



On 18th November, we had **8,585** trees in our database and **13,684** photographs

Welcome to the latest issue of Tree Watch.

It's autumn again, and along with the colourful leaves, fungal fruiting bodies attract our attention.

The photos here relate to features in this issue. There's an earthstar fungus from Paddick's Patch (see [page 4](#)); a group of fire shield fungi (see [page 5](#)) and red oak tree leaves (see [page 7](#)).

Starting with this issue, we have a new regular feature "National (Tree) Treasures", in which Sarah Swatridge will tell us about trees at National Trust properties (see [page 11](#)).

Also in this issue, there's a round-up of tree-related issues across the Borough. These were reported at the recent Tree Forum meeting and I hope to be able to include similar reports in future issues. The next Forum meeting is not until March and so won't feature in the February issue; but I hope to be able to report some Tree Week events.

The next issue of Tree Watch will be February 2023 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 - TreeWatch@wdvta.org.uk**

Don't forget words underlined in dark green are links to further details (obviously not when printed).



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Events - Dec 2022 - Feb 2023

❖ **Sunday 4th December 10:30 - Winter walk in Ruscombe and optional pub lunch at the Royal Oak.**
Meet at Ruscombe Church. Please [register](#) your interest in joining this walk.

Non-WDVTA events:

❖ **Sunday 18 Dec 10:00-13:00 - Friends of Fox Hill Wood - Conservation Working Parties.** See [website](#) for details and map.

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

TREE WATCHING FROM MY CHAIR

Alison Griffin

The calendar is telling us it's Autumn, but the weather was so mild in early October that the leaf colour changes seemed to halt for many trees, especially the English oaks which are even now largely green and in nearly full canopy. The non-native oaks on the other hand have continued their autumn colour changes and the bronze and reds have made it very easy to see which oak trees are native and which are not as you drive by.



One of my favourite trees for autumn colour is the liquid amber (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) and some of these were planted in Peach Place in Wokingham when it was redeveloped. This one (left) particularly caught my eye recently both for its colour and for its prolific production of fruit.

Oak trees are having a mast year as those of you who live near any will know, with roads, paths and gardens carpeted with acorns. I've also seen that the local sweet chestnut trees have plenty of nuts too and these are much larger than normal.



The award for 'The most confused tree this Autumn', however, goes to a horse chestnut in Arborfield (right). Derek Oxbrough alerted me to it in mid-October. Having lost all its leaves and with its conkers having fallen as well, with the warm spell, the tree decided that spring had come and burst its buds into new blossom and leaves. An unusual sight but not something



that will be good for the tree as it needs to "hibernate" and conserve its stored energy for next year. [See Tree Council [article](#) -Ed]

In the August edition of Tree Watch there was advice about watering young trees. Maybe Gloucester City Council needed to take notice as in September there were multiple press reports that over 12,000 trees that had been planted in the city in the early months of the year had died because they had not been watered.

Elaine also reported on the overgrown state of the 'Duck and the World' sculpture in Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve. We are pleased to hear that Earley Town Council have cut back the vegetation and are replacing the information board. When he saw that piece in the newsletter, Derek Oxbrough sent us a photograph of another carved tree stump, this time a pheasant (left), that he saw when walking on the 'Sandstone Trail' in Shropshire.



Reports of tree felling:

Since the last edition of Tree Watch we have had messages through our website from members of the public concerned about tree felling in their area. The largest scale was on the Haines Hill estate in Hurst where an 8m wide stretch along significant lengths of the sides of two roads were felled (photo right). Over a month after receiving those messages, there was a [report](#) in the local paper giving the estate's explanation for the work. It's being carried out as part of a cycle of woodland management, which includes health and safety issues related to the adjacent roads. Significant new planting is being undertaken. Whilst the estate did have the requisite Forestry Commission felling licence and



permissions; it's surprising that they did not inform local residents through the parish council and local social media prior to starting the work.

As well as Hurst, we have recently had emails from residents in Finchampstead and Barkham reporting tree felling and asking for advice. In both cases, the Borough's tree officers have placed a TPO on the relevant area to protect the remaining trees. In the Barkham case, a planning application has now been submitted to develop land which the lost trees bordered. Over the years we have had similar issues and enquiries and have developed several [FAQs](#) (Frequently Asked Questions) on our website. In essence the advice for situations like these three is:

- Who owns the land? - find out from local knowledge or the Land Registry
- Are the trees covered by a TPO? - use the WBC map, there is a link on our website map page
- Does the amount of felling mean that a Forestry Commission licence is required?
- Are residual trees in the area at risk? - if so, contact WBC and apply for an urgent TPO
- Contact local town/parish councillors to ensure they are aware and ask them for help
- Contact the local borough councillor to ensure they are aware and ask them for help

Hedge Trees

Over 10 years ago Jon Stokes introduced us to the Tree Council's campaign for Hedge Trees, to try to identify native tree species growing in hedges that were getting cut back every time the hedge was mechanically cut. Stephen Loyd and Michael Rea in particular took up the challenge and with the consent of the Borough Council they identified several 'hedge trees' within hedges that cross Cantley playing fields. The initial work involved haloing the trees (by clearing the hedge from around the tree) and pruning them to encourage a vertical leader shoot. Michael regularly checks on the trees and takes photographs. It is a real success story with the trees growing well as you can see below.



H11 when identified in August 2012 and its development in May 2016, October 2018 and October 2022.



H40 in December 2015 and its subsequent development in May 2016, November 2017 and October 2022.

We do need to increase the number of hedge trees to improve the biodiversity and ecological benefits of all hedges, so if you are able to follow in Michael and Stephen's footsteps and have a local hedge where you know the landowner and think they will be agreeable to your work, do get in touch with Stephen Loyd to get advice.

Trees and Telecommunications

There have been reports and discussions, not all of them well informed and balanced, about the impact the rollout of 5G might have on trees because of potential signal absorption by the canopies, particularly when wet, leading to tree pruning or even felling. The Association of Tree Officers has just published a [report](#)

written with the engagement of the mobile phone industry infrastructure providers. It covers when trees can and cannot be pruned by providers without permission and gives advice on the planning process for the siting of cabinets and masts to minimise the impact on local trees. The link above is also on our website, towards the bottom of the Publications page.

Platinum Jubilee Trees

Last year Barbara Stagles managed to buy five locally grown English oak trees which are both Barbara's Jubilee Trees and our WDVTA Platinum Jubilee trees. Two were planted last winter, one in Swallowfield and one in Winnersh. The remaining three will be planted this month, one in Charvil meadows, one in Riverside in Wokingham and one in Wooshill. In the next edition of Tree Watch we will have photographs and location details for all five of these trees.

With the passing of the Queen we are very interested to hear of any commemorative trees planted in her memory. Do send us details of any you hear about. There may also be plans for commemorative trees for the coronation of King Charles, but as this has been fixed for May next year, I hope the trees will be planted from November 2023 onwards.

And finally ...

The October walk at Paddick's Patch to look at autumn fungi was well attended and very interesting (*see below*). I was particularly taken with these clusters of brown spherical fungi, about 1cm diameter, growing on an old stump. They are the fluted birds nest fungus (*Cyanthus striatus*). The spheres open up when the spores are ripe and rain drops splashing into the 'cups' disperse the spores.



WOODLAND FUNGI WALK

This walk at Paddick's Patch on the Waingels Road in Woodley was enthusiastically and knowledgeably led by Keith Boseley. He'd taken us on an equally interesting walk there in November 2015, looking at ancient oak coppice stools and other trees.

As we assembled for the walk, Keith pointed out a tiny collared earthstar (*Geastrum triplex*), just 2.4cm diameter (*see page 1*). In his introduction, he described a selection of fungi he'd collected for us (including the ones Alison mentioned).



Two poisonous ones to avoid:

Right:

Brown or Common roll-rim fungus (*Paxillus involutus*) - diameter 13cm; at the base of a wooden mushroom (there are several at Paddick's Patch). This fungus is also called the '[Timebomb Toadstool](#)'



Far right:

[Panthercap](#) fungus (*Amanita pantherin*) - diameter 6cm.

IDENTIFYING FUNGI

In September, Mike Dawson found these fungi growing on the remains of an old fallen, rotten ash tree near Beech Hill, across the border with Swallowfield. The group is shown on page 1. I put these two photos on the British Mycological Society Facebook page and had four replies identifying it as the fire shield or orange shield fungus (*Pluteus aurantiorugosus*), together with a comment that there was "a lot of it around this year". Malcolm Storey (whom some of you may know) has a [website](#) detailing known trophic relationships. This fungus is [recorded](#) as being saprophytic on fallen, decaying ash trunks, as well as other broadleaf species (including beech, poplar and elm).



THIS SUMMER'S DROUGHT

RTWN report that this summer's drought and exceptionally hot weather has greatly stressed many trees in the Reading area, particularly birch, beech and rowans. Even some species thought to be drought tolerant, notably tulip trees, have been quite badly affected. In Prospect Park all of the tulip trees in the avenue leading from the car park to Bath Road (which were originally planted by Tree Wardens in 2012) lost their leaves during the very hot weather; but most of them are gradually showing signs of recovery, with new leaves emerging in September as a result of some welcome rain.



Above: one rowan tree is healthy but the adjacent one is suffering from drought - at St Andrews Churchyard, Assandun, Rochford, Essex. So dry, there was a warning sign about the large cracks appearing in the churchyard.

WALKING IN HIGHWOOD, WOODLEY

Barbara Stagles

On a wet Saturday morning, November 5th, I was pleased to join a small party of Reading Tree Wardens walking around the public footpaths of Highwood, Woodley. The group was led by conservation volunteer, Marcus Wheeler.

Highwood is now a Wokingham Borough Council local nature reserve, managed by the council in conjunction with the volunteer group, 'Friends of Highwood'. The 15.2 acres were once part of estates belonging to Woodley Lodge (later Bulmershe Court). It contains the remains of an arboretum with a variety of trees but, in particular, a large number of majestic coastal redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*). As well as an *Araucaria* (monkey



puzzle), western hemlocks, English oaks and sweet chestnuts, there are some interesting holm oaks with twisted trunks (photos left and below).



Another feature of the reserve is a sizeable area of rare lowland heath; cleared and maintained to provide a habitat for different kinds of wildlife. Woodley and the surrounding countryside would once have included extensive stretches of this kind of landscape in years gone by, so this Highwood patch of land is an important historical relic.

The history of this woodland and reserve is rather sketchy so far but it is thought that many trees growing here were felled during the First World War. It would be very interesting to find out more details about Highwood's story sometime - if this is possible.

Linda Martin and John Southgate have recorded over 100 trees in the Highwood woodland; 40% of which are coastal redwoods. This has been no small task as many of the trees are very close together. They deserve our sincere thanks and appreciation.

The photos below show Linda by the holm oak with a twisted trunk (MRN 8352) and one of the multi stem coastal redwoods (MRN 8350) she recorded.



THE VETERAN TREE SURVEY

Although the survey has now closed, we have added 11 new trees in Hurst, with the details coming from an arboricultural survey for a planning application (PA220458). There have also been some corrections and updates. We've added 40 new photos this month.

Barbara Stagles updated her record of the relic apple (MRN [4413](#)) by the Emm Brook. Steve Oram at the 'People's Trust for Endangered Species' suspects it may be a 'Lord Derby', a variety used in Victorian times. Barbara had been thinking of getting cuttings from it, but she thinks that's not necessary now as it's possible to buy 'Lord Derby' apple trees locally. The surrounding vegetation has been cleared. It now has a TPO and a new Greenway runs past it; replacing the old footpath, and visible in the photo (right).

Brian Moffat added some lovely autumn photos to his record of the superb 100-year old red oak (*Quercus rubra*) in the middle of Folly Court housing estate (MRN [9332](#)). There are now 18 photos attached to this record.



The delightful photo below of MRN [2163](#) was added by Dennis Bryant. This is the tree surveyed by local scouts in 2005 and used as the cover photo for the first edition of our Survey Handbook (below). Dennis verified the record in 2016 and was extremely concerned when an application to fell it was made. Fortunately, permission was refused and a TPO was placed on the tree.



The small horse is one of a troop of 8 identical, small, white circus ponies grazing in the meadow around the tree. They are very inquisitive and friendly and belong to the Lands End Equestrian Centre in Whistley Mill Lane.

Derek Oxbrough suggested MRN [6932](#) at The Junipers in Barkham is a bundle-planted tree. It's not very obvious in the photos for this record, but after looking carefully at the trunk, he could see about twelve identifiable upright stems.

In "[Check a Tree](#)" week, Janet Firth and Derek checked the one tree that ATI have classified as ancient in Barkham. It's MRN [7032](#). His new photos have been added to our record and that of the ATI.

AN ANCIENT TREE IN EARLEY?

Barbara Stagles

In early September, when Stephanie Mackay and I were measuring the girth of one of the 60 Diamond Jubilees planted in 2012/13 by WDVTA and Wokingham Borough Council, we were asked by someone watching us whether we knew about a huge ancient tree that was growing in Earley. Unlike our Jubilee tree which was just 32cm in girth and between 15 and 18 years old, he said this tree was massive and that local folk believed it to be between 1,000 and 1,500 years old.

We pricked up our ears with interest, but cast some doubt on this assessment. How could we have all missed such an enormous tree in Earley in our WDVTA veteran tree survey? We knew some trees had measured over 6m in girth but, magnificent as these were, they were only likely to be about 400-450 years old. We certainly had seen ancient trees in Windsor Great Park thought to be 1,000 years old, but these were enormous, wide-spreading structures. They had hollowed and died back over the centuries, but still struggle on, producing many live branches with leaves every season. We hadn't found any tree of this description and age in the Wokingham area.



When Stephanie and I called at the place where we were told the tree grew, we did indeed find a distinctive veteran standing proud in a garden at the end of Knossington Close (photo left). It has a very large trunk and looks strong and healthy. The house owner was working in the garden and told us she was taking care of the tree. She had been very saddened by the unsympathetic way the previous owners allowed it to be pruned. Recently a large branch had dropped off and the tree is showing other signs of aging. This of course is a natural aging process and could last hundreds of years. There was a lot of ivy growing around the trunk and the owner will be trimming this back. Together we measured the girth of the tree over the ivy and estimated that it was now about 5.8m.

When we checked the WDVTA database we found the tree had been recorded in February 2008 with a girth of

5.44m (MRN **1666**). The record was accompanied by a sad photo (right) of a very large, bare tree showing signs of harsh and ugly pruning in spite of the fact that it had been included in a TPO. It seems that in 14 years it has grown about 35cm fatter. It is difficult to estimate the age of the tree using the **chart** we have on the WDVTA website as we cannot be certain about the conditions in which it grew in the past. We know from old maps that it was growing for most of its years in an agricultural landscape, but this changed dramatically when the Earley estate was built and it is now enclosed by housing. It is probably between 350 and 400 years old and may have some connections with the veteran trees growing in **Maiden Place**.

It is great to know that people have been excited at having an historic tree in their neighbourhood and, even though it has been damaged by inept pruning and isn't of such a great age as they imagined, it is never the less one of the oldest features of the Earley landscape and an important living monument to be valued and cared for.



"The next big release of land came with the sale of the remnants of the Maiden Erlegh estate to Cooper Estates. Wokingham Rural District Council refused the application but this was overturned by Government Inspectors hence the local planning authority lost control of the development and little open land was left for the residents."

Earley Local History Group "Earley Days" (referring to late 1950s).

SADLY DEPARTED

This apparently healthy, tall, mature conifer, which isn't on our database, was felled in August.

Linda Ashwell came across it by chance, whilst walking past the Flower Pot pub in Remenham. The tree was taller than the pub. The pub's car park was closed to accommodate the necessary equipment. Linda found it really interesting seeing how the five men worked on the tree, having been lifted to the top with their chain saws. She was told the tree was pushing over the wall of the garden where it was growing.

Many of you will be familiar with this pub, at the junction of Remenham Lane and Ashton Lane, as it's been the starting point of many walks. It's been temporarily closed since at least August, when Linda took this photo. The former licensees have moved out after being tenants for 29 years. It's still listed as a [Brakspear pub](#), but its [website](#) has been taken down and its future seems uncertain.



TREE OF THE YEAR...

The Woodland has announced their **Tree of the Year** for 2023. It's the Waverley Abbey Yew in Surrey.



These photos were taken in 2012 and it was mentioned in a talk we had some years ago. It's growing on the ruins of the first Cistercian monastery founded in Britain 900 years ago.

It reminded me of other trees growing on built structures.

You may remember this photo (right) from Tree Watch [#52](#) p14. It shows a the small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*) in the Lindeboom Cemetery in Ypres, enveloping the gravestone of Private J. MacPherson, who died in July 1917, aged 33 years. Aurel Sercu, who took this photo, is an archaeologist in Ypres who discovered a forgotten battle. He couldn't identify anyone as all the dog tags had eroded, but then he found a spoon, with a clear number on and it was Kerry's great uncle William who had never been spoken about. She didn't know about him at all. Everyone was so sad he died as he'd come home injured in December 1914 and chose to go back and was then killed. Aurel delved and delved and was misled by a wrongly scribed village name in Kent. Kerry found him looking and realised he was talking about her grandfather and his brother. As William married while home at Christmas, it was thought there may have been



a descendent conceived but sadly no. Aurel has chosen to send Kerry the spoon (*right*), which had been on his desk for years as something very special to him. A documentary was made about the battle and shown on BBC2 and Kerry has watched this.

Another example can be seen in Reading Cemetery at Cemetery Junction. A common beech tree has grown adjacent to a tomb stone recording the death of Rinah Clark who died in November 1851, aged 81, and Charles Chapman Clark who was also 81 when he died in June 1890. These photos taken in May 2013.



Veteran Tree Survey snapshot

PHOTOS

41% (3,534)
trees with only one
photo

12% (994)
trees with no
photos

3% (268)
trees with more
than 4 photos

18
most photos for one
tree MRN [9332](#)

This month's ACRONYMS / INITIALISMS

Related to [COP27](#), held this month in Egypt:

COP (or **CoP**) - Conference of the Parties

UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

LDCs - Least-developed countries

NDCs - Nationally determined contributions

IPO - Indigenous peoples organizations

SBSTA - Subsidiary body of scientific and technological advice

SBI - Subsidiary body of implementation

NGO - Non-governmental organisation

BINGO - Business and industry NGOs

ENGO - Environmental NGOs

RINGO - Research and independent NGOs

TUNGO - Trade union NGOs

YOUNGO - Youth NGOs

NAZCA - not an initialism, but the name of the 'Global Climate Action Portal' established in 2014 by the UN, France and Peru, to write and check all climate commitments.

For explanations of these and others related to the UNFCCC see the [Wikipedia entry](#).

ANGLESEY ABBEY

My husband, Graham, and I recently spent a few days in Suffolk and on our way back stopped at Anglesey Abbey near Cambridge. It's a National Trust property and has the most beautiful, carefully planned gardens - not in a parterre sort of way. I find them too formal. These were more works of art making the best of nature.

We visited in early October, so some of the trees were beginning to show their autumn glory. This Red Maple



definitely made you stop and reach for your camera/phone. I seem to remember walking beside a yew hedge and then as I turned the corner - wow! this magnificent tree standing out from the crowd. We'd gone to Anglesey Abbey because some time ago I'd seen a picture of 'ghost' like birch trees. I've seen one recently, as Barbara has a stunning Himalayan Birch (*Betula utilis* 'Jacquemontii') in her back garden! The image had stayed with me and the ones here certainly didn't disappoint. As we walked through the car park, there was an avenue of them. They are distinctive because of their white bark and this avenue really drew you toward the entrance. I almost thought, well this is what I came to see, but there were more treats inside. Several areas of these distinctive white-barked Himalayan birch trees had been planted, all in neat rows. I could

imagine that in the twilight, they'd be quite ghostly and serene. They really do have a certain beauty and elegance about them, but the carefully planned planting in rows enhanced the effect. Don't ask me how many photos I took!

Inside the National Trust café they'd used trunks from these birch trees to form a divide between the area where you chose your food and the seating area. I suppose it's another way of 'bringing the outside in' and recycling the wood.

A real surprise was walking through a small area of woodland - beech trees, I think. Underneath was a carpet of cyclamen. The photo



doesn't really do them justice. I love to see a bluebell wood in the spring, but this was all the more special because it was October and there isn't so much colour around, especially at ground level. I found I slowed down and savoured the moment here. It was so peaceful and pretty.

Something else I wasn't expecting was a whole garden planted with dahlias. I lost count of the different varieties - thirty, forty maybe - all tall and even, thoughtfully planted but such a wide rainbow of colours. If you ever contemplate planting dahlias, this would be the place to come to for inspiration; although instead of just choosing one, you may end up with several!

As you may have guessed, I think this was probably my favourite garden (so far). There were lots of mature cedars etc as in so many stately homes, but also a wonderful and clever blend of mini gardens focussing on one or two types of trees/plants. Well worth a visit if you're ever in the Cambridge area.

SPECIES IN FOCUS – RAILWAY POPLAR (*POPULUS X CANADENSIS* 'REGENERATA')

10 miscellaneous facts about the Railway Poplar:

1. This is one of several clones of the hybrid black poplar (*Populus x canadensis*) and is often referred to as *Populus* 'Regenerata'. It's a female clone, but produces little 'cotton' as most of the flowers are sterile.
2. Called the railway poplar, it was frequently planted alongside railway lines, because of its resistance to pollution and non-production of seeds.
3. By the 1970s, as well as being common along main railway lines into cities, in coal-yards and sidings, it was frequently used in shelter belts, on village greens and in London parks.
4. It's not planted much now because of its susceptibility to bacterial canker. It's even been banned in France, north of Paris, because of this susceptibility. Disease-resistant varieties are used instead.
5. This clone originated in Arcueil, a suburb of Paris, in 1814. It was probably a spontaneous cross between two other clones, 'Serotina' and 'Marilandica'.
6. The date of its introduction into Britain is unknown; but the Knap Hill nursery advertised it around 1870 and called it 'the new Canadian poplar' or *P. canadensis nova*; recommending it for its very fast growth and its ability to grow well in a smoky atmosphere.
7. Ecologically, it's considered of little value to UK wildlife.
8. We don't have any in our veteran tree database, but perhaps some may be included in the 24 trees recorded as '*Populus* sp'.
9. We do have one in our "Commemorative and Special Trees Inventory" ([W149](#)). It's in Wokingham Town, on the top of an ancient earthwork between Lesley Sears Playing Field and Viking Field. It's in the 'Significant visually' category and was nominated by Brian Moffatt, who described it as "a magnificent tree. I love the way its upper branches stretch to sweep the sky." These are his photos, showing the tree prominent on the skyline; the fissured bark and the female catkins. Others have also commented on its striking appearance.
10. TROBI's 'Berkshire County Champion: Girth & Height' for this variety is in Eton college (# 50607). In 1997 its girth was 4.96m (at 1.5m) and it was 34m tall. Our tree has a girth of 2.36m.



RECENT ACTIVITIES

We have a Tree Forum meeting three times a year to discuss all tree matters and the various projects we have. Below is a summary of those activities that have not been reported elsewhere. The 10-year review of the diamond jubilee trees and the planting of our platinum jubilee trees will be reported in future issues.

CHARVIL

- Queen's Green Canopy for Platinum Jubilee - Mike Heath (Charvil Parish Councillor) facilitated 77 trees to be planted last year.
- There is a WhatsApp group 'Green Charvil' used to monitor watering, progress and difficulties with these trees. Mike also met with the Headmaster of Charvil Primary because some of the pupils had pulled up some of these trees. It is hoped the primary school will become more involved in watering the replacement trees to help prevent this happening again.
- As part of WBC's Tree Project, 800 trees have been planted in Charvil Meadows since October 2021, to form a native hedgerow. They include hazel, hawthorn, dog rose, spindle berry and field maple. Unfortunately, there were no plans to nurture these trees and it looks as though many have not survived the hot summer.
- Charvil Guides/Brownies/Rainbows have independently ordered 90 hedging trees to fill in the gaps in the hedge at East Park Farm car park. They will monitor and water them.
- Six apple trees (all different varieties) were planted to establish the start of the Charvil Community Orchard. Residents from The Hawthorns water these and all six are looking healthy.
- A rainwater harvesting system has been installed in the nearby Charvil Village Hall and this water is used to water the orchard.
- It is hoped that at least another 6 fruit trees will be planted this Nov/Dec. Sponsors contribute approx. £52 each. 12 trees will be planted if enough interest.
- Charvil Village fete 4th September 2022 - the parish council promoted the orchard sponsorship scheme - looking for sponsors for 6 or 12 trees and for more volunteers to water.
- The 24 silver birches planted in St Patrick's Rec have been regularly watered and are doing well. However, a replacement lime is to be replaced (again) this Autumn/Winter. Watering in this area is not straight-forward.
- The annual Ash Tree monitoring continues for the third year with no obvious signs of deterioration.
- 155 trees (30 goat willow, 10 Rowan, 30 small leaf limes, 10 wild cherry, 30 hawthorns, 15 hazel and 30 downy birch) are due to be planted during National Tree Week (Nov/Dec 2022). It has been agreed that some will be planted in Charvil Country Park including an avenue of limes.
- The silver birches planted last winter in Chiltern Drive are all alive and continue to be watered by residents in that area.
- Claire Andersen has been watering the Anniversary Elm and the Spanish Elm in East Park Farm car park. Both continue to thrive.
- The 5 Elms in Charvil Water Meadows are also doing well and are monitored by Sarah Swatridge. The water level in the nearby river has made it very difficult to water this year.
- Charvil has been fortunate enough to be awarded one of Barbara's Oaks. It will be planted in Charvil Meadows SU 77947 76331 and is hoped to eventually replace an oak there which is in decline.

EARLEY - The Earley Green Fair resumed this year and WDVTA had a successful presence (thanks to Jane Sellwood). The Town Council is discussing further tree surveys, but has made no progress yet.

HURST- The disconcerting amount of tree felling on Haines Hill Estate, mentioned by Alison, included two of our recorded trees (MRN [5392](#) and MRN [5393](#)). More trees have been planted at Dinton Pastures.

RUSCOMBE - 17 new flowering cherry street trees planted last winter survived the harsh summer conditions thanks to diligent watering by residents.

TWYFORD - Two well established trees have suddenly died this summer. One was a memorial tree planted in the 1990s to commemorate 100 years of the local church.

WARGRAVE- A local piece of woodland that was put up for auction has been bought by local resident neighbours.

WOKINGHAM TOWN -

- Funding has been lost for the tree work proposed for the Riverside Walk by the Emm Brook and so work has stopped.
- A 350-home development proposal has been submitted for land bordering Barkham with a planned access road through current woodland. Some parts of two areas of woodland, several hedgerows and quite a few trees would be lost if the proposal goes ahead.

RECOMMENDED READING, VIEWING AND LISTENING

Just click on the green links.

'CHECK A TREE' WEBINAR - The Woodland Trust designated the last week of October as 'Check a Tree' week. This video explains how to do that and describes their survey. Anyone can check an ATI tree at any time - not just during 'Check a Tree' week. If you check one of our trees, please let me have the details too. The **Woodland Trust** and the **Ancient Tree Forum** have several videos on YouTube.

'FRIENDS OF RUSCOMBE WOODS' celebrate their 30th anniversary.

FOX HILL FOOTPATH UPDATE - WBC's response to a footpath application made 2 years ago.

TREES FOR READING - an initiative set up under the 'Ethical Reading' banner. They've planted 80 trees since 2019, including 52 this year. There's a map showing locations and species. Funding comes from local businesses, individual people and from the Forestry Commission's 'Urban Tree Challenge Fund'.

PROSPECT PARK TREE CUT DOWN BY READING COUNCIL - it was storm-damaged!

THE COST OF ASH DIEBACK - BBOWT has already spent £400,000 on ash tree clearance and expects to double that over the next few years.

THE POPLARS OF BRITAIN - Forestry Commission bulletin 92 "Poplars for Wood, Production and Amenity". Chapter 3 (pp33-37) is a useful guide "Field recognition of the chief poplars grown in Britain".

COMMUNITY ORCHARDS ARE ON THE RISE

WELSH COVID WOODLAND MEMORIAL PLAN CUT BACK.

CLIMATE CHANGE THREATENS HEALTH AND SURVIVAL OF URBAN TREES.

MORE THAN HALF OF THE WORLD'S PALM TREES IN DANGER

GIANT 'SPACE BROLLY' TO WEIGH EARTH'S FORESTS

HOW PLANT EVOLUTION CHANGED THE COMPOSITION OF THE EARTH'S CRUST.

IS FINLAND'S WOOD CITY THE FUTURE OF BUILDING?

HELSINKI'S NEW BUILDING HELD UP BY TREES (mentioned in the last issue)

From the Tree Council

NEW TREE GROWER'S GUIDE [Their 2011 tree **planting guide** and **video** are still available.]

SEED GATHERING SEASON: ACORNS AROUND THIS AUTUMN!

HEDGE TALKS -from national hedgerow week.

For some lovely photos:

AUTUMN COLOUR AT WAKEHURST

AUTUMN COLOUR AT KEW - with links at the bottom of the pages to explore further.

8 ICONIC TREES at English Heritage sites (but not in Berkshire)

11 INCREDIBLE TREES - the first two are very familiar but you won't believe number 9!

FREAKY FUNGI

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

Another contribution from Sarah Swatridge: We "played at the newish Adventure Golf in Henley. The 18-hole course features Henley Bridge, the Town Hall, the Kenton Theatre etc AND Rupert's Elm. I must admit I hadn't heard of Rupert's Elm, nor the story attached to it and wondered if other members had. I'm pleased it was considered important enough to be included up there with Matthew Pincent and Steve Redgrave!"

It's the 18th hole and the information board explains its significance: 'Henley was at the centre of some of the fiercest fighting between Royalists and Parliamentarians during the Civil War. It is said that Charles I's cousin, Prince Rupert, had a Parliamentary spy hung from the bough of this elm as a cautionary tale. The elm survived until 1955 when its dead stump was felled, a piece is on display in the River & Rowing Museum.'



Some sources used in this issue: all web pages accessed 28-11-2022 (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: Identification by Coralie Ramsey (personal communication) <http://www.treeregister.org/> (database accessed May 2013)
Mitchell, Alan (1974) 'A Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe' ISBN 0 00 212035 6
<https://treesandshrubsonline.org/articles/populus/populus-x-canadensis/>
https://wiki.bugwood.org/Archive:Poplar/Bacterial_canker [https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/21750/populus-x-canadensis-regenerata-\(f\)/details](https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/21750/populus-x-canadensis-regenerata-(f)/details)
<https://davisla.wordpress.com/2013/06/19/plant-of-the-week-populus-x-canadensis-robusta/>
<http://www.identitree.com/find?name=railway+poplar&q=Find>

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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.