

Living Woods

No.61 WINTER 2021

MAGAZINE

**WILD ABOUT
WOODLAND CAMPING**

**SPRUCE INVADERS
BARK BEETLES**

plus

**MEET THE MAKER:
BOWYER PHIL BROOKE**

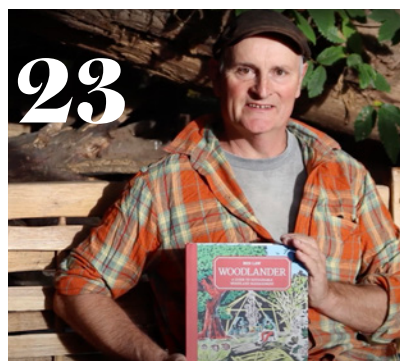
CONTENTS

It's undoubtedly been a funny old year, but here at Living Woods we are grateful to our crack team of contributors who have provided thought-provoking and informative features. Owen Davies of the Forestry Stewardship Council explains the benefits of FSC accreditation. Caroline Gooch covers the dismal progression of the spruce bark pine beetle and how woodland owners can try to mitigate its effects. David Collins reflects on the joy of camping in woodland and explains how owners might share their woodlands for a small profit. Bowyer, and bushcraft teacher Phil Brooke is the subject of Meet the Maker. And finally there is a fine selection of woody books for those winter nights in front of a log fire.

With best wishes from everyone at Living Woods Magazine for Christmas and 2022.

Judith Millidge Editor

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COVER PHOTO

Rain or Shine (Photo: Arabella Proudfoot, Woodlands Award Winner)

- 3 **News and updates from the woodland world**
- 5 **The confidence to grow** – the value of FSC accreditation
- 7 **Wild about woodland camping**
- 10 **The healing power of woodlands**
- 12 **Spruce invaders** – the threat from pine bark beetles
- 14 **Woodcraft** – extract from John Rhyder's book
- 16 **Meet the Maker** – bowyer Phil Brooke
- 20 **Woodlands Awards 2021** – the winners
- 22 **Book reviews** – Treasury of Folklore: Woodlands and Forests; Woodlander; Ash; Treepedia; The Woodland Craft Handbook; Live your Bucket List
- 27 **Woodnote** – the festive walnut
- 29 **Acknowledgements**

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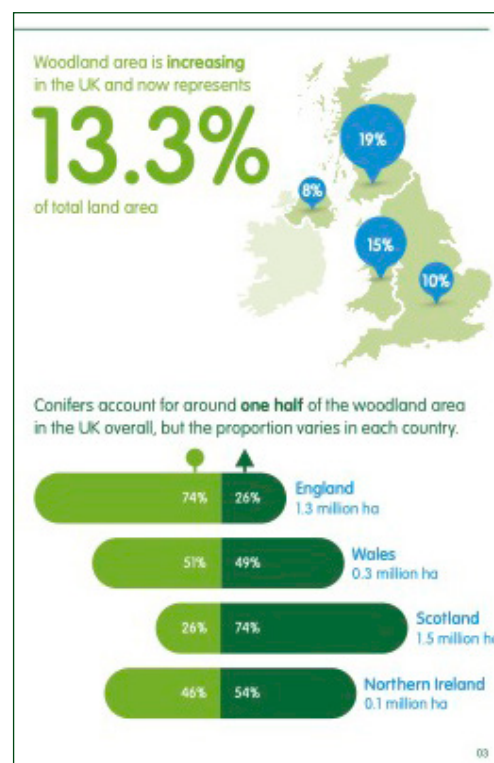
Photo: Annie Spratt/Unsplash

Forestry statistics – tree cover expands slowly

The publication of the annual survey of the state of Britain's forests, **Forestry Facts & Figures 2021**, reveals that woodland area in the UK is gradually increasing. Forest Research reports that trees now cover 13.3% of the UK: 10% of England, 15% of Wales, 19% of Scotland and 8% of Northern Ireland. Cover has expanded slightly since 2019–20, but many forestry professionals are frustrated by the slow rate of expansion.

Forest cover in England increased by 2,000 hectares in 2020–21, but Edward Daniels of John Clegg thinks that there are still too many barriers to tree-planting. The government has committed to increase forestry cover across the UK to 17% by 2050 and, at the current rate, this aim is unlikely to be achieved. Small-scale planting schemes all add up, but land managers believe that it is the shortage of suitable land which is preventing expansion.

While large softwood plantations would, over time, help Britain to reduce its timber imports, mixed forests of hardwoods and softwoods are a more attractive proposition. Of course, successful schemes of mixed plantations, such as the National Forest in the Midlands and Grizedale Forest in the Lake District, already exist. Both produce timber, provide extensive wildlife habitats, and attract tens of thousands of visitors every year. 'The stakes are high when it comes to climate change, and inaction will mean there are huge consequences for future generations' says Daniels, who believes that only with a national debate will we overcome the practical barriers to planting. (Read Edward Daniels' [blog here](#).)



RFS Book Club

One of the great successes of lockdown has been the introduction of the Royal Forestry Society's Book Club. Featuring interviews with well-known forestry and woodland authors about their books, past speakers include Keith Kirby (pictured), Isabella Tree and James Canton.

Book Club 2022 kicks off with Gabriel Hemery and *The New Sylva* in January, with George Peterken in March talking about his books *Woodland Development: A Long Term Study of Lady Park Wood* and *The Arborealists in Lady Park Wood: Art Meets Ecology*. The sessions are about an hour long and are a wonderful opportunity to hear distinguished authors talk about their work and woodlands. Sessions can be booked via the events section of the **RFS website**.

Past events are well worth viewing and can be seen on the **RFS YouTube channel**.



Wood Awards 2021

Aiming to encourage and promote outstanding timber design, craftsmanship and installation, the Wood Awards were established in 1971. The Awards are the UK's premier competition for excellence in architecture and product design in wood. With two main categories, Buildings and Furniture, and Product, an elite independent judging panel of professional experts and specialists visit all the shortlisted projects in person. This means that the Wood Awards are as meaningful and rigorous a competition as possible.

Winner of the Gold Award this year is Magdalene College Library, Cambridge, which the judges described as 'a tour de force of architectural design and achievement . . . A truly outstanding building'.

Jim Greaves, Chair of Buildings Judges, said 'It is reassuring to see how wood has now become such a mainstream building material, with designers increasingly appreciating its low carbon, biophilic and regenerative potential'.

*Visit the **Wood Awards website** to view some inspiring designs and examples of exceptional craftsmanship.*



A guide to planning new woodland in England



The Forestry Commission has created a new guide for anyone planning to create a new woodland in England. This comprehensive 40-page document, entitled **A guide to planning new woodland in England**, offers in-depth advice on the following:

- what you should think about before starting your woodland creation design plan
- what information you'll need to include in your woodland creation design plan, where to find it, and how to bring it together
- how to apply the UK Forestry Standard forest design principles to guide strengthen your proposal plans
- how best to engage stakeholders in your project and use their responses to strengthen your woodland creation design plan
- the spatial plans you'll need to produce as part of your woodland creation design plan
- how the Environmental Impact Assessment process works
- where you can find further support and information.



Walking 5,000 miles

Michael Yellowlees must have heard every Proclaimers-based joke in the book after his trek across Canada to raise money for the Scottish charity Trees for Life.

Michael and his Alaskan husky Luna left Tofino on the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia in March to embark on a 5,000-mile journey. Nine months later, they reached the remote Cape Spear lighthouse in Newfoundland which marks the eastern edge of Canada, having raised an incredible £46,000. Luna went missing for a week in Northern Ontario and they survived encounters with black bears and snowstorms in the Rockies. 'Apart from that horrible scare, the journey through Canada has been amazing,' said Michael.

Steve Micklewright, Chief Executive of Trees for Life, said 'We want to say a huge thank you to Michael for walking across Canada for the last nine months and raising so much money for our work.'

Trees for Life is dedicated to rewilding the Scottish Highlands. Its volunteers have established nearly two million native trees at dozens of sites. It is still possible to recognise Michael's incredible journey by donating on his **JustGiving page**.

The confidence to grow

The joy of having your own corner of woodland may be tempered by the responsibilities that come with it. What are your legal obligations? What should you do to protect the woodland environment? Forest Standards Manager at the FSC **OWEN DAVIES** provides some guidance.

Owning a wood can be thrilling, but it can also be daunting. If you have no background in land management, questions about how to deal with your new woodland could feel overwhelming. Even if you know what you're doing, you might be grateful for a second opinion. So how can you grow in confidence as a good steward of the woodland in your care?

Seeking advice

There are plenty of organisations you can join to benefit from the wisdom of other members, and which often run woodland visits or training courses, such as the Small Woodland Owners' Group, Small Woods, the Royal Forestry Society and Woodland Heritage.

Of course, there is a huge amount of information available online, though the sheer volume might prove bewildering. There are also many good books, such as *Getting Started in Your Own Wood* by Julian Evans and Will Rolls.

Following standards

One way to steer through all the information with some confidence that you're heading in the right direction might be to follow a standard. Standards are a well-established part of woodland management. The government have their own **UK Forestry Standard**, or UKFS, which includes both legal and best practice requirements and guidelines, and which is the basis for decisions on felling licence and grant applications. It's a comprehensive and detailed document which runs to over 200 pages, and might feel a bit much for the enthusiastic amateur to handle.

There are also voluntary standards. For us at the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) UK, one particular standard forms the basis for our Forest Management certification: the **UK Woodland Assurance Standard**, or UKWAS, which was first published in 1999, and has been revised several times since. Designed to be aligned with UKFS, UKWAS also implements FSC's international Principles and Criteria, which set out our vision for



FSC certification can be really helpful when it comes to selling wood products such as hazel hurdles. It provides a guarantee that producers are adhering to sustainable methods of forestry management. (Photo courtesy FSC UK/E. Parker.)

responsible forest management.

You don't have to be certified, of course, to try to follow a standard or to embrace a vision. For your purposes, assessing your own performance might be enough. But, although there are costs, a very different level of assurance for you and for others comes with the independent assessment of conformity provided by FSC certification.

FSC certification

In the simplest terms, FSC Forest Management certification means two things: managing your woods according to a specific standard, i.e. UKWAS, and an independent third party checking that you are doing so. External auditing is carried out by certification bodies which are independent of FSC.

Being independently audited against FSC standards can give you added assurance that the work you are doing will protect and enhance all the things you value in your wood. It can also provide important, credible assurance to others, such as neighbouring landowners or the wider community.

You might even find that there are marketing or financial advantages if you are selling forest-based products. FSC certification might give you greater access to markets for wood products, and potentially to markets for non-wood forest products like fruits, nuts, mosses, foliage, saps – even venison.

To provide greater assurance about specific benefits, an optional FSC procedure now enables the independent verification of claims about maintaining or enhancing ecosystem services under five headings: biodiversity conservation; carbon storage and sequestration; watershed services; soil conservation; and recreation services.

Most importantly of all, though, certification helps to ensure that woods are managed in a way that meets a global vision of responsible forest management. Whether or not you decide certification is right for you, we hope you too will embrace that vision.

Taking the next step

For small woodlands, it is usually most cost-effective to join a group scheme, in which individual members are covered by a single group certificate. A group scheme manager will carry out internal audits to ensure standards are met, and group members will also be audited on a sample basis by a certification body. We recommend that you talk to more than one group scheme manager to find the best fit.

Whatever you decide to do – wherever you seek advice, and whether or not you adopt voluntary standards or certification – we wish you every success and happiness in your woodland stewardship. But we do hope you will choose to join the national and global family pursuing a common vision of forests for all, forever.

A summary of the FSC's Principles and Criteria for small woods in the UK

- Ensure everything you do in your woodland is lawful and, as far as possible, protect your woodland from the unlawful actions of others.
- Look after the people who work in your woodland, and respect their rights.
- Contribute to your community, respecting their rights and, where possible, providing opportunities for work and play in your woodland.
- Ensure your woodland provides sustainable benefits to you, your community and/or wider society.
- Protect the woodland environment.
- Know your woodland, have a vision for it, and know what you have to do to achieve that vision; you should be able to communicate this information to others.
- Understand how your woodland changes in response both to your actions and to other influences and adjust your actions if necessary to achieve your vision.
- Protect and, where possible, enhance any particularly important features of the natural, historical or cultural environment in your woodland; if you're not sure what the effects of your actions will be on these features, you should always err on the side of caution.
- Everything you do to achieve your vision should be done appropriately and well.



The Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) is a global, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of responsible forest management. Our mission is to promote environmentally appropriate, socially

beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests, and our vision for 2050 is for a new forest paradigm to be realised, where the true value of forests is recognised and fully incorporated into society worldwide. FSC operates an independent, third-party forest management and chain of custody certification scheme, to enable businesses and consumers to make informed choices about the forest products they buy and create positive change.

FSC UK is the national office of the Forest Stewardship Council in the United Kingdom. FSC UK is independent of FSC International. It sets forest management standards for the UK by inputting into the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS), promotes the FSC system, and provides an information service.

Find out more via the **FSC UK website** or contact Owen (owen@fsc-uk.org) or Outreach Manager Amy Willox (amy@fsc-uk.org) directly.



Fuelled by the pandemic, there has been a resurgence in people wanting to connect with nature and get outside, many keen to spend time under a canopy of trees in woodland.

DAVID COLLINS of Wildpoint helps woodland owners share their space with careful campers.

Camping in a forested area is a real treat for many campers looking to get back to basics and reconnect with nature (it's one of the top three places campers say they'd like to stay) but many owners are concerned about safety, damage to property or annoying their neighbours. I've spoken to one owner who's decided to welcome careful campers into her woodland in the Chilterns to find out more about how it works.

Meet Lara

Lara (pictured right) is originally from Italy and has a successful international career

in the technology industry, which she combines with an active social engagement volunteering and as a non-executive. She fell in love with nature as a child, hiking with her father, and is keen on conservation.

What's your background? What makes you want to be in the woods?

I've had a dream of caring for a woodland for some time, and it's taken a few years to turn that into an actual project. Given that I work full time, realistically I would not have time to run a farm, but on the other





hand, conserving ancient woodland is very important for biodiversity. So, I started to learn about woods to see what I could do.

What made you want to purchase a woodland? Tell us a little about your space.

I chose Walk Wood as it was the perfect combination in a number of ways. Being in the Chilterns AONB means it lies within a healthy environment. At the same time, I appreciated the proximity to the Metropolitan line, which enables me to get there regularly.

From a forestry perspective, Walk Wood is a PAWS or plantation on ancient woodland site. It means that while most trees are young, under 80 years old, it has an excellent seed bank and diversity, for plants, fungi and wildflowers, among others. I actually feel very lucky, because finding nine acres of this quality is rare. I made an offer very quickly once I visited the wood and purchased it from forests.co.uk.

What made you decide to share it?

I really believe that both environmental and what I would call social sustainability are important. Walk Wood has been enjoyed since Tudor times, when it was part of the Chenies Manor estate. It is sited alongside some of the Chiltern hiking

trails. I don't believe woodlands should be a privilege!

Though I happen to be the owner, I see myself much more as a custodian, to ensure that the wood thrives and is used in ways that are compatible with its wildlife and long-term balance. I have engaged several non-profit organisations to

keep the community involved, and am working with AdventureClinic on activities to allow children and adults to learn about our woods and how to enjoy them while leaving no trace.

Renting the woodland to experienced wild campers, within the limits allowed by the law, is a good way to be able to earn a small income for the wood to pay for new signage or for a woodland consultant, for example. But it is also a way to share something I care about. It makes me happy when families share back their pictures, or guests discuss a wildlife encounter and how delighted they are with their stay.

“

Renting the woodland to experienced wild campers . . . is a way to share something I care about.

”

How have the campers that have stayed with you been?

I'm lucky to have had good experiences. Everyone has been very respectful, some have given great suggestions, and all seem to have enjoyed their time at Walk Wood.

I do take the time to vet each party of guests, to ensure they are experienced enough, check for party size, and of course to address their questions. At first, I was concerned that guests might find it intrusive or be annoyed to be reminded of the basics, such as checking ashes are thoroughly cold before disposing of them, or set camp

before nightfall, but so far they told me they appreciate the level of care. And for me, the preservation of the wood and safety of the guests come first.

Make sure you have also camped in your woodland. This allows you to walk in your guests' shoes, to see things through their eyes and to define what you are willing and unwilling to accept.

Tips for a trouble-free rental

1. Check local permissions – most private landowners (including woodlands) can take advantage of the 28-day rule to allow camping for up to 28 days per year without any additional permission. It's always worth checking local rules to ensure you get this right.
2. Ensure that you have public liability insurance in place.
3. Decide which facilities and amenities you'd like to offer - facilities vary greatly from site to site with some offering showers, toilets and other on-site facilities. Campers will typically require a toilet at the most basic level (composting toilets are affordable and eco-friendly) and possibly access to clean drinking water. The facilities you provide will dictate the price you can charge.
4. Choose a nightly rate – prices range from £10 to £60+ per night depending on location and facilities.
5. Capture amazing photos of your own stay. Providing good photos of your woodland is a crucial factor in your listing's success.
6. Write a great description – help guests to understand your space by writing a detailed description, including what's on-site, the nature nearby and any local, relevant activities.
7. List your space. Choose a platform that aligns with your goals and that can help and advise you if needed. Wildpoint allows you to manually accept or reject each booking before it's confirmed to ensure you are in full control.



About Wildpoint

Wildpoint empowers private landowners to monetise their land. Guests are able to find beautiful sites and book stays with ease. Share your corner of the world with campers using our platform – it only takes five minutes to begin sharing your space and earning money from your existing land.

This year, we've helped hundreds of first-time hosts welcome guests onto their land. From basic wild camping, to quirky glamping, there's something for everyone. There are no upfront fees, no initial investment, no exclusivity or hidden costs, no registration or licences required. In addition, Wildpoint also has a helpful and responsive support team that will be there for you.

Visit the **Wildpoint website** for more information.



THE HEALING POWER OF WOODLANDS

Poet **LAWRENCE ILLSLEY** won the Live Canon Collection Competition with his book, *A Brief History of Trees*. The book tells the story, in verse, of the year following the death of his mother, when he found solace whilst walking among woodlands across the UK.

The inspiration for the book came from a phrase that Lawrence's mother said to him before she passed away – that, if she could choose, she would like to come back as a tree. After she died, Lawrence found himself returning again and again to this idea, and asking in response: but which tree would she have liked to be?

Already a prize-winning poet, Lawrence naturally found an outlet for these thoughts and emotions by starting to write the poems that became *A Brief History of Trees*. When he began writing he had very little arboreal knowledge so began to read, researching trees, their biology and history. He began to understand how the history of trees and the history of people, especially in Britain, are woven together and that trees have long been a way to help people understand their place in the universe, with woods often being a place of refuge or contemplation.

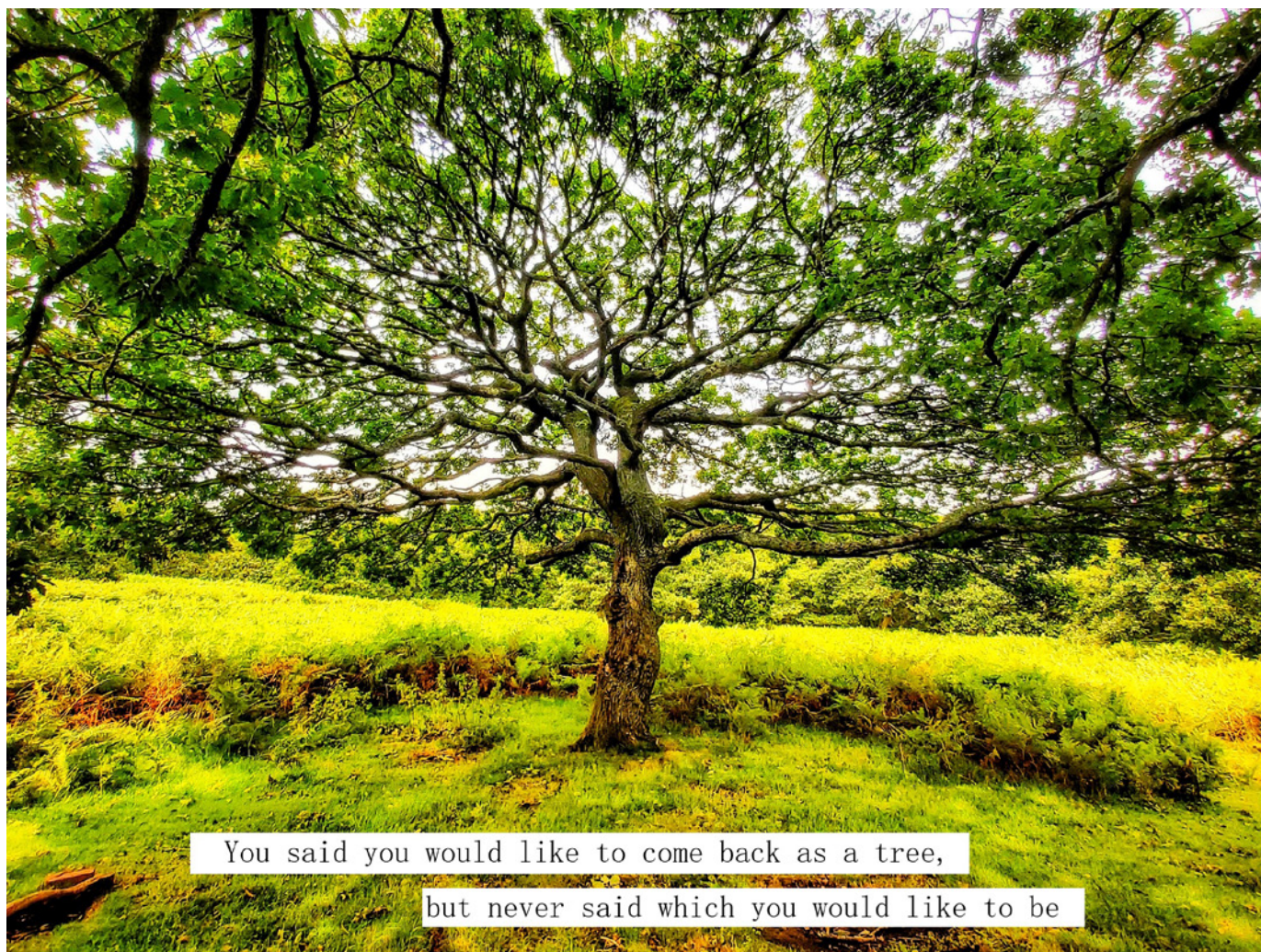
In his grief, Lawrence began to walk in the woods near where his home in South Wales and found that being among the trees brought him closer to his mother, who appeared to live on in the branches and shifting patterns of light. He then ventured further from his home, visiting places in Cornwall where he had grown up – the cliffs, where the trees are stunted and windblown and the river valleys, packed with broadleaves. Each encounter with trees seemed important and the feelings that emerged seemed attached to a particular place. These inspired the poems which became at once personal and cathartic, yet also expressive, as the global history of trees intertwined with his own journey and meant the words needed to be shared.

Lawrence has been delighted with the

response he has received to his poems. He won the Sophie Warne Award from the University of London and then the Live Canon Collection Prize and has received many five-star reviews. But it has been the personal response from his readers that has meant the most. People have contacted him, saying how beautiful the poems are, how they too have found trees to be a blessing during a time of crisis and how his work has allowed them to unlock their own grief and learn to try and live with it.



My friends tried to contact me.
Death is silent. Did they not
know? A liberty of silence.



Extract from 'A Mother Beech'

The road was grey-green. Running
through a tunnel of sycamore. The light
dim. A crepuscular valley. Shelter
from the incessant mizzle seeping

that day from the monochrome emulsion
of the cloud-smeared sky. Broadleaved trees, other
than sycamore, are rare there. They shelter
in the narrow valleys. Or the odd lone

tree will grow up from a hedgerow. Branches
raked across the sky by the wind. Further
along the valley - by the water works
and the old wooden bridge we played on as

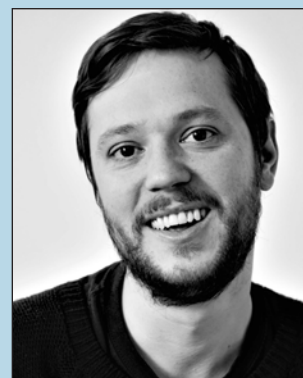
youngsters - I found a solitary beech
on the riverbank. Its oval leaves, like
those children draw in school, identified
it immediately. Closer. I reached

out a hand and touched it.



BUY A COPY

We hope you enjoy this
extract from, 'A Mother
Beech', the first poem in
Lawrence's collection, *A
Brief History of Trees*. Get
in touch with the author at
www.lawrenceillsley.com
or buy a copy of the book
direct from the publishers
livecanon.co.uk



SPRUCE INVADERS

Forestry Commission Local Partnerships Advisor **CAROLINE GOOCH** introduces *Ips typographus*, a savage eight-toothed 5mm-long beetle that destroys spruce trees.

One of the great things about owning your own woodland is watching it grow. Whether you actively manage your woods, or only intervene occasionally, the diversity of life to be witnessed is one of the greatest pleasures.

However, not all forms of diversity are beneficial to the health of our woodlands. Pests and diseases can have a significant impact on the health of our trees. Many species cause only minor damage and are generally those which have evolved within our native woodlands. Our flora and fauna have evolved alongside these pests to tolerate, avoid, or eat the problem. Unfortunately, the number of non-native species which have a detrimental impact on our woodlands has increased dramatically over the past 50 years, affecting a range of native and non-native tree species. Some, such as Oak Processionary Moth, are largely contained within one region through a control programme which has slowed the spread. Others, most notably ash dieback, have swept across the country, with dramatic impact.

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Spruce bark beetle

One pest new to our shores and causing concern is *Ips typographus*, the larger eight-toothed spruce bark beetle. Common in continental Europe, where it is a native species, this beetle favours spruce species, and is particularly attracted to trees which are dying or under high levels of stress, such as windblown trees or those planted on unsuitable site conditions. Once beetles discover these, they will release pheromones to attract other beetles to the new, tasty food source, where with the right weather conditions,

populations can build up rapidly to attack other spruce trees nearby which may also be under stress. If populations become large enough, they can then attack healthy trees.

In 2018 a small population was found in Kent, and an eradication programme was swiftly implemented, felling the infested spruce and all other spruce trees out to 300 metres, disposing of the timber and bark, and restrictions placed

in areas of Kent preventing the movement of all spruce timber both within and out of the 'demarcated zone' unless inspected and certified as clear by one of the Forestry Commission's Plant Health Inspectors.

Since 2019 the Commission's plant health team have set up specific pheromone traps for *Ips typographus* to monitor their presence in the south-east and, unfortunately, fresh outbreaks have been discovered this year. Warm winds appear to have blown new populations from the Continent, and the plant health team are working hard to identify where other populations might be in order to implement control and eradication methods.



Controlling the spread

In an effort to control the spread of this pest, there is now a 'demarcation zone' across Kent, East Sussex, Greater London, large parts of Essex, West Sussex, Surrey, and smaller parts of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire. This means that any spruce (of any species) over 3 metres tall which is to be felled within the zone must be inspected by a Forestry Commission Plant Health Inspector before and after felling. This is to make sure it's free from Ips before it can be

moved, and if it's safe to move, the Plant Health Inspector will issue written authority to do so.

Notifiable pests

So what should you do if you think you might have this beetle? *Ips typographus* is a notifiable pest, so report it to the Forestry Commission if you find it. In Great Britain you should use the **Tree Alert** reporting system, and for Northern Ireland use **TreeCheck**. If it is discovered, there is a good likelihood that the trees will need to be removed, to prevent further spread of the beetle.

The Forestry Commission is

currently running a tree health pilot grant scheme to help cover the costs associated with this, such as felling of the spruce, support from a professional forestry agent, and restocking the felled area. If you live in the south-east of England, you are eligible to express an interest and apply for this scheme. For owners in the south-east, even if your woodland seems clear, it might be worth contacting your local Woodland Officer to see if you could manage your spruce to prevent it becoming attractive to the beetle, and avoid loss of trees. You may also be eligible for the tree Health pilot grant.



Ips beetles are often referred to as 'engraver' beetles because of the 'engraved' appearance of the galleries, as in the picture above. This characteristic also gave rise to its scientific name '*Ips typographus*', typography being the art of engraving.



TAKE ACTION

If you suspect the presence of bark beetle in your woodland

1. Use **Tree Alert** to notify the Forestry Commission.
2. Investigate the tree health pilot grant to help cover costs.
gov.uk/guidance/tree-health-pilot-scheme
3. Be proactive: talk to the FC about appropriate management to discourage *Ips typographus*.

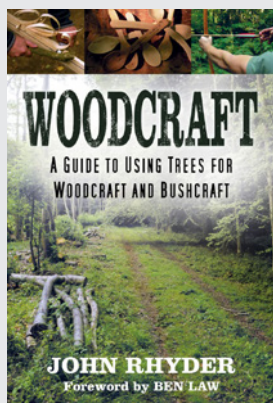
CONTACTS

South-east owners: FC Tree Health Pilot Woodland Officer, Elliot Carpenter
Elliot.Carpenter@forestrycommission.gov.uk

MORE INFORMATION

www.gov.uk/guidance/eight-toothed-european-spruce-bark-beetle-ips-typographus

WOODCRAFT



JOHN RHYDER is a naturalist, woodsman and wildlife tracker, both founder and head instructor at the **Woodcraft School**. He is regarded as one of the most experienced authorities in the field of bushcraft in the UK. It is great to see his valuable book **Woodcraft** reissued for a new audience. Packed with woodland wisdom, step-by-step guides and practical advice, it is illustrated throughout and this new edition benefits hugely from the addition of an index. This extract appears by kind permission of the publisher, The History Press.

Paperback 352 page RRP £22 ISBN: 9780750998185

Fire Lays and Management

There are lots of versions of fire lays to be found, but it seems to me that they are mostly one of four basic patterns, slightly adapted. I suppose a fifth version would be the tepee fire, which often is illustrated as a way of lighting a fire: tinder is placed in the centre, then sticks are leant into each other, effectively locking everything together in a twig cone. This gives all the pyramid requirements discussed earlier and, in theory, should make an easy fire. Often, this is indeed the case.

However, in my experience, the cone either falls over or locks up totally, allowing the tinder to burn out in the middle, and the fire to die. When used as a main fire lay with bigger fuel, it burns extremely hot and bright, but eats through firewood. (All very well for Guy Fawkes night or your effigy-dispatching celebration of choice, but for me, having to get up every five minutes to put more wood on gets a little tedious, so I tend to avoid this one. However, these things are best experienced directly, so do make up your own mind.)

There always will be a trade-off between the effort expended in gathering, preparing and managing a fire and what you get back from it. For this reason, I much prefer to light a fire using either twigs or feather sticks, then turn it into the type of fire I need. Once that fire has served its purpose, it is a simple matter to change it once more. The following are what I regard as the four key fire-lay patterns.

Star Fire

The star or hunter's fire has its main fuel radiating out from the central point, like spokes from a wheel. The wheel can contain just a few spokes or be filled, depending on preference. The star fire's main advantage is the minimal preparation needed to collect firewood: if you can carry it to the fire and drop the end into the centre, or allow the fire to

burn it in half, this is all the preparation required. Because it is only burning the ends of the logs, it is massively fuel efficient too (I have had four good-sized logs last for a whole week's camping).

Bear in mind that the more spokes you use, the further back the fire will spread. It will be hotter and brighter, which means using more wood. Sometimes, a shallow dish can be excavated under the central point to cut the wind and further increase fuel efficiency. However, if you make this too deep, your logs may overhang the heart of the fire and not burn very well.

The downside to this fire is that it is high maintenance. Without constant pushing in and restacking of logs to maintain height, the fire soon burns out. It is not a good one to be left for any period of time.



Criss-Cross Fire

The criss-cross fire consists of alternate rows of parallel sticks, laid close enough together to touch. It is like several alternating platforms, laid one on top of another. Its purpose is to produce an even bed of hot coals – charcoal, in other words. Designed for cooking, it is, in essence, a barbecue.

The idea is that even-diameter timber should be used, so that it will all burn at roughly the same rate. If you mix the sizes, then some of your wood will be ash and some smouldering logs, and you'll never get the even bed you're after. If your sticks are different lengths, it is very difficult to keep them balanced without collapsing and rolling off the fire.

It should be possible to stand a pan on a criss-cross fire in the early stages before it turns to charcoal. While it is a great cooking fire, using it for a general campfire is impractical, due to the preparation and the fact that it burns through wood at a great rate. (I often use a criss-cross to start the brew on a wet morning, then turn it into a hunter's fire just as the kettle boils. Purely for the adoration and delight of my fellow campers, as they emerge from their tents, you understand!)



Parallel Fire



Parallel fire lays may be familiar to many as the classic wilderness long-log fire, designed to heat the whole of the body and burn for several hours. These consist of long logs lying side-by-side and stacked into a rough triangle. Between three and five sticks, depending on diameter, tend to work well.

On a smaller scale, these fires are good for grilling and cooking on a spit. I have used versions of different sizes to heat rocks for outdoor steam baths too. They make a great alternative to the tepee fire for a good old 'Ging Gang Goolie' singsong, as they are much more fuel efficient, yet throw out a lot of heat. Often, they do need pegging to stop the logs rolling out, and big ones can be too hot to get close enough for cooking.

There are variations of this kind of fire: a reflector can be added just behind the long log, about an arm's length, that will throw heat back towards you or your shelter; alternatively, a reflector can be built up against the fire and allowed to catch it, creating a flaming grill – an arrangement known as a 'back wall fire'.

On a small scale, this can be used for cooking. In fact, I have suspended whole chickens in front of this arrangement on wire. On a larger scale they are extremely hot, almost too hot. The back wall can be propped by driving stakes into the ground at an angle, although eventually they will burn through. Using less-seasoned wood for the wall can slow this process down a little.

If using it within a shelter, keep the logs about an arm's length away, to be fairly easy to reach and fiddle with, but not so close as to be unsafe. Moreover, bear in mind that if you double the distance between you and a fire, you will be four times colder.

'V' or Fan Fire

This is a great fire for bad weather, or times when low maintenance is key. The fuel is stacked in a 'V' formation to give the all-important height, then the centre of the 'V' is filled in. It is a fire for exposed places with constant wind: beaches are a great example. The idea is that the point of the 'V' is downwind and, in the situation already described, this arrangement stops the fire from migrating. Because there is no fuel beyond the point, the fire can't go anywhere. (Anyone who has lit a fire on a windy day and found it moved 6ft [1.82m] will appreciate the value of this.)

A further advantage of this arrangement is its self-feeding nature: the formation can be stacked as high as your fuel store allows, and will constantly drop down into the fire, which – so long as the wind remains constant – is relatively small. I once built one in appalling conditions, using fairly big logs and as high as my waist, as I had to leave camp for a few hours. The fire was still burning well on my return. The physical arrangement of the fuel means that the wood above is kept warm and dry before it hits the fire.



MEET *the* MAKER

PHIL BROOKE is more than just a bowyer. Like many makers, his interests are rooted in the natural world and he is an accredited bushcraft specialist and keen naturalist. He divides his time between bow-making and working as chief instructor at the Woodcraft School Sussex.

How and when did you realise you wanted to be a bow-maker?

I served in the armoured infantry for close to ten years and while I enjoyed my time in the army and the training that came with it, I found that I wanted a more intense educational challenge when I left. I travelled widely following my interests in bushcraft and when I returned to the UK, I began studying at Woodcraft School. What I found fascinating was seeing the natural world through different eyes. As a soldier, I would view terrain as a combat area, and the Woodcraft School taught me how to read a woodland, how to identify and use plants and trees, and how to thrive on the land sustainably.

I had always been interested in archery and traditional bow-making and pursuing this interest was a natural progression that worked well alongside my bushcraft studies. English medieval archers are the stuff of historical legend, but longbows have been used since Mesolithic times, so prehistoric bow technology has always connected bushcraft and bow-making.

Where do you source your wood?

Bows for hunting and bows for warfare have always intertwined, but the design features of each type of bow really demonstrate the intended use.

In recent times the materials used to make bows have

changed, with the introduction of different woods from places like South America, as well as the practice of using multiple woods – even though the designs from our ancestors have altered very little. The best wood needs to combine strength and elasticity or be good at resisting tension and compression. Our ancestors knew that good

yew wood, wherever it came from, was the ultimate bow wood: that remains true today, although finding it is a much harder task. Over-harvesting, deforestation, and the planting of mono crops have all played their part, but growing conditions are also different as a result of global warming. This means lowland yew in European forests grows too quickly to become dense enough for war bows. Mountainous regions such as the Pacific Northwest or some of the most distant parts of Europe produce the best yew, but for British makers, it is very expensive.

I tackle this by renting large woodlands to run courses covering a wide range of subjects. We manage the woods traditionally and produce materials for bow staves and arrows using

traditional woods often regarded as non-commercial, such as ash, rowan, birch, aspen, poplar or hazel.

The timber for our woodland courses is sustainably sourced as part of a healthy cycle of woodland management. For the bows, we buy a limited amount of timber from responsible exotic timber businesses for more modern tri-laminate bows and sell a limited amount per year. We also buy high-quality yew but this is limited to maybe five to ten





A trilaminate bow, made from a triple laminate of hickory, purple heart and lemon wood.

staves a year. The rest we fell ourselves and source from woodlands in the UK.

My bows are made entirely from traditional, and where possible, natural materials, with arrow heads/bodkins sourced from a talented friend and local blacksmith Joe Garnett (@joegarnett_blacksmith).

What species makes the best bows?

Yew provided the wood for prehistoric bows and medieval longbows because it combines strength with flexibility and is easy to work. The pale sapwood resists tension – think of it as being stretched – and forms the outside or back of the bow, while the orange/red heartwood resists compression and forms the inside curve of the bow, providing a natural spring.

Ash is such a versatile, strong wood and it was used undoubtedly by bowyers through history. Unfortunately, since Chalara hit, the timber quality cannot be relied upon, but it is still used for arrow shafts today. Ash, along with poplar, birch and aspen, makes strong, heavy arrows which were historically used for fighting. Lighter woods such as

pine and spruce form arrows that fly efficiently but are only suitable for target archery and not war weight bows.

Once harvested, I season the wood for years depending on the timber or what it's used for. Seasoned timber is harder to work, but once dry the wood is stronger and will return to its original shape when in use, reducing set or string follow. Depending on the species, you can either season the timber whole or reduce it down to staves to season.

How do you start a bow and how long does it take to complete one?

'Self-bows' are made from one stave of wood, usually from local-sourced timber.

Modern-style double- or triple-laminate bows are made from thin strips of two or three different timbers glued together to maximise their inherent qualities.

A bow is a very personal instrument, so before I begin a commission I will ask the client questions about poundage, their draw length, their preferred brace height and the bow length, as well as the intended purpose of the bow.

If all the materials are to hand, it takes about two weeks



Above: Longbows

Below: Phil explains how to start work on a stave during one of his workshops in the woods of East Sussex.

to complete a bow, but with the trimmings it's probably more as I don't like to rush.

Where do you look for inspiration?

Humans have used bows and arrows to hunt animals (and each other) since time immemorial. One of the things I love about traditional bow-making and bushcraft is that I am using the same skills today to bend and bend wood as my Mesolithic ancestors did 6,000 years ago and probably up to 100,000 years ago. Hunting equipment evolved to match the prey available in particular areas, meaning that humans adapted according to the animal species they encountered, which I find fascinating.

I am captivated by the way in which bows and arrows evolved and am continually amazed by the beauty of the craftsmanship involved in creating a really beautiful longbow by hand from entirely natural materials. I've been inspired by other makers in the past and present who all have their own unique signature on their work.

There's a lot of wisdom in learning

old skills, and old hands have helped form that opinion: Pat Beach (master carver), John Rhyder (naturalist, author and colleague) and the late Chris Boyton (a special bowyer).

How many bows do you sell every year?

On average, I personally make 20 - 30 bows a year, but I also supervise the production of about 60 or so on my bow-making courses.

Tell us about your workspace and the tools you use

I have two workshops: one in the woods for courses using only traditional tools; and a modern workshop for producing traditional equipment.

My favourite tools above all else are my axe, knife, spoke shave, farrier's rasp and cabinet scraper. Any power tools are just for the early stages of making, as they're not suitable for the job. Machines often leave linear cuts, but bow-making isn't like modern carpentry. The best part of being a bow-maker is





Bow nocks made from buffalo horn or cow horn and deer antler, which can be difficult to work. The final result is stunning once they have been filed, sanded and finally polished.

that a machine can never replace you. They can't examine wood, assess suitability of the grain, they can't follow grain with a tool only go through it, or assess density, or replace unwanted features. There's really no way to replace the skill needed to make wood bend until it's 90% broken and return safely again and again over the long life of a well-made longbow.

What does the craft mean to you?

I want to understand the world we're in and pass on that knowledge. That's at the heart of everything I do, be it teaching bow-making, bushcraft or natural history.

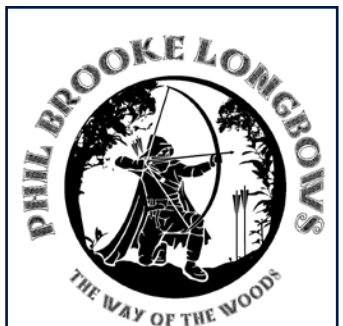
I run several bow-making courses. Probably the most popular is the three-day workshop, that offers a guided experience to bow-making. The client base is varied, ranging from target archers and historical re-enactors to ecologists and bushcrafters. Learning to make a bow seems like a natural progression of the 'prim tech' or hunting-gatherer culture of study familiar to those interested in bushcraft.

The really dedicated can undertake a year-long course, which studies the design and characteristics of different styles of bow. Students will be thoroughly immersed in the subject and will make between 8 and 20 bows over the course of the year depending on their other commitments, but a minimum of 8 is required to understand the principles of bow-making. This long-term course sets you on a further journey to becoming a bowyer.

What's your proudest achievement?

My transition from soldiering to my career now was not an easy step. I had to work very hard over several years to upskill. Even getting opportunities and enough work to make a living was a challenge. This isn't a normal career path and I'd say it's very difficult.

It's a passion and not many people achieve the goal of being a full-time woodsman, bushcraft instructor and bowyer, so I feel very lucky.



Phil Brooke Longbows

is a centre of outdoor-learning, based in beautiful private woodlands in the heart of the East Sussex countryside, offering courses and qualifications in traditional bow making, bushcraft, natural history and nature awareness. For more details of Phil's courses, visit the website chosenpathsbushcraft.co.uk

E-mail: phil@chosenpathsbushcraft.co.uk



The Woodlands Awards were launched five years ago as a means to celebrate and reward the hard work, expertise, artistry and innovation of the woodlands sector. The awards categories have changed a little over the years, and this year two new categories were introduced: Best Makers in Wood, and Best Woodland Toilets. They attracted a host of entries that match perfectly the intentions of the awards:



to give recognition to good work, and to inspire others to follow. Entries are judged on merit and there may be a number of winners in any of the categories; all winners are given equal recognition, and not ranked in any order, beyond alphabetical. This year there 48 winners in all, listed in brief below.

More details will be posted on the sponsor's website: woodlands.co.uk

SMALL WOODLAND WEBSITES

Andy Simpson for
blackbirdwoodindevon.blogspot.com

WOODLAND PHOTOGRAPHY

Chris McSherry
David Roberts
Peter Trimming

WOODLAND INSTAGRAMS

Caroline Bales for
[@wishwell_woods](https://www.instagram.com/wishwell_woods)

The Dorset Bushcraft Club for
[@dorset_bushcraft_club](https://www.instagram.com/dorset_bushcraft_club)

Suzie Grieve for
[@foragedfibres](https://www.instagram.com/foragedfibres)

MAKERS IN WOOD

Steve and Tamara Davey
Robin Elliott
Peter Thomas

WOODLAND TOOL RECOMMENDATIONS

Dave Budd: Handmade Tools
Fiskars WoodXpert Sappie XA22
Ben & Lois Orford: Knives

FOREST SCHOOLS

Down the Woods
Marston Vale Forest School
Muddy Feet
Nature of Learning Forest School
Priory Park Infant School, St Neots
Rain or Shine Forest Preschool
Wood Learn Forest School

WOODLAND COURSES

Fergus the Forager
Theresa Emmerich Kamper
John Rhyder / Woodcraft School
Wilderness Survival Skills
Woodland Makers

WOODLAND HUTS

Kellie James / Shambhala Designs

WOODLAND CONTRACTORS

Sam Evans
Justin James
Julian Miller
James Sutton
Kajedo Wanderer

WOODLAND TOILETS

Joanne Hedger
Neil Hopkins
Alan, Jen and Joseph Kelly
Lin Page
Small Family Wood
Guy Thornton

COMMUNITY WOODS

The White Wood, Huntly

WOODLAND BOOKS OF THE YEAR

A Brief History of Trees by Lawrence Illsley (Live Canon)

Ash by Edward Parker (Reaktion Books)

Entangled Life: How fungi make our worlds, change our minds and shape our futures by Merlin Sheldrake (The Bodley Head)

Sharp by Sean Hellman (Crafty Little Press)

We Are Nature: How to reconnect with the wild by Ray Mears (Ebury Press)

Wild Days: Outdoor play for young adventurers by Richard Irvine (GMC Publications)

Woodland Wild Flowers: through the seasons by Alan Waterman (Merlin Unwin Books)

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL WOODLAND ORGANISATIONS

Confor
Reforestation Scotland
UKFISA



Above: Beautiful pendants made by Steve and Tamara Davey in their Devon woodland.

Below: One of the mostly hotly contested categories is the award for woodland conveniences. Beautifully constructed, Neil Hopkins' loo is one of the finest throne rooms we've seen.

Previous page: Skipworth Common, York, photographed by Chris McSherry.



BOOK REVIEW

Writer **LAWRENCE ILLSLEY**, no stranger to a good story, is drawn into the world of woodland myth and legend.

The Treasury of Folklore: Woodlands and Forests, is a cornucopia of woodland mythology from around the globe, collected and researched by the duo behind the popular Folklore Thursday website, Dee Dee Chainey and Willow Winsham.

My first impressions of the book, pulling it from the envelope, were excellent. The greens and browns of the beautifully illustrated hardback cover felt special, and I immediately wanted to show it off, and place this book on my bookshelf. Not that we should judge a book by its cover, but for this type of collection, which is often bought to keep, design is important. The quality of the cover continues throughout the book with a series of stunning black and white illustrations by Joe McLaren, reminiscent of block printing, accompanying the text at every turn.

So, a positive visual impact, but what about the words? These, again, were a surprise to me. The word 'treasury' in the title led me to expect a collection of folk tales, to which I am partial, but I found much more than that. Folk tales do feature, but more as examples. This book is a study, a passionate overview of the variety and form of woodland folk tales found across the globe. It is this research and categorisation that sets the book apart from others of its kind.

The book is split into three parts and covers topics as diverse as the world tree, wolves, dryads and giants, as the authors expertly guide us through the global pantheon of woodland myth and folklore. The book is succinct, whilst being clearly well-researched, and provides a valuable introduction to a vast subject area. The reader can dip in or out or read it cover-to-cover. The style of writing is gentle and conversational, guiding the reader and imparting knowledge without it ever feeling like a lecture. And cleverly, having opened the door, the authors finish the book with a large reference section of further reading for anyone keen to expand their knowledge.

Whilst the book delves back into the history of folklore it also brings these stories and ideas up to date, placing this history into a modern context. The authors address

TREASURY OF FOLKLORE: WOODLANDS AND FORESTS

DEE DEE CHAINEY AND
WILLOW WINSHAM

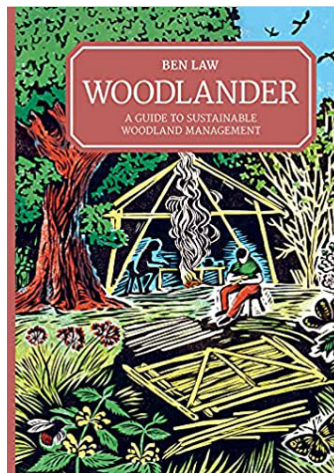
Batsford
Hardback
192 pages
£12.99
ISBN 978-1849946872

contemporary concerns such as cultural misappropriation and have kept all names in their original language, despite any difficulty this may pose to the reader; a decision I heartily support.

If I am honest my favourite moments are where the authors give us real examples of the tales they discuss, bridging the academic and the storytelling worlds. These stories bring to life the topics the authors are describing. Perhaps my only criticism would be a wish that there were even more folk tales in the book. But then, this would take away from the essence of the work and may muddy what is a remarkably concise and enjoyable read, an essential and permanent addition to any library about trees and a great place to begin an exploration of woodland folklore.



Woodland manager and forestry lecturer **MIKE JONES** enjoys Ben Law's latest book of practical advice.



WOODLANDER
A Guide to Sustainable
Woodland Management

BEN LAW

GMC Publications
Hardback
184 pages
RRP £25
ISBN 9781784945572

Previous books by Ben Law have focused on making things out of woodland produce, famously including his own house, and on the traditional tools needed for working with timber. His latest book, *Woodlander*, takes a step back and, in nine chapters, looks at the sustainable management of woodland, from establishment to harvesting and everything in between.

The book starts with a clear introduction to the types of woodland found in Britain today, from ancient enclosed woodland and wood pasture, to recent plantations and orchards. This is followed by practical advice on how to survey and assess a woodland site, including up-to-date information on tree diseases and an overview of the legal aspects of woodland ownership. The following three chapters cover the establishment, protection and management of woodland, including discussion of planting versus natural regeneration, native species versus non-native, and managing for biodiversity. Two chapters on the sale of timber and adding value to woodland through the sale of non-timber forest products are a valuable reminder of potential for income from woodlands.

“
Far more than an aspirational coffee table book, this is a practical guide to sustainable woodland management.
”

The importance of woodland for education, recreation and social benefit is covered next, and the book concludes with a very timely guide to buying woodland.

Clearly written, and drawing on Ben's 30 years of experience, this book is far more than an aspirational coffee table book, and is a practical guide to sustainable woodland management. Although primarily aimed at

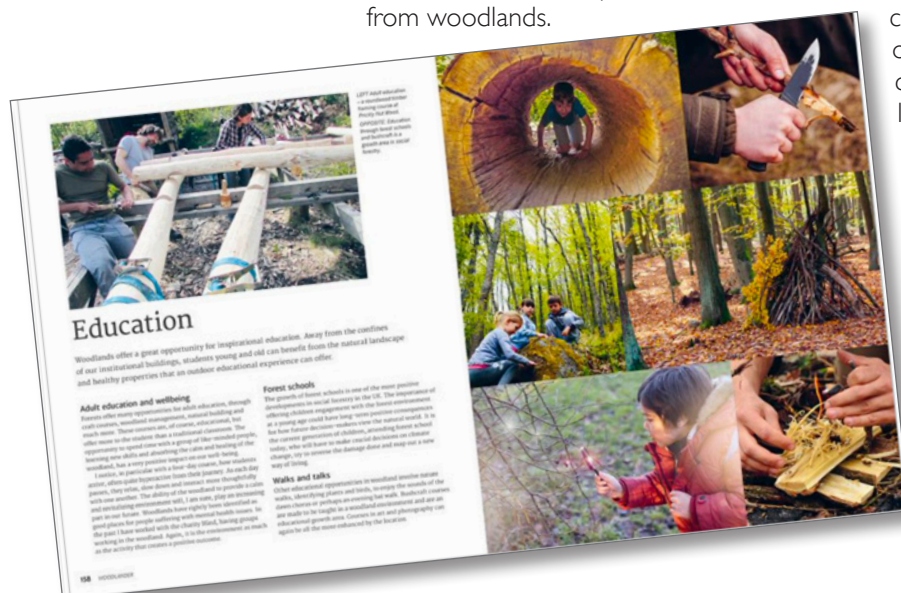
new woodland owners, of whom there are many, it should also act as a prompt to more established owners and an encouragement to more active management.

One of the strengths of the book is the inclusion of mini case studies, mainly drawn from Ben's own Prickly Nut Wood. The focus of the book is very much on lowland broadleaved woodland, including PAWS sites – conifer plantations don't get much of a mention, despite making up a large proportion of the country's

tree stock. Given the likely readership, this is probably justified, however. The overall message, that good sustainable woodland management can benefit wildlife, the environment and society, whilst producing an income, is well made and a constant theme throughout. The types of woodland covered by this book are too often written off as amenity woodlands, non-intervention conservation areas or merely part of the landscape, but Ben clearly shows how they can, and should be so much more than this.

It is to be hoped that the new breed of woodland owner, often with a few acres within a larger block of woodland, will read this book and heed his message and that we see previously under-managed woodlands being brought back into active management.

The book is beautifully illustrated, both with clear photographs, each one carefully chosen to illustrate some point in the text, and with illustrator Jane Bottomley's timeless pen and ink drawings.



The ash tree has played a critical part in civilisations across the world for millennia. It has been used in tool-making and the production of medicines, and has an important place in the folklore of many cultural traditions. **JOHN CAMERON** reviews an absorbing book.

The first impression of *Ash*, by Edward Parker, is the exceptional quality of its production. From very first handling, the extremely pleasing feel is immediately apparent, and this continues throughout, from the quality of the printed page to the many and varied, super-glossy photographs and drawings. It's a cliché about 'books and covers', but in this instance the reader really will not be disappointed. It is a joy to just hold the book! The fact that it is also an easy and absorbing read is a plus.

Edward Parker is director of the Springhead Trust in Dorset, and the author of several tree-related books. This is one of several botanical writings in a series by Reaktion Books. *Ash* brings together a broad and varied perspective of this most prolific of trees, with abundant stories, fascinating facts and scientific research into *fraxinus* from around the globe.

The author takes the reader on a journey through history, beginning with the first fossils of the species dated at over 35 million years old, through to more recent periods in human history when the ash started to be valued and utilised by varied civilisations. The utility of ash can be traced right through to the 21st century.

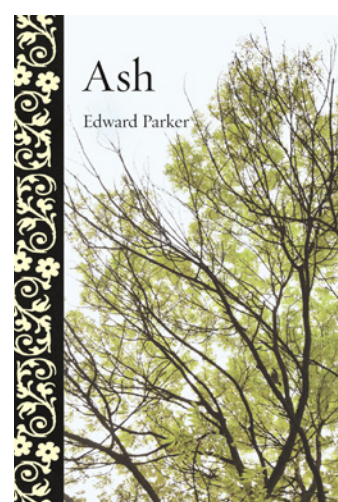
Having begun its evolutionary journey in North America, ash species took advantage of various geological events that allowed the trees to strike out into Asia and beyond. Considering the far-reaching extent of ash, folklore and mythical stories abound across its range. Celtic belief held strong that the ash was a conduit for good and bad powers, probably as the ash attracts more lightning strikes than other species. This is largely due to the general prevalence of tap roots penetrating deep into the water table and therefore ensuring that ash trees are well grounded. In North America, the Wabanaki

believe that humans were first created from the black ash, while in Scandinavia, Norse mythology and tradition places the ash tree at the very heart of the celestial organisation.

Probably the main reason for the enduring interest in ash is its pure usefulness as an abundant woody material, as well as its medicinal uses. History chronicles the use of ash in Egyptian chariots, Greek weaponry and the chassis of carts, motor vehicles and aircraft. The steaming of ash, to bend and contort it, illustrates another prized quality of the timber. European warfare capitalised on the straight and strong grain of the ash for the production of both spears and arrows, but happily these qualities have also been optimised in the design and manufacture of hand tools. These hand tools have then been utilised in the further working and refinement of other timber products.

Medicinally, the ash has had a noted history for over 2,000 years: in ancient times Hippocrates and Pliny the Elder both recorded its use. More recent is its use in Chinese medicine, as well across North America, from treating snake bites to its use as an anticoagulant. Very recent research is pointing the way toward the treatment of complex conditions such as Parkinson's Disease and Alzheimer's.

For all of the success of ash over millions of years, it is now facing new challenges, with threats such as ash die back and emerald ash borer beetle. Perhaps human concepts of time give added tragedy to the threats posed to one of our most common landscape tree species. Time will ultimately tell whether the enduring ash can evolve, adapt, survive, and continue its immeasurable contribution to Planet Earth for another 35 million years.



ASH

EDWARD PARKER

Reaktion
Hardback
216 pages
RRP £16
ISBN 9781789143560

ANTHONY MASON dips into an enjoyable pocket-sized encyclopedia of trees and tree-lore. It's a handy guide, and as a bonus, is printed on recycled, wood-free paper

It may come as a surprise to find something called a '-pedia' is actually a short, small-format book – more like a stocking-filler than an encyclopaedia. Also, the subtitle 'A Brief Compendium of Arboreal Lore' would surely make readers – at least UK ones – think of traditional perceptions of trees: myth, old practices and ideas, 'folklore' etc.

In fact, **Treepedia** is more like a rather random selection of moderate-length encyclopaedia entries about trees, tree terminology, and leaders and activists in the field. And largely American ones at that.

That said, it is a neat little book, enlivened by occasional black-and-white drawings. Joan Maloof is a professor of biology and environmental studies at Salisbury University, Maryland, and an experienced 'tree-writer', author of such works as *Teaching the Trees: Lessons from the Forest* and *Among the Ancients: Adventures in the Eastern Old-Growth Forests*. She has a clear, approachable style and an engaging sense of curiosity.

British readers may find the American orientation a bit relentless. The first four

entries, for example, are Adirondacks; American Chestnut; Appleseed, Johnny (a US historical character); and Arbor Day. The brief biographies are almost all about Americans. And the tree selection leans heavily towards the Americas. In among these, however, are a fair number of entries from around the world: Baobab; the old-growth Białowieża Forest of Poland/Belarus; Wangari Maathai, who started the Green Belt Movement in Africa... Yes, as mentioned, it is a rather random and personal selection.

But that is a large part of *Treepedia*'s charm, and dipping into it brings plenty of rewards. The curious chance-creation of the wretched Leyland cypress, for instance, promoted by British nurserymen from 1926 with literally fatal consequences. The astonishing age of some baobab trees, one reaching 2,450 years. How leaf scars can be used for tree identification. Tupelo honey, from the nectar of black gum trees.

Isn't that just the kind of thing you want from a stocking filler?



TREEPEDIA
A Brief Compendium of
Arboreal Lore

JOAN MALOOF

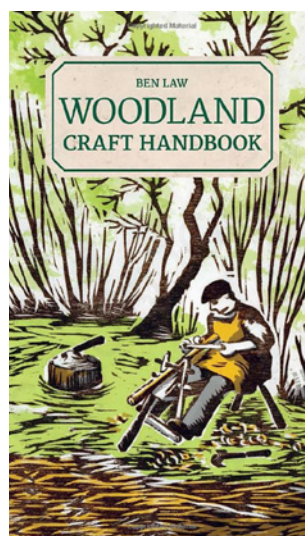
Princeton University Press
Hardback
152 pages
RRP £9.99
ISBN 9780691208756

NEW AND NOTED

'Wood, a material from trees, grown by the energy of the sun, is the beginning of all crafts and trades.'

The *Woodland Craft Handbook* is another gem from Ben Law, who explores the many crafts that are rooted in material gathered from woods and forests. From hurdles, to spoons via basketmaking and kindling, this small book packs in an amazing amount of detail, covering the best species to select and exactly how to go about producing useful items for the home or outdoor spaces.

Designed to be carried with you into the woods, this book will help enthusiasts learn about the different characteristics of each type of wood, and with 15 step-by-step practical projects, it enables readers to produce simple rustic items by hand. Illustrated throughout with black and white line drawings and practical photographic guides, it would make an excellent present for anyone keen to embark on green wood projects.



**WOODLAND CRAFT
HANDBOOK**

BEN LAW

GMC Publications
Hardback
168 pages
RRP £12.99
ISBN 9781784946159

Live Your Bucket List – **JULIA GOODFELLOW-SMITH** explains how to realise your goals, including owning a woodland.

Living Woods regular Julia Goodfellow-Smith has provided a wonderful commentary on her activities in her woodland in the Malvern Hills as she and her husband learnt how to manage it. She has branched out and written a self-help book designed to guide readers towards their life goals. She explains how her woodland proved to be a valuable source of inspiration.

Live Your Bucket List explains how to break down goals into achievable plans which will enable you to fulfil your dreams, whatever they may be.

What prompted you to write a self-help book?

As I walked the South West Coast Path last year, I kept being reminded of lessons I had learnt during my life – about the value of planning, the power of self-talk and how interacting with people can boost your day, to name just three. I had planned to write a book on my return, but had not dreamt that it would be about self-help, but these were the strongest messages arising from my journey. I felt that writing a book on the subject would be a really positive way to help other people to live their bucket lists, as I have been living mine.

It's a really interesting and personal story and your woodland plays a valuable supporting role. Did owning your own woodland help you achieve your goal?

One of the many things that attracted Mike and me to each other was our shared love of woodlands – and our desire to own one someday. It was one of the most stretching goals we have had – and with

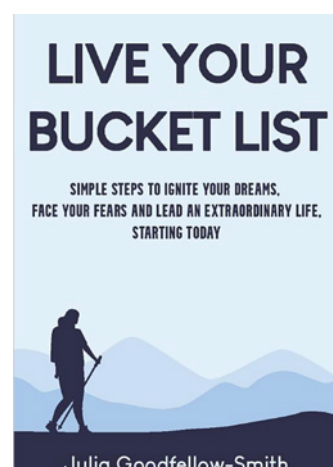
a bit of determination and careful planning, we achieved it! Once you start achieving some of your life's goals, others don't seem so impossible. So yes, I guess that achieving such a big life goal with the woodland did give me more confidence to achieve some of my other goals.

What advice would you give to those who have owning a woodland at the top of their bucket list?

Don't ever give up – and don't assume that you can't afford it. We had been looking for a woodland for three or four years before we found Garland Wood. We had already downsized our house to reduce our outgoings and sometimes rented out our spare room to increase our income. Those actions allowed us to save well, which meant that we could increase our budget. And our timing was perfect – Garland Wood came on to the market just as we had enough to buy it, and it is only 15 miles from home.

As a woodland owner, do you have a bucket list for your wood?

We would like to erect a more solid shelter – our canvas bodgers' shelter takes a lot of maintenance. In terms of the trees themselves, we have had contractors in to do a major thinning exercise, and now we would like to continue with the management plan ourselves, milling timber for our use and to feed into the local market.



LIVE YOUR BUCKET LIST
Simple Steps to Ignite Your Dreams, Face Your Fears and Lead an Extraordinary Life, Starting Today

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Popular additions to Christmas stockings in the past and still a festive snack, walnuts are also steeped in symbolism. **CLARE GIBSON** explores the legends behind *Juglans regia* and its fruit.

Like most nut-bearing trees, the walnut offers two distinct paths along which to explore its symbolic associations: one linked with the tree itself – *Juglans regia* – and the other with its fruits, in this case, walnuts. For most of us, I suspect, the first thing that springs to mind when considering the latter’s symbolism is winter, by which time the fleshy green husk has rotted away, exposing the shell encasing the edible kernel within.

Walnuts have long been a symbol of fertility and abundance, proof of the parent tree’s fecundity, as well as being providers of sustenance during the autumn and winter, seasons when nutrient-rich foods were once hard to come by. The walnut tree’s genus name, *Juglans*, is derived from the Latin contraction of the name of the Roman god, Jupiter, ‘Ju’, or ‘Ju’, combined with *glans*, meaning ‘acorn’ or ‘nut’, ‘Juniper’s nut’ being said to recall the mythical days when the supreme Roman deity feasted on walnuts, while humans made do with acorns. The word ‘walnut’ comes from the Old English, meaning ‘foreign nut’, probably referring to its introduction to north-western Europe by the Romans.

As fertility symbols, walnuts often featured at weddings in ancient Greece and Rome, the hope being that they would ensure that the newly-weds’ union would produce numerous children. One reason for the walnut’s additional association with love can be traced back to Greek mythology, which tells of Carya, the daughter of Dion, a king of Laconia, who, along with her two sisters, was given the gift of divination by Apollo, on condition that she never betrayed a divinity. When Dionysus, the god of wine and fruitfulness, fell in love with Carya, her sisters conspired to keep him away from her, thus breaking the divine-betrayal condition and causing them to be turned into stones and Carya, on her death, into a nut, or walnut, tree. Carya’s name was latter combined with that of Artemis, the Greek moon goddess, Artemis Caryatis being worshipped in the Laconian town of Caryai. (The priestesses of Carya were known as the caryatidai, and their representations were carved from walnut wood to serve as columns holding up the temple of Artemis

Caryatis, such caryatids later being sculpted in stone to support buildings’ entablatures, most famously at the Acropolis in Athens.)

The walnut’s appearance has also influenced the symbolism ascribed to it through its kernel’s two lobes and wrinkled appearance, giving it a resemblance to the human brain, with its shell being equated with the skull. According to the ancient doctrine of signatures, by which a plant’s apparent similarity to a body part signals its supposed ability to heal ailments afflicting that part, eating walnuts is beneficial to the brain’s health.

Because the best bit of the walnut, the edible kernel, is protected within a hard shell, it can additionally symbolise concealed wisdom.

St Augustine ascribed Christian symbolism to the walnut, asserting that the husk represents Christ’s flesh; its shell, the cross on which he was crucified; and the kernel, his divine nature. When the walnut makes an appearance in Christian art, it usually signifies this, or else the Holy Trinity, again on account of its three parts.

As for the symbolism of the walnut tree, its lifespan of over a hundred years has caused it to represent longevity,

along with endurance in the face of difficulty. A more tenuous symbolic association with youthfulness derives from the dark dye obtained from walnut husks that was traditionally used to dye grey hair. The tree also symbolises selfishness because no other plant thrives beneath it, due to allelopathy, or the walnut’s secretion of toxic chemicals into the surrounding soil, thereby inhibiting the growth of any other vegetation. Maybe this also explains a folk belief that witches frequent walnut trees. The most notorious of such trees was one that stood on the banks of the Sabato River in the Italian town of Benevento, which was said to shelter Satan and covens of witches beneath its branches. St Barbatus, Benevento’s bishop, had the tree cut down during the 7th century and the Church of Santa Maria in Voto erected in its place; history does not record, however, whether walnut wood was used in its construction.





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