



Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association

Tree Watch

Issue 51

November 2021

On 1st November, we had **8,554** trees in our database and **13,434** photographs

Welcome to this colourful issue of Tree Watch.



Autumn colour in Spencers Wood and fungi in Arborfield this October.



The next issue of Tree Watch will be February 2022 and the copy deadline is 31st January. 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

Main items in this issue:- (click on title)

p3	Barbara's jubilee trees	p8	OPM status in England
p4	Reporting tree issues to WBC	p9	Sadly departed and reprieved
p4	Tree Watching from my chair	p9	Ash culling in Twyford; FAQ: What is CO ₂ e?
p6	Arborfield's bridge wins award	p10	Woodland coverage and CO ₂ emissions
p7	Inappropriate planting	p12	Species in Focus - African Baobab
p7	New Tree Warden training material	p13	Remarkable trees
p8	TPOs - old and new	p13	Book reviews
		p13	Recommendations

Events - Dec 2021-Feb 2022

❖ We hope to have a winter walk in January or February.

Non-WDVTa events:

❖ Saturday 27 November - Sunday 5 December - National Tree Week

❖ Thursday 2 December 18:00 - RTWN Zoom talk by Glynn Percival 'Can we vaccinate trees to protect against diseases?'. Email rtwn2011@gmail.com to register. The Zoom link will be sent nearer the time.

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

TREE WEEK IN WOKINGHAM

Although WDVTa had not planned any specific events during National Tree Week, there will be significant tree planting in both Twyford and Charvil on Sunday 28th. The **Twyford Tree Festival** has been widely publicised and WDVTa will have a stand there. Held in Stanlake Meadows between 11:00 and 15:00, it will have live demonstrations, children's workshops, woodcraft stalls and Christmas carols, as well as the community tree planting. Charvil are planting a community orchard and another disease-resistant elm (New Horizon variety), along with hedge planting. I hope to include reports on both events in the February issue.

TREES AVAILABLE AND TREES WANTED

David Geen has about 20 bare rooted ash saplings that he'd like to give to anyone who can plant them. Let me know if you are interested and I'll pass on the information.

Waingels College in Woodley has just adopted a house system. The houses are named after trees: Birch, Hazel, Lime, Maple, Oak and Willow. They want to plant one of each in the college grounds. Please tell me if you know of anyone who might be in a position to donate one of these tree species to the college.

REPLACEMENT OF LOST STREET TREES IN WOKINGHAM

At a WBC council meeting in August, Cllr Paul Fishwick (Cllr for Winnersh) raised concerns about the lack of a tree-replacement policy. He emphasized the number of street trees that have not been replaced over the last few years. In reply, Cllr Parry Batth (Executive Member for Environment and Leisure) said it should be covered in the forthcoming tree strategy. The **Bracknell News** featured a detailed report of their exchanges.

FOX HILL WOODS

Plans have been approved for 14.77ha of Fox Hill Woods, currently privately owned, to become a SANG (although the approval documentation refers to it as "Informal Recreational Greenspace"). The plans include landscaping, a footpath network and a car park, as well as a number of conditions that have to be met. For more details and a map see [planning application 203539](#).

BARBARA'S JUBILEE TREES

Alison Griffin

Diamond Jubilee trees: As most of you will know, Barbara Stagles, who founded WDVTA, led our side of the Diamond Jubilee project with the Borough Council to plant 60 English oak trees in 2012. This year she has been pressing for two of these trees, which have been lost, to be replaced during this winter's planting season. Additionally, some of the posts supporting the plaques have rotted, so there is also some post and plaque replacement work needed as well as planting of the new trees.

To prevent the movement of oak processionary moth around the country DEFRA has banned the movement of larger oak saplings, so we are unable to obtain replacement trees from the original nursery. However, Barbara has been able to source smaller (5 to 7 foot) oak saplings from a nursery in Bracknell. The trees are not tall straight specimens, but are randomly branched and quirky shapes as you can see in this photograph of one of them, but all are healthy.

We are following up with the relevant councils for the two missing Jubilee trees, whether planting one of these much smaller trees as a replacement is a sensible and feasible plan. Next year, for the 10th anniversary of the Diamond Jubilee trees, Barbara and Stephanie McKay will visit all 60 of the trees (assuming the two replacements are planted) to record their development and status.

The **Queen's Platinum Jubilee** is next year with a tree planting initiative, named the Queen's Green Canopy, already underway to celebrate this unique event. As 5 oak saplings were available from the Bracknell nursery, WDVTA have bought all 5 and we plan to plant the 3, 4 or 5 not used for replacement Diamond Jubilee trees as our initial contribution to the Queen's Green Canopy and to mark the completion of our tree survey project.

As Barbara has recently celebrated her own significant birthday, we will be calling these trees **Barbara's Jubilee Trees**.

We would like **your suggestions** for sites to plant the trees and will be asking Barbara to make the selection of sites from all the ideas that you make. We would like the trees to be one of the following:

- close to a veteran oak tree that is declining, so it becomes the successor tree, as in this photograph of **MRN 2273** from Ruscombe. or
- a new hedge tree, as replacing the lost trees in hedges has been a campaign we have had for many years.
- any other site in the Borough where Barbara has a special connection

All suggested sites will need the following, so please consider this when you make a suggestion:

- the permission of the landowner for the planting
- the agreement of the landowner that a new hedge tree will be protected when the hedge is cut. The new tree will be 5 to 7 feet high, so the current hedge height must be no more than 5 feet.
- a local member to be responsible for the maintenance of the tree for several years, to water it in times of drought, keep it free from competition from weeds etc

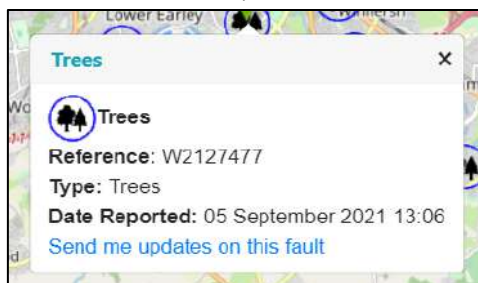
Please send your suggestions to me (chair@wdvta.org.uk) by December 12th. Stephanie and I will review all the suggestions and then ask Barbara to prioritise the sites. We will then work with you to approach the landowner before finalising sites in January in time for planting the trees in February.



REPORTING TREE ISSUES TO WBC

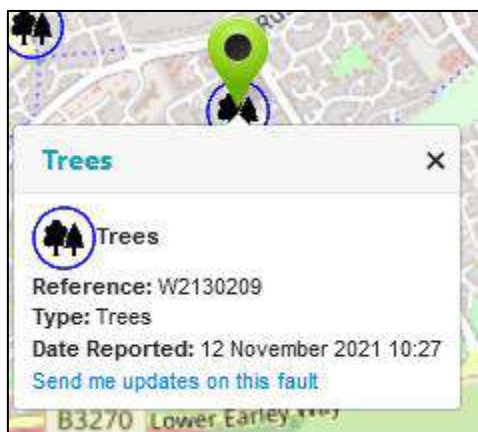
You've always been able, and indeed encouraged, to report tree problems to the 'Trees and Landscape' department of WBC. Now you can do so on-line via a [map](#). You click on a location and a box pops up asking for details. I only found out about this in September, when Patricia Green "discovered" it. When I mentioned it at a subsequent WDVTA committee meeting, nobody there knew about it either. It should be a very useful way of reporting non-urgent issues and it's a pity it hasn't been publicised effectively.

When I looked on 18th September all 27 reports were dated September. Unfortunately, we are not told what the reported problems are. You can request updates on any report, but you have to do so individually. There's no list facility. I signed up for reports on the one below, just to see what would be reported, but I have not had a report. However, a search of the reference number said there was no problem, but again didn't say what had been reported.



W2127477

No problem found with the specified reference number (W2127477)



Now, in November, if you enter a reference number into the search bar, the relevant site is indicated by a green marker and there is no information box. Instead, if you sign up for updates, you get an email with a link to a search bar. The ones I've looked at just say "This report is currently under investigation. We aim to complete any work required within 28 days.", but presumably more detailed information will be given after investigation.

September issues are not now displayed. Presumably they are removed once the problem has been dealt with.

It would be very useful if we could download a list of all the reported trees in the Borough, together with the reason for the report. This could be made available as a csv file. Both the display box on the map and the search result box should give a description

of the reported fault or a link to that information. Having given your details for updates, you have the opportunity for comment and I raised these two suggestions in September. I hope they might be implemented soon, but even without them, it is a useful facility, allowing you to scan the map for reported issues in your area, although of course you won't know what those issues are!

TREE WATCHING FROM MY CHAIR

Alison Griffin

I hope you have been enjoying all the coverage that trees have been getting recently with pledges against deforestation at COP26 and so on. We are pleased that Wokingham Borough Council have now appointed a new officer who will be running the project for developing the borough's Tree Strategy and the planting of the 250,000 trees pledged as part of the Climate Emergency plans. We will keep you updated as we hear of more details and I hope you have been able to respond to the borough's initial Tree Planning survey that we recently circulated.



Now, something rather different for a change, a series of recent photographs. It starts with a lovely carved wooden bench that I spotted when we were on holiday in North Wales. I have a soft spot for owls and thought this design with outspread wings sheltering its brood of owlets was inspired.





Shortly after our holiday I saw these two trees on a single journey. The first reminded me of Jon Stokes' description of ash trees that have ash die-back sometimes looking like 'lollipop' trees; but this tree wasn't an ash and the lollipops are all mistletoe. The second is a cedar I know well ([MRN 6624](#)) which looked to be very brown over the canopy. I went back with my camera and took these photographs. The cedar is indeed very brown as it is covered in cones. I don't recall seeing anything like these two trees before.



Whilst out with my camera, I spotted a hornbeam. When I see tree species that I don't often



see, I frequently recall when I first saw that species and who told me what it was. Hornbeam is an example and it was Barbara who told me. It was a surveying trip in Fox Hill and must have been in the autumn as the tree had its cascades of fruiting spikes, as this one does (right).



For the last month I have been looking out for good autumn colours on trees. Narrow-leaved ash (introduced to me by Linda Martin) has glorious maroon foliage, but I haven't seen one at the height of its colour yet. Liquid amber is another favourite of mine and the one by Arborfield roundabout has been impressive, but not when I had a camera with me. At the start of November, I spotted this swamp cypress and I hope you agree it fits the definition of stunning autumn colour.

I always have to look up both swamp cypress and dawn redwood, two deciduous conifers, as they are easily confused. The swamp cypress has its short needle-like leaves on shoots that are staggered on either side of the branches. The dawn redwood has very similar needle-like leaves on shoots, but its shoots are paired across the branches. Again, my first dawn redwood was on a surveying trip with Barbara, but in this

instance, she wasn't certain what the tree was either. We were surveying along Barkham Road and came across the tree in a front garden. I visited the tree recently to check that it is a dawn redwood and it



has a few cones this year as well as these strange panicles. One of my reference books describes the male flowers on dawn redwood as 'small ovoids at the base of each pair of leaves...on side shoots. The side shoots are not shed until April so resemble a flowering panicle'. I think you will agree that the photograph fits that description. The book says of the male flowers 'not yet seen in the open in Britain (1972)'. Maybe a newer edition of the book has corrected that statement!

Finally, another anomaly. Derek told me about these two silver birch trees (right) very happily growing out of the stump of **MRN 3205**. Our records give the species as 'unidentified' but probably an English oak stump. The 'warm welcome' sign belongs to the



Ye Olde Leathern Bottel on Barkham Road, but I rather liked the juxtaposition with the new trees.

ARBORFIELD'S BRIDGE WINS BIODIVERSITY AWARD

The **Arborfield Cross Relief Bridge** (featured in issue 48) over Observer Way has won the 'Innovation' category of this year's '**BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award**' organised by **CIRIA** (Construction Industry Research and Information Association). Below: a model of the green bridge and how it looks today. Both photos courtesy of **Wokingham Today**, which has featured several reports about this bridge, including the win last month.



Reading's **Green Park** won in the 'Biodiversity Legacy' category.

INAPPROPRIATE PLANTING

In the last issue (page 14) Sarah Swatridge raised the question of tree planting spoiling great views of the countryside. It reminded me of a guided walk I went on in Prospect Park in Reading some years ago. We were told that the stunning views of the avenue of Wellingtonias at Spencers Wood were now obscured by new tree growth in the foreground. However, some views are deliberately retained. Driving north, there are extensive views on the east side of the A429 into Moreton-in-Marsh, but roadside trees had obscured these views. Earlier this year the trees over a long stretch of this road were cut down to restore the views (at least that's what I was told).

From King Henry's Mound in Pembroke Lodge Gardens in Richmond Park, there's a lovely view of St Paul's Cathedral, 10 miles away. A tree-framed sightline from the mound to the dome has been maintained by generations of gardeners and the view is protected. No new building is allowed to impede it.



TREE COUNCIL NEW TREE WARDEN TRAINING MATERIAL

Alison Griffin

The Tree Council have produced new training and reference material for tree wardens which replace the old Tree Warden handbook. So far 4 modules have been launched:

- Championing your local trees - the Introduction
- Trees and the Law
- Tree Biology
- Threats and Challenges to Our Trees

4 additional modules will be added soon:

- Tree Planting
- Managing and Caring for Trees
- Tree Health
- Organising Tree Events and Projects

More modules will be added in future e.g. Hedgerows.

The recommendation is that all tree wardens should 'know' the material in the Introduction module. The other modules are optional. Each module has a text document, typically about 20 pages long and available electronically as a pdf file. When read electronically there are links to additional material and references. Each module also has a presentation pack and speaker notes for presenting the material to tree wardens.

The view from everyone that has seen the material is that, just like the Tree Warden Handbook, it is very useful reference to have available. The move to an electronic version makes it easier to update and more accessible through electronic devices. The presentations add another extra facility for explaining and communicating all the material covered.

The recent Committee and Forum meetings discussed the new material and agreed that we will use it by selecting one module to be covered in each Forum meeting with the pdf circulated in advance and one member of the meeting leading a discussion and question and answer session over the material in the module. We will start with Stephen Loyd leading the discussion on the Introduction module at the next Forum meeting, which will be by Zoom on Tuesday March 8th. By having one module covered in each Forum meeting, we will cycle around the 8 modules about every 3 years, which is a good reminder frequency. Apart from the Introduction module, 'tree wardens' will be responsible to read as much or as little of the other modules as they want. If you are not currently invited to the Forum meetings but would like to learn more about this new material from the Tree Council, then do email me and you can be included to the Forum group.

The Tree Council owns copyright to all material and all tree wardens should have access to all the pdfs. As most of our members are not registered tree wardens we will be asking the Tree Council whether the module text can be made available to all our members or only to tree wardens.

We think most members would be interested to see the scope and content of the material and will have displays or sample presentations at a future event when we are able to start meeting face to face again.

TPOs - OLD AND NEW

In our database, there was a comment against [MRN 4258](#), a White Mulberry, saying that the TPO on this tree was reputed to be one of oldest in the country. That's probably not true, but it seems to be the oldest extant one in our Borough. It dates from 1967. Earlier entries on the Protected Tree Map are for works on trees in conservations areas. [TPO 2/1967](#) covers two areas. Seven of our trees are covered by the Woodland TPO of area W1 and another 19 by an area TPO designated A1. One of these trees is [MRN 4266](#) (shown here), the only Smooth Arizona Cypress (*Cupressus glabra*) in our database. It had an estimated girth of 5m at 0.3m when surveyed in 2010.

Do have a look at this 'historic' document. It's a scanned copy of a typed order with non-computer-generated maps and runs to 13 pages.

One of the latest TPOs, cofimed last month is [1785/2021 \(T1\)](#), and is on one of the first trees we recorded. It's [MRN 150](#) at the Hawthorns Primary School - an English Oak with a girth of 4.05m at 1.5m when surveyed in March 2006 as part of the Wokingham Town survey in the year before



WDVTA was formed and the veteran tree survey was extended to cover the whole Borough (or District as it was then).

Veteran Tree Survey snapshot

77

species in our
database

71%

maidens

18%

multi stems

7%

coppices

3%

pollards

OPM STATUS IN ENGLAND

Dave Arnold of Tree Solutions Arb Ltd sent me an [article](#) from the Horticulture Week newsletter (subscription required) with current information about the spread of Oak Processionary Moth. As Alison has pointed out, there are currently restrictions on the movement of oak trees because of this pest. First identified in London in 2006, it has become established in London and surrounding areas, but most of Britain has 'pest free area' status. This year surveillance was increased in this protected zone, resulting in the detection of a few infected trees at five sites in Bedfordshire, Cheshire, Oxfordshire and Sussex. Swift, and assumed effective, action was taken to eliminate it at these sites. In July 2019, about 70 cases were detected in this zone, on oaks recently imported from continental Europe. Outside of the pest free area this year, DEFRA recorded 2,043 oaks trees with OPM and 72,152 with no evidence of it.

See the Forestry Research [website](#) for detailed information and a [map](#) of the three zones (core, control or buffer and pest-free or protected).

SADLY DEPARTED AND REPRIEVED

A tree that was to be felled has had a reprieve thanks to representations made by local residents and a **petition** signed by 32,975 people. The new owners of a Mimosa tree on the corner of Cheyne Walk and Cheyne Gardens in Chelsea were given permission to remove it, but have now agreed to leave it growing and flowering for everyone to enjoy.

However, a **200-year-old palm** has been felled because its "home" at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh is being renovated. The 18m tall cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*) weighed 8 tonnes and was too big to move. It was the oldest known plant in the Garden. Originally planted off Leith Walk in 1810, it was moved to a coal-fuelled Stove House at the current site at Inverleith 12 years later, and into a new tropical palm house in 1858. It had reached the roof of that palm house a decade ago, being pruned since then to prevent it breaking the glass roof. Having both male and female flowers, this palm was self-pollinated by air movements caused by the opening and closing of the palm house doors. Hundreds of its offspring are being cultivated, and so there may well be another large palm in the renovated glasshouse in 200 years' time.

ASH CULLING

Stephen Loyd

A few weeks ago nearly all the ash trees on one half of BBOWT's Loddon Nature Reserve at Twyford were felled by a contractor using specialist tree harvesting equipment. The trees bordered the public walkway and were assessed as potential hazards because of ash dieback disease. The logs and brash are due to be removed, and there is now much more light, so it will be interesting to see which species spring up.



FAQ: WHAT IS CO₂e?

Wokingham's waste and recycling contractor, re3, have re-launched a **recycling calculator**, inviting you to enter the numbers of items, such as cans and cardboard boxes, into each field to find out how much CO₂e is removed from the environment thanks to recycling them instead of putting them into the blue rubbish bags.

CO₂e or CO₂e is the shorthand for carbon dioxide equivalent. It's the standard unit in carbon accounting to quantify greenhouse gas emissions and carbon credits; expressed in tonnes - tCO₂e. Sometimes a hyphen is included, tCO₂-e.

Energy use is converted into a corresponding amount of CO₂e by multiplying fuel use (in kWh, therm, tonne or litre) by a fuel-specific (and unit specific) marginal emission factor. These factors are usually expressed as the weight of greenhouse gases (GHG) divided by a unit weight or volume of fossil fuel. As agreed at Kyoto, GHGs include all emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆).



WOODLAND COVERAGE AND CO₂ EMISSIONS

Kerry Clissold alerted me to a government [web page](#) published last month. It gives you carbon dioxide emissions and woodland coverage in your area. The areas are Local Authority (LA) areas and cover all LAs in the UK, a total of 379. You can choose an LA by zooming into a map; choosing from a drop-down list or typing the name into a search box. A graph shows the change in CO₂ emissions between 2005 and 2019. The data can also be downloaded as *Excel* files.

Overall UK woodland cover in March 2021 was 13% (10% for England) and had increased by 11% since 1998. [Scotland-19%; Wales-15%; N. Ireland-9%. Worldwide-31%; Germany-33%; France-32%; Ireland-11%.]

Woodland area varies considerably of course. Urban areas, wetland areas and far-north islands (such as Orkney and Shetland) all have low coverage as expected. The National Forest Inventory (NFI) woodland map for 2019 (released in June 2021) was used to work out what percentage of a local authority area was woodland. It includes only woodland over 0.5 hectares; wider than 20 metres; with a minimum of 20% canopy cover, or the potential to achieve it. Trees in private gardens and parks are not included. In 2017, there were around 742,000ha of trees excluded, including 390,000ha of small woods between 0.1 and 0.5ha in size (such as the roadside strip in Shinfield shown above).

In the table below the woodland area is in **square miles** for 2019:

Woodland cover	0-10 %	10-20 %	20-30 %	30-40 %	Overall
No of LAs	229	119	24	7	379
% of LAs	60	31	6	2	
Combined woodland area	2,274	6,624	2,212	1,212	12,348
Woodland as % of overall woodland cover	18	54	18	10	
Woodland as % of overall land area	2.4	7.1	2.4	1.3	13.2

The table shows that most LAs have less than 10% of their area covered in woodland; with only 2% having a cover of over 30%. Of the 12,348 sq miles of woodland in the UK, most of it is found in LAs with between 10% and 20% cover. For 2017 woodland in UK was estimated to have removed 18,000kt of CO₂ (0.07kt/km²) equivalent to 4% of the total UK greenhouse gas emissions that year (not including shipping or aviation!). Of course, CO₂ production is not directly correlated with woodland cover and as expected areas with heavy industry produce more CO₂.

The CO₂ data supplied comprises CO₂ production for all years between 2005 and 2019 and the percentage reduction in emission between 2005 and 2019. Again, information is for all 379 local authorities in the UK. Overall annual CO₂ emissions fell by 36% between 2005 and 2019, but again this varies considerably between LAs.

The CO₂ estimates are for emissions within the LA area, whether or not under the control of that LA (such as railway lines and motorways passing through the LA). Whether they include emissions emanating from the production of importations from abroad is not clear.

The table below shows woodland cover for 2019, CO₂ production in 2019 and the reduction in CO₂ production compared with levels in 2005. Data is shown for the six Berkshire LAs and those LAs ranked first and last in the three categories.

Rank 1 is most woodland cover, greatest reduction in CO₂ since 2005, and the least CO₂ production.

Local Authority	Woodland cover		CO ₂ production		CO ₂ Reduction 2005 - 2019	
	Rank	Area	Rank	kt/km ²	Rank	Reduction
Bracknell Forest	3	33.3%	213	3.9	40	42%
West Berkshire	57	16.4%	127	1.6	205	34%
Windsor & Maidenhead	60	17.8%	215	3.9	165	36%
Wokingham	82	14.2%	219	4.1	211	34%
Reading	306	5%	329	12.6	14	49%
Slough	341	3.9%	367	21.3	369	18%
Neath Port Talbot	1	39.3%	23	15.9	Last	9%
Argyll and Bute	7	30.1%	1	0	29	43%
Northumberland	44	17.6%	2	0.1	1	82%
City of London	374	0.9%	Last	203.3	5	61%
Shetland Islands	Last	0.04%	22	0.3	14	20%

The reduction is expressed as a percentage and LAs with low emissions in 2005 will only have to reduce them at little to achieve a high percentage reduction. [Northumberland ranks top with 82% reduction. Its output in 2005 was 0.8 kt/km² and so it achieved that percentage by a reduction of just 0.7 kt/km². Ten other LAs had a reduction of 0.7 kt/km² and their percentage reduction range from 22% - 43%. The City of London had by far the largest CO₂ production at 203.3 kt/km² (the second highest is Westminster with 77.6kt/km²); but that is a 61% reduction on its 2005 emission of 521.9 kt/km². Two other LAs achieved the same percentage reduction by reducing their outputs by 11.4 kt/km² and 4.4 kt/km².]

Don't forget the ancient woodland sites (also for 2019) within the Borough are mapped on WBC's "**Planning Constraints**" map (which also show TPOs). They are both options under the "Trees and Landscape" heading. Choose them from the layer list, by expanding the 'Planning Constraints' list. Incidentally you can also see the locations of LWSs and LGSs by choosing these options under the "Ecology" heading.

Wokingham approved its "**Climate Emergency Action Plan**" in July 2020. It sets out the actions that will be taken to achieve the goal of net zero carbon by 2030. Progress reports were published in July 2020 and 2021.

".. tree planting that is poorly planned and executed could actually increase CO₂ emissions and have long-term, deleterious impacts on biodiversity, landscapes and livelihoods."

Global Change Biology (2021) vol 27 p1328

SPECIES IN FOCUS – AFRICAN BAOBAB (*ADANSONIA DIGITATA*)

12 miscellaneous facts about the African Baobab.

1. Native to the savannah regions of Africa, across 32 countries; with a global count of 3 trillion trees; they are in the same family (Malvaceae) as our lime trees; along with cotton, kapok, mallow and hibiscus.
2. They can grow to 25m tall with a girth of 44m; containing up to 500m³ of wood and their extensive root system exceeds their height. They are pachycauls - plants with few branches and a disproportionately thick trunk for their height. The word is derived from the Greek *pachy* (thick or stout) and the Latin *caulis* (the stem).
3. Baobabs are the oldest living flowering plant (angiosperm). Annual rings can be absent or very faint and not reliable as an ageing tool. Recent accurate radiocarbon methods dated a giant, sacred Baobab in Zimbabwe as 2,450 years old. Such longevity may result from their growth habit. They produce new stems periodically (much as other trees produce new branches) and, over time, these stems fuse into a ring-shaped structure, creating a false cavity in the middle. These hollow trunks can hold thousands of litres of water, and elephants sometimes tear the trees down to get to the moisture inside.
4. Common names include the 'upside-down tree', 'monkey-bread tree', and 'tree of life'. Every part of the Baobab can be utilised as food or medicine. Fibres from the bark are used to make mats, ropes and clothing. The powdered fruit is particularly rich in vitamins C, B2 and antioxidants and is now being traded world-wide, although as yet in limited volumes. It has been approved for use as a food ingredient by the EU (in 2008) and the US (in 2009) and is commonly used as an ingredient in smoothies and cereal bars.
5. They resist drought, fire and termites and their bark regrows if stripped. When they die, they rot inside and suddenly collapse.
6. The large flowers, 12-20cm across, contain up to 1,600 stamens and are pollinated by bats and bush babies. They open during the late afternoon and stay open for just one night.
7. According to legend if you pick a flower from a Baobab tree you will be eaten by a lion; but if you drink water in which Baobab seeds have been soaked, you will be safe from a crocodile attack.
8. Ten years ago, the Zimbabwean giant suddenly collapsed and died, along with others across southern Africa. There was no obvious cause for this "event of unprecedented magnitude" affecting large, old trees and it's been attributed to climate change.
9. Seed production and germination is very good, but there aren't many young trees in populated areas. The saplings have succumbed to changes in rainfall patterns and high livestock numbers. They are more susceptible to browsing than to trampling.
10. Farmers seldom plant Baobabs because they take up to 23 years to flower and bear fruit; but now researchers in Ghana have reduced this to less than 3 years, by grafting branches from mature trees onto seedlings. The widespread cultivation of these trees could diversify farming, improve food security and help to alleviate poverty. Will they lose their iconic status when grown in plantations?
11. The hollow trunk of the Ombalantu Baobab in Namibia can accommodate 35 people. It has served as a chapel, post office, house, and a hiding site and is now a national monument and tourist attraction.
12. The nearest Baobab trees are in Cornwall, within the Rainforest Biome at the Eden Project.



Atamari, CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons



Roburg, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons



Muhammad Mahdi Karim, GFDL 1.2, via Wikimedia Commons

REMARKABLE TREES

Janet Firth sent me this photo taken by archaeologist Steven Rippon. The long line of beech trees is growing on a low field bank, near Venford Farm at East Anstey Common on Exmoor. Such banks are apparently typical of eastern field boundaries across Exmoor. The trees were presumably planted as wind breaks and, since they are so close together, may be overgrown hedges,

They are certainly atmospheric.



BOOK REVIEWS

Patricia Green's recommendation is '*Orchard: A Year in England's Eden*' by Benedict Macdonald and Nicholas Gates, published in 2020; ISBN 9780008333737.

It is about an ancient orchard in a secret location in or near Herefordshire, which has been allowed to grow wild and has a wealth of associated plant and animal life. The photos include 'ancient apples and pensioner pears'. The text details life in the orchard during each month. It is almost a companion volume to '*Rewilding*' except that everything has developed naturally from a very old orchard site with no human intervention.

Dave Arnold of Tree Solutions Arb Ltd recommends "*Tree Experts - A History of Professional Arboriculture in Britain*" by Mark Johnston, published in 2021; ISBN 978191188889.

It covers all periods since Roman times, the use of trees in formal and landscape gardens, the rise of tree experts between 1900 and 1945, and professional arboriculture's "coming of age" since 1946. He discusses trends that have shaped public arboriculture, including expenditure cuts, the introduction of TPOs in 1947, changes in pruning and planting practices, technical innovation and rising green awareness.

RECOMMENDED READING, LISTENING AND VIEWING - PLUS WALKS

TVERC AUTUMN CONFERENCE – in case you missed all or part of it. The sessions are available as separate videos, so you can watch it all or just the sessions that interest you.

'WILDER TREES AND SHRUBS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY' – an excellent zoom talk by Jill Butler for the Reading Climate Change Festival in September. Unfortunately, the visual quality of this recording is poor. It was much better originally!!

ANCIENT TREE FORUM AUTUMN FORUM – if you missed any of these sessions, they are now on-line.

TREE HEALTH & DISEASES – the main threats to our trees and ways to protect them - Ana Perez-Sierra

VETERAN OAKS – insect diversity and ecosystem functioning - Ross Wetherbee

ANCIENT AND VETERAN TREE SOILS – damage, compaction, consequences and solutions - Neville Fay

JOHN STOKES ON COUNTRYFILE – Countryfile's 'Plant Britain' autumn special celebrates the magic of trees and hedgerows in combatting climate change, boosting wildlife and our own wellbeing

ONE IN THREE TREES FACE EXTINCTION IN WILD - the 'State of the World's Trees' report finds that of 60,000 tree species, 30% (17,500) are currently at risk of extinction (meaning there are fewer than 50 individuals remaining in the wild.. That means there are twice the number of threatened tree species globally than threatened mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles combined.

(Contributed by **Dave Arnold-Tree Solutions Arb Ltd**)

PROTECTING TREES FROM PESTS AND DISEASES - a pilot scheme proposed by the Forestry Commission, initially focusing on ash, sweet chestnut, larch and spruce.

(Contributed by **Dave Arnold-Tree Solutions Arb Ltd**)

REWILDING PROJECT - Approval of UK's largest urban rewilding project at Allestree Park in Derby.

GROWING TREES FROM LOCAL SEEDS - Tree Council webinar.

MENAI WHITEBEAM - Bangor University's efforts to protect this endangered tree. It's one of the trees at risk of extinction.

'WOOD WISE' - this Spring 2021 issue from the Woodland Trust has articles on the state of the UK's woods; the contribution of ancient woods to CO₂ concentration and much more.

FORESTS - articles about forests and deforestation are very popular now:

THEN AND NOW: WHY DEFORESTATION IS SUCH A HOT TOPIC' - BBC News item.

TEN GOLDEN RULES FOR RESTORING FORESTS - from Kew's 'read and watch' series.

NORTHERN FOREST PLAN - BBC News item - the plan for 50 million trees gets a £15million boost.

FORESTS OF THE FUTURE - can planting trees really compensate for carbon emissions? - an episode of Radio 4's "Costing the Earth".

BRAZIL SEES WORST DEFORESTATION OF AMAZON RAINFOREST IN 15 YEARS - and

CORPORATE MASS TREE PLANTING 'DAMAGING' NATURE - and

HUMAN ACTIVITY MAKES FORESTS EMIT CARBON - and

SHOULD WALES BECOME A FOREST NATION? - four more BBC News items.

URBAN PLANNING: **'WE ARE AXING TREES TO SAVE WATER'** - water shortage in South Africa.

'THE MAN TURNING CITIES INTO GIANT SPONGES TO EMBRACE FLOODS' - not just trees.

GROWTH STRATEGIES IN PLANTS (1hr) - not specifically trees; includes a comparison between the growth strategies of plants and animals.

EVOLUTION of flowering plants (including trees):

DARWIN'S ABOMINABLE MYSTERY (35mins) - the mysterious origin of flowering plants. Richard Buggs discusses why fossil angiosperms are absent from the Jurassic period and "suddenly" appear in the middle Cretaceous.

IN SEARCH OF THE ROOTS OF ROOTS (1hr) - 400 million years of plant root evolution.

PTES HEDGEROW SURVEY AND APP - for anyone interested in surveying hedges.

WINTER TREE IDENTIFICATION WALK IN PROSPECT PARK, READING - one of the RTWN walks.

TREES OF FOX HILL - an outline map showing paths and approximate location of certain trees.

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



I love this painting of a Baobab tree by Hannah, my six-year-old granddaughter. She learnt about the **Tingatinga**-style of painting at school.

The 'memo' was sent to me by Sarah Swatridge. It's on this noticeboard at **Tiggywinkles** wildlife hospital near Aylesbury. She spent a lovely day there in September and highly recommends the guided tour.



Some sources used in this issue: all web pages accessed 18-11-2021 (unless stated otherwise) Links embedded in the text are not repeated here. Email me if you want a list of them.

p12-Species in Focus: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adansonia_digitata <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adansonia>
<https://aduna.com/blogs/learn/the-baobab-tree>
https://www.newscientist.com/article/2288512-how-domesticating-the-african-baobab-tree-could-secure-its-future/?utm_source=nsday&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NSDAY_310821
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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adansonia_digitata#/media/File:Baobab_Adansonia_digitata.jpg;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adansonia_digitata#/media/File:Adansonia_digitata_-_baobabs.JPG

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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.