



Tree Warden News - Cornwall

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Greetings to you all at the end of what turned out to be a really rather lovely spring season despite the strange circumstance in which we are all living. It seems that never before have our parks, gardens and wild places, and the trees within them, been so important for our health and wellbeing and as places to escape.

This edition focuses on our woodlands and the incredible diversity and beauty they provide – please feel free to share this with those you may know who have not been able to enjoy our woods at this time. We hope that through the Tree Warden scheme and Forest for Cornwall we might be able to bring the woodlands a little closer for many more residents.

At Cornwall Council we have been extremely busy in our response to COVID -19 and supporting our communities.

We are looking forward to bringing you exciting news on the Forest for Cornwall and the Crowdfunder opportunities which could help get your ideas for establishment of new trees, hedges and woodlands in your communities off the ground; so watch this space!

Staff at the Tree Council HQ have also been busy creating new funding opportunities and continuing their work to raise awareness of trees and woodlands at a National level. If you would like to register for the Branching Out newsletter [follow this link](#).

As always, we would love to hear from you so feel free to send us your news, photographs or perhaps even a short article for our next newsletter.

Thanks and stay safe

Nick Cooper

The Art of Parenting

Nick Cooper



The Dalai Lama once said *"Just one small positive thought in the morning can change your whole day"* and as I sit here in my garden, bathed in early morning sunlight with coffee in hand, happily admiring my newly emerged little green offspring, I couldn't agree more.

I began in earnest last October, gathering seeds from notable Cornish trees; a pocket full of berries here, a hat full of acorns there, foraging under the watchful eyes of squirrels, blackbirds and the occasional curious dog-walker.

Then came the optimism, the building hope whilst preparing the seeds, mashing the berries, stratifying them to help break their inbuilt dormancy. With a rare dry and sunny late winter weekend came pleasant hours planting the seeds - finally utilising the army of old flower pots and trays that had accumulated behind the garden shed. Then the waiting began...

Days, weeks, months passed, and nothing grew. The acorns were stolen in the night by scavengers unknown, the beech seeds weren't viable, the hazelnuts had gotten too dry and

perished. I'd got it all wrong, I'd made mistakes, nothing will grow now.

By March, with the arrival of Spring, I'd all but abandoned hope: *"Oh well, next year will be better"*. Then, with the slow but steady lengthening of the days and the restorative warmth of the unusually sunny afternoons, **life happened.**

The first tiny shoots with their fragile little cotyledons began to push their way through the soil. Like an over-zealous mother hen, I aided them with their earthly emergence, helping them shed chunky bits of soil or stubbornly attached seed casings.

The parenting effort went into overdrive. Pots were moved around the garden trying to find the "perfect" amount of sunlight or shade. Plants were shrouded in makeshift mini poly-tunnels to create the "ideal" humid environment for early establishment. Watering regimes and pest prevention were the subject of fevered debate and excessive consideration. I just wanted to get it right.

Weeks passed, and my obsessive nurturing finally calmed to more sensible levels. It turned out that nature knew best and could quite happily take care of itself, thank you very much! Seeds are programmed genetically to grow, without fuss or human intervention, and grow they certainly did.

I am now the proud parent of around 400 seedling trees of 8 different species - it would have been 10 but the yew and hornbeam stubbornly remain dormant. Watering has settled to a twice weekly, weather dependent affair which, for now, is sufficient; they do only have half a dozen leaves or so at present, so their water demand is pretty limited.

The trees have now been thinned out and given more space for their roots to establish by transplanting them into bigger pots. I had not realised how quickly the roots could grow and they rapidly filled the small cells on some of the recycled plant trays. If I can resist the urge to interfere, they'll stay in these pots until this

winter when they'll be transplanted out into a suitable corner of the veg garden to grow on - the brassicas will just have to make room. By then, there will be more seeds needing preparing and planting, to start the whole process all over again.

Little did I realise when I began this journey the joy that could be had from the raising of these little trees and the positivity they would bring to my days.

It'll be a while yet until I can picnic in the shade of these trees, but I can wait!

I'd like to spread this happiness across the County; it would be great to have Tree Wardens adding to their own seedling families. I will keep you all posted via the Tree Warden Cornwall newsletters and in the meantime, if any of you have been growing at home, please do send us some pictures for inspiration!



The Finest Woodland Orchestra

Holly Berwick



In the last few weeks I've been "up with lark", my mind racing and occasionally worrying about my family and friends in the current pandemic. To calm my mind, I head into my local woodland to exercise and seek out nature's prescription; a natural orchestra of the finest musicians ranging from the fluty blackcap, wistful robin, drumming woodpecker and the sweet melodies of the black bird; their collective song forming the dawn chorus.

The performance often starts with Robins and other early risers like Thrushes with smaller insectivores soon joining in including warblers, wrens and dunnocks. If you're within hearing distance, not forgetting that at this time of the morning sound carries much more clearly, you may also hear Sky Larks hovering above their meadow nests.

Some would say this is nature's way of turning sunlight into music. As soon as spring has sprung into action, the tree buds swell and burst into fresh lush green growth, the mass of

blossom produces pollen and nectar, which supports a diverse array of insect fauna. This in

turn gives the birds enough food to fuel their enthusiastic singing, defend their territory and attract a mate; collectively they build this remarkable musical morning crescendo.

The louder and more lyrical the song (of the typically noisier males) the stronger, better fed and therefore "more capable" the male bird is likely to be as a potential partner.

Each concert is distinctly unique with many birds developing their own regional accents. A chaffinch from Launceston may sound different from one from Penzance.

So, under doctor's orders, get your free prescription and take a moment to listen to this beautiful natural concert, whether it's in your garden, getting exercise or even from lying in bed whilst the morning sky brightens, remember you are privileged to hear an exclusive performance. Kick back and embrace the unique and amazing talent of your local avian culture – far better than waking up to your alarm clock.

The Woodland Metropolis

Steve Harding



As we approach Summer, Cornwall's rich and diverse 'woodland cities' have well and truly come to life.

These bustling, night-time hubs are popular with many nocturnal creatures, such as 13 of the 17 different species of breeding bat found in the UK, that we are lucky enough have living in Cornwall.

These woodland metropolises are noisy by night (if your listening in with an ear that can hear ultrasonic sound) with the calls of hunting bats such as the pipistrelle, shouting at its prey. The pipistrelle can be easily identified by the pitch of its call. At 45kHz this can be heard using an ultrasonic bat detector (many amateur versions of these detectors are cheaply available to the keen nocturnal naturalist, such as the 'Magenta Bat 4 detector',) which can enable you eavesdrop on the late-night action. This can help you to identify the different species of bat that you often see whilst walking in the late evening; those that are hunting in your garden, along

your hedge rows and amongst the trees of your local woodland.

Other species of bats are not so easy to hear even with a detector, such as the brown long-eared bat, which is another charismatic and common woodland bat, but one that is often under-recorded due to its stealthy approach to hunting - it listens out for its prey upon the leaves and branches of trees using its huge, complex ears and then picks them off with immense hovering skill. As a result, they need echolocate as often – ruthlessly stealthy.



Brown long-eared bat © Vincent Wildlife Trust

Another sneaky bat and a favourite amongst bat enthusiasts is the barbastelle, also often referred to as the 'Tree Bat'. These sly specialists use a 'stealth echolocation' tactics, exclusively targeting eared moths which are listening out for predators (moths with countermeasures – yes, it's an arms race!). By echolocating at intensities that are inaudible to distant moths they ambush their prey, with calls that are more than 10 times quieter than those of other bats which hunt insects in a similar way.



Barbastelle bat © Stefan Greif

Upon detecting a moth, the barbastelle reduces its call intensity even further while closing in. Consequently, the call intensity heard by the moth only increases

Species found in Cornwall	Frequency (kHz)
Common pipistrelle	45
Soprano pipistrelle	55
Nathusius' pipistrelle	39
Brown long-eared	45-50
Daubenton's	45
Whiskered	45
Serotine	27
Noctule	20-25
Natterer's	50
Greater horseshoe bat	80
Lesser horseshoe bat	110
Brandt's bat	45
Barbastelle	32

very slowly, delaying the time and shortening the distance between predator and prey before it becomes aware of the attacker. Once a moth hears the calls, it is most likely too late to escape.

In total, 14 of the 17 UK species of bats roost in trees at some point during the year (if there is a roost site that is suitable in all probability it has been used by a bat at some point!) and it is without doubt that woodlands (and trees in general) are vital hunting grounds for all of our bat species.

If you're interested in learning more about our furry flying mammals, you might want to sign up to your county bat group [here](#)



Noctule maternity colony within a *Quercus robur* © H. Andrews 2020.

Oak Processionary Moth

The Forestry Commission is warning people to be on the lookout for toxic caterpillars that can cause life-threatening asthma attacks, vomiting and skin rashes.

The Oak Processionary Moth was first identified in London in 2006 and has since spread widely. Last year, the tree pest was spotted in Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Lincolnshire.

Large populations can strip whole oak trees bare and the caterpillars and their nests contain hairs which can cause itchy rashes, eye and throat irritations, and should not be touched under any circumstances at any time.

Any sightings should be reported to the Forestry Commission via its *Tree Alert* online portal. Alternatively, people can email opm@forestrycommission.gov.uk or call 0300 067 4442.

Sea of Blue floods our Woodlands

Holly Berwick



Bluebells - Tehidy © Holly Berwick

Spring has more than sprung, the woodland floral displays have been amazing this year with the yellow carpets of lesser Celandine *Ficaria verna* slowly turning into a sea of blue with the enchanting bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* taking over our woodland.



Celandine © Holly Berwick

Being woodland enthusiasts, many of us can look more carefully to find the delightful pockets of stunning woodland floral beauties. These can often be living proof, or at least indicative, of ancient woodland and include: wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, Opposite leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium*

oppositifolium, Barren strawberry *Potentilla sterilis* and Early Dog violet *Viola reichenbachiana*.

For those good at identifying plants in their vegetative state or those who just fancy a challenge, look out for Pignut *Conopodium majus* which will be in flower and whole host of ferns including ancient woodland indicators: Scaly male fern, *Dryopteris affinis* and Narrow buckler-fern *Dryopteris cathusiana*.

For more information of ancient woodland indicators (AWI) 'The Wild Flower Key' by Francis Rose is a great assistant, identifying the different AWI for each region across England.



Wood Anemone © Holly Berwick

You also might be lucky enough to smell the pungent garlic scents of Ramson *Allium ursinum* or the non-native invasive, three cornered leek *Allium Triquetrum*. Ramson can look like a dusting of snow on the forest floor which many would say is just as beautiful as the sea of bluebells.

If you are lucky enough to have a woodland on your door step or within a short walk or cycle, I hope you too have enjoyed all these species, the trees are rapidly growing denser leaves and soon the woodland floor will become too shaded for many of these wonderful flowers, but there is always next year.

If you would like to help by recording these species for you can download a free mobile app called "ORKs" - this data is compiled and used for scientific research which helps direct future policy and study.

30 Days Wild!

This June, join thousands of people across Cornwall taking part in the Wildlife Trusts' annual nature challenge, **30 Days Wild!**

Choose one 'wild thing' a day, every day, throughout the whole month: for your health, wellbeing and for the planet. That's 30 simple, fun, and exciting Random Acts of Wildness.

Click here for your [free, downloadable pack of goodies](#) to help you plan your wild month, plus lots of ideas to inspire you to stay wild all throughout June (and beyond!).

Please feel free to pass this on to your friends, family and colleagues and we can all start trying to discover our "Wild side"

Free Learning Opportunities

A free series of lectures are available online from one of the UK's leading Arboriculture lecturers and researchers – Andrew Hirons of Myerscough University. The 'Applied Tree Biology' series will help you learn the science behind tree care and broaden your understanding and appreciation of the fascinating world of tree biology; a fantastic opportunity for us all.

[Get learning HERE](#)



Future Training Opportunities

We will be advertising a series of training events later in the year to help develop the knowledge and skill sets of our Tree Wardens.

This will include induction training for new tree wardens as well as getting some hands-on experience with different types of tree planting techniques, formative pruning and pests and diseases recognition.

If there are specific topics you would like to be included as part of future training, please let us know. Keep an eye out for more information in the next "Tree Warden News - Cornwall".

New Community Funds to Support Tree Establishment

A new financing round under the Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCf) of the Forestry Commission is now open and project proposals must be submitted ASAP.

The Forestry Commission grant will support applications coming from smaller organisations or community groups who are looking to deliver small-scale projects in urban or peri-urban areas, on land for which they have full management control or consent for planting.

The fund provides 50% of standard costs for planting and establishment of small trees. The remaining costs of planting and establishing trees supported under the UTCf must be met through match funding, either in the form of money or labour.

All eligibility criteria and application form may be found [here](#).

In Round 1 in 2019, block bids allowed organisations to apply for funding for multiple projects under one application. Cornwall Council has been successful in securing funding to plant 13 sites across Cornwall. The Trees for Cornish Town project already started in 2020 with the first 22 trees planted in Torpoint. Nearly 200 trees will be planted in various sites across Cornwall's towns during 2020/2021 planting season.

The trees planted in Cornwall with the support of the Urban Tree Challenge will contribute towards the Forest for Cornwall. We now have an online Tree-ometer, which you can see on our [Forest for Cornwall website](#).

Any trees planted in Cornwall since 1st September 2019, anywhere and by anyone can count towards the Forest for Cornwall, so long as they do not form part of a legal planning

requirement. The Forest for Cornwall has to deliver a **net gain** in canopy cover over and



Photo taken in Callington. Volunteers planting trees in an urban space under the Trees for Cornish Town Project

above any replacement of lost trees. We now have an online Tree-ometer and you can easily register your trees by filling in the [Contact us](#) form – it only takes a couple of minutes!



Branching Out Fund

The Tree Council are pleased to announce that applications are now open for **The Tree Council Branching Out Fund**.



If you are a school or community group who would like to plant trees or hedgerows in your local area this winter, we will support well-planned projects between £300 - £1,500. It is a simple process and, if you are successful, we will fund 100% of the cost (excluding VAT) provided that young people up to the age of 21 are actively involved in the planting.

At this time, it is unclear what social distancing rules will be in place when the tree planting season begins again. However, we are still keen to encourage groups to develop tree planting projects, managed by small groups in their communities. If Covid-19 restrictions allow, we hope safely-run tree planting activities will happen during National Tree Week – 28 November to 6 December 2020. If your funded project cannot go ahead at any time this winter due to social distancing restrictions, then the delivery deadline of your grant will be extended to the following year. So please don't let Covid-19 stop you telling us about your fantastic tree planting projects. We would love you to apply.

Please apply and help create a greener, tree-filled future!

[Find out more and apply here!](#)

Funding Opportunities from the Tree Council

The Tree Council are also inviting schools, teachers and student environment groups to apply to plant an orchard through their new fund.

“The *Tree Angel campaign* will help us plant and care for trees in towns, cities, villages and woodlands around the UK. The trees planted will help mitigate climate change, enhance communities and create homes for wildlife. It was organised in partnership with the Daily Mail, The Orchard Project, TCV, Trees for Cities, the Woodland Trust and more. The campaign was inspired by former National Tree Champion Sir William Worsley.” If your local schools are interested, get further information and [register here](#):

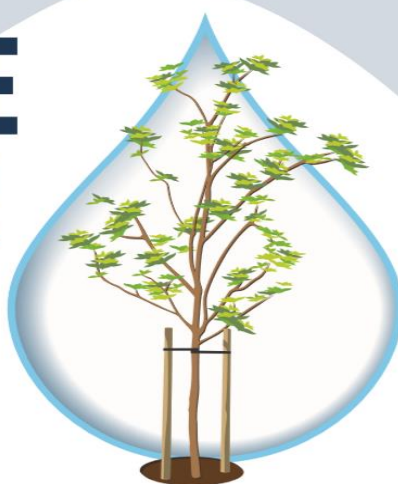


Watering Saves Trees

A national campaign has been launched to ensure that newly planted trees are watered regularly over the summer months, highlighting the fact that young tree maintenance is just as important as planting.

The dry weather which much of the UK experienced during April and May has raised the question about how trees might be affected by COVID-19 if those people who ordinarily water them are no longer able to do so. Hundreds of thousands of trees have been planted over the last couple of years, but without proper aftercare they will not make it into maturity. **So please consider giving your local young trees a drink!**

PLEASE WATER YOUR TREES!



Newly-planted trees need to be watered regularly over the summer months if they are going to become established and thrive.

If you have a tree outside your house, or one that you pass on your daily walk, then you can help.

Requirements vary depending on a number of factors such as species and location, but a general rule is that they should receive at least 50 litres of water per week in May, June, July and August:

Please water regularly during dry periods with as much as you can – Every little helps



Watering should ideally be carried out in the early morning or evening.



It is good practice to water trees for the first three years after planting.



If the tree has a watering pipe, then half of the water should be poured down the pipe and the other half on the surface of the tree.
If the tree has a watering bag, then fill that.



Where possible, water should be sustainably sourced. Harvested rainwater is ideal, but bath water, or water which has been used for the washing up, is also suitable.

More information about tree watering can be found in the **London Tree Officers Association (LTOA)** publication *Sustainable water management*, available for free download at www.ltoa.org.uk

General information about trees and tree care can be found at the **Arboricultural Association** website www.trees.org.uk

www.trees.org.uk
Arboricultural Association

www.ltoa.org.uk
London Tree Officer Association

www.ato.org.uk
Association of Tree Officers

www.mtoa.co.uk
Municipal Tree Officers' Association