

Westonbirt

AUTUMN 2017

Autumn glory

Deep in the mountains

BioBlitz

**The photograph that
changed my life**

Autumn life at the arboretum



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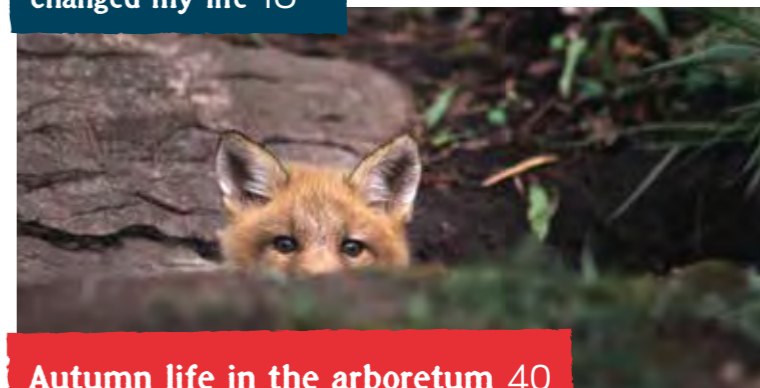
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the friends
of Westonbirt
Arboretum



Westonbirt

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Views expressed in the Westonbirt magazine are not necessarily those of Friends of the Westonbirt Arboretum or the Forestry Commission. Every effort is made to check factual accuracy, but no guarantees are expressed or implied. In particular, readers should satisfy themselves about the authenticity of products advertised.

Welcome to your new look Friends magazine



Inside you'll still find all the regular features and information on forthcoming events and courses that you tell us are important to you. Each issue will include news about what's happening at

Westonbirt, and some features, such as the family section, have been given a fresh, new look.

Westonbirt's dendrologist, Dan Crowley, writes about seasonal highlights around the arboretum in autumn. These are now presented in a handy pull-out section for you to bring with you on your next visit, with an improved map.

As well as being one of your go-to sources of information for all things Westonbirt, we will also be including articles on other gardens, botanic collections and places of interest that we have a connection with across the UK and further afield. In this issue, Catherine our Supporter Engagement Manager writes about her recent visit to nearby Batsford Arboretum, one of our reciprocal gardens.

We've also included our Annual Review in this issue, giving you an overview of our income and expenditure in 2016, some of our key achievements and what our plans are going forward. Your membership subscriptions mean we can provide significant financial support to the arboretum. The review provides you with information on the impact this has had in the last year. Thank you for your continued support, we couldn't do it without you.

This is your magazine, and we work really hard to make it as useful and enjoyable as we can. We'd love to hear what you think. Please get in touch with us on magazine@fowa.org.uk with your feedback.

Anna-Claire

Anna-Claire Temple
Chief Executive

Including more...



With many things in life it can seem that the more you do the more you realise there is to do.

Since 2014 we have been working with youth and adult groups, who would otherwise be

excluded from experiencing the arboretum, as part of our Westonbirt Project, funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Friends. Like much of our work here it has only been possible with the tremendous support of our enthusiastic volunteers. It has had a profound impact on many of those involved and as a result we have been keen to continue this work.

I'm delighted that the Friends are now able to assist in funding this work long-term thanks to their improved revenues from increased membership. We have now appointed our existing Community Officer into a permanent role. From January 2018 (the end of the HLF project) Karen will become our Community Coordinator; helping us to develop targeted, positive experiences that utilise the therapeutic benefits of Westonbirt's remarkable assets.

Part of our future work will be focused on looking at the many small things we can do to make Westonbirt more inclusive for members and visitors. I committed at the Friends' AGM in May to pilot a form of internal transport to enable those with limited mobility to get from the Welcome Building to the restaurant. I'm pleased to say that a new pilot will start this autumn (see page 6 for further information); I hope some of you will be inspired to become volunteer drivers.

Andrew

Andrew Smith
Arboretum Director



Hire the Great Oak Hall

▲ Credit: Rob Cousins

Nestled amongst the trees at Westonbirt Arboretum, the Great Oak Hall is an inspirational venue in a picturesque setting.

Constructed by master carpenters and a team of dedicated volunteers, the magnificent medieval-styled Great Oak Hall was funded by the Friends charity.

The hall's exposed oak beams and traditional stone flooring frame a bright and airy space, complementing the magnificent natural environment that it sits within.

Proceeds from all hire charges go to the charity, so by choosing the Great Oak Hall as your venue, you'll be directly helping to preserve and protect Westonbirt Arboretum.

Find out more about hiring the Great Oak Hall for your event at fowa.org.uk/venue_hire/great_oak_hall
Contact Lorna for more details greatoakhall@fowa.org.uk or call **0300 067 3301**

Keep an eye on our event listings to find out what's on.

- A unique backdrop to present public art exhibitions and sales
- An exclusive space for conferences and business meetings
- A superb setting for classes and workshops
- A peaceful place for funeral receptions



New team members

We are delighted to introduce two new members to the Forestry Commission team here at Westonbirt. Recreation Managers, Hannah Ward and Kit Beaumont.

Hannah worked at Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park, before making the move over to Westonbirt – so if anyone needs rare breed trivia or assistance milking a cow, Hannah's your woman. She's looking forward to gaining a new understanding and appreciation of trees.

Kit joins us from the Prince's Trust. In his new role, he's looking forward to finding the Gruffalo... and learning some Latin names for trees so he can impress his friends! His favourite part of the arboretum is the 2050 glade.

Trialling transportation

Following your feedback, the Forestry Commission will soon be trialling onsite electric transport to and from the Welcome Building. This will be available for those who struggle to get around the site and need a bit of extra assistance.

We're currently in the planning stages, but it's our intention to run trials over the next few months. After the trial period, we'll undertake a review of the impact

If there's a story you'd like us to feature why not drop a line to our editorial team at magazine@fowa.org.uk

Enchanted Christmas update

Enchanted Christmas continues to be a seasonal highlight at Westonbirt. We're delighted that the Friends earlybird booking option from 18th September is still in place, so you can have first pick of tickets!

Every adult member is still entitled to a 50% discount on their Enchanted Christmas ticket every Friday. From this year, the Forestry Commission will be implementing a small charge of £2 for child tickets, including those of the Friends. This will help us to safeguard visitor capacity and manage our health and safety responsibilities to ensure everyone has a magical experience.

Little book of disappearing trees

Pick up a free copy of our *Little book of disappearing trees* to learn about the threats some of our rare trees face in the wild, and see if you can find them here at the arboretum.



Available from the Welcome Building.

on visitors and the landscape, before deciding whether to make this a permanent service.

What is clear is that this will be a volunteer run service and we will be hosting a volunteer information and recruitment session on Wednesday 6th September for those interested in becoming a driver for the service.

Head to forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt-volunteering to find out more about becoming a volunteer driver.

Forest Live 2017

▼ Credit: Paul Groom



Forest Live 2017 has been amazing! Glorious weather, beautiful surroundings, and great live music with Elbow, Olly Murs, Rick Astley and Craig David all performing. What more could you want from a summers evening?

We asked you to share your photos and memories with us on social media – here are some of the highlights:

f What an excellent evening we had! Olly is a great entertainer and had everyone on their feet.
Sue Owen on Facebook

f Beautiful place great for concerts! Rick belted out the tunes and it was so well organised! Thanks to all.
Joanne Manton on Facebook

t In 1993, I sat atop Dads shoulders watching @rickastley in Torquay. On Sat, my daughter sat atop mine at Westonbirt. Such a special night.
Ladey Grey on Twitter

And the winner is... here's the lucky winner of our ticket competition, Patricia Oates, with her sister. She won tickets to see Rick Astley at this year's Forest Live! We loved her description of what makes Forest Live concerts so special:

“The most beautiful surroundings, entertained by stars under the stars!”

Well done Patricia.

Great Oak Hall guides

Volunteer tour guides will be in the Great Oak Hall on weekends* giving visitors the chance to learn about the building's fascinating architecture and history. Did you know that 40 oaks from 16 private estates were donated from all over Gloucestershire to construct the crucks, and fossils within the natural stone floor date back 170 million years?

A sign at the Welcome Building will let you know when the hall is open, so why not come and see for yourself?

*subject to volunteer availability

Celebrating our community project participants

To celebrate the successes of our HLF community project, participants and volunteers are building an exciting new sculpture. Over 300 shingles created by participants will form the roof of a partial round-house, evoking the natural shapes of the landscape. On the shingles are quotes, pictures and memories from those who have taken part in the community project to date. Designed by Westonbirt coppicer, Brian Williamson, the sculpture echoes the shape of an inverted fir cone, and is a celebration of this wonderful four-year project. Located in Silk Wood, you can view this amazing installation from the end of September.



▲ Credit: Heather Lilley



£10k raised at the 10k

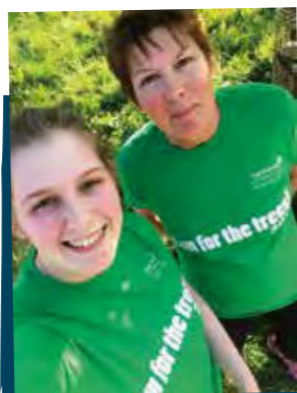
Crowds of enthusiastic runners gathered at the arboretum this May for the Westonbirt 10k. 1,000 people signed up to run for the trees this year! Even the unexpected heat wave didn't put off these energetic individuals.

Over 100 wonderful supporters raised funds for Westonbirt and its trees. Their efforts are still ongoing, but so far over £10,000 has been raised for the charity – easily beating the total raised in previous years!

There was a fantastic mix of seasoned athletes, casual competitors, and 10k newbies, all with bucket loads of enthusiasm! In their bright green 'Run for the Trees' t-shirts, our dedicated fundraisers couldn't be missed. Every one of them did a wonderful job of supporting the arboretum.

To register your interest in becoming a fundraiser in next year's race, head to fowa.org.uk/how_you_can_help/10krun

▲ The early arrivals looking ready and raring to run for the trees.



Spotlight on: Mother and daughter team, Liz and Zoe

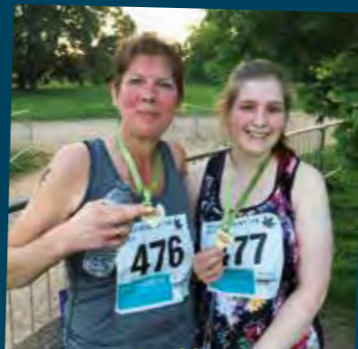
Three years ago, Liz bought membership with Friends of Westonbirt, and she hasn't looked back since! Her weight loss journey began with walks around Westonbirt. After a while she started bringing her husband and daughter along, visiting more often and taking longer walks.

"Every visit we found a different route, discovered interesting wood sculptures and different views throughout the seasons to keep each walk unique."

Between them Liz and Zoe have lost eight and a half stone. This brilliant achievement inspired Zoe to suggest to her mum that they take part in their first 10k at Westonbirt. After lots of training, they have accomplished something they could never have imagined. Not only did they complete the Westonbirt 10k, but raised money to support the arboretum in the process!

We're so pleased for Liz and Zoe and we're thrilled that Westonbirt Arboretum has helped them along the way.

There are so many ways to fundraise for the arboretum. So whether you'd like to run, bake cakes, or hold a coffee morning, visit fowa.org.uk/fundraise-for-us to find out how you can make a difference.



"We were both so proud on getting our beautiful wooden medal."

Farewell to Kim

We're saying a fond farewell to Friends' Finance Coordinator, Kim Seaton, who is leaving after 13 years working with us.



“When I first started working for FOWA in 2004 there were three of us in the office. Now, staff numbers have tripled. I have a profound respect for the professionalism and dedication of the hardworking staff. I will miss working with them as a team.”

Over these past years, Kim's taken on an assortment of different roles. Beginning as Membership Coordinator, Kim helped administer memberships, sorting applications in the Great Oak Hall with an army of volunteers. At the same time, she was instrumental in developing an events programme in the Great Oak Hall, organising weddings and facilitating some truly wonderful and unique events. With her 15 years' experience working for Barclays International, Kim ultimately became Finance Coordinator extraordinaire, meticulously keeping track of every penny raised for the charity.

Kim has been an essential part of the Friends team and will be sorely missed by all of us. We'll never forget her silly hats at Christmas parties and her famous stuffed dates. We wish her the best of luck!

Tetbury Walkers

Step outside your door and enjoy the beautiful countryside

Country walks are a favourite pastime for many people across the UK. The Cotswolds are a long established and popular route for people from far and wide, who come to meander across this wonderful landscape.

The Tetbury & District Footpath Group was started in 1987 by a group of residents concerned that the footpaths around the town were at risk of disappearing. The group meet every Tuesday throughout the summer.

Several local walks have been developed around Tetbury, encouraging local people and visitors to make the most of the beautiful countryside. The group are keen for Tetbury to become a part of the 'Walkers are Welcome' initiative.

www.facebook.com/TetburyWalkers



Useful fact:

'Walkers are Welcome' is a nationwide initiative, launched in 2007 to encourage towns and villages to be 'welcoming to walkers'.

www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk

Deep in the mountains



▲ Credit: Douglas Justice

Dan Crowley, Westonbirt's expert dendrologist, regularly works with partners across the globe. Dan gives us a behind the scenes account of his latest trip to Vietnam, where he was able to apply his extensive knowledge of maples to identify species across the region. Enjoy Dan's fascinating account of a rare conservation expedition into the Hoang Lien Mountains.

This April I was thrilled to undertake field work in the Hoang Lien Mountains of north west Vietnam. This was as part of the ongoing Hoang Lien Son Conservation Initiative (HLSCI) to catalogue and conserve the fantastically diverse flora of the region.

The project is led by the Vietnam Institute for Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR), University of British Columbia Botanical Garden (UBCBG) and Atlanta Botanical Garden (ABG). I was invited to assist particularly with the identification and documentation of the numerous maple (*Acer*) species, some better known than others, that are native to the region.

The Hoang Lien Mountains

The Hoang Lien Mountains mark the south eastern most extension of the Himalayas. At their heart is the Hoang Lien National Park, which contains Indochina's highest peak, Fan Xi Pan, reaching 3,143m above sea level. The park is home to nearly a quarter of Vietnam's endemic species, with new plant species still being discovered and described including *Magnolia sapaensis*, which was only described scientifically in 2010. It is named for the Sapa settlement, that is now a tourist centre in the north west, and was our expedition base. *Disanthus ovatifolius*, an exciting member of the witch hazel family, the Hamamelidaceae, that has been in cultivation since 2006 under the name *Uocodendron whartonii*, was formally described as recently as June this year. This is a hugely botanically rich and exciting region!

Over the course of our expedition, we were to collect herbarium specimens, take images and describe the plants we encountered, to build on the knowledge of the flora of the region. Our long-term project goals include the publication of a comprehensive flora of the region and sustainable forest management plans.

Field work

The field work was focused in two key areas. The first was the massif known as Five Fingers.

“ This area has been little explored and we understand that we were the first group of western botanists to tackle the route we took on our four-day trek. ”

The second was Y Ty (pronounced ee-tee), a mountain to the northwest, five or so miles from the Yunnan border, where we spent a further three days exploring.

I was part of an extremely knowledgeable and experienced team. On Five Fingers, I was accompanied by Andy Hill, Douglas Justice (both UBC), Dan Hinkley (Heronswood, US), Nguyen Van Du, Bui Hong Quang along with Master's students Trần Đức Bình and Doan Hoang Son (All IEBR). For Y Ty we were joined by Scott McMahan (ABG), Donglin Zhang (University of Georgia) and Bleddyn Wynn-Jones (Crûg Farm Plants).

“ We were escorted by a merry band of porters, who are, quite frankly, some of the most incredible people I have ever come across. They tackled challenging terrain with unbelievable ease, wearing little more than sandals to protect their feet. ”

What's more, they managed this while carrying tents, food supplies and most of our belongings. By the time we rolled (almost literally) into the makeshift campsites in the evenings, the tents were always up and dinner almost ready.



▲ Credit: Dan Crowley



Along the way

We collected:

- 290 herbarium specimens
- from 59 families

We discovered:

- 4 species, completely new to science!

At an altitude of:

- 1340–2393m



Though maples are abundant in parts of the Hoang Lien Mountains, most plants are young, with mature specimens removed to create light and space for cardamom production, wherever the terrain allows.

Acer aff. campbellii
(Campbell's maple)

Technical term

The term 'aff.' means 'affinity to', as in something that is closely related to the species name that follows.

The maples of Vietnam

The maples of Vietnam have been little documented. Around 20 are known, though details in floras are inconsistent and incomplete. Some are not recorded at all. It didn't take us long to find one of these. *Acer sterculiaceum* subsp. *sterculiaceum*, also known as the pungent maple, was one of the first maples we came across on our hike up Five Fingers. Its native distribution is recorded as being west from North West Yunnan, more than 600km away. Here we observed it growing with Campbell's maple (*Acer aff. campbellii*) and the Chinese tulip tree (*Liriodendron chinense*) among many other incredible plants.

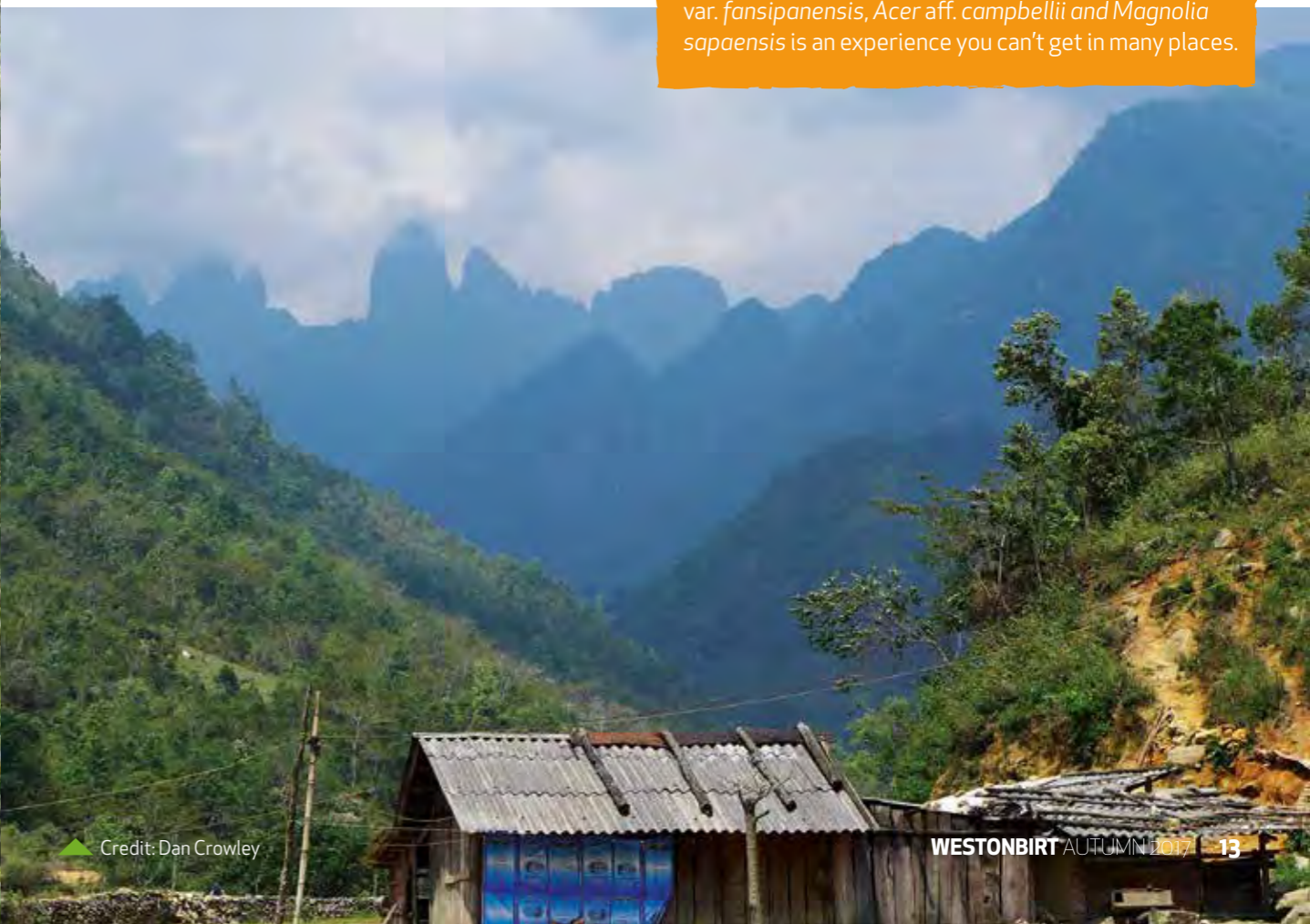
“ Waking up to see specimens of the rare *Rhoiptelea chiliantha*, was amazing. There is only one plant of this species in cultivation and this is here at Westonbirt, so I was particularly happy that we were able to harvest some seed, albeit a touch early in the season. Still, a great start to the day. It wasn't even eight o'clock! ”

Four days on Five Fingers

Our four days on Five Fingers somewhat blurred into one, with endless ups and downs on challenging terrain. Coming off the mountain on the fourth day brought about a feeling of huge satisfaction with the plants we had seen and the ground we had covered. We'd been tremendously fortunate with the weather, it rained only once on the first evening. Following our successful first leg of the expedition, we returned happily to civilisation for a well-earned shower!

Next was our excursion to Y Ty, where we camped for two nights amid the maples. Immediately adjacent to the campsite was an excellent specimen of the snake bark *Acer sikkimense* and all around were juvenile Campbell's maple. What was particularly noticeable here, and to a lesser degree on Five Fingers, was the lack of old trees (particularly maples). Many had evidently been removed for cardamom production, leaving a distinct lack of seed sources. The area is in serious need of conservation.

The trek was full of highlights, and settling down for the evening beneath specimens of *Betula insignis* var. *fansipanensis*, *Acer aff. campbellii* and *Magnolia sapaensis* is an experience you can't get in many places.





In this vicinity also grew *Magnolia foveolata*, some of which were in flower. If our one tree ever flowers as they do in the wild, then we'll all be in for a real treat. Along with more *Rhoiptelea chiliantha* (and a second seed collection), we also encountered the unusual *Dipentodon sinicus*. Although a rarity in cultivation, it is not uncommon on Y Ty!

Our time on Y Ty ended with one of the highlights of the trip. On our way up in the minibus I had spotted a large tree with big, pink inflorescences, and mentioned to Douglas that I had seen something rather unusual; sadly stopping had not been possible. However, on our way down Scott spotted this tree and this time we were able to stop for a closer look.

“ No one seemed to know what it was until it dawned on Douglas that it must be *Bretschneidera sinensis*; listed as Endangered under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, it truly is a species in need of help. Descriptions of the flowers state they are white to pink, and boy, these were pink! ”

It was a stunning sight and the only example we had seen anywhere on Y Ty. This great moment seeing the tree really brought home the importance of conserving species in the wild.

VIETNAM'S ENDANGERED SPECIES

Endangered tree species in Vietnam are under threat from deforestation.

Vietnam has some 1,534 known species of fauna and 10,500 species of vascular plants, according to the World Conservation Monitoring Centre. 3.4% of Vietnam is protected under IUCN categories I–V.

◀ Credit: Dan Hinkley



“ For me, this expedition was a wonderful introduction to the sheer diversity of plant species in this part of the world and, in the case of Y Ty, on a single mountain. The threat to this diversity in these areas is very real, particularly as human influence increases. ”

▲ Credit: Dan Hinkley

Much knowledge was gleaned on the maples of the region and the opportunity to study these plants in the wild is a real privilege. We are certainly a few steps closer to understanding the maples of the Hoang Lien Mountains and while this expedition, like others, answered some important questions, it also presented plenty of new ones to answer.

My sincere thanks go to Arboretum Wespelaar, The Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum and The Maple Society for supporting my involvement in this expedition.

Your membership is helping to fund trips like this, to improve our understanding of natural environments and the protection of tree species worldwide. Thank you!



“ This work is so important in giving the next generation the tools, knowledge and enthusiasm to carry on caring for our remarkable collection of trees. ”
Chris Meakin, Learning Officer

Inspiring the next generation

▲ Credit: Rob Cousins

At Westonbirt, we are committed to protecting the many amazing trees we care for at the arboretum. But as well as our arboricultural work, we never lose sight of the need to inspire our next generation of nature lovers.

Supported by 36 learning volunteers, our Learning and Participation team work tirelessly to give as many families and children as possible the opportunity to visit the arboretum and to feel inspired and eager to learn more about the wonderful life of trees!



The autumn half term event, **Seed Spectacular (23-27 October)** encourages children to explore the incredible variety of seeds and how they travel. It's a fun and engaging event that includes seed printing, acorn rolling and berry juice painting.

As well as our seasonal family trails, we also organise family events during the holidays, to spark children's enthusiasm for nature. With each season comes a fresh array of discovery and craft activities, all with a chosen tree theme.

By working with schools we try to inspire the foresters and arborists of tomorrow. Alongside our learning partner, Learning with Nature, we have welcomed over 7,000 students to Westonbirt over the past year from Early Years right up to university level.

Our team bring nature to life through hands on activities and discovery, problem solving and critical thinking. Links are made between the tree collection and different aspects of the curriculum (plant growth and adaptation, landscape design, woodland ecology, and trees, forests and climate change). Older students also have the opportunity to apply for one of our work experience placements.

If you would like to volunteer to help our Learning and Participation team we would love to hear from you. Visit forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt-volunteering to find out more.



Celebrating 25 years

Helen Daniels, one of our lovely administrators, celebrates 25 years with the Forestry Commission (FC). We caught up with Helen to discuss her time here.



▲ Credit: Becca Hare

25 years is amazing Helen! What was your first job with the FC?

It was a temporary posting on reception at Mamhead, near Exeter. Within my first week we actually went on a staff outing to Westonbirt. The Superintendent back then, Phil Morton, took us on a tour of the Old Arboretum – I remember thinking that my mum would love it here!

Can you remember what your first day was like?

Too long ago to remember now! But on promotion to Bristol, I was very much thrown in at the deep end on my first day there! My boss unfortunately had to have major surgery the day I started, so there wasn't really anyone to show me the ropes.

I do remember being told on my first day with the FC "You won't succeed in the Forestry Commission unless you are a character". After 25 years, I wonder what character I've become?

You've certainly succeeded! Has Westonbirt changed much over the years?

It's been wonderful to see how the site has grown and developed. There was no restaurant when I started; at my very first communications meeting here, we discussed plans for building the restaurant.

The arrival process for visitors was also very different – there was no Welcome Building – people used to get tickets from a ticket hut as they drove in.

“ Something that has never changed is how well the trees and landscape are cared for, and the team's commitment to this beautiful place. ”

It sounds like the changes have been very positive. What part of your job are you most proud of?

I love helping to organise the group visits – although most of the bookings and enquiries come via the

website now, I like to make time to speak to the group organisers. It's so great when you hear that they had a wonderful time!

And if you had to pick your favourite part of the arboretum?

It's difficult to choose between Lime Avenue, in the Old Arboretum, and Rotary Glade, in Silk Wood. There's just something completely magical about those two spots!

After so many happy years is there anything that stands out as a favourite experience?

There are so many, but I suppose I should say meeting my partner, Scott. He was part of the Admin team when I started. Although we'd met before, we didn't really get to know each other until I came to Westonbirt.

Another favourite was when I planted my own tree here. I dedicated it to my late sister, and it's lovely to think that we will always be part of the arboretum. It's a Bladdernut (*Staphylea pinnata*), and is just off Rotary Glade.



The photograph that changed my life

Jane Gifford is a professional photographer. She tells us how her first encounter with Westonbirt helped her to burst onto the national scene.

Westonbirt Arboretum has held a special place in my life for many years. I never grow tired of it. For me, as a professional photographer and writer, it's a magical place full of inspiration. I have been coming here since the mid eighties and although I have visited hundreds of times, I can honestly say there is always something new to discover.

I am still excited each year when early rhododendrons and magnolias herald the onset of spring and I can look forward to the mass eruption of flowers and tender new leaves which follow. I love the sweet scent of lime blossom on the summer air, when the downland is bright with wild flowers. There are always new berries and fantastical seeds to find in autumn, all against a backdrop of extraordinary primary colours. Snow brings a mystical silence and special beauty to the arboretum, where winter flowers bloom bright, like mahonia with its delicious fragrance and delicate witch-hazels.

One glorious autumn, the evening light turned a Blue Atlas Cedar so blue it was stunning and I was lucky enough to capture the moment on film. Little did I know at the time that this picture would change my life. I sent it off to *House & Garden Magazine*, along with a series of shots from Acer Glade, and was delighted when they not only published the pictures but also commissioned me to write a feature to accompany them.

▼ Blue Atlas Cedar



First of all *World Magazine* asked to use it and commissioned me to write and illustrate a further feature about the arboretum. Then *Country Living Magazine* did the same. It was used in a book about the making of the British countryside which I photographed and co-authored with Professor David Bellamy, called *Wilderness Britain – a green print for the future*. This book came to the attention of Kodak, who commissioned me to design, write and provide the photographs for the 1994 International Kodak Calendar which had an environmental theme. The Blue Atlas Cedar took pride of place in October.

My career as a photographer and writer grew out of this one shot, which gave me the courage to earn a living as a photo-journalist, as each new commission opened the door to new opportunities. I want to say thank you for all that the trees of Westonbirt have done for me. I will be eternally grateful to that Blue Atlas Cedar for kick-starting my career and I still look forward to every new visit to the arboretum.

Share your autumn snaps with us on Facebook!
👤 FriendsOfWestonbirt
#westonbirtautumn

Autumn photography tips

Whether you are taking pictures with your phone or are using a state of the art DSLR, what really counts more than anything else is what you see. Here are a few simple tips to help you focus.



◀ Find a general shot to sum up the season. For Holford it had to be Japanese Maples. Notice how changes in light can enhance a scene.

▶ Look for the unusual in small things. Autumn brings a cornucopia of weird and wonderful seeds and berries.



▶ Look up. Shoot through the canopy. Autumn colours can be even more spectacular when pictured against the sky.



▶ Shoot against the sun for dramatic effect. When the sun is low in the sky you will get the best results.



▶ Look down. Don't despair if an early frost strips the leaves from the trees. When the trees are bare, the ground remains colourful.



“We love being out in the rain. In the strong rain that washes the world clean and the fat rain that drips from the trees straight down our backs. In the rain that hangs like mist, playing hide and seek with Mother Nature. We think you probably love it too.”

COTSWOLD
outdoor

Hope for the best, prepare for the worst

Opening the first shop in 1974 in Cirencester, Cotswold Outdoor is viewed by many as the go-to store for any outdoor gear. Originally called Cotswold Camping they quickly became the leading local provider of top quality outdoor equipment and invaluable advice. Today they have 74 shops across the UK and opened their 75th in Bagshot, this August.

Cotswold Outdoor works in partnership with a number of charities across the UK, including the National Trust and the Ramblers Association. Helping these groups fulfil their outdoor goals has become a core part of the business. Offering support to local outdoor communities, providing advice and expert knowledge such as rucksack fittings and tailored kit talks.

As part of their partnership with Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum, Cotswold Outdoor are delighted to offer members a 15% discount* online and in stores nationwide. To redeem your discount either present your FOWA membership card in-store or quote code AF-FOWA-22 online.

View the full range online at cotswoldoutdoor.com

*Not to be used in conjunction with any offer or discount. Selected lines are exempt. Offer expires 31.12.17.

A year in the life of a student arborist



In July 2016, the arboretum took on two eager student arborists. Time has flown by, and a year on we ask Seth, one of the students, about his Westonbirt experience.

Why do a placement at Westonbirt?

I'm studying for a degree in countryside and environmental management at Harper Adams University, and part of the course involves taking on a placement. There's a really wide choice of locations we can apply for, but Westonbirt was definitely the top of my list. It was brilliant news when I heard I'd got the placement!

What attracted you to becoming an arborist?

A passion for trees. I'm especially interested in the whole life cycle from propagation to planting, caring for and removing trees. It's amazing the amount of work that goes into the life of a tree.

And has the placement helped in getting you closer to your dream job?

I've gained some important qualifications that will all help in my future career.

My first qualification was the Forestry Machinery Operators License. I've got tractor driving under my belt which is awesome and I can also do things like loading, flailing and skidding trees.

What's been the most interesting part of your year?

Westonbirt's Curator Mark, knows all there is to know about trees at Westonbirt – I learnt so much when I shadowed him. It was particularly interesting to see how he makes decisions about where and why trees are going to be planted or removed. So much thought and planning.

Have you learnt anything unexpected over the last 12 months?

I've learnt loads about different species and identification. I'm definitely more considered in my decision making. Always looking at why we are doing something, and what will the impact be on the local environment? I look at things with a completely different perspective now – I see individual trees instead of just seeing a whole forest.

And if you were visiting the arboretum, what would be your go-to spot?

That's really difficult to answer. It's all impressive for different reasons,

especially because of the seasons and amazing colours. But if I had to pick one place that is special I would say Maple Loop in Silk Wood.

Have you taken part in any events at Westonbirt?

I ran in the 10k on the first really hot day of the year in my spaceman outfit! Probably not the most sensible idea! I finished in 58 minutes, but that's my days of running over.

I also represented Westonbirt at the annual Wacky Races Go-Cart race in Tetbury. It was great for a laugh, but I managed to crash the vehicle four times! Luckily Joe (the other student arborist) kept up our reputation by coming in second.

What are you up to next?

I've decided to write my Uni dissertation on the subject of 'Alternative trees for British forestry due to climate change'. After, I plan to visit Canada to see different aspects of arboriculture and forestry. I want to experience diverse extreme climates, which could be anything from cities to wilderness and forests, to see different approaches to tree care.

And finally, if there was one piece of advice you could give to the new students, what would it be?

Get stuck in from the get go and never be afraid to ask questions. (And watch out for Andy Jane's singing!)

Our next student duo are already learning the ropes. Support their work at fowa.org.uk/how_you_can_help/arborist_appeal



Immerse yourself in autumn

Visit the arboretum this autumn to surround yourself with a spectrum of marmalade, amber and crimson hues. October is the prime month to see the very best of autumn, but interesting colours will start to emerge as early as August, and will linger on until the first cold snap.

Autumn tree highlights

▲ Credit: Paul Box

Autumn is always astonishing at Westonbirt Arboretum and this year is no exception. With such an array of colour, which trees are particularly special at this time of year? Westonbirt's dendrologist Dan picks out some of his highlights.

Westonbirt's autumn magnificence is provided by trees from all over the temperate world. Some of these regions are home to large numbers of plants that come to the fore at this time of year.

One of these is eastern North America. Growing in varied and sometimes strikingly different habitats in their native surroundings, a great many thrive here at Westonbirt. Many plants from North America have been grown in Britain for centuries and while some are almost as familiar as our natives, others are less so.

🌳 The tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) is special in more ways than one. At its peak its autumn colour is among the very best, with vibrant shades of orange burning bright in the landscape. **Its scientific name, *Nyssa sylvatica*, roughly translates as 'nymph goddess of the woods'.** A fitting name for such a beautiful tree. A small genus of around 10 species, with about four found in eastern North America. The water tupelo (*N. aquatica*) is another of these, though as the scientific name suggests, it occurs in rather different areas to tupelo. It grows in swamps and develops a remarkable swollen base. Though most apparent on large trees, the swollen base can be seen on young trees here, planted in 2010.

🌳 Another lover of swamps is the sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*). **Known by some as the 'traffic light tree', it often colours from the top down, in three distinct bands of colour.** Often beginning to change as early as August, there can be shades of red-purple at the top, orange-yellow in the middle, while still green towards the bottom. It has a broad range, extending south from north east USA to Central America, with trees at Westonbirt collected from Georgia, Tennessee and West Virginia.

Autumn seasonal trail map

Why not use our handy pull out map for an autumn visit to the arboretum. You'll find all the trees discussed in our *Autumn tree highlights* article identified on the map to help you enjoy the best of autumn's glory at Westonbirt.

▲ Credit: Paul Box

Pull out map

These symbols mark some of the spectacular trees worth seeking out on your next autumn visit...



Tupelo - in parts of its native range, tupelo is known as an excellent nectar source and tupelo honey is rated among the best.



Tulip tree - as well as distinctive foliage, the tulip tree has distinctive buds that are duck-bill shaped.



Sweet gum - denotes the taste of the gummy resin that the tree produces. It is among the first trees of the western hemisphere to be documented and the Aztecs called it xochiocotzoqualhuil! (I'm pretty sure I spelt that right!).

Tree guide

- Tupelo**
- Sweet gum**
- Tulip tree**
- Sugar maple**
See reverse for details
- Birch**
See reverse for details
- Hickory**
See reverse for details

Each grid square is 100 metres or about two minutes walk

0 100 200 300m

Sugar maple – the source of maple syrup. Mature trees are said to pump around 5,000 gallons of sap around their 450 miles of vascular system!



▲ Credit: Hugh Angus



Yellow and cherry birches – similar in leaf, the two can be easily distinguished from each other by their bark. That of the yellow birch is shiny and near bronze in colour, while that of the cherry birch is comparatively dull.



Hickory – the name *Carya* derives from the Greek word for nut, *Karyos*. The name hickory is said to be from the Native American word 'powchikora', which was reportedly written in over 15 different ways!



John Tradescant the younger is accredited with introduction of the tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), which has been in cultivation since before 1888. **In nature, it grows (where given the chance) to a monumental size, with stems clear of branches to around 80 feet up.** Nearly as tall as our tallest specimens! The butter yellow leaves of those on Jackson Avenue are distinctive from afar and numerous younger trees are dotted around the arboretum from seed collected by Forestry Commission colleagues at Bedgebury Pinetum in 2006.

Striking though short-lived, **the colour of the sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), visible from the STIHL Treetop Walkway, has definite shades of bonfire about it.** Known as much for its autumn display as for its syrup, it doesn't colour quite as well as it does at home in Canada. Though for the short period that it is at its peak, it is still rather impressive!

A number of birches are known for their autumn colour and two of the species from eastern north America are among the finest. The yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) and the cherry birch (*B. lenta*) are equally fine, both turning vibrant yellows. The two have overlapping ranges, though the yellow birch occurs at higher elevations. **Our best of both grow along The Link, in Silkwood.**

Always worth mentioning are the hickories (*Carya* species). Reliable as any for autumn colour, they too turn fantastic yellows. **A real crowd pleaser is the large, narrow growing bitternut (*C. cordiformis*) in what was the Hickory Collection on Broad Drive.** Equally good is its close relative the black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), with large trees recently supplemented with young plants collected from the wilds of the Midwest (almost east!) in Illinois and Missouri.

Don't forget to pull out the map and take it with you. Discover the expert's seasonal picks on your next visit!



THE HISTORY OF STIHL

STIHL and Westonbirt Arboretum have been partners since 2006. In 2016 STIHL became the proud sponsors of the Treetop Walkway. They continue to support the work in the arboretum by providing the Tree Team with chainsaws and other essential pieces of kit.

STIHL is the No.1 selling petrol chainsaw brand worldwide and is renowned for its revolutionary outdoor power equipment. To this day it remains a family-owned business based in Germany. STIHL employs more than 14,000 staff worldwide and sells products in more than 160 countries.

The company started out in 1926 as one man with a vision and last year celebrated its 90th anniversary. Andreas Stihl started the brand with an engineering office near Stuttgart, his pioneering idea was that 'the saw must go to the tree, not the tree to the saw.' He imagined a petrol-powered chainsaw, with which trees could be felled and bucked directly in the woods rather than being carried to a stationary saw – which was an incredibly laborious and arduous task.

It wasn't long before one of the first petrol-driven two-man STIHL chainsaws had been developed and in the years that followed, STIHL began regularly launching new and better models. In 1959 Andreas Stihl achieved his lifelong vision and the STIHL Contra was launched to market. This gasoline-powered chainsaw weighed 12kg and offered a power output of 6HP, which was much lighter

and more efficient than any other product on the market at the time. Using the Contra, logging firms were able to increase their productivity by 200% and STIHL recorded double digit turnover growth.

In the years thereafter, STIHL began to venture into the development of other products, including hedge trimmers, grass trimmers and pressure washers. As such, the STIHL name has become internationally known and is now a recognised mark of quality across all gardening tools. STIHL products are now exported to neighbouring European countries and across 160 countries worldwide.

Innovation has always been integral to the STIHL brand and ensures it stays up-to-date with current customer needs and demands. This innovation fuelled the development of high performance cordless machinery, resulting in manufacturing three collections of cordless tools – Lithium-Ion, Lithium-Ion Compact and Lithium-Ion Pro. Each offers the customers a solution for everything

from smaller gardens, larger outdoor spaces and right through to the largest gardens and professional applications.

In 2016, STIHL became proud sponsors of the Westonbirt Treetop Walkway. This innovative structure offers spectacular views of the arboretum's 15,000 trees to all of its visitors and the inclusion of seven interactive hotspots gives visitors the chance to learn about the beautiful surroundings.

STIHL understands how important it is for everyone to have the right tools for the job, which is why working with the Tree Team at Westonbirt Arboretum makes perfect sense. Each member of the team can have the equipment they need to be able to maintain the arboretum all year round.

www.stihl.co.uk



FAMILY FUN

Seed spotting

Fruits, berries and nuts are produced by trees. They come in all different **SHAPES, sizes, colours** and **TEXTURES**. They're designed to spread the seeds inside them and these seeds may eventually grow into a new tree.



"We visit quite often as the children love making things and finding treasure. We have even made them special bags for their collections."

Gillian and Katya, Friends of Westonbirt members



HOGGY FACTS

- Hedgehogs usually hibernate between October and April
- Hedgehogs have about 5,000 to 6,500 spines at any one time
- They live on average for 4 - 7 years in the wild and longer in captivity
- Hedgehogs have huge appetites. They feast on snails, slugs and insects

How many can you spot?



✓ **Hard 'nut' type seeds are spread by animals who store them for later, often underground. The ones that are forgotten grow into new trees.**



✓ **Berries and fruits are spread by animals that eat them and then release the seeds in their poo!**

Winged seeds are spread by the wind, spinning in the air when they fall from the tree. Fluffy or very light seeds are also spread by the wind.



✓ **Prickly pods help to protect the seeds inside from being eaten before they are ready to be released.**



How many did you find?
We'd love to see a photo of you with any seeds you've found. Post on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag **#westonbirtfun**. You could be featured in our next issue!



REMEMBER NEVER eat any berries and make sure you wash your hands after touching them. If something is attached to a tree, the tree still needs it!

A hidden gem in Gloucestershire



As a Friend of Westonbirt you have free access to various arboretums and gardens across the UK. One of our nearest partners is Batsford Arboretum in Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire.

Never been? Supporter Engagement Manager, Catherine gives you a glimpse of what to expect from her recent visit.

I'd been looking forward to visiting Batsford Arboretum for a long time. With its oriental influence and man-made watercourse, it couldn't be more different from Westonbirt's natural vistas. I was anticipating a magical journey to the Far East, and wasn't disappointed!

It was a bright warm day with plenty of sunshine, and I set off on a gentle stroll along 'Her Ladyships Walk'. I was greeted by fabulous flowering alliums, including 'Purple Sensation' and the wonderfully named white-headed 'Mount Everest'. Crossing over rockery bridge, I caught the first sight of a brook flowing through Jurassic-like foliage. This was my first of many sightings of water throughout the site.



I decided to go a little off the main track and wandered into a wide vista of a manicured lawn, which was surrounded by a selection of enchanting trees, including 'the Weeping Spruce' and 'Japanese Maple'. From here, I could glimpse the neo-Tudor Batsford House, an extraordinary Victorian design built in the 1890's.

Back onto the main path I turned a slight bend, which brought into view the formidable neo-Norman gothic church of St Mary's, sitting on the edge of Batsford village. I'd come for the trees, but was also getting a fascinating architectural tour.

Strolling back, I spotted the majestic 'Purple Beech' with its huge clawed roots digging into the soil. Throughout, there were meandering paths leading to hidden delights, including a field of wild flowers with drifts of 'Camassias' nestling close to a stunning Italian marble sculpture 'Daphne'.

The estate has 60 acres of grounds

Around 3,000 plants grow in the garden

The arboretum has 10 champion trees





Great Oak roots



Oriental Foo Dog



Butternut Tree

“ I wandered past a sprawling ‘Evergreen Oak’ and a ‘Butternut’ tree and found myself in a spot that I can only describe as something from Tolkien, with a fairy glade waterfall cascading into the large lake. ”

At every turn, there was evidence of the Asian influence, with red bridges crossing water, and a fine collection of Japanese Maples and Bamboo. There were statues of an Oriental Foo Dog and Buddha, and for the weary, there is the chance to relax at the ‘Japanese Rest House’, with its own rooftop dragon – apparently there to ward off evil spirits.

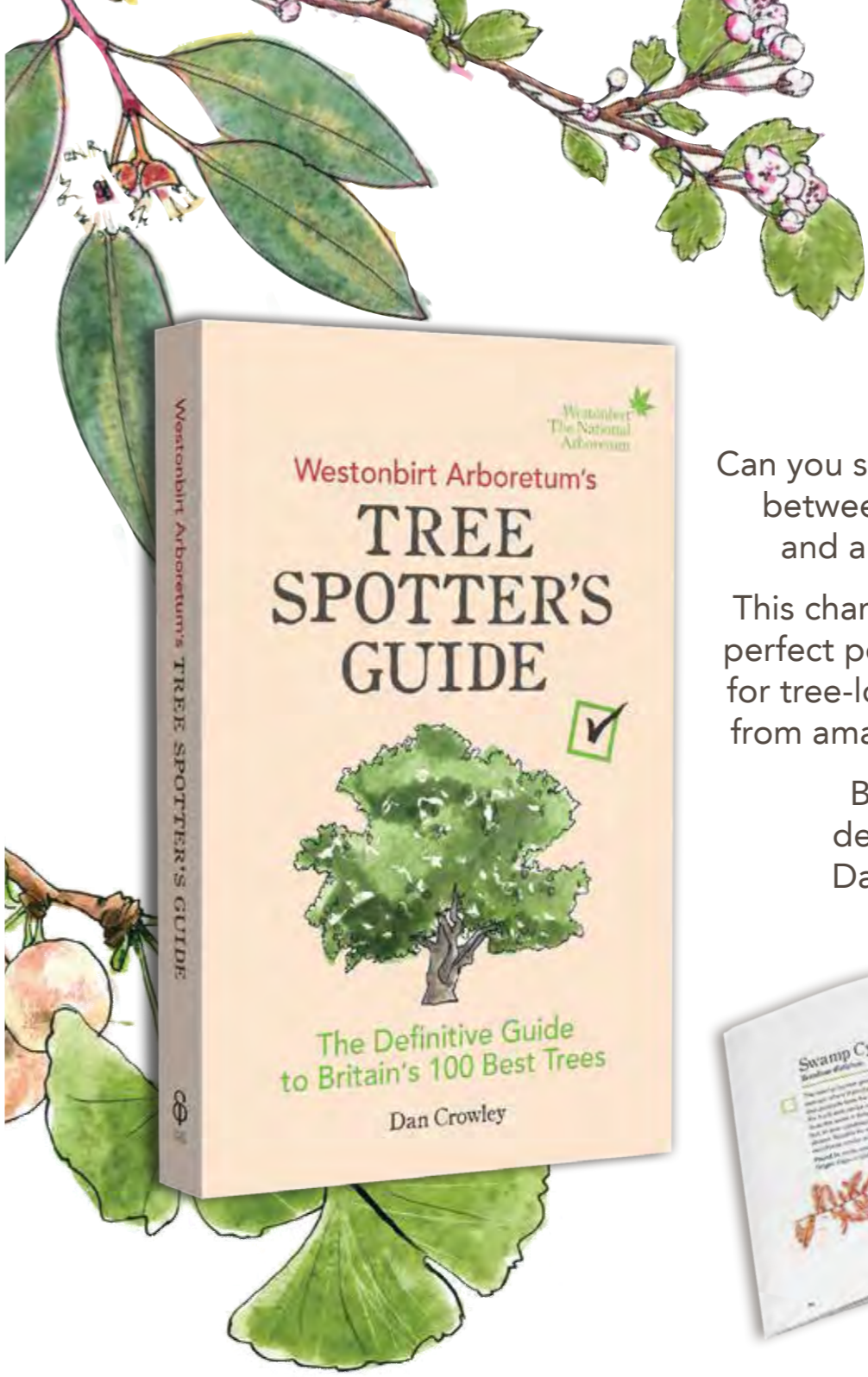
My visit to Batsford really was magical. As a recognised centre for botanical excellence, it houses over 1,300 different species from throughout the temperate world, including several champion trees. There are surprises at every turn, and for the younger visitor the newly developed play area houses, endangered bird life such as ‘Coco’ the African Grey Parrot and interesting information on the importance of trees to the environment.

I’d thoroughly recommend Batsford Arboretum for a day out.

Membership as a Friend of Westonbirt Arboretum provides free entry to Batsford and several other gardens and arboreturns in the UK, as well as all the benefits mentioned on page 48.

A wonderful gift

Membership is a lovely gift for a friend or loved one. Visit fowa.org.uk/membership to find out more.



Westonbirt
The National
Arboretum

Can you spot the difference between a silver birch and a downy birch?

This charming book is the perfect pocket-sized guide for tree-lovers nationwide, from amateurs to experts.

By leading dendrologist
Dan Crowley



RRP
£8.99

Westonbirt Arboretum's
TREE SPOTTER'S GUIDE
Available from Tidings at Westonbirt and all good bookshops

The amazing world of trees

Exhibition

An artistic eye on trees

Westonbirt's very own Director, Andrew Smith, will be opening this stunning exhibition. Not only do these fascinating artworks call attention to the importance of trees and woodlands, but the fact that trees are central to diverse wildlife ecosystems, and vital for our own wellbeing.

For the past two years members of The Bath Society of Botanical Artists have been studying and painting trees, highlighting the beauty and intricacy of nature. With over 70 distinct paintings on show, the exhibition will emphasise the incredible diversity found in the world of trees.

Formed in 2002, the society's members are based across the Bath area. Several have won National and International awards for their work.

Where: BRLSI, 18 Queen Square, Bath BA1 2HN
When: Thursday 5 – Monday 23 October
Time: 10am – 4pm (closed Sundays)
Talk: Friday 13 October 7:30pm at BRLSI – Alan Power from Stourhead: 'My Life With Trees and Theirs With Me.'
Bookings: www.bathboxoffice.org.uk
www.bsba.co.uk



▲ ©Maureen Seed

A shady story



▲ Credit: Sarah Malina

When Penny, our Propagator, asked if we could look into providing shade screens for Westonbirt's glasshouses, it had never occurred to us just how essential seemingly mundane pieces of equipment could be!

It may seem obvious, but when it comes to successful propagation and the health of new trees, getting the correct amount of light is critical.

The problem: The team were whitewashing the glasshouses to protect germinating plants from the harsh sunlight. However, this meant that the amount of light couldn't be adjusted – not ideal on dull days, and lots of hard work.

The solution: Shade screens! Not only do shade screens allow Penny to adjust the amount of light plants receive, but they also act as thermal insulators, keeping plants cool in the summer and warm in the winter. The screens also eliminate the need to reapply whitewash to the glasshouses and the team won't need to apply horticultural fleece in the winter.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Finnis Scott Foundation, we were able to provide Penny with her shade screens, and she couldn't be more thrilled!

Support our young specimens

Westonbirt's incredible tree collection has been hundreds of years in the making. Our work today is as important as ever. Each year 300 trees are planted out into the arboretum, most of which have been grown here at Westonbirt from seed.

Our expert team go on seed collecting trips abroad to gather species that have adapted to thrive in warmer climates.

These collections are vital for Westonbirt's research into climate change, ensuring the survival of the UK's trees as the weather warms. Having brought the seeds safely home, we want to make sure they have the best possible chance of growing into the champion trees of tomorrow.

Propagating specimens with a variety of needs is an art, and one that our Propagator, Penny Jones, has mastered. With an incredible success rate that involves germinating the trickiest of seeds to cultivating innovative new air-layering techniques, Westonbirt Arboretum has thoroughly earned its title of National Arboretum when it comes to exceptional propagation practices!

Providing this level of care requires a great deal of specialist equipment, some of which has now come to the end of its life. Currently, our polytunnels and shade house need re-covering and our entire drip irrigation system needs to be replaced. It may not sound like the most exciting equipment, but this kit is essential in ensuring our propagation unit can perform at its best and provide Westonbirt with the trees of tomorrow.

Your generous contribution will help to support Westonbirt's propagation and tree management programme. Thank you!

Please help to ensure the future health of Westonbirt's trees by making a donation today.

Visit fowa.org.uk/how_you_can_help/propagation to donate.

Every sapling could be a future champion tree.



Alternatively, you can cut out this slip and send it with a cheque made out to 'FOWA', to: Propagation appeal, Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8QS

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ Donation amount: _____

I would like the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum to treat this donation and any donations I make in the future as Gift Aid donations, until I notify otherwise. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay and difference.

giftaid it

Signed: _____ Date: _____ **Thank you for your support!**

Autumn life in the arboretum



Autumn is always abundant in the arboretum, with nuts, fruit and seeds providing plentiful supplies of food for wildlife.

Spiders



▲ Credit: Peter Smithers

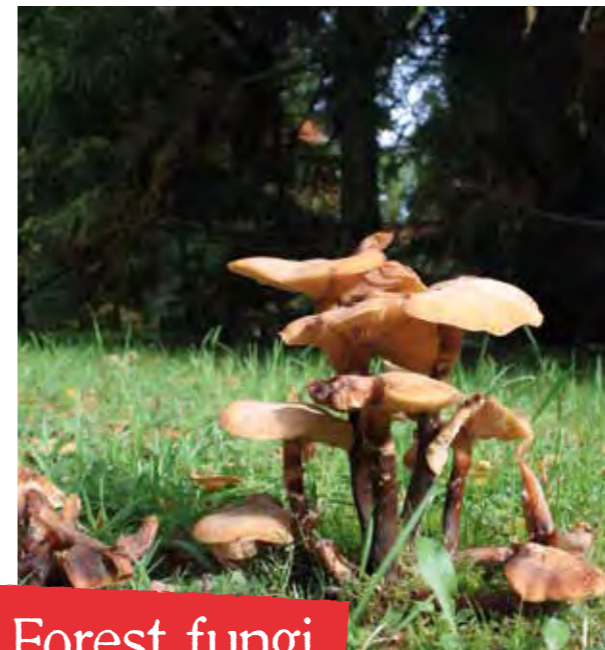
Did you know that autumn is a brilliant time to marvel at the intricacy of a spider's web? On a cold autumn morning, why not take a walk through Silk Wood and go spider spotting? You'll find their elaborate webs are particularly beautiful when there's a heavy dew or frost.

At this time of year, common spiders are fully-grown. If you're lucky, you might spot one constructing its web. Take a moment to admire the exquisite and complex creation. You might also glimpse drifting gossamer produced by dispersing baby spiders. This amazing process is known as ballooning. The spiders climb up high to produce threads that catch the wind like a parachute. The breeze then carries their minute offspring across long distances.

Where Throughout the arboretum

When Most frequently seen in late summer and autumn

Time Most visible in the early morning dew



▲ Credit: Bev Starkings

Forest fungi

Triggered by autumn rains, fungi can suddenly appear out of nowhere. An astounding 1,218 different species of fungi have been recorded at Westonbirt – the highest number in the West of England! Many of these fascinating fungi have equally enchanting names.

You'll quickly discover a huge range of these odd organisms at Westonbirt. From the amethyst deceiver, which you'll most likely spot under the leaf litter surrounding a beech tree. To the shaggy parasol, which you'll have seen growing in magical fairy rings, to dead man's fingers, which eerily resemble rotting fingers reaching up out of the ground!

Where Sheltered woodland areas

When Most abundant in October

Time Any time of day



Where have the garden birds gone?

With copious quantities of wild food in autumn, you may find that your bird feeder is going untouched!

Preferring natural seeds and berries, you're likely better off leaving spotting your birds at Westonbirt until later in the year, when less plentiful food supplies may see them returning to your garden feeder.



Fruits and nuts

▲ Credit: Bev Starkings

Autumn colour isn't just about the leaves! A whole compendium of colours can be spotted in the beautiful berries across the arboretum. Many trees produce berries so that birds and other animals will gulp them down and later distribute the seeds.

Westonbirt provides all sorts of tasty treats for visiting wildlife. In the autumn, fruits ripen for the taking. Many members of the rose family produce berries that are particularly popular with birds. The rowan or mountain ash yields wonderful scarlet fruits that are a rich source of autumn food for caterpillars of the apple fruit moth, as well as a huge variety of birds including the blackbird and song thrush. The common hawthorn's deep red berries are rich in antioxidants and popular with small mammals and migratory birds like redwings.

Nuts are also aplenty in the autumn. Horse chestnut conkers are a firm favourite with deer and other mammals. There are also a number of walnut trees at Westonbirt, but you'll have to be very quick to spot a walnut before the squirrels get to them!

Where All over the arboretum

When Both berries and nuts can be seen in copious quantities by September

Time Any time of day, spot them before they're gobbled by wildlife!

Share your favourite autumn experiences at Westonbirt. Email us at magazine@fowa.org.uk

BioBlitz

Unusual, rare or interesting finds during the BioBlitz:

Acorn Weevil beetle (*Curculio venosus*)

This beetle has a strikingly long snout, known as a 'rostrum'. This is longer on females than males. The female uses her rostrum to bore into acorns and lay her eggs.

Four Spotted Footman Moth (*Lithosia quadra*)

Few records of this moth in Gloucestershire to date. Only the females have the spots which give the species its name; often there appear to be only three spots, as the wings overlap when at rest.

Nettle Leaved Bellflower (*Campanula trachelium*)

Is locally a common plant in woodlands, but at Westonbirt it is much rarer than the Spreading Bellflower! Both are ancient woodland indicator species.

Fern grass (*Catapodium rigidum*)

Fern grass is so called because of its likeness of the flower head to a fern leaf. The scientific genus 'Catapodium' is made up of two words meaning diminutive foot which refers to the flower spikelets which have very short stalks.

This July we held a BioBlitz to celebrate the Downs Restoration Project. Wildlife experts and members of the public descended on Westonbirt to hunt for the remarkable animals, plants and insects that have made their homes in Westonbirt's grassy downland.

With themed talks, guided walks, and a myriad of amazing discoveries, it was a fantastic day celebrating the diverse wildlife at Westonbirt Arboretum.

With hundreds of different species uncovered, experts are still working on the final count, but here's a good look at the fantastic array of flora and fauna we have identified so far.

Clouded yellow butterfly (*Colias croceus*)

Is a butterfly that migrates to the UK each year from Southern Europe, being usually unable to survive our winters. The BioBlitz record was the first at Westonbirt and locally this year, though they do arrive earlier further south.

Lichen (*Parmotrema reticulatum*)

A fine grey lichen that often grows on trees and rocks in the south and west of the UK.

Downland Villa Bee-fly (*Villa cingulata*)

Was considered almost extinct in the UK but has been seen again recently. It was recorded at Westonbirt last year, and in the Cotswolds in general. It is probably a parasite of solitary bees, laying eggs on the ground. When the larvae hatch, they crawl in to the hosts nest where they eat the hosts eggs and larva.

Earthworm (*Dendrodrilus Rubidus*)

An under recorded earthworm was found in a decaying log at Beech Bank just beyond Waste Gate.

Garden Tiger Moth (*Arctia caja*)

A beautiful patterned moth. It is in decline and numbers have fallen by approx 90% in the last 30 years. Its caterpillars are very hairy.

Spreading Bellflower (*Campanula patula*)

Is widespread in Europe but in the UK, it is restricted to the Welsh borders and Severn Valley and is listed as nationally scarce. At Westonbirt, we have an unusually good population with 21 plants found during the BioBlitz period.

Species we found

- Birds: 29
- Mammals: 7
- Inverts: Damselflies: 3
- Inverts: Butterflies/moths: 267 (including over 98 macro and 78 micro moths)
- Inverts: beetles/bugs: 24
- Inverts: spiders: 39
- Inverts: other: 44
- Earthworms: 8
- Fungi: 15
- Lichens: around 78
- Mosses/liverworts/ferns: 25
- Flowering plants: 199
- Bees/wasps/ants: 56
- Slime mould: 1

Total: 795!
and counting...

With thanks to:



BioBlitz



Did you know?

facts from our expert recorders

“All blue tits in Britain eat moth caterpillars, this has been calculated at over 35 billion eaten in one year. It’s amazing the moths survive.”

Peter Cranswick, Gloucestershire Butterfly Conservation – Moth Recorder



“If you cut an earthworm in half this doesn’t make two worms but the head may grow another tail.”

“In summer they dig deep into soil and go into a dormant state until autumn.”

Frank Ashwood, Forest Research – Worm Recorder



“We spotted the clouded yellow butterfly for the first time this year at the BioBlitz. It is a migrant butterfly which we would normally see at the end of July.”

Carol Taylor, Fauna and Flora Group Volunteer

“It is estimated that there are two and a quarter million spiders in one acre of hay meadow in the UK.”

Peter Smithers, Bristol Naturalist Society – Spiders



We were absolutely thrilled with the wonderful results from this year’s Bioblitz. The sheer number of species found, not to mention some rare and unusual taxa, shows just what a haven Westonbirt is for wildlife. The historic downs are a wonderful home for all sorts of organisms and we’re delighted to see what a positive impact the restoration has had in helping to conserve such a huge number of species.

Welcome to our packed events calendar. We’re excited to offer a great diversity of events across a wide range of activities and interests. For more information about individual activities please visit the web link shown.

Discovery sessions



Fabulous Fungi

Using magnifiers and microscopes, look closely at our display of fungi and spot their similarities and differences. Design your own woodland fungi picture.

Saturday 23 & Sunday 24 September, 1pm – 4pm
www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AKALBA

Seeds Spectacular

An amazing variety of seeds and seed packages for you to discover, with a simple test to see if seeds are likely to grow and autumn story books to share.

Saturday 28 & Sunday 29 October, 1pm – 4pm
www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AKALBA

Guided walks

Wonders of Westonbirt Guided Walk (Until End of October)

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11am

Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays,
11am and 2pm

Note that on the first Sunday of each month the Wonders of Westonbirt Guided Walk only runs at 2pm, with a Secrets of Silk Wood walk starting at 11am instead.

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AHWFT5

Coming up

▼ Credit: Paul Box



Secrets of Silk Wood Guided Walk

Two hour guided walk exploring some of the secrets of this ancient woodland. Each walk will take in the seasonal highlights and explore the history and management of the landscape.

Well behaved dogs are welcome. Please wear suitable outdoor clothing and footwear.

Sunday 3 September & Sunday 1 October
www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AG7MVK



Behind the scenes tours:

Our propagation and tree management centre
This 90 minute walk takes you behind the scenes so you can follow even more of the journey taken by every new tree, from propagation to planting out. Take a look inside Westonbirt’s glasshouses and polytunnels and marvel at machinery in the tree management centre.

Saturday 30 September & Sunday 1 October, 11am

Family events



Seed Spectacular

Make your own cone or conker snail, and investigate our amazing variety of seeds and how they travel. We'll have a different seed themed craft to get involved with every day.

Monday 23 – Friday 27 October 2017
10am – 3:30pm

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-ANPLNW

Courses and workshops

Westonbirt Impressions

**Saturday 16 September, Friday 20 October,
Wednesday 1 November 2017, 9:15am – 5pm**

www.imageseen.co.uk/westonbirt-arboretum-impressions

Beginners Digital Photography Course

**Tuesday 17 October 2017, Monday 30 October 2017,
10:30am – 3:30pm**

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AJEJEJ

Autumn Colours

**Monday 23 & Wednesday 25 October 2017,
9:15am – 5pm**

www.imageseen.co.uk/westonbirt

Advanced Digital Photography Course

Monday 6 November 2017, 10:30am – 3:30pm

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AJEGXZ

Chair Making Courses

A six day course commencing weeks beginning:

Monday 4 September 2017

Monday 11 September 2017

Monday 2 October 2017

Monday 9 October 2017

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AGNL5A

Women's Wellbeing Workshop

Women's Health and Wellbeing Coach Diane Danzebrink and GP and expert Dr Louise Newson present Understanding Menopause – your questions answered. Online tickets £30 (Members' discounted price £24 quote code **FRIEND**).

Sunday 1st October 2017, 10:30am – 1:30pm
at The Great Oak Hall

www.menopausesupport.co.uk for details
and booking.

Other events and activities

Public Foray: National Fungus Day with the Cotswold Fungus Group

Book your place on a fungi foray to learn about the fascinating, and often beautiful, world of fungi. A supervised display of fungi finds will be held in the Education Centre from lunchtime onwards.

Saturday 7 October 2017, all day

www.ukfungusday.co.uk/event/westonbirt-public-fungus-foray-display

Coppice Open Days

We'll be holding exciting demonstrations around our charcoal kilns and talking about how coppicing helps to ensure the continued health of the trees and the woodland as a whole.

Sunday 24 September 2017

Sunday 29 October 2017

Sunday 26 November 2017

10am – 4pm

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AJEDKG

Firewood Sales: Every Saturday

**Saturday 2 September – Saturday
30 December 2017, 9am – 12pm**

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-ANBDAZ

Hot Air Balloon Flights

The following flights will take place in the morning:

Saturday 7 October 2017

The following flights will take place in the afternoon:

Sunday 17 September 2017

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/BEEH-AHJDY3

Art Exhibitions and Sales



Cotswold Edge 'Inspirations'

This is the group's fourth show at Westonbirt, where their strong association with the arboretum has inspired many new works to be shown for the first time this autumn.

www.grahametucker.co.uk

www.aveningglassware.co.uk

www.lizbrookeward.com

Saturday 7 – Thursday 12 October 2017,

10am – 4pm (3pm on final day)

Foursight 'Capturing Nature'

Four local artists with a colourful and imaginative collection inspired from the natural world use a variety of media. The spectacular colours of the seasons in Westonbirt feature strongly.



Saturday 14 – Thursday

19 October 2017,

10am – 4pm (3pm on final day)

www.drawingonreality.co.uk

Gloucestershire Printmaking Cooperative 'Out of the Woods'

Thirty artists are displaying new print-based work originating from Westonbirt's trees. Prints will be on sale alongside the original inspiration for the piece and printmakers will be on hand to talk about their craft.



**Saturday 21 – Thursday 26 October 2017,
10am – 4pm (3pm on final day)**

The Giant Print

Come and make your mark! You can get involved throughout the week and have a quick free course in lino printing; cut and print your individual piece to create a giant image celebrating one of Westonbirt's iconic trees.



Thursday 26 October 2017 (2pm Great Oak Hall)
Come along to see the end result of your cumulated individual lino cuttings from across the week.

www.GPCHQ.co.uk

Firestorm Artists Collaborative 'Elemental 2'

Artists utilise the incredible natural properties of the rocks, minerals and earth beneath our feet in this exhibition. Glass, ceramics and bronze works will be displayed with the autumn trees as they come under the influence of the changing elements.



**Saturday 28 October – Thursday 2 November 2017,
10am – 4pm (3pm on final day)**

www.elementalexhibition.com

**Help spread the word about
Westonbirt Arboretum events
by sharing on social media.**

Friends of Westonbirt how you help

In this edition of the magazine, we thought you might like a quick snapshot of how your membership supports the amazing work that takes place here. You help to fund the following:



**Over 250
volunteers**

who work across the whole
of the arboretum



A student
arborist placement

**International
research field trips**



Motorised buggies give
accessibility to more visitors

In today's unsteady economic and environmental climate, support from the Friends is vital to help strengthen the sustainability of Westonbirt Arboretum. We plan to continue to grow our membership and continue the amazing work that takes place here.

Whether you visit for the landscape, exercise, wide open spaces or to walk your dog, our membership continues to grow year on year with over 30,000 loyal Friends who help us support the Forestry Commission in its work to preserve and develop this beautiful landscape.



School visits and
family activities
for over
**35,000
participants**

There are lots of reasons to join the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum. Here's a quick reminder of all the benefits of being a Friend!

- Free entry 364 days a year
- Kids go free age 18 and under
- Free quarterly magazine
- Discounts with local partners
- Earlybird booking and discounts for Enchanted Christmas
- Early bird booking for Forest Live

Free entry for adults at reciprocal gardens:

- 1 Batsford Arboretum, Gloucestershire
- 2 Bedgebury National Pinetum, Kent
- 3 Birmingham Botanicals and Glasshouses
- 4 Yorkshire Arboretum, Castle Howard
- 5 National Botanic Gardens of Wales
- 6 Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh including Benmore, Dawyck and Logan
- 7 Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Surrey
- 8 Royal Botanic Gardens Wakehurst Place, West Sussex



Visitor views



"There's so much to do and so much freedom. Kids can really use their imagination."

Susan and Melanie Churchill (Members)



"Westonbirt is an amazing place. We've never seen anything like it. It's so beautiful and peaceful. This landscape really connects you with nature and gives you such a feeling of wellbeing."

Helene and Aysha, visiting from the USA and the Maldives

The Friends of Westonbirt team

Chief Executive Anna-Clare Temple

Business Manager Jacqueline Dalton

Business Support Lorna Butcher

Interim Finance Coordinator Chris Jacob

Supporter Engagement Manager Catherine Hewer

Membership Coordinator Bev Starkings

Membership Administrator Kelly Hough

Fundraising Officer Sarah Malina

Fundraising Assistant Gill Ball

For general enquiries:

general@fowa.org.uk 0300 067 3300

For membership enquiries:

membership@fowa.org.uk 0300 067 3300

For fundraising enquiries:

fundraising@fowa.org.uk 0300 067 3303

For Great Oak Hall enquiries:

greatoakhall@fowa.org.uk 0300 067 3301

Patrons

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall

Giles Coode-Adams OBE

Sir Henry Elwes KCVO

Robin Herbert CBE

Hon Beth Rothschild

Sir Crispin Tickell GCMG, KCVO

President

Christopher Brickell CBE

Vice Presidents

Roger Busby CBE

Peregrine Pollen

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Sue Bradley-Jones (Vice Chair)

Gavin Grant

John Hammond

Margaret Headen

Mike Howarth

Malcolm Potter

Stephen Segar OBE

Andrew Smith

Karen Thornton (Vice Chair)

Beth Weston



▲ Credit: Paul Box

Arboretum opening times

9am–5pm (last entry Dec–Feb 4pm) (March–Nov 4:30pm)
1 April–31 August open to members to 8pm
Closed Christmas day

General enquiries Mon–Fri

Tel: 0300 067 4890

westonbirt@forestry.gov.uk

Learning Centre

The Learning and Participation team offers a wide range of fun, hands-on programmes
Tel: 0300 067 4856

Mobility Scooter Reservations

Book in advance, collect from Welcome Building
Open daily 9am–4pm
Tel: 0300 067 4861

Volunteering

Tel: 0300 067 4862

cheryl.pearson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Westonbirt Shop

Open every day 9am–5pm
Tel: 01666 880 787

Restaurant and café

Open 9:30 am–5pm
(Closed Christmas and New Years day)
Café open seasonally, Tel: 01666 880064

Westonbirt, The National Arboretum, Tetbury,
Gloucestershire GL8 8QS



Protecting your family wealth

Preserving family wealth is a priority for many people. If you are seeking to minimise inheritance tax on your death, protect your children's inheritance from divorce, or safeguard your estate being used up in paying care home fees, our specialist team can help.

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01225 485700 hello@mowbraywoodwards.co.uk

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Westonbirt
The National
Arboretum

Advance
tickets only

**Early bird booking
for Friends opens
18 September!**

HALF PRICE adult
tickets and £2 children's
tickets for Friends
booking Friday nights

ENCHANTED CHRISTMAS

**An illuminated celebration of
Westonbirt's tree collection**

**FRIDAY 1 – SUNDAY 3, THURSDAY 7 – SUNDAY 10
& THURSDAY 14 – MONDAY 18 DECEMBER**

Tickets & info:

forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt-christmas

Box office: 03000 680 400



**Forestry Commission
England**

Westonbirt, The National Arboretum is
cared for by the Forestry Commission.