

Knighton Community Woodlands Group

Update

Welcome to the latest Woodlanders' Update.

We have news of regular and new activities, a wildlife highlight, training opportunities and new sources of woodland information and learning. We hope you will find this Update interesting and be inspired to get involved! As always, please send us your thoughts, news and comments – our contact details are at the end of the newsletter.

Best wishes

The Woodlanders Team, 8th June 2021

Calling budding carpenters

We start this issue with a call for help. Gary, who normally leads a lot of our task days, has had to take a step back for health reasons so we need volunteers to lead on a few construction projects! Firstly, we have a 'new' shed to assemble but before we can do that it needs a wooden base/floor made for it. Secondly, we need to construct a removable cover for our new charcoal retort. Lastly, we need to make lidded crates, out of pallets, to season small-diameter timber for charcoal making. A full briefing, including pencil sketches, will be provided as will volunteer helpers! If you are able to take a lead on any of these projects, please [contact us](#).



Charcoal Making

Our Shropshire Hills AONB Trust funded charcoal retort and training are now booked to be delivered in July, to the Woodlander volunteers who will be leading on this new venture.

Our trainer for the day, James, has suggested that it would be really useful to get a set of scales like his – pictured here – with the nice big scoop for weighing charcoal into bags. We were wondering if any of our readers might know where we might get a set, or know the correct name for this type of balance so we can search online? We do have a small budget for ancillary equipment. If you can help, please drop an email to us at woodland@tveg.org.uk



If you go down to the woods today...

At our task day on 27th May we were delighted to find this perfect little nest, expertly constructed within a coil of rope in the shed lean-to. We think that it was made by a member of the tit family, perhaps a long-tailed tit, but there was no sign of activity on that day.

However, we did receive an email from woodlander Steve this week: "When I arrived at the shed there were two nestlings standing on the lip of the nest who fledged immediately - no doubt for fear of me! Two more popped up and fledged too as I watched for a couple of minutes and there were at least two more hunkered down in the nest. When I came back half an hour later it was entirely empty and you could catch glimpses of the youngsters high in nearby trees and hear them cheeping for food.



They flew off so quickly that I only caught glimpses, but I'm pretty sure they were wrens, and there was an adult wren hanging out nearby on my return too. I was surprised as the nest doesn't look very 'wrenny' but have since read that wrens can adopt other nests and other strange sites for brooding. I wonder if the nest was originally made by long tailed tits as per our colleague's suggestion, and later adopted by wrens?"

Hedgelaying

We received a link from one of our volunteers, Sue, to an excellent video: "[Hedging \(1942\) Ministry of Information for the Ministry of Agriculture](#)". From the film we can see that hedgelaying remains largely unchanged since then, but we will have to have a word with Chris, our trainer, about whether it is necessary or optional to smoke a pipe throughout...

Covid restrictions allowing, we hope to run our hedgelaying course again this autumn – pictured is our last course. Two of our volunteers, Mark and Clare, have kindly provided the venue for our courses to date. However, they have now run out of hedge to lay. If you would like to host a course and have a hedge suitable for laying (we can advise on suitability) then [please get in touch](#). Our training venue requirements are a suitable hedge, parking for 5 or 6 vehicles and access to a toilet – we provide everything else.



Biodiversity Information Service (BIS) Training

BIS have free online training events and talks that may be of interest to you. The 'Moth Trapping for Beginners' course would be an excellent way for anyone who is interested in becoming a moth surveyor for the Woodlanders to spend an evening: as reported in the last *Update*, we have received funding for moth survey training and equipment from Natural Resources Wales, to take place in 2022. More information on the BIS Courses is available [here](#).



BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION SERVICE
FOR POWYS AND BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK
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POWYS A PHARC CENEDLAETHOL BANNAU BRYCHEINIOG

Wednesday 9th June 2021 7:30pm to 9pm. **Burial Grounds as Biodiversity Hotspots Across Wales**, an informative talk over zoom. Burial grounds can be surprisingly rich in biodiversity, supporting a fantastic array of different species ranging from tiny lichens to ancient yew trees.

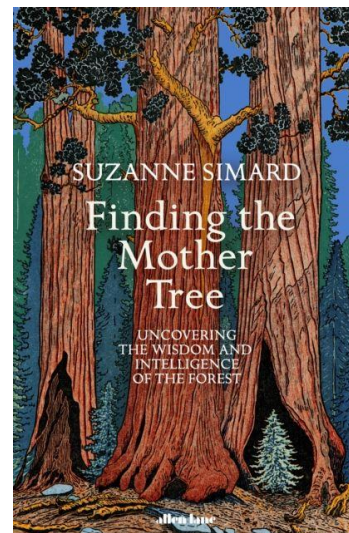
Wednesday 7th July 2021 7:30pm to 9pm. **Moth Trapping for Beginners**, an informative talk over zoom. County Recorder Norman Lowe will show you how to get into moth trapping, the equipment you need and how to identify some of the easier, more common moths you are likely to attract. You'll also learn about some of the iconic moths that make their home within Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park.

Finding the Mother Tree: Uncovering the Wisdom and Intelligence of the Forest by Suzanne Simard

A new book that may interest you, description from [The Guardian Review](#):

“In *Finding the Mother Tree*, Suzanne Simard demonstrates how storytelling can ignite something science alone cannot. Her research in underground tree communication through a “wood wide web” of mycorrhizal fungi will be familiar to readers of Peter Wohlleben’s *The Hidden Life of Trees* and Robert Macfarlane’s *Underland*, while one of the characters in Richard Powers’ *The Overstory* was heavily inspired by Simard’s life and work in forest ecology.

The author takes us through her career in the forests of North America, working on plantations to identify links between crop yields, herbicide use and species diversity. In carrying out these initial studies, she goes on to discover that trees communicate underground through a complex web of fungi, and at the centre of this web, an individual known as the “mother tree” helps to coordinate a powerful network that heals, feeds and sustains the other members of the forest.”



Available from Powys and Herefordshire library services, but not Shropshire’s, and independent bookshops.

Living Woods Magazine

The Spring 2021 issue of Living Woods Magazine is now available [here](#), with articles on planning and building, trug making, bees in woodlands and a chainsaw review.

The magazine is for anyone interested in trees, woodlands and timber. So, whether you dream of owning your own woodland, want to learn new and exciting woodland skills and activities or simply want to enjoy the therapy of quiet, green woodworking, Living Woods Magazine will show you the way. It is free to read and download.



We are pleased to receive feedback in response to **Update** and your thoughts and comments on anything else. Please email woodland@tveg.org.uk, or get in touch via our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts. For more information about the Woodlanders, please visit our webpage: <http://tveg.org.uk/wordpress/woodland-project>

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