

Tree Warden & Conservation Volunteer Newsletter



SPRING '09

Planting New Hedges & Trees? Protecting Archaeology and Landscape Character



Photo courtesy of www.flickr.com/photos/leicaview/801563846

For those thinking of planting new woodlands & hedgerows, Suffolk County Council have prepared new guidance to highlight the areas in which, without careful planning and thought, planting schemes can come into conflict with the protection and maintenance of historic landscape features, archaeological resources and the maintenance of local landscape distinctiveness.

Landscape Character

The location scale and style of woodland planting is a very important part of the local distinctiveness of landscapes. Inappropriate planting can erode this local sense of place and undermine the local historic character of the landscape. Furthermore the inappropriate siting of the planting of new woodland may have a negative effect on important views of local landmarks or the setting of distinctive or designed landscape features. Therefore planting proposals should be mindful of four key issues:

1. Is the woodland in the right location for the wider landscape?
2. Is the scale and shape of the proposed woodland in keeping with that of other local woodlands?
3. Is the woodland in a location that will enhance the local landscape or will it compromise the setting or views of churches other listed buildings or villages?

4. Is the planting of woodland going to obscure or degrade historic landscape features?

Archaeology

Planting trees on archaeological sites destroys valuable historical materials, therefore important information will be lost to future generations. Any planting proposals should be mindful of

- Planting proposals next to existing Ancient Woodland should reflect the historical extent and form of the woodland wherever possible.
- Planting proposals next to buried archaeology may need to have an unplanted buffer zone; this can usually be accommodated within the woodland design.
- Planting proposals that could damage archaeological features will not receive funding from the Forestry Commission's (FC) England Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS).
- It may still be possible to plant sites such as these if the design of the planting can be modified to accommodate the archaeological materials.

To help answer these questions and inform your thinking about your community woodland scheme

Contact: Phil Watson, Landscape Development Officer on **01473 264777** or

phil.watson@et.suffolkcc.gov.uk



Start your Own Tree Nursery

When times are tough and purse strings are tight, innovation is required even in the field of horticulture (excuse the pun!)

Funding for the Parish Tree Scheme is not guaranteed over the next few years so have you considered the possibility of creating a tree nursery to provide an ongoing supply of saplings for your parish? Seeds can be collected from good local specimen trees or ancient hedges so you know you are planting native and local varieties.

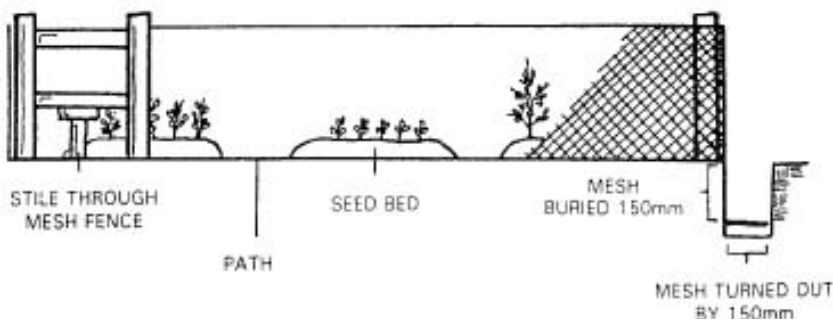
Tree nurseries should be located in a sheltered sunny spot with good soil. Parish land, the corner of a big garden, an old allotment site or a school field could be considered for a site.

A tree nursery of about 9 sq.m will hold around 200 saplings which will be ready to plant out after 2 years. The materials for a tree nursery are quite simple. One of the best methods is to make a raised bed with boards or old sleepers (4 oak sleepers cost about £100). Ideally create a bed with a geo membrane floor or weed control fabric or even some old carpet – this prevents the tree roots from growing too deep and means when the trees are transplanted they are not damaged (Geo –membrane are about £10) . You can even plant trees in plant pots but this requires a commitment to watering in the summer.



It is worth placing rabbit netting around the nursery as otherwise they can cause havoc- rabbit netting @ £40 a roll, but can be bought in metre lengths.

SIDE VIEW OF NURSERY SHOWING MESH FENCE



Growing trees from seeds is an interesting task with tree species requiring different techniques to get them to germinate. The Tree Council and the Woodland trust have lots of interesting articles on this topic.

Creating and planting a tree nursery is an excellent job for volunteers or school groups. Could your Parish support a community tree nursery, involving the local parishioners and school children in the collection and

planting of the seeds to give them real ownership of the trees in their parish. We are holding a training event on 'Creating a Tree Nursery' in the Autumn. See the Events 2009 insert If you are interested in this event or have a small piece of land that could be used for a shared parish nursery, please contact Sam Mortlock on 01394 444557 or email sam.mortlock@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Butterfly Surveyors needed



Butterfly Conservation (BC) is launching a new nationwide butterfly recording scheme for 2009. The survey arose out of concern that the long-standing Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (BMS) covered nature reserves, SSSIs and special habitats rather well, but ignored the "boring bits". As a result, BMS presented an image that was well above average for the country as a whole.

The new scheme will survey a random sample of squares, to fairly sample butterflies of the wider countryside, rather than the species of special habitats. Over the past 3 years, the survey methods have been trialled in a way that establishes its scientific and statistical credentials. A pilot scheme was run in 2007 and extended to selected counties (including Norfolk) in 2008. The results were a success, and it has been decided to launch to all counties in time for the 2009 season.

The new scheme does not replace existing surveys. It borrows some transect methodology, but requires only 2 or 3 walks per year, as distinct to the heavy commitment of 26 weeks required by the established BMS. For this reason, it may well appeal to some existing recorders who are keen to do more, but not ready to tackle a full transect. The Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey is being mounted in collaboration with the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO),

using their established bird survey arrangements, including on-line recording as the primary method (although surveyors without internet are also welcome, and may send their returns by post). A large number of BTO bird surveyors have already agreed to record butterflies in their existing squares, which gets us off to an excellent start.

To find out more, visit <http://www.ukbms.org/wcbs.htm>



Pond Conservation

Pond Conservation is the national charity dedicated to creating and protecting ponds and the wildlife they support. They are currently seeking funding for a nationwide scheme that your Parish could be part of.

The Million Ponds Project will create an extensive network of new ponds across the UK. Ultimately the aim is to reverse a century of pond loss, ensuring that once again the UK has over one million countryside ponds.

Phase 1 of the Million Ponds Project runs from 2008 to 2012 and aims to create the first 5,000 clean water ponds in England and Wales. Around a quarter of the ponds will be targeted to support some of the 80 or so pond species that are national priority for conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

Everybody can join in and contribute to the Million Ponds Project: To register any ponds you've created or if you have any enquiries about the Million Ponds Project or any other aspect of the conservation of ponds please get in touch via www.pondconservation.org.uk

Plotting Suffolk's Orchards. Volunteer's needed.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: A young nutmeg pippin apple begins its second season in a Suffolk orchard

Volunteers are needed to survey villages for the remnants of traditional orchards. Suffolk County Council has set up a project to survey and map Suffolk's old orchards. This project has been organized by Paul Reid, a trained botanist, Phil Watson of Suffolk County Council and Gen Broad Suffolk Biodiversity Officer. A map exists of about 6,000 traditional orchards with a few mapped in the coastal 'Sandlings' and we want to know whether they are still in existence and the variety of the fruit. Traditional orchards, including species such as apple, pear,

plum, cherry and nut trees are microcosms of natural habitat, attracting wildlife such as small mammals, birds, mosses and lichens. Dead and diseased wood can support insects, beetles and bats. Over 1,800 species of plant, fungi and animal have been found in these important habitats. Fruit trees can take on the characteristics of 'ancient' trees within 50 years, the equivalent to hundreds of year's growth by trees such as Oak.

If you are interested in helping with this important survey I will organize a training event to learn about the traditional varieties of fruit trees and how to survey them.

If interested please contact Sam Mortlock at Suffolk Coastal D.C. 01394 444557 or email sam.mortlock@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Coppices & Constables

Our 2 autumn events were well received and covered the topic of trees as part of the landscape and how they can inspire, in this case John Constable and how they often need maintenance to create conditions for them to grow to their maximum potential.

In **October** a group of us met at **Dedham** to look at the wonderful landscape of the Dedham Vale and how it inspired one of our greatest painters. There was debate about how landscapes change and evolve through natural phenomena (Dutch Elm Disease), planting trends and tree management for timber (willow pollarding and poplars) and manmade influences (wirescapes, masts and buildings). How far do we go to conserve landscapes of the past? The Dedham Vale AONB team are trying to recreate some of Constable's landscapes and we witnessed one section of the flood plain where wires had been put under- ground. There was general acceptance though we have to accept that landscapes do change. We as Tree Wardens and Conservation Volunteers do that with every tree or hedge we plant and every



gorse or birch we remove from heathland. Similarly, our **November** event at **Debenham** showed ways to influence the landscape through tree management. Trees can be left to form naturally or there are circumstances where we want to manage trees to grow into a magnificent standard by selective thinning and pruning or to provide a regular timber supply through coppicing or pollarding. This latter technique prolongs the life of a tree beyond its natural years and can often be of more benefit to wildlife. The photo above shows the formative pruning of a wild cherry, by SCDC's Arb. Officer Martin Minta, to promote better form.



Training Events 2009



Below is a list of this year's training events for all Tree Wardens and Conservation Volunteers. The idea as ever is to bring all of you together do some leaning, sharing of experiences, networking and not forgetting enjoying oneself. We hope you will be able to attend at least 1 event. All events have limited places and will be on a first come, first serve basis, so please return your reply slip as soon as possible to guarantee a place. We will then contact you to confirm your place and inform you of any further details.

Sat. May 9th & 16th : Hedgerow Survey Training

At Lackford Lake Reserve and Thornham Field Study Centre. Contact Guy Ackers, Suffolk Hedgerow Survey Chairman, for more details. 01394 383264

Fri. May 29th @ 2pm: A walk in Captain's Wood, Sudbourne

Meet in School Rd, Sudbourne for a 2pm start. Warden Mick Wright will then guide us on a walk around this ancient wood pasture to look at its trees, flora, fauna and management. The wood should be alive with the sound of spring birds and awash with spring flowers.

Sun. June 7th. 10 til 1. 'Wild About Your Garden', Melton

Please come along to our public event that we are holding at Melton Riverside Picnic Site to encourage people to become wildlife friendly gardeners. There will be bird box building, insect homes, composting demos, quizzes, etc. If you would like to volunteer your help or have a great idea you would love to share or demonstrate on the day, please get in touch.

Thurs. June 11th @7.30pm til 10ish: Westleton's heath & nightjars

Meet at Westleton Heath Natural England car park where we will be firstly guided on a walk around Westleton heath to see heathland management and forest reversion work being carried out. Then at dusk, there will be a chance to see and hear the eerie, but wonderful nightjar. This walk is being led by Mel Kemp, RSPB Minsmere Warden.

Sep/Oct: East Anglian Tree Wardens Forum

To be held in Tendring District, Essex. No other details at present.

Sat. Oct 10th 10 til 4: Creating your own Tree Nursery

Meet at SWT Foxburrow Farm, Melton where Anne Raymond, local horticulturalist will show us techniques for propagating seeds and cuttings from nature to grow on for planting. She will also show us the fundamentals of creating your own tree nursery, however big or small. Anne has her own web site. www.gardenandchicken.co.uk

Sat. Nov 15th 10 til 1: Aftercare of Young Trees.

Following on from last year's successful event, we are holding a practical, hands-on morning at The Grove, Felixstowe to look at pruning and other aftercare techniques of newly planted trees. In this case an acre of land was planted with a mixed bag of species approximately 25 years ago. The trees are in need of thinning, pruning and coppicing to create better trees, a varied age structure and get some light onto the woodland floor to create greater diversity. Come and learn something and be of great use at the same time.



Suffolk Coastal District Council Conservation Volunteers & Tree Wardens Training Events 2009 RSVP slip

I/we would like to attend the following events (please tick your choices)

Fri. May 29th : A Walk in Captain's Wood , Snape

Thurs. June 11th: Westleton's heathland and nightjars

Sat. Oct 10th: Create Your Own Tree Nursery

Sat. Nov 15th: Aftercare of young trees

Name(s)

Address.....

I am/we are representing

Contact phone number

e-mail address.....

Please return this slip to the address listed below ASAP to guarantee you place

Sam Mortlock
Greenspace Assistant
Community & Economic Services
Suffolk Coastal District Council
Melton Hill
Woodbridge
Suffolk
IP12 1AU

or e-mail your details in a similar format to sam.mortlock@suffolcoastal.gov.uk

For further information about any of the events, contact Sam on the above e-mail or by phone: **01394 444557**