



Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association

Tree Watch

Issue 67



May 2026



Our Veteran Tree Database was closed in June 2024. The **8,696** trees and **13,976** photos are detailed on our [map](#).

Welcome to the latest issue of Tree Watch.

We are delighted to have a new chairman. It's Cathy Boddy and you can read about her on page [6](#), in a resurrected 'Profile' feature. Not only that, but we also have a new Tree Warden Coordinator, Denise Tolan. Both are comparatively new WDVTA members and have already been very active. Cathy has contributed to Tree Watch and has rejuvenated our dormant Facebook page and regularly posts to it. Hence I've included a link to it at the top of this newsletter and there's a link on the home page of our website. Denise is being very active in promoting Tree Warden activities.

You'll see that the Tree Council is planning their annual regional 'Tree Warden Forum' in July this year. There are no details on their website yet. When I googled it, the AI overview included this statement, with a link to our Events page:

Organiser: Usually coordinated in partnership with [The Tree Council](#) and supported by local associations, such as the [Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association](#).



The photo left was sent to me by Michael Rea. It's a bank of young aspen trees on the west side of Redlands Farm Park in Evendons Lane, Wokingham, where our new chairman initiated the planting of a walnut tree ([W155](#)) last November. The mature parents are in a row behind them.

The two photos below left are of the lovely English Oak ([MRN 120](#)) in the NE corner of the same park. It was surveyed in April 2008, when it had a girth of 4.9m at 1.5m, and featured as the cover photo for the Wokingham Borough Council tree report for Wokingham Town Council in 2007. There are 10 trees in our database in Redlands Farm Park, including [MRN 203](#), another English oak, this one on the right side of the entrance to the car park. It's girth was 4.3m at 1.5m in May 2008. Both are classified as veteran by the ATI.



The next issue of Tree Watch will be August 2026 and the copy deadline is 31st July. 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 – June-August 2026

Non-WDVT events:

- ❖ Saturday 4th July - [National Meadows Day](#) - look out for details of local events - possibly at [Langley Mead](#) in Shinfield
- ❖ Saturday 11th July - Tree Warden Forum - Sheffield Park and Gardens, East Sussex [no details yet]

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

AGM

The very successful and well-attended AGM this year concentrated on the completion of the veteran tree survey. It was lovely to see some “old” faces and several representatives from parishes and WBC, who’d been especially invited. Pam Gasspool, who was our coordinator for Sonning until she moved away, came up for the meeting from the Winchester area. After the formal part of the AGM and the end-of-survey presentation, Sam Village, the Tree Council’s National Tree Warden Scheme Coordinator gave an inspiring update on Tree Council recent activities with many ideas for what we might do in the future.

With the completion of the survey and the transition to focus on tree warden activities, the following committee members did not stand for re-election: Alison Griffin, Kerry Clissold, Barbara Stagles, Jane Sellwood, Michael Rea and Elaine Butler. All will continue with their non-committee roles and will support the new committee fully. After many years as Secretary of the association as well as the organizer for so many enjoyable events, Kerry Clissold has stepped down. She was thanked for all the time, effort and friendship she has given to us all and a presentation of some lovely orchids was made to her. In recognition of covering the committee gap left after she stepped back from being Chairman in 2023, a presentation was also made to Alison.

Derek Oxbrough was re-elected as Treasurer, but gave us notice that he intends to stand down at the next AGM. He hopes someone will volunteer to take over the Treasurer role soon, so that they can work with him over the coming year and take over next year.

There were no nominations for the post of secretary to replace Kerry. Do contact us if you think you might like to take on this role.

The committee members elected are: Gabriella Eory, Sarah Hanson, Stephen Loyd, Stephanie Mackay, Claire O’Keeffe, Denise Tolan and Gordon Veitch.

The full list of officers, committee members and non-committee members with posts of responsibility is on our website on the [Contact us page](#). There’s a review of 2025 on the [website](#).

SURVEY COMPLETION REPORT

Alison Griffin

As you are aware, the presentation at the AGM in March was about the completion of our veteran tree survey. Copies of the Survey Completion Report were available at the meeting and an extended version of the report is now also on our [website](#).

Thank you to all the surveyors who completed the feedback for Barbara which was summarised in the report. The online

section for this feedback has now been **extended** and clearly illustrates the many benefits of voluntary surveying work as well as a few of its challenges.

The **printed version** of the report is a brief summary but the on-line version will have some new and extended sections added in the future. It is an addendum to the **10th Anniversary Report** which was written in 2017. Although most of that report is still accurate, if we were writing it now there would be differences and we'd like to capture some of those differences in the on-line version of the completion report.

We would very much welcome feedback for what you would like to see included in the on-line version. For example:

- ❖ We have added a Lessons Learned section
 - What additional lessons would you add?
- ❖ For the parish and town descriptions:
 - Are they still accurate?
 - Was there significant additional surveying after 2017?
 - Has there been new tree planting e.g. community orchards?
 - Have new developments had trees in their landscape planting?
 - Has there been significant tree loss e.g. disease, storms?
- ❖ From the database itself:
 - Are there additional analyses you would like?
 - Would an update for the parish / town data be of interest?

(This might include, for example, the total number of trees recorded and the three most common species in each parish.)

- Are there any other sections in the original report where you believe an update would be useful?

Please send any ideas, requests, proposed revised text or proposed new text to our **webmaster**.



A NEW TREE GROUP IN BUDLEIGH SALTERTON

After the AGM publication, we were delighted to hear from Ellen Singleton-Wood, our original membership secretary, who now lives in Devon. She is setting up a tree group, inspired by what we have done. She says:

"We have since written our vision for our group and linked concrete actions to those. We have 100 saplings from the Woodland Trust to give out on our launch evening at the end of May, plus a photography competition to begin an archive of 'treasured trees'. It's very different here as we don't have all the stunning oaks of Wokingham but we do have some beautiful trees that need nurturing and protecting. With the seaside climate here we're looking into types of trees for the future especially for some seafront planting. They need to weather winter sea storms as well as very dry spells in the summer. We're even investigating what they plant in coastal northern Spain, whilst still focussing on our native species. We also want to record and map our existing trees plus those we're going to plant, so will be looking at what WDVTA did to create the fabulous mapping of trees with all their data linked. Budleigh Salterton is particularly known for the row of pines on the headland as an example. Recording the trees is certainly going to be a long task and at the moment we're just four enthusiastic tree lovers."

I hope we'll be able to bring you updates on their progress.

LOCAL NEWS

St Paul's Churchyard: As reported in '**Wokingham Today**', a new rowan trees has been planted to replace the Cedar of Lebanon (MRN **180**) which had to be felled in October 2024.

Keephatch: Keephatch has been **designated** a Local Nature Reserve. This reflects nearly 20 years of dedication from

the '[Friends of Keephatch](#)', which includes Kerry Clissold and some other WDVTA members.

Hedge laying: At [Hazebrouck Meadows](#) in Arborfield, WBC Countryside Service Rangers have been [teaching](#) traditional hedge-laying techniques to volunteers, students on work experience from St Crispin's School and a placement student from Berkshire College of Agriculture. Work has paused now for the bird nesting season and will continue in November when the trees are dormant.

Community champion: The WBC [Mayor's Honour](#) is awarded to people deemed to have made outstanding contributions to the borough. This year Bob Collis, chairman of the [Earley Environmental Group](#), was one of the recipients. *"Bob has shown remarkable leadership in protecting and enhancing local green spaces. His advocacy for [Swallows Meadow](#) has been instrumental in encouraging partnership between the University of Reading and local residents. Through his tireless efforts, access to the meadow has been improved and he has inspired countless residents and volunteers to also get involved in conservation projects."*

TPO enforcement: Following a 'Freedom of Information Request', the Bristol Tree Forum have [published](#) their findings. They asked 99 local authorities questions about TPO enforcement since January 2024 and 87 responded. The responses revealed 2,328 possible breaches of tree preservation law (1,603 relating to TPO trees and 725 relating to trees in conservation areas). Only 77 (3.3%) of these resulted in any form of enforcement action. There is no data about the validity of the possible breaches, just a record of the number of investigations.

In WBC, there were 53 cases (50 TPOs and 3 in conservation areas).

There were 33 in Windsor & Maidenhead; 12 in Bracknell and 9 in Reading; none in Slough and no data for West Berkshire. There were no enforcements in any of these cases, although Windsor & Maidenhead did issue Tree Replacements Notices (presumably not enforced). Only one prosecution resulted from these investigations. That was in Reading, but it did not result in a successful prosecution.

TREE PROTECTION DURING DEVELOPMENT

Sarah Swatridge

I don't know if this is too controversial...but around December 2025 I noticed Tree Protection signs on Heras fencing on the corner of Pound Lane, Sonning near Sonning Golf Club. I took a photo of the sign because I had not seen one before and thought it was a good idea. Unfortunately, I didn't take a wider view of the site, but you can see there were trees growing behind it, although nothing of significance, I admit. A large oak tree (I think) that used to be in the area was felled one Sunday morning some years ago before planning permission was actually submitted.



On 25th March 2026, with the area being developed for housing, the signs remain, but the trees do not! The areas have been cleared and 'landscaped'. The sign reads 'Tree Protection Do not remove' - this obviously refers to the sign rather than the trees!

Just to point out to readers of Tree Watch that they should be vigilant, even if tree protection signs are on display.

It looks as if the original plans for 54 houses has been reduced to 13 houses, but actually this is only Phase 1, the rest are to follow.

If nothing else...I've got this off my chest!



At the end of March we had a day exploring the City of London. Not a great area for trees of course, but I didn't know that over the last twenty years the City has begun to require any building over 75m in height to incorporate publicly accessible terraces to offset the building's environmental impact. In the Walkie-Talkie building it is called 'The Sky Garden' and is enclosed on the top 3 floors (36 – 38). Booking is needed, but access is free. At 120 Fenchurch Street, no booking is needed and the garden is on the roof (15th floor). Again access is free and it is well worth visiting (*photo left*).

Down at ground level, similar new planning policies are forcing 'people centric' public areas. I particularly liked these striking small pollarded London plane trees in Aldermanbury Square (*below left*). However my favourite tree of the day was a cherry in the nearby garden of the Salters company. It was planted by HRH The Duke of Kent on 20th June 2022 to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (*below right*).



I am sure many of you will have visited Welford Park in West Berkshire to see their impressive woodland display of snowdrops each spring (*photo below*). On every visit I notice more and more trees there with mistletoe. This year I counted over 20 that I could see just from the car park. We were there on a very grey day, but this pollarded lime tree is typical (*right*).



A CHALLENGE FROM SARAH SWATRIDGE

This is a photo of Pipistrelle Way in Charvil.

Who needs to go to Japan for cherry blossom?

The challenge is for Tree Watch readers to find other attractive streets in the borough and photograph them. It doesn't have to be cherry blossom. Send the photos to Tree Watch or upload them to our Google Drive folder:

<https://tinyurl.com/WDVTA-pretty-roads>

where you'll be able to see them all. Please include the road name in the photo filename.



PROFILE – CATHY BODDY

Cathy is our new chairman.

Although I have only been a member of WDVTA for a year, and Tree Warden for Wokingham Without for half that time, I've been involved in woodland conservation at Holt Copse for at least 15 years and before that was hedge laying and coppicing with HAWCs (the Hedge and Woodland Conservationists) based in the Bracknell area.

My "career" has meandered from IT Network Management, through Financial Advice, Counselling and finally Financial Coaching, before I decided that I would rather focus on trees and woodlands instead.

I live on Evendons Lane, conveniently poised between the amenities of town and country, in a little Victorian semi with my husband Karl.

In summer you'll find us serving beer at the Twyford charity beer festival and Wokingham Festival and generally enjoying the outdoors.

Having been lucky enough to grow up in a house with a walnut tree in the back garden, I have a special affinity for walnut trees, so when I noticed how few of them there are in the Wokingham area, I thought I'd see if I could use my role as Environment Lead for Wokingham Rotary club to get one planted in Redlands Farm Park, off Evendons Lane where I live. Having previously planted a native species hedge in Howard Palmer Gardens with Marianna from Wokingham Town Council, I floated the idea and, being a fellow tree enthusiast, she was up for it. Here I am by the 16-foot-high tree ([W155](#)) we planted in November 2025. My plan is for this to be just the first of many trees we'll plant together with various partners.

When I heard that WDVTA needed to find a Chairman to keep going, and having talked with existing members and Denis Tolan, who I'm pleased to say has agreed to be our new Tree Warden Coordinator, I thought I'd give it a go. Our vision is to recapture the camaraderie of the earlier surveying days, build on WDVTA's impressive history, skills, knowledge and network and expand the active projects that can engage and enthuse existing and new tree wardens, so that we can further the cause of planting, caring for and protecting the trees in Wokingham Borough into the future and enjoy them together.



When I first volunteered to be a Tree Warden for Charvil it was because I love trees. That’s still the case. However, what I’ve probably never confessed is that in 2015 my husband and I downsized from Sonning to Charvil as our sons had moved to Woodley and the garden was a full-time job. Our old home was a beautiful 1930s mock-Tudor house with a large garden full of mature trees. Our new home, less than a mile away, was built in 2004 and the entire garden is the size of our old vegetable plot! Whilst we have neighbours on one side with a hazel weeping over our fence, at the back our neighbour has a dense bank of mature leylandii, preventing much growing underneath and blocking out the sunsets. At the front, we do have an ornamental cherry which is a joy whatever the season! But that’s it. Not one in the back and no room to plant anything substantial. None-the-less, there are advantages. A morning pottering and we can make a real difference in our tiny garden, and then spend the afternoon enjoying it! However, last year for Mothering Sunday, I was given two British grown Brown Turkey figs. (I’d just finished reading Elif Shafak’s ‘*The Island of Missing Trees*’). Until then, I’d never considered it possible to grow figs in the UK, although I’ve since discovered two mature fig trees in Charvil. Mine are tiny and in pots. I did get fruit last year but they were late starters and too hard to eat. This year, having nurtured them, they’ve started early, one already has 14 good sized figs! Of course, that doesn’t mean I’ll be harvesting them any time soon, but it’s exciting all the same.



of Acers – one bright lime green and the two others purple/red. They’re so tactile, I love them!

I’ve noticed our neighbour has now planted a small olive in her front garden – mini trees seem to be the thing.

I’m just glad I’m no longer a tree-less Tree Warden!

I’ve now added to my collection of mini trees and bought a Kilmarnock Willow. We used to have one which the birds loved. We’ve packed away our bird feeders until winter on advice from RSPB and I wondered if we’d still get birds, although they continue to use the bird bath. Our previous Kilmarnock died, but, like many dead trees, they keep their beauty. The birds didn’t seem to mind the lack of leaves and continued to perch on its branches. It lasted years and became a real feature. Thinking about it, we also have a couple



***Veteran Tree
Survey snapshot***

PINES

87

trees in our database

28%

in Barkham

6

parishes have none
recorded

5

species

94%

maidens

> 20

Scots and Austrian Pines

1

Japanese Umbrella Pine

THE VETERAN TREE SURVEY - update for MRN [2163](#)

This tree was recorded in the early years of our survey by Stuart Croft, who was a WBC ranger at that time, and a group of scouts. It's a pollarded English oak much loved by the local community and stands in Stanlake Meadow on the bank of Twyford Brook, the boundary between Hurst and Twyford parishes. The meadow is part of the Haines Hill Estate and was the subject of much discussion in 2022, when Haines Hill applied for Planning Permission to fell it, on the grounds that it was a danger to people using the public footpath which runs close by. This despite the fact that the tree stands in a wide meadow and people can skirt around it. WBC tree officers examined the application, turned it down, and placed a TPO on the tree (*see note below*). It was featured in Tree Watch in November 2022 ([issue 55](#) page 7).



Dennis Bryant took this delightful photo of the tree and a small horse in August 2002. It was one of a troop of 8 identical small white circus ponies from the Lands End Equestrian Centre in Whistley Mill Lane. They were very inquisitive and friendly.

Following a query sent recently to WDVTA by a concerned resident, Dennis checked on its current condition, photographed and re-measured it. There is some evidence of the trunk hollowing, some dead fungal growth and a considerable amount of dead wood (a good habitat), but it looks healthy and in good condition.



Its girth at 1.5m:

Oct 2007	5.8m (top photos)
Sept 2009	6.1m
April 2016	6.3m
April 2026	6.7m (photos left)
Averaging a growth of rate 4.5cm/year	

With a girth of 6.7m, this tree is about 500 years old, having germinated in the first part of the 16th century, when Henry VIII was on the throne.

TPO 1886/2022 - it can be accessed by typing the TPO number (just the number 1886/2022) into the search box of the [TPO MAP](#). Click on the tree to get a summary and on the "View" link to find the document. A rather tedious process, but linking to the document itself requires a sign-in!!!

TREE MOSAIC

In the [last issue](#) (page 5), I asked if anyone had a photo of the mural adorning the wall at High Close School in Wiltshire Road, Wokingham. The Arts Society Wokingham funded this mural. Sue Bryant is their Publicity Manager and kindly sent me some photos taken in 2018. I think you'll agree it's superb.



AGROFORESTRY

Radio 4's '[Farming Today](#)' featured agroforestry in the first week of May (starting at 2:4mins; ending at 17:42mins)

Several examples are described:

- 4,500 trees planted on 8% of a farm (leaving 92% arable) resulted in a 400% increase in pollinators and 10 times increase in species richness. After 20 years, arable crop yields had increased, with the crops nearest the trees yielding and performing better than those in the middle of the fields, contrary to what was expected. The contribution of various factors responsible for this and other benefits are discussed in the programme.
- Trees planted inside glass houses to shade crops and attract beneficial insects and the necessary root pruning.
- The improvement of a dairy herd after planting willow trees in fields they grazed. The health benefits of eating the willow included increased fertility and decreased instances of mastitis. There was the added benefit of a willow crop.
- The planting of 20 walnut trees around a milking parlour and collecting yards 10 years ago being very effective in deterring flies; as well as providing a crop of walnuts.
- The importance of hedgerows and how to prune them - not by trimming to the same height every year.

"Tall pines bend with the wind but rarely break"

Traditional saying, possibly based on

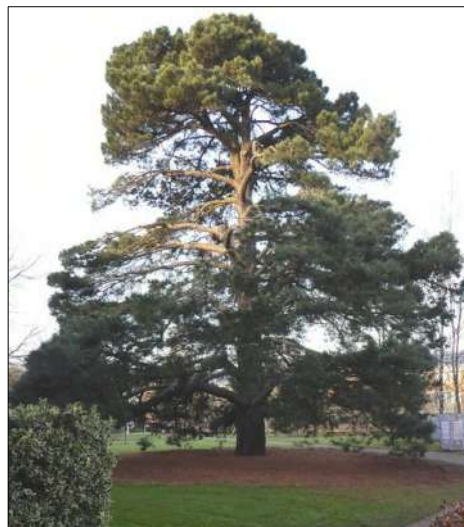
*"The lofty pine is oftenest shaken by the winds;
High towers fall with a heavier crash;
And the lightning strikes the highest mountain.*

Horace (65-8BC)

SPECIES IN FOCUS – MONTEREY PINE (*PINUS RADIATA*)

15 miscellaneous facts about the Monterey Pine

1. Also called the radiata pine (in New Zealand) and insignis pine (*P. insignis* is a synonym and used by the RHS). The specific name refers to cracks that radiate from the base of the seed scale (the umbo).
2. Endemic to three small areas in California and two islands in Mexico (Guadalupe and Cedros), in the coastal fog belt area of Baja California, with poor sandy soils.
3. There are two natural varieties, *binata* endemic to Guadalupe Island and *cedrosensis* endemic to Cedros Island. Most of the trees on Guadalupe Island were destroyed by tens of thousands of feral goats eating the seedlings and causing soil erosion. By 2002 only one hundred trees remained. A program to remove the goats was essentially complete by 2005 and the trees are now regenerating.
4. One of the Californian areas is the 'Monarch Grove Sanctuary' in Monterey Bay, a prime wintering habitat for around 15,000 monarch butterflies.
5. The species was added to the IUCN list of endangered species in 2011 because of its limited range and because of the introduction (in 1986) of a fungal disease, pine pitch canker (*Fusarium circinatum*). In some stands, 80–90% of trees are infected. It is also threatened by the pine shoot moth (*Rhyacionia buoliana*), red band needle blight (*Dothistroma septosporum*) and another fungal shoot blight (*Diplodia pinea*).
6. *P. radiata* was introduced into Britain by the Scottish plant hunter David Douglas in 1833 and widely planted during the 20th century, especially in the south-west.
7. It is the most widely planted pine in the world; the main introduced species in many countries (including Spain, Australia, New Zealand and the world's most remote inhabited island, Tristan da Cunha); and the major plantation tree in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Kenya and South Africa.
8. The timber is used for framing, roofing, furniture, plywood, MDF, chipboard, pallets, crates, pulp and paper.
9. In their natural habitat their average life span is 80–90 years, with a maximum recorded height of 38m (125'). Plantation trees can reach 60m (200') before being harvested. They can grow over 1m/year in UK and up to 2.5m/year in ideal conditions. With our climate getting warmer, it has the potential to become the fastest growing and most productive pine in Britain, with a wider range of sites being suitable for it.
10. Closely related to bishop pine (*P. muricata*) and knobcone pine (*P. attenuata*), it hybridizing readily with both species.
11. They are adapted to regenerate after fire. The cones are serotinous (they remain closed until opened by the heat of a forest fire) and may open in hot weather. The seeds within the cones can remain viable on the tree for up to 20 years.
12. Monterey pine roots will grow downward until physically restricted. Lengths of 12m (39') have been recorded. This allows them to survive in poor sandy soils, but can be a problem where grown in plantations if water is scarce. In South Africa, the removal of large areas of these trees has resulted in significant increases in accessible water.
13. Often planted as windbreaks in coastal area, their spreading roots help to stabilise soil and prevent erosion. Environmental benefits include food for squirrels, mice, voles and crossbills, as well as shelter and nesting sites for birds and insects.
14. It is the most common species of Christmas tree in Australia and New Zealand.
15. There are three in our veteran tree database: one in Arborfield (MRN [5275](#)) and two on the University of Reading campus in Earley (MRNs [2594](#) and [5801](#)). All three are classified as notable by ATI. The photo here is MRN [5801](#). It grew from a seed planted in 1885, had a girth of 1.22m at 1.3m in 1904 and 3.68m at 1.5m in March 2020. It's number 6 on the [Whiteknights Tree Walk](#).



RECOMMENDED READING, VIEWING AND LISTENING

Just click on the green links

YouTube videos:

ATF webinars: [Dead & Decaying Trees](#) – Are they Valued by the Public?

[Axes for Managing Ancient Trees](#)

[Ancient](#) – Reviving the Woods That Made Britain

Exploring the [Giant Sequoias](#)

National Hedgerow Week was 4-10 May
Check the Tree Council [website](#) for possible reports

Radio programmes:

[Savernake Forest](#) and vet trees and [Hedgerow Havens](#) – episodes of Radio 4's 'Open Country'

Fellings and trees at risk or fallen:

The [ancient oak](#) felled at the Toby Carvery in north London was healthy

Man [fined](#) £7,200 for chopping down Oxfordshire yew trees

Firm handed 'record' [fine](#) over illegal tree felling in Loughborough

'[Uprooting](#) my Acer is daft' says bemused Watton homeowner

Scientists warn Australia's "zombie tree" could [vanish](#) within a generation

If the [giant sequoia](#) is dying out, why are there so many seedlings and saplings?

Families [evacuated](#) in Hatch Farm Way as WBC responds to potential 'emergency' as tree falls on pylon

Penton Hook Island in Staines closed because of [ash dieback](#)

Council sorry after [wrong trees](#) cut down in Sherwood Forest

Beetles threaten African [baobabs](#)

New [mahogany](#) species found in Zanzibar – but fewer than 30 trees remain

Tree planting and trees saved:

Two hundred trees planted in one day for Bristol [mini woods](#)

More than [60,000 trees planted](#) at Castle Howard in Yorkshire

Young musicians [plant trees](#) to celebrate 100 years of countryside protection

River Wear [tree planting](#) project completed

Owner of King's Lynn wood [refused permission](#) to fell trees

In the February issue it was squirrels, now it's deer: Deer culling to be made easier to [protect trees](#) and crops

New plans lodged to save three [ancient oak trees](#) in Cowfold, West Sussex

Community comes together to save New Forest's [Queen Oak](#), two years after the King Oak's demise

Hope blooms at Trewithen Gardens after [Storm Goretti](#) felled trees

England's [largest forest](#) (Kielder in Northumberland) marks its centenary

Rare [wet woodland](#) given protected status

Trees and climate:

Urban trees emerge as the biggest [carbon sink](#) in cities

Planting trees in the sea could act as a [huge carbon sink](#) and save millions of dollars in storm damage every year.

Novel research finds unexpected [climate resilience](#) in up to 36% of the Amazon forest

Africa's forests have [flipped](#) from carbon sink to carbon source

Satellite record shows [boreal forests](#) expanded 12% and shifted north since 1985

Location of [reforestation](#) projects has greater effect on climate than number of trees planted

Miscellaneous:

Burnham Beeches [ancient pollards](#)

Petition over National Memorial Arboretum [name change](#)

Woodland Trust at [Chelsea Flower Show](#)

[Foxes](#) were allowed into a solar farm, and they ended up turning the panels into part of their habitat

.... And to make you smile:

“What do you think when you hear about solar trees?” An article in ‘The Pulse’ gave three possibilities (other articles give different choices as you’ll see if you check the links below):

- Scientists create a [DNA-inspired molecule](#) that stores sunlight for years. It absorbs light and relaxes to release it.
- Scientists built a [system](#) that captures energy from starlight and then turns it into liquid fuel to produce hydrogen.
- Scientists chased the dream of limitless [fusion](#) for 70 years. Now “magnetic bottles” may finally trap the energy of a star.

You can read about all three, but the [solar trees](#) referred to are street lamps with heads containing photovoltaic cells powering a set of LED lights pointing downwards. The poles of the lights are painted green and the base has several watertight boxes containing batteries which provide the energy needed to power the lights at night. Some solar lamps, with yellow poles, were installed in [Clerkenwell](#) for London design week 2012.

The photo here was used to illustrate an interesting [article](#) describing solar trees with information from ‘Treehugger’. The photo shows the “super-trees” in the ‘Gardens by the Bay’ in Singapore. They have elevated walkways and the tallest one has a restaurant at the top. However, the [Wikipedia entry](#) does not mention anything about solar panels.



Shiny Things, CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Some sources used in this issue: all web pages accessed 10-05-2026 (unless stated otherwise). Links embedded in the text are not repeated here. Email me if you want a list of them.
p10: Species in Focus: Mitchell, Alan (1974) ‘A Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe’ ISBN 0 00 212035 6
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinus_radiata <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/331783/pinus-insignis/details> <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/42408/2977955>
<https://bsbi.org/taxa/2cd4p9h.w8y/pinus-radiata> <https://pollinatorpioneers.org.uk/brooklands-park-nature-trail/plant/trees/monterey-pine/>
<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-species-database/133202-radiata-monterey-pine-rap/> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarch_Grove_Sanctuary

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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 pdf versions of our [10th anniversary report](#) and the [Veteran Tree Survey Completion Report](#) from our website - but you can also access extended versions of them, with links to the trees mentioned:

wdvta.org.uk/report10.php

wdvta.org.uk/Rsurvey.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.