We're told it's for better grip when working.

Condition on delivery

The blade was supplied sharpened but there was a significant burr on one side of the blade which had to be removed before use.

Where the blade tang projects at the end of the handle it has been peened over, but there were several sharp points which needed to be filed down.

Use

The hook feels good and well balanced in the hand and has a slightly longer blade than our other billhooks.

It cuts well and we were able to cut all the rods on a coppice stool quickly and safely.

Leonhard Müller & Sons billhook, round tip, leather grip version, number 0673, 10in cutting edge, £34 inc VAT from Classic Hand Tools Ltd. www.classichandtools.com

The Woodland Skills Centre/ Canolfan Crefftau'r Goedwig offers a two-day Coppice Crafts course, 18 - 19 November, including not only introductory woodland management and coppice work, but the opportunity to make a range of coppice products including a besom broom and a small hurdle. www.woodlandskillscentre.uk

Many thanks to Classic Hand Tools, who supplied the billhook. classichandtools.com

Robert Sorby PROEDGE SHARPENER

Peter Lanyon modified his ProEdge and now he likes it even more

Many years ago, when I was a neophyte furniture maker, I attended the NEC woodworking exhibition, where Jim Kingshott – he of *Sharpening: The Complete Guide* fame – was doing a sharpening demonstration. When I asked if he ever used a honing guide, the chap next to me snorted as if to pour scorn on the suggestion that the great Mr Kingshott would ever stoop to using such devices. Jim calmly pulled out a drawer in his workbench and talked me through his considerable collection of sharpening aids.

Sharpening for me is a machine process. It needs to be carried out precisely and quickly. If it is a slow and laborious procedure – well, I know what I'm like, and I just won't get around to it as often as I should. My work is a kind of fusion between green woodworking and contemporary furniture making. As well as making and selling furniture, I run green woodworking courses with a modern slant, and support communities to design and make furniture for their own spaces.

Nobody pays me to sharpen my tools, but it pays for me to have sharp tools. And I have a lot of them: chisels, plane irons, spokeshaves, knives, cabinet scrapers, carving gouges, travishers. They are an essential pre-requisite for nearly everything I do in the workshop, and if I am to enjoy and succeed at my work, then they need to be sharp. Having struggled once, many years ago on a course where the tools were anything but finely honed, I know how important it is that participants on my courses and volunteers on my projects all experience the joy of working with razor-edged tools.

For many years I have relied on a slow wetstone grinder, which, while perfect for chisels and plane irons, is absolutely useless for the workhorse of my creative practice, the drawknife. These I have always sharpened by hand. The issue with this is that when one has ten drawknives to sharpen, and a workshop to tidy and a hundred other things to do, it can get rushed. The edges over time become 'dubbed over' and they then take an age to re-profile.

This year I invested in a fabulous piece of kit – the Robert Sorby ProEdge sharpener. I was pleased when I took it out of its box: it had a solid, well-made feel to it, with the added bonus of being British-made. I could now sharpen spokeshaves, chisels and plane irons to a razor edge in a matter of seconds, but drawknives were very fiddly to hold steady and often the handles got in the way of achieving an edge along the entire length. There are a number of accessories for the ProEdge and eventually I bit the bullet and invested again in the knife jig. It takes a couple of minutes to set up the machine for knives, but I have found that as the tool is held lower on the belt, so far, none of the handles on the drawknives I own have fouled the machine.

As each drawknife is a different width, the setting needs to be adjusted, but with a couple of spacer jigs, this becomes a simple, quick and accurate alteration to make. I use the ProEdge to grind the bevel, then take off the burr by hand using either a diamond file or simply some wet and dry paper glued to a piece of flat hardwood. I finish it off with a couple of strokes on a leather strop with some Flexcut Gold honing compound. It is good not to over strop, as it is easy to dub the edge over, over time.

I can now sharpen all my tools with this one machine. I actively look forward to sharpening my tools knowing that a razor edge will be effortlessly and reliably achieved. Now, time to restock the first aid kit.

This grip seems to work best

The jig accepts a wide variety of knife thicknesses, but I swapped the rather stubby screws it came with for something a little longer, so it now accepts up to 7mm thick blades. There are a number of grits available, from a 60 grit for rapid regrinding, to an incredibly fine ProEdge 3000 Trizact belt, which leaves an edge similar to a brand-new razor blade. Belt change-over takes just seconds.

Robert Sorby ProEdge Sharpening System, from £270: www.robert-sorby.co.uk

Flexcut Gold Polishing Compound, £11.66, available widely.

Classic Hand Tools stocks both items: www.classichandtools.com

Peter Lanyon Furniture:
www.peterlanyonfurniture.co.uk

It takes a STORM TO MAKE A WOODLAND

Portrait of a Woodland: Biodiversity in 40 Acres
Published by Search Press, £25

The Handbook of Native Trees and Shrubs – How to Plant and Maintain a Natural Woodland
New Holland Publishing, from £3 (est)
Both by Charlotte de la Bédoyère
Review by **Judith Millidge**

CHARLOTTE DE LA BÉDOYÈRE

I always loved second-hand book shops – the fusty smell, the piles of books overflowing from the shelves and the possibility of discovering hidden treasure. Although many have fallen victim to the Amazonian behemoth, others have flourished as online repositories of the well-written and illustrated word. I was delighted to stumble upon two books by Charlotte de la Bédoyère: *Portrait of a Woodland: Biodiversity in 40 Acres*, written in 2004, and *The Handbook of Native Trees and Shrubs*, published in 2001.

Woodland owners in search of illustrated guides on planting and woodland management will not regret perusing either of these volumes. They are full of clear advice with excellent practical illustrations on planning, propagating and planting, as well as providing an inspirational record of one woman's mission to encourage biodiversity and extend broadleaf coverage within a native woodland.

The owner of a 40-acre woodland in the High Weald, Charlotte wrote *The Handbook of Native Trees and Shrubs* in 2001, drawing on her experience of sourcing healthy tree stock, planting and nurturing. Her mission was to plant native species throughout her woodland, much of which consisted of what she called 'cash trees such as Douglas fir . . . which came down like dominoes in the storm' of 1987. This is a practical guide to planting both large and small woodlands, along with advice on how to manage them with minimal intervention – although this is often easier said than done. The author touches on the importance of rides and glades to the woodland's biodiversity, advises on the creation of ponds, and discusses how to protect young tress from pests such as deer and rabbits.

The second part of the book catalogues the 133 tree and shrub species native to Britain, noting the characteristics of each one, and illustrating them in all their seasonal glory with colour photographs.

The final section is devoted to an area that is often neglected, but that is absolutely vital to a healthy woodland ecosystem – the forest floor. Ground vegetation is a critical habitat that requires sensitive management and this section of the book is a useful pictorial guide to the many flowers, grasses, mosses, fungi and lichens in a native woodland.

The book concludes with a list of suppliers, nurseries and woodland organisations, which is

Bluebells in Butler's Wood

useful but must be treated with caution, given that the handbook is now 16 years old.

Charlotte de la Bédoyère is confident that you *can* plant a woodland and advocates using a mix of native species alongside a structured programme of thinning, ensuring that there are rides for access and wildlife habitat, and the preservation of ancient woodland. Given time, it will flourish, and her next book is testimony to how that happened.

After 25 years restoring and managing her woodland in East Sussex, Charlotte wanted to produce a detailed record of the woodland for her sons and grandchildren. *Portrait of a Woodland,* published in 2004, catalogues her management of 40 very diverse acres of woodland that she acquired along with her house in the late 1970s. The woodland is divided into 11 separate and distinct areas, with different stages of growth and past history. The author's record of how she tackled the disparate sections makes interesting and often inspiring reading.

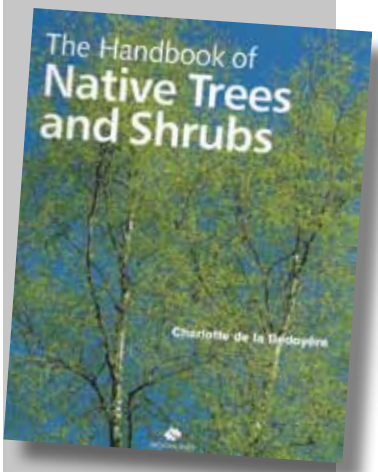
What makes this title stand out is the trenchant views of the writer, who had a clear vision of what she wanted to achieve in her woodland. She was also spurred on by the 1987 hurricane, which ripped through the southeast of England, snapping so many venerable trees like matchwood. Although she deplored the devastation, in many ways, the author could see that it was a 'godsend', and was particularly pleased to see the destruction of so many Scots pine in her woodland. In fact, the storm provided a huge opportunity to replant and restock. As she wrote in the introduction to *The Handbook of Native Trees and Shrubs,* 'The trauma of fallen trees everywhere, round the house and blocking access turned into a miracle. The seemingly barren coniferous earth had once been ancient woodland, and when cleared and replanted with native species, it underwent a complete transformation.'

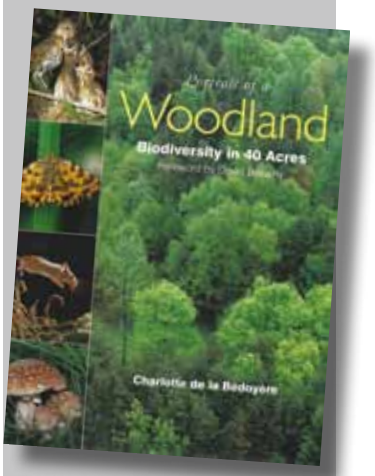
A couple of years after the storm, the entire woodland was properly surveyed, producing a catalogue of 250 species of trees and shrubs. This whetted Charlotte's appetite and encouraged her to work to restore her woodland to a better mix of species. She firmly believes that 'conifers are the worst trees for holding back any diverse understorey', eschews the use of weed killers or other chemicals, and will not allow bonfires on her property.

She delved into the history of the land using old maps and her local record office and discovered that her wood was a perfect microcosm of UK forestry. 'Only tiny pockets of the original ancient woodlands survived. As in my case, most had been felled and replanted with cash crops that gave little heed to wildlife and the dormant biodiversity.' Charlotte set herself the task of redressing the wrongs of the past and she recounts how she approached the different needs of each section – thinning here and replanting there. She consulted local experts and organisations, but has followed her best instincts, to let nature take its course, working from the ground up to establish healthy soil and knowing that everything will flourish after that.

The biodiversity of the woodland is discussed and illustrated in great detail, with a complete list of every species of flora and fauna found within her 40 acres. Long captions provide vital information – where the various species of tree and shrub thrive, how fungi flourish and in which habitat, and how the birds, insects, reptiles and mammals fit in. It's a useful work of reference, as well as a well-illustrated gazetteer.

Charlotte's work has undoubtedly improved the habitat of her woodland. Thirty years after the great storm, large parts are utterly transformed and, much to her satisfaction, the biodiversity has improved immeasurably. Both of these titles make rewarding reading, whether you are in search of inspiration or would appreciate a well-illustrated woodland reference work.





See Letters (page 47) for a special offer on *Portrait of a Woodland* – and the chance to win a copy.

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LETTERS

DEAR NANCY,
I am enjoying reading issue number 44, summer 2017, but feel that I must write and comment about the choice of photo used in the 'All the kit you need' article.

The photo of the Kelly Kettle in this article is to my mind appalling. As a Forest School leader and a woodsman, I am disturbed by a photo that could be deemed to encourage the unsafe use of a Kelly Kettle. In the picture, where the kettle is clearly alight, the spout is almost directly above the air hole in the pan, and on a still day, many people choose to blow through that hole to encourage their kettle to boil quickly – this could result in a nasty scald as the kettle boils over while someone is bending down.

This in itself is dangerous enough, but not only that, the kettle is clearly being boiled with the cork bung in – something that has always been clearly stated by the manufacturer that you should not do. If the cork swells, and sometimes it does in contact with hot water, the kettle is sealed, and will explode! I work with lots of children and we use Kelly Kettles all the time, and I am very proud to say that when shown this article, they all said they were astonished by this, and they were worried that someone might have an accident and be scalded.
Seb Corall
Out Of Our Tree Forest School CIC

DEAR NANCY
May I suggest two corrections? One is very serious, and is the photograph on p19 of what you call the Kelly Kettle, but which our family has called a volcano kettle, of which we've had a series for the past 50 years. Your picture shows a lighted fire in the kettle WITH THE CORK IN PLACE. The instructions that come with the kettle these days warn against that, so please can you print a correct picture and a warning – and maybe avoid a nasty explosion?

The second is less serious: a request to put more emphasis on hand tools and less on that horrible instrument of noise and insensitive destruction, the chain saw. I know that some professional woods people need to use one to earn a living, but surely many of your readers are not professional. For them two kinds of handsaw were designed, one over 2000 years ago, the two-man cross-cut, and one in the 19th century, the one-man cross-cut. Both are readily available new from, for instance, Thomas Flinn of Sheffield, or on ebay. They are easy to sharpen, easy to use, give you exercise and don't use fossil fuels. What's not to like?
Yours sincerely,
Simon Barley
(Author: *British saws: a history and collector's guide*)

DEAR NANCY,
Read *Living Woods Magazine* for many years, and enjoyed each one.

Kelly Kettle image on page 19 shows a very dangerous practice: never use the kettle with the stopper in as this can cause a build-up of steam pressure with explosive results. If you were unlucky to be standing in front, boiling water and you are not a good combination.

This image does show a trickle of water down the side so maybe not too much build-up with this boiling, but who can tell.

Not a good practice to have stopper in place. Please correct this in your next edition.
Regards,
Richard Bingham

Dear Gentlemen,
Many thanks for taking time to write and point out the incorrect use of a Kelly Kettle in the last issue of Living Woods. Kelly Kettles are a super piece of kit, but should be used in accordance with instructions and common sense at all times. The editor apologises and sincerely hopes no readers referred to that photo as instruction.
Nancy

ALEX RAMSAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Dangerous practice

COMPETITION AND SPECIAL OFFER

Win a copy of *Portrait of a Woodland* by Charlotte de la Bédoyère. We have two copies to give away. Send your name and address via email to nancy@livingwoodsmagazine.co.uk and we'll pull two names out of a hat.

When you order the book via the Search Press website, www.searchpress.com, using promo code SP9863, you get £2.00 off and free postage in the UK.

Right outside your front door

This charming guide invites readers to appreciate the nature that's nearby

If you don't have a generous, enthusiastic, artistic friend to accompany you as you explore the natural world in your neighbourhood, be of good heart. Author and artist Sue Belfrage just fits that description, as does her beautiful little illustrated book-cum-journal, *Down to the River and Up to the Trees*. Belfrage wants to inspire you to 'discover the hidden nature on your doorstep' in a series of simple chapters with pages to record your findings. Like this, following instructions on making charcoal from willow:

If you've made your own charcoal, you could use it to create a bark rubbing. All you'll need are a sheet of paper and a drawing medium such as your charcoal, a soft pencil, pastels or wax crayons. And a tree.

Press your paper against the tree's bark and rub your charcoal stick or crayon over it until the pattern and texture of he bark comes through. If you have a couple of different colour crayons or pastels with you, use these to create contrasting layers. And, while you're there, take a moment or two to enjoy the feel of the bark under your hands.

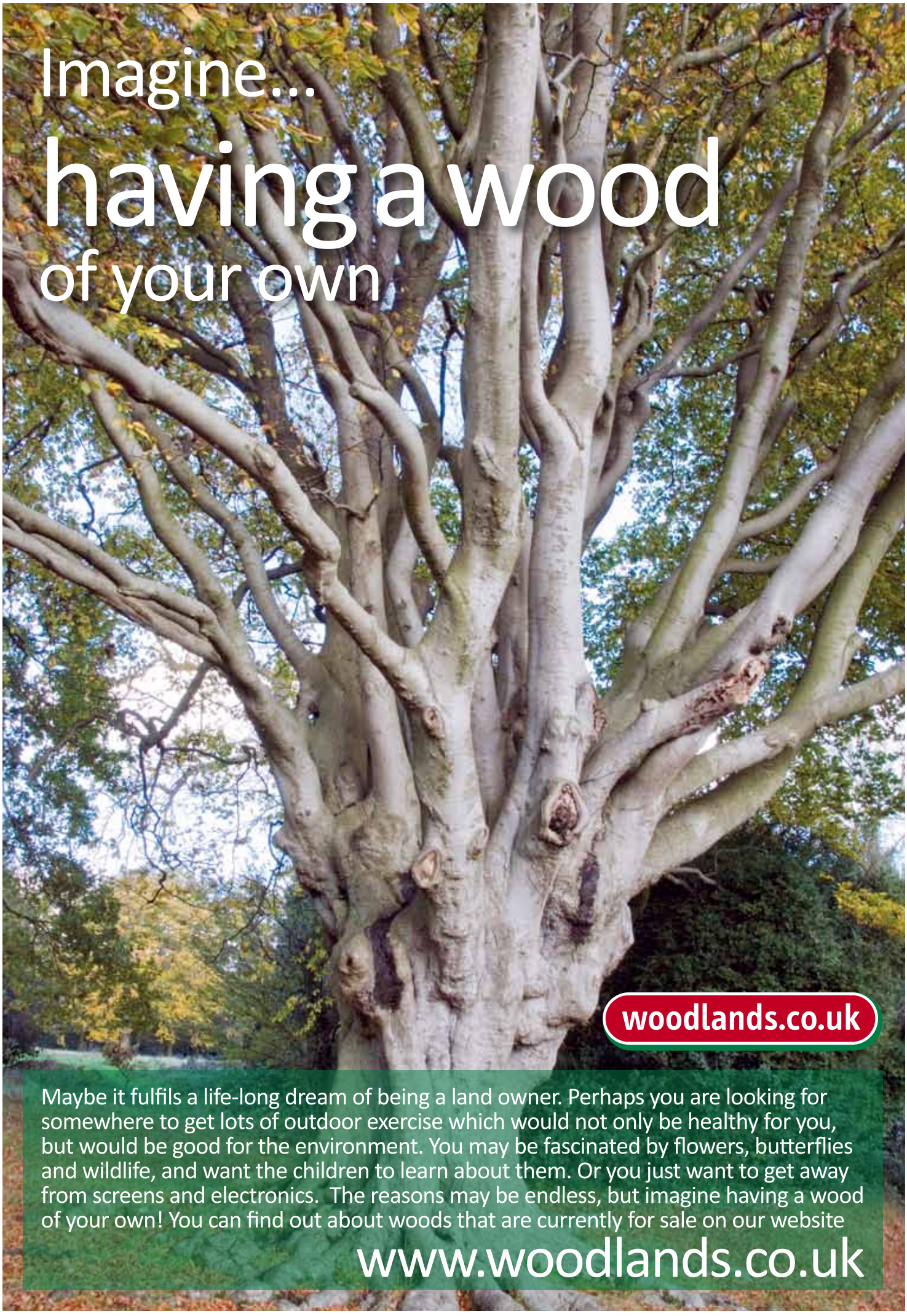
Turn the results into an abstract piece of art or cut up the rubbing to make a collage; or stick them in the space opposite – whatever appeals to you.

Different types of tree have different patterned bark, so if you're unsure what species of tree you've been leaning up against, you might be able to identify it by comparing your bark rubbing with the images in a field guide.

Belfrage would inspire a young person to interact with the natural world and bring home memories to keep in the pages of this charming book.

Down to the River and Up to the Trees by Sue Belfrage is published by Thorsons and is widely available, £9.99.

Tom Wheeler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