



On 29th July, we had **8,478** trees in our database and **13,244** photographs

Welcome to the 50th issue of Tree Watch.

This lovely ancient oak, MRN **9187**, shows many veteran features. It's one of the trees recorded this year in Wokingham Town's Fox Hill Woods. If it's always been in woodland, with a girth of 4.6m at 1.5m, it could be 650 years old; meaning it germinated in the time of Edward III, John of Gaunt and the Hundred Years War. Although it's recorded as declining, we all hope it and Fox Hill Woods survive for many more decades.

You'll notice the Reading Tree Warden Network (RTWN) features quite a lot in this issue. They really are a very active group, involved in tree planting, watering and other tree maintenance tasks. In spite of Covid restrictions, they've managed to hold monthly events, many under the 'rule-of-six'.

I hope you are following up some of the references on page 14. This time, there's some useful information about hedges as well as a variety of other features.

Don't forget our Zoom meeting on 8th September. It promises to be both interesting and hopefully useful to WBC.

The next issue of Tree Watch will be November 2021 and the copy deadline is 31st October. If you have any comments or responses to anything in this issue or contributions for future issues, please send them to: Elaine Butler - datamanager@wdvta.org.uk



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Events - Sept-Dec 2021

❖ **Wednesday 8th September 2021 - 19:30** - a Zoom talk "*Treescaping in Oxfordshire and Berkshire*" - identifying potential planting sites for trees, without compromising their current land use or biodiversity. The Zoom link will be sent a week before the talk.

Non-WDVTa events:

❖ **TVERC Autumn Conference** - Fri 15th & Sat 16th October 10:00-12:45 - on-line - free, but you must register.

❖ RTWN will have their usual public lecture in November - details tbc

For up-to-date information - see the events page on our website - wdvta.org.uk/events.php

TREE WATCHING FROM MY CHAIR

Alison Griffin

I hope you are all enjoying the return to more normal activities with the relaxation of Covid restrictions. The calendar tells me it is August, but the month started with unseasonal morning mists, cooler temperatures, showers, rain and winds. At least that has changed and I am back in short sleeves again. I hope we have a warm spell in September.



Our trees seem to have mostly recovered from the late and disrupted spring but in the Forum meeting in early July we heard of a few issues with pests and diseases. Stephen Loyd reported that the trees planted in Stanlake Meadow last winter were all attacked by oak sawfly, which rapidly defoliated most of the saplings of all species. The caterpillars were removed and the trees have grown new leaves. It is suspected that the insects came from nearby mature trees and discussions



are on-going to determine if further interventions are needed to prevent a similar issue next year.

The photo (left) was taken by Rebecca Howard, the project planning coordinator, who, with a team of volunteers, removed the caterpillars by hand for around 2 weeks at the end of May when they were at their peak.



Dave Kenny reported that the unusual spring had caused a problem with local plane trees where the early shoots and buds died back. This is a symptom of a fungal disease called *Plane anthracnose*. London plane trees can be particularly affected, but the oriental plane is more resilient. I had spotted what I had assumed was frost damage to early shoots on the London plane trees in the Waitrose car park in Wokingham, with many of the trees having multiple twigs with up to 30cm of new growth completely dead. The nearby old oriental plane was unaffected. By the end of July the trees looked very healthy and very few dead twigs and leaves remained as you can see (photo right).



More local ash trees are succumbing to ash die back and we are hearing about many that are being felled or planned to be felled, particularly where they may be a safety risk to roads, pedestrians or property. We hope that the genetic diversity of the population along with the reports that some ash trees appear unaffected will mean that we don't lose all the local ash trees.



In the last few weeks several people have reported bad cases of mildew on local oak trees including some of the Jubilee trees, such as #33 near the Activity Centre in Dinton pastures, which Dennis Bryant photographed this month (left). I recall that I saw a lot of mildew especially on younger oak trees several years ago. Maybe the damper spring has made

this year a bad one. In looking for articles on the topic, I came across an **interesting** one written by David Lonsdale in 2016.

Yeldall Manor Wargrave

When we wrote the Anniversary Report in 2017, I discovered that we have four avenues of Wellingtonia trees in the borough and that one of them is at Yeldall Manor in Wargrave. The trees in the manor grounds including the avenue have been surveyed and recorded, but most had no photographs. Before the survey was closed, I thought this should be rectified and got permission to visit the manor. The estate manager very kindly agreed to show me some of the many trees close to the manor house on what turned out to be a very wet day. As we walked along one path his comment was "somewhere in there is a monkey puzzle tree" pointing into an area of woodland with deep undergrowth with several more Wellingtonia trees along its edge.

A few days later and luckily in drier conditions I returned to take photographs of the Wellingtonia avenue and of as many of the other recorded trees as I could find. Some of the recorded trees were within the overgrown area of woodland which I managed to get into. While taking photographs of four Wellingtonias inside the wood, I spotted another large tree about 30' away. That was yet another Wellingtonia which hadn't been recorded. Yes, the woodland is dense enough that you could miss seeing a Wellingtonia! Whilst recording that new tree, I spotted a clearing about 30' further on and there was the monkey puzzle. Sadly at 2.26m girth it isn't quite big enough for our main database; but it will be recorded and mapped as an unusual species. It also had this burr up the trunk with its own small monkey puzzle epicormic growths.



These photos and new records will be submitted soon.

On the [website](#) for the manor it gives a little of its history. Yeldall Manor was built in Victorian times, and completed in 1894 as an impressive private residence. The grounds were lavish and by 1912 were featured in



Garden Life magazine. It boasted a 2.5-acre labyrinth of trees, with steps to a viewing platform from which you could see four counties.

The manor, in normal times, does hold open days and I would thoroughly recommend a visit if you have the chance to go. Do take a copy of our tree map with details of all the tree species which include several cedars, pines, western red cedar, coastal redwood

and several large English oak and holm oaks as well as the avenue of Wellingtonia trees.

Tree Council Tree Warden information

The Tree Council have just launched the first modules of new material for tree wardens. More modules are due later this year and more planned for the future. I recently attended a webinar where they discussed the structure of the materials and I have seen the first 4 modules. I think they are a very useful information source. In September several tree wardens, Stephen, Stephanie and I will review the materials so we can propose to the committee meeting at the end of the month how we use the material and make it available to all the members who are interested in it. I'll write about that in the next edition of Tree Watch.

Plant a Tree for the Jubilee

This is the slogan for the Queen's Green Canopy [project](#) to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee next year. Three organisations that we are linked with, the [Woodland Trust](#), the [Tree Council](#) and [The Conservation Volunteers](#), are partners in the project and you can find more details on their websites.

We shall be discussing whether we are able to be involved in the project at the Forum meeting in November, so do let us know if you have any ideas, suggestions or are involved in any plans for planting with other groups.

WARNING – OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH

The Reading Tree Wardens remind us about the dangers of OPM. This noxious pest is dangerous at the caterpillar stage and Tree Wardens at Epping Forest shared these excellent photos of both the



caterpillars and the nest (the holes are probably caused by birds). Note how well the nest blends in. The caterpillars not only strip oaks of their leaves, but are a real hazard to human health, as their hairs are an irritant to the skin and, if breathed in, can damage the lungs. They have been found and dealt with in the Pangbourne and Twyford areas, but



have now been seen in Woodley, where the Forestry Commission is trapping them.

Please keep a close eye on any oaks in your area and report, with photos, anything that concerns you.

TREE PLANTING IN WOKINGHAM

The plan to plant 250,000 trees across the Borough by 2025 is, hopefully, well known by now. It is target 18 in the '[Climate Emergency Action Plan Progress Report July 2020](#)' and is estimated to save 3,500 tonnes of CO₂ per yr, contributing to the carbon sequestration goal. The plans include planting a new forest and smaller woodlands on council-owned land, as well as grant schemes to support the creation of woodland and hedges on private land. 18,000 of those trees will be planted at the new [solar farm](#) in Barkham.

There is also an aim to make Wokingham a 'Garden Forest'. A scheme is planned to encourage residents, schools and small businesses to plant trees and look after them. It is hoped that 10% of households will opt-in to such a scheme, with the potential to deliver 6,000-7,000 new trees, although the suggested budget ceiling is 10,000 trees. This is surely something that Tree Wardens can support in practical ways.

As well as promoting the planting of new trees, there is mention of the maintenance and restoration of existing woodland and hedges, as well as the development of a Tree Strategy

As mentioned before, Earley Town Council has produced its own [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#). As well as pledging to increase tree planting, it's good to see they want to maintain an inventory of newly-planted trees, so they can check on their growth and replace if necessary. Hopefully, some members of WDVTA will be able to help with this; although we currently don't have any Tree Wardens in Earley.

Other parishes, including Finchampstead, are developing their own action plans.

INAPPROPRIATE TREE PLANTING?

Sarah Swatridge



Tree planting is the in-thing at the moment and it is good to see. However, we were recently walking part of The Cotswold Way near *Belas Knap Long Barrow* and spotted a field planted up with saplings. I am usually delighted to see this, but on this occasion, I was enjoying the view and realised that once these trees have grown up you will no longer be able to see the stunning views.

I suppose you can't have it all.

TREE PLANTING OR REWILDING?

We all know that "one size doesn't fit all". It's the same for trees. In some areas rewilding will be much better than tree planting, but not all areas are suitable for rewilding. We need to encourage tree planting especially in urban areas, and where we do plant trees, we need to choose appropriate species and maintain them after planting. The advantages of trees are now widely recognised, but some recent research has shown another benefit. Professor Don Broome (formerly of Reading University) has ranked the various methods of **beef production** world-wide. He's found that the most sustainable method is a semi-extensive one with pasture including trees and shrubs (especially if the supplementary feed is not grain). The trees and shrubs provide a higher protein content to the diet than just grass.

Rewilding has become newsworthy in recent years, but David Green reminded me of a rewilding experiment that started 60 years ago. At **Monks Wood** near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire, two areas of farmland adjacent to ancient woodland were abandoned and allowed to rewild. They have been regularly monitored since then. The 'Old Wilderness' (3.9 ha) was abandoned in 1961, and the 'New Wilderness' (2.1 ha) in 1996.

A **report** on these observations concludes that they provide "unique direct evidence of how closed-canopy woodland re-establishes onto abandoned farmland. This native woodland restoration was approaching the structure (but not the species composition) of long-established woodlands within six decades. Such sites adjacent to ancient woodland probably reflect ideal conditions for restoration, with numerous seed sources of varied woody species close by."

Hence "passive rewilding through natural regeneration could be a significant tool in afforestation policies, such as the UK's ambition to increase woodland in England by actively planting at least 12 million trees on 185,000 ha by 2042, which has forecasted costs of £5.7 million for a 'Northern Forest'. Incorporating targeted passive restoration into such plans could result in significant cost savings."

There are many other examples of successful passive rewilding, including Clayfield Copse in Caversham, and they don't have to be adjacent to ancient woodland; but this detailed study over a 60-year period is probably unique. There can be no doubt that passive rewilding can increase native woodland habitat at very low cost, in a relatively short time; and with the increasing availability of efficient remote sensing techniques, the development of such areas can be regularly monitored. Such techniques can give detailed information about the woodland structure, including its species composition.

TREE PLANTING IN READING

Last month, Reading Tree Wardens finally planted trees at the front of Reading Station. It has been a long project, started well before the pandemic, with partners Ethical Reading and Network Rail. Many



meetings were held to decide the species, containers and locations, which involve both the north and south sides of the station and the bays near the Heathrow coach stop. Anna Iwaschkin, RTWN coordinator, chose the tree species. Some had to have attractive flowers and cope with growth in containers which face the sun. The first choice was Pride of India or Golden Rain Tree, *Koelreuteria paniculate*, but they couldn't source this, and instead chose the dogwood, *Cornus kousa*, (in the blue containers above).



Anna has expressed her huge thanks to Dave Kenny for continuing frustrating negotiations with Network Rail and contractors, as well as watering the trees awaiting planting over many weeks, and managing the final planting events with Network Rail. They are delighted with the result, which will have a big impact on the look of the station; and they have ensured that the watering contractors know how to look after the whole array of trees.

In the last **issue** of Tree Watch (page 8) I mentioned that RTWN had planted 100 Sakura Cherry trees across Reading. In their June newsletter, they reported on their 'Sakura Cherry Ceremony of Celebration and Thanks' held on 3rd June at St Laurence's churchyard (where three of the Cherries are planted). The Mayor of Reading, Cllr. David Stevens and Chizuko Winter of the Japan Association **unveiled the plaque**.

The Sakura Cherry Tree Project distributes trees throughout the United Kingdom to parks, gardens and schools. There's a **map** of the locations; which include 14 in Reading, 2 in Windsor and 3 in Slough; but none in Wokingham or Bracknell. Most of the trees were planted last winter or will be planted later this year.

It is particularly pleasing that one of the varieties chosen is the *Taihaku*, or 'great white', which had become extinct in Japan and was re-introduced from the UK in the early 20th century by **Collingwood Ingram**, who collected and studied Japanese cherry blossoms, as well as creating some new cultivars.

Cherries grow well in Britain. National collections of flowering cherries are held at **Batsford Arboretum** in Gloucestershire and at **Keele University**.



By SLIMHANNYA - Own work. CC BY-SA 4.0

THE VETERAN TREE SURVEY - OUR 8000TH TREE - THE FINCHWOOD OAK - MRN 8670

On June 24th there was a small celebration (reduced because of Covid restrictions) to mark us registering this lovely oak in Finchampstead as our 8000th tree, MRN **8670**. This was attended by Cllr Simon Weeks, Chairman of Finchampstead Parish Council and a WBC Borough Councillor; Gordon Veitch, a Finchampstead Parish councillor and our coordinator for the parish; Katy Dagnall, Clerk to Finchampstead PC; Laura Powell, Planning Manager for Cala Homes which are developing the new housing nearby; and Barbara Stagles, Janet Firth and Maggie Sanderson from WDVTA, plus Simon's two dogs. It was featured in Finchampstead Parish **newsletter** in July.



From left: Laura Powell, Barbara, Simon Weeks, Maggi, Janet & Katy Dagnall

Cala Homes and the Parish Council have agreed that the tree will be named 'The Finchwood Oak' and Laura has confirmed that Cala Homes will fund a plaque for the tree which Katy Dagnall is now organising.

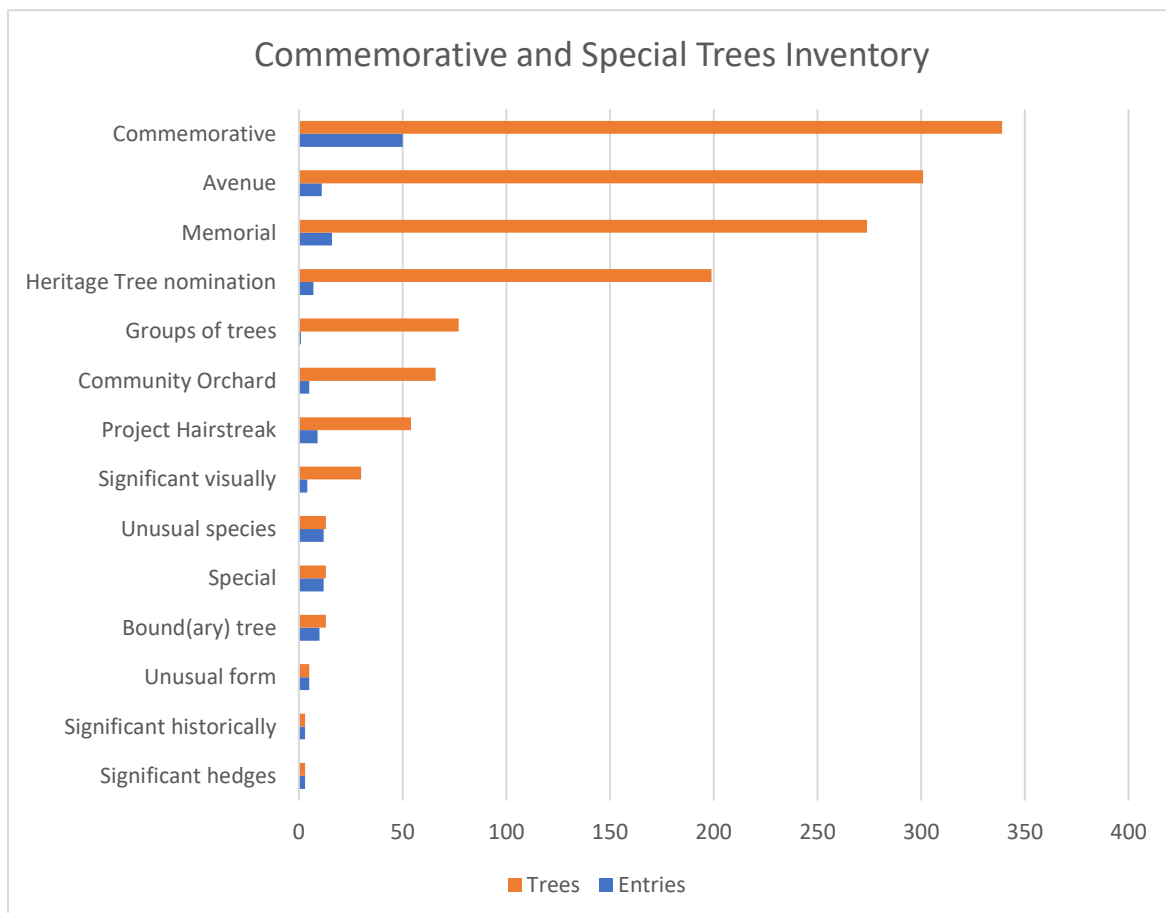


The tree is currently within the Cala development site, but in an area that will soon be a new SANG owned by WBC and eventually open to the public.

COMMEMORATIVE AND SPECIAL TREES

The veteran tree survey was a systematic survey, aiming to record all large trees in the Borough. To be thorough, certain items of information, such as girth and grid reference, were required before a tree could be entered into the database. It's explained in detail in our [Handbook](#).

The Commemorative and Special Trees Inventory is not a systematic survey. It exists to allow anyone to record a tree they think is special, especially commemorative and memorial trees. Although we want to know as much as possible about the trees, there are no set requirements. Just the existence of a tree (past or present) and the reason for including it, is sufficient. If anyone is interested, they can try to find out more. We currently have 140 entries and over 878 trees in this inventory. We record individual trees and groups of trees. The graph below shows the various categories.



The totals obviously reflect the interests of the people submitting the data, rather than the state of such trees in the Borough. If you want to include a tree in this inventory, there's a simple nomination form on our [website](#), as well as a [map](#) of the trees already recorded, with links to photos of the trees and other information and you can download the complete [spreadsheet](#).

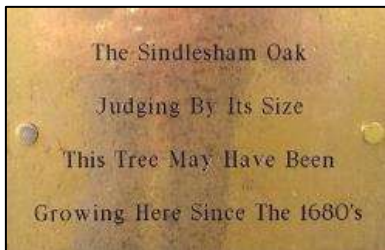
It's always interesting to see how significant trees are recognised and treated elsewhere. Previously, I've mentioned places in Australia where individual trees are mapped with an on-line map, where people can make comments about them. The City of Unley, a local government area of Adelaide, certainly appreciates its trees. As well as a Tree Strategy, it maintains a list of **Significant Trees**. The value of individual trees is calculated and displayed on **tree tags** attached to the trees. The example shown here identifies the tree as a River Red Gum, providing oxygen for 4 people to breathe all year round, removing 1687g of harmful air pollution every year and providing 330m² of shade - equivalent to 105 beach umbrellas!

If we followed their example in Wokingham, we'd have to think of something other than beach umbrellas as a comparison!



Photo: Jason Tyndall, Nature Play SA.

THE CHAIRMAN'S OAK – W140



This is the latest addition to our Commemorative and Special Trees Inventory. It's a very young offspring of one of our veteran oaks. MRN **5576** (photo left) in Bearwood Recreation Ground was officially named the 'Sindlesham Oak' at the Winnersh Fete in 2018, as previously reported in Tree Watch and described in "**Naming Bearwood Trees**" by Linda Martin. In autumn 2016, Paul Fishwick, Chairman of Winnersh Parish Council, collected several acorns from the Sindlesham Oak and potted them up in his back garden. One of these germinated in 2017 and was transplanted, by Paul, in December 2020 to a site at the edge of the Recreation Ground (top right). It's **W140** in our Commemorative and Special Trees Inventory. The photo below shows Paul beside his tree in July this year. Hopefully it will eventually be a replacement for its parent.



Also at that 2018 Fete, our 5,000th tree MRN **5297** was named the 'Walter Oak'. The other photo shows Paul with our secretary, Kerry Clissold, unveiling the plaque on the 'Walter Oak'.



Tree Guards

The FAQ feature in the last issue asked "What Can We Do About Plastic Tree Guards?". The Woodland Trust have **pledged** there will be no more new single-use plastic tree guards on their land from the end of 2021.

This month the Tree Council sent out a questionnaire asking people about any tree guards they had used, with the option list: Plastic tree guards; Plastic spiral guards; Cardboard shrub guards; Plastic strimmer guards; Plastic mesh guards; Cardboard tree guards; Plastic shrub guards; Cardboard rodent guards; Metal mesh guards or Weed mats. Quite a selection.

DID YOU KNOW? *There's a professor of tree-ring science.*

This spring, **Valerie Trouet** became the first female professor in the Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research at the University of Arizona.

She is a dendroclimatologist, studying tree rings to uncover information about past climate and its impact on human and forest ecosystems. In April, she published "Tree Story", a book about tree-ring science for lay audiences.

Her lab is the oldest of its kind in the world, being established in 1937 by the first person to develop tree-ring science, Andrew Douglass, who was an astronomy professor at Arizona!

JUBILEE OAKS

Barbara Stagles

In the winter of 2012/13, when we planted the 60 English oaks across Wokingham Borough to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee, we labelled each of them with a plastic plaque mounted on a wooden base. This year it came to our attention that some of the bases had rotted and the plaques had come away or, in a few cases, gone missing altogether. We decided to check them all and, whilst 38 plaques and bases are still in reasonable condition and two plaques had been mounted on improvised new bases, 14 plaques were detached and have been 'taken into custody' by various WDVTA friends. They await new bases. These may be made of recycled plastic posts and we are very grateful to Derek Oxbrough for looking into this for us.

Four of our trees have lost their plaques and bases and in one case, in Winnersh Meadows, the tree has disappeared as well! We are following this up with Wokingham Borough Council who may well arrange for another tree to be planted. We are also exploring how we can replace the second tree we planted at Swallowfield Recreation Ground which sadly failed like its predecessor. For these six trees we will probably arrange for them to have small identification discs so they can be traced



#58 Tyler Drive Arborfield



easily. The positions and grid references of all our Jubilee trees, however, can be seen on the [interactive map](#) on our website. By clicking on any tree number, you can find photos and other information about the tree's planting.

Most of the trees are doing well and, although they all have the same provenance, it is interesting to see differences between them. When we do our 10-year survey next year in 2022, we will explore how we can record these variations and see if there is any way we can account for them. Thank you to everyone who is 'keeping an eye' on Jubilee trees near them. Please let me know if you spot anything interesting - or problematic.

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

Sarah Swatridge



On a walk alongside a canal near Wincle in Cheshire, I saw this fascinating tree that seemed to be in mid-air. The roots seemed quite exposed and yet the tree was healthy and didn't seem in danger of coming down.

Nature is wonderful isn't it?

Veteran Tree Survey snapshot

SWEET CHESTNUT

331

trees in our
database

36%

in Wokingham Town

4

parishes haven't
recorded any

124 (37%)

maidens

12 (4%)

pollards

5 (1.5%)

stumps

SPECIES IN FOCUS - SWEET CHESTNUT (*CASTANEA SATIVA*)

10 miscellaneous facts about the Sweet Chestnut.

1. Native to Southern Europe, Asia Minor and north Africa, it's sometimes classified as an 'honorary native'. It was probably introduced by the Romans; but chestnut charcoal has been found in pre-Roman archaeological sites in Britain. Whether it was grown here or was imported as timber is unknown.
2. Other common names include '*Spanish chestnut*', and '*marron*' (French for "chestnut"). The Roman called the tree *Castanea* after a town in Thessaly where chestnuts grew in abundance. The Latin '*sativa*' means "*cultivated by humans*".
3. They don't bear fruit until they are about 25 years old.
4. Sweet chestnuts are the only nuts rich in vitamins C. The Romans ground sweet chestnuts into a flour or coarse meal.
5. Sweet chestnuts were traditionally coppiced to provide hop poles, but in the 20th century, cleft chestnut paling fences became the major product. With its high tannin content, no preservatives are needed for outdoor use. When used for cask staves the wood is said to improve the colour, sweetness and longevity of wine.
6. Its use as timber was widespread by the time of Henry II and there is some evidence that it was exported to Normandy. Lacking structural strength, it is not suitable for buildings, but is used to make furniture.
7. Although it is predicted to thrive in Britain under future climate change scenarios, it is threatened by various diseases (which may become more serious).
8. The world's oldest known chestnut tree grows on Mount Etna in Sicily and had a girth of 58m when it was painted in 1782. A hundred years later its girth was 64m. Above ground, the tree has split into multiple large trunks, but below ground, these trunks share the same roots. It's called the '*Hundred Horse Chestnut*' and is said to be 2,000-4,000 years old.
9. The famous '*Tortworth Chestnut*' in South Gloucestershire is shown as a landmark in boundary records compiled in the reign of King John. In 1776, with a girth of 15.8m, it was described as the largest tree in England; but by 2013 it measured 12m (at 1m). Like the Sicilian one, it's multi stemmed.
10. The largest Sweet Chestnut in our database, MRN **5845**, had a girth of 10.4m, measured at 1.5m around a single trunk in August 2011, making it about 970 years old. It's in the private garden of '*The Old Vicarage*' in Wargrave. The far photo shows the gardener with Penny Miller, our Wargrave coordinator, who very sadly died in 2017. It's classified as '*ancient*' and as a '*tree of national special interest*' by the '*Ancient Tree Inventory*' (**#163880**)



By Jean-Pierre Houël - Voyage pittoresque des Isles de Sicile, de Malte et de Lipari, Paris, 1782., Public Domain,



SADLY DEPARTED - MRN 356



Anne Booth fought hard to save this tree, but was regrettably unsuccessful. As she says in her article for the **EEG newsletter** (page 5), Earley has lost one of its finest veteran oak trees.

A TPO (1423/2012) was put on it in 2012, but permission to fell "to near ground level" was granted (**PA202102**) because it was deemed to be causing subsidence of a nearby house in Somerton Gardens. It was on a footpath behind the house, and I don't understand why it couldn't be left

as a monolith, which I thought was standard practice these days. There is no mention of any disease problem in the permission letter. No condition of planting a replacement tree was made (which I thought was standard when a TPO'd tree was felled). It was felled on 13th July.

Recorded as a veteran (now a lost veteran) in the Ancient Tree Inventory (**#66611**), it is shown on the 1887 OS map at the corner of three fields, long before the housing was built around it.

It's a shame that WBC didn't stand up to this claim, but sadly it's happening all too often now with insurers and subsidence claims. Some councils are using the CAVAT valuation scheme to place a monetary value on trees vs insurance claims, but it seems that our local councils won't do this.

This month's **A C R O N Y M S / I N I T I A L I S M S**

ETAP - England Trees Action Plan - an implementation group of ETAP is in consultation with CLG, LGAs and (probably) VCSEs.

CLG - Communities and Local Government (UK)

LGA - Local Government Authority

VCSE - voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations

THEN AND NOW - Wellingtonia in Palmer Park - 2016 and 2021

This tree featured in the "Where is it?" section of 'Tree Watch' in November 2016. The young Wellingtonia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) is in Palmer Park (SU 73605 73048) near the London Road-Wokingham Road junction. In 2016 it was about 12' tall and is twice that now (24' or 7.2m). It was planted in 2012 by the Reading Tree Wardens and pupils from Alfred Sutton School, as one of a series of landmark trees to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee. It's number 2 on the RTWN Palmer Park to Redlands **Tree Walk**, one of seven tree walks on their **website**.



ACORN 'COFFEE'

Sarah Swatridge

Make this at the end of August, beginning of September when the acorns are falling from the oak trees.

- Collect a couple of handfuls of acorns. Mine happened to be all from local English Oaks because that's what we've got in Charvil.
- Boil in water (shell included) for about 20 minutes.
- Cool.
- Peel off the hard outer shell. This is not good for the finger nails!
- Peel off the outer skin.
- Split the acorns with a knife.
- Put the split acorns somewhere warm to dry for about 24 hours, for example in an airing cupboard or warm window sill.
- Grind the split acorns or use pestle and mortar.
- Put on a baking sheet and either grill or roast in oven until dark brown BUT not burnt.
- Allow 3 tablespoons in 1 cup boiling water.
- Add milk and sugar if desired.

I usually drink my coffee black but I found this acorn drink much improved with a little honey. Personally, I would forget the word 'coffee'. I felt it bore no resemblance to coffee whatsoever. As an Acorn Drink it is fine. However, it was quite time consuming and, unless you were desperate for a different hot drink, I would collect the acorns but save them as seeds for the future, for planting new oaks, and buy a jar of Nescafe!

In the recent WBC Climate Emergency **newsletter**, one of the five stated consequences of a rise in global temperatures is "Changes in climates affecting production of things like beer, wine, chocolate and coffee" - so perhaps we should start experimenting with acorns now.

"Why are we going for quantity over quality?"

"We don't call it the Woodland Trust. We call it the Plantation Trust."

Ted Green (July 2021) Arb Assoc webinar: 'Another evening with Ted Green')

RECOMMENDED READING, LISTENING AND VIEWING

DEFRA BRIEFING ON THE ENGLAND TREES ACTION PLAN - Tree Council webinar in case you missed it.

WINDSOR GREAT PARK

A recent episode of 'Open Country' on Radio Four (25 minutes), including an interview with Des Sussex about the ancient trees there (about 9 min in).

WHY HEDGE TREES AND HEDGEROWS MATTER – Jon Stokes from the Tree Council (webinar)

According to the climate change committee, we need to increase our hedges by 40% to meet net zero by 2050. Jon refers in particular to the following websites.

HEDGEROW MANAGEMENT AND REJUVENATION

HEDGE STRUCTURE (10 classes) and how to manage and survey them (with a downloadable phone app)

THE ERSATZ HEDGE: HOW WE'RE DEBASING ENGLAND'S RURAL LANDSCAPE – A review by Richard Mabey of good and bad hedges and the scourge of the plastic wrappings of saplings,

CLIMATE CHANGE: THE EFFECTS OF PLANTING EXTRA TREES

A number of studies have looked at the range of impacts, both positive and negative, of converting agricultural land to sustainable forests. It could boost rainfall across Europe.

WORLD'S TALLEST TREE DISCOVERED (SO FAR AT LEAST!)

A giant tree more than 330 feet (over 100m) tall was identified in Borneo from the air, and then climbed with a tape measure. It's a yellow meranti tree (*Shorea fagueteria*).

AT FRANCE'S NEWEST NATIONAL PARK, IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TREES.

With 50 million trees, the Parc National de Forêts is a model of sustainable tourism. Its core protected reserve is the continent's second largest and will remain completely untouched, a laboratory for the study of biodiversity and adaptation to climate change. By July 2020, 95 different towns had voted to become part of the park.

OUR GOVERNMENTS IS PLANNING TO REMOVE LEGAL PROTECTION FROM MANY SPECIES IN UK.

Legal protections likely to be removed from many species in the UK. The Government proposes restricting legal protection to those organisms that are threatened with global extinction. There are only two trees in the **list** of UK BAP priority species. These are the common juniper (*Juniperus communis*) and the Plymouth pear (*Pyrus Cordata*). The juniper is ranked as 'Least Concern' by the IUCN and therefore will be removed from the UK list if the Government's proposals become law. The pear is 'Vulnerable' and therefore very likely to lose its protective status here.

WORLD ON FIRE -Forest fires in 2020 and their consequences - an episode of Radio Four's 'Costing the Earth' from October 2020 (30 mins)

THEN AND NOW: THE BURNING ISSUE OF WILDFIRES – a recent BBC News item

TALKING TREES WITH TED GREEN

Another webinar from the Arboricultural Association, which has its own **YouTube** channel, where you can watch other videos.

READING'S FAMOUS BLACK MULBERRY TREE IN FORBURY GARDENS COLLAPSES

Although there are hopes it can be **saved**.

.... *And to make you smile:*

This contribution comes from Sarah Swatridge.

We recently visited the Rococo Garden in Painswick,



Gloucestershire. It is a beautiful place with lots of different styles of garden within one overall garden. A large kitchen garden, a wild area, orchards and so on. In the woods with a carpet of wild garlic was a tree that had been chopped down. I don't know why but, never the less, they had turned it into something beautiful.



This very detailed castle was quite magical. It reminded me of the cedar that once stood proud in West Drive, Sonning but was felled and then the remains of the trunk were carved into a hand.

Some sources used in this issue: all web pages accessed 25-08-2021 (unless stated otherwise) Links embedded in the text are not repeated here. Email me if you want a list of them.

p8-Species in Focus: Mitchell, Alan (1974) 'A Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe' ISBN 0 00 212035 6

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<http://www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/The-Tortworth-Chestnut-for-Pro-Arb-July-2016.pdf>

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The views and opinions expressed in Tree Watch are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or the official policy or position of the Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association.

Don't forget: You can download a pdf version of our 10th anniversary report from our website - but you can also access an extended version of it, with links to the trees mentioned:

wdvta.org.uk/report10.php

Details of all trees in our database are available via the web map pages: **wdvta.org.uk/WDVTS**

The inventory of commemorative and special trees can also be accessed via our website:

wdvta.org.uk/commem.php

Finally, and most importantly,
THANK YOU to everyone who has recorded our trees.
We wouldn't have a database without you.