

Westonbirt

SUMMER 2018

Time for
summer plantings



Return to Vietnam

New roots for Westonbirt

Our mechanical muscles

Learning about trees

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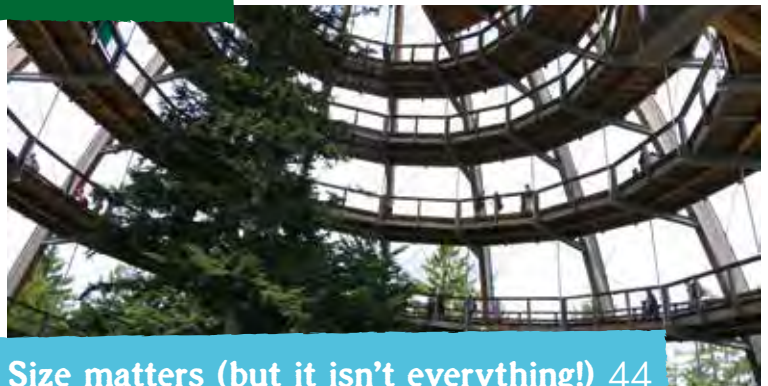
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the friends
of Westonbirt
Arboretum



Westonbirt

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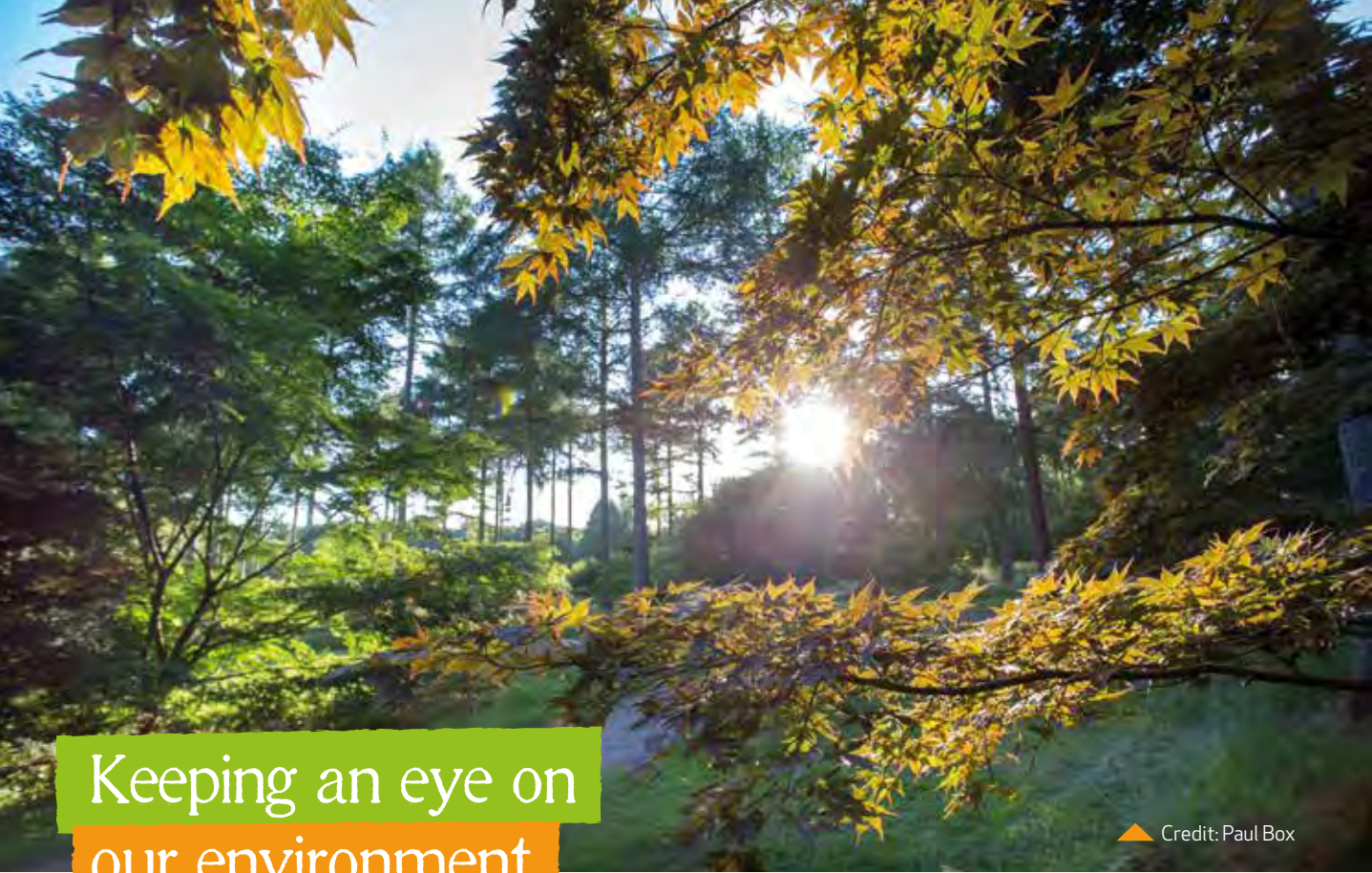
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should satisfy themselves
about the authenticity of
products advertised.

Cover image: Paul Groom



Keeping an eye on our environment

▲ Credit: Paul Box



Welcome to the summer issue of the Westonbirt Magazine. Whilst Westonbirt is famous the world over for its autumn colours, late spring and early summer are arguably even more vibrant with carpets of

bluebells and other wildflowers in Silk Wood, and the wide variety of rhododendrons in the historic collection in the Old Arboretum. And for the more energetic amongst you, the Westonbirt 10K allows you the opportunity to take in all these sights whilst running past champion trees and rare specimens. Go to our website to find out more!

Thank you to all of you who wrote in commenting on the poly-wrap that your Westonbirt Magazine is delivered in, prompted in no small part by Andrew Smith's article in the spring issue. We are all becoming more aware of the products we use and our impact on the environment. The

poly-wrap used to mail our magazine is and always has been, in fact, recyclable plastic. Whilst many kerbside recycling schemes don't collect this sort of plastic, I have found that most supermarkets have facilities to recycle poly-wrap of this type (along with old carrier bags, the plastic bags that loaves of bread are sold in and even the plastic wrapping from toilet tissue and multipacks of tins and cans). We have taken on board your feedback and are looking into alternatives that are cost effective as well as sustainable.

“ The poly-wrap used to mail our magazine is and always has been, in fact, recyclable plastic. ”

If you are keen to learn more about Westonbirt and its unique collection, then I recommend joining one of our guided walks (March–October). Whether you have recently joined us or have been a Friend for many years, the knowledgeable and passionate volunteer guides always have something new to share with visitors. Guided walks are free and take place daily at 11am; ask at the Welcome Building for further details.

From 1 July we will be reinforcing our card policy. We are doing this to protect our membership scheme and ensure it can remain good value and support the arboretum. Please see page 46 for details.

As many of you will have seen, the bad weather this winter took its toll on the arboretum. Whilst children were enjoying sledging and snow days, Westonbirt's dedicated Tree Team was left counting the cost of the heavy snow and winds. Sadly, several important specimens have been lost, including some that provided important links to our heritage. However, sad though these losses are, they have provided space and opportunity for new acquisitions to the collection.

This season the Tree Team has already planted nearly 300 new trees, including new additions to our national maple collection which were grown from seed collected by the team on a trip to Italy in late 2016, which was supported by the Friends. Twelve months from germination to planting is something of a record, even for Westonbirt's experts! See if you can spot some of our new trees when you are next here.

Anna-Clare Temple
Chief Executive

Not completion, just the end of the beginning



In March we were able to pay the final invoice and submit a 801 page evaluation report for the Heritage Lottery Funded Phase 1 of the 'Westonbirt Project'. Together with Phase 2 this marks the

completion of something that started with ideas being discussed over 20 years ago.

My predecessor, Simon Toomer, and I say in our foreword to the report: "The 'Westonbirt Project' has brought the arboretum into the 21st Century and utterly transformed its ability to meet its mission. Through carefully considered infrastructural improvements and imaginative approaches to interpretation and engagement, Westonbirt has taken a step to change in its accessibility and value for enjoyment and learning"

The report is available to view on the FOWA website at the link below. The two page executive summary gives an overview of the wide scope and many achievements; look further and you'll see the attention to detail and the outcomes considered alongside the original rationale.

In this magazine it's important to pay tribute to the FOWA past Chairman, Stephen Segar OBE, who galvanised trustees and members into championing a project larger than anything undertaken before. In the context of the economic downturn it was also a bold move by the Forestry Commission Chief Executive Simon Hodgson in 2009 to invest in the resources necessary to develop a credible plan. The end result is a much more sustainable basis for conserving and funding the arboretum.

“

The 'Westonbirt Project' has brought the arboretum into the 21st Century and utterly transformed its ability to meet its mission.

”

I've described it as end of the beginning because the project has a living and growing legacy. We're continuing the community programme; these and other changes, many of which are made possible thanks to support from FOWA, have enhanced interpretation resources and are appointing a collections manager to help better care for the collection. These and other changes give a great springboard for the future.

Andrew Smith
Arboretum Director

Visit fowa.org.uk/hlf-report to view the report online.

Coming up

Welcome to our summer events calendar. We're excited to offer a great diversity of events across a wide range of activities and interests.

Guided walks

Our guided walk program for 2018 is now up and running. With at least one guided walk each day, these are a fabulous way to learn more about Westonbirt and its unique collection.

Flora guided walks

Explore the flora of Westonbirt Arboretum on a guided walk.

**Tuesday 5 June, Tuesday 3 July,
Tuesday 7 August, 10:30am**
Leave from the Welcome Building



Find out more

Visit our website www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt or call our team on 0300 067 4890 to find out more information about any of our events.



Behind the scenes tours

Discover what goes on behind the scenes of the propagation and tree management centre on a guided tour.

**Saturday 2 June, Sunday 3 June,
Saturday 7 July, Sunday 8 July,
Saturday 4 August, Sunday 5 August, 11:30am**
Leave from the Great Oak Hall

Secrets of Silk Wood guided walk

Take in the stunning seasonal sights of the ancient Silk Wood.

Every Saturday and Sunday, 2pm
Leave from the Welcome Building

Wonders of Westonbirt guided walk

Explore the seasonal highlights of Westonbirt's Old Arboretum on a guided walk.

Every day, 11am
Leave from the Welcome Building

For children and young people

Wild Westonbirt

Aged between 14–18? Love the great outdoors? Join a youth club with a difference and learn a range of practical conservation, traditional bushcraft and outdoor survival skills.

Saturday 23 June, Saturday 21 July, 10am – 4pm

Meet our Machines

Find out more about the work of our Tree Team, meet their machines and have a go at our throwing line challenge.

Saturday 7 July and Sunday 8 July, 11am – 4pm
Tree Management Centre

Chewing on Trees

Find out more about the wonderful range of food and drink our trees can provide.

**Monday 30 July –
Friday 3 August, 11am – 4pm**
Learning Centre

Fantastic Fibres and Fabrics

Discover the plants that provide us with the fibres and fabrics that help us make up our world.

**Monday 6 August –
Friday 10 August, 11am – 4pm**
Learning Centre

Wood Wonders

Celebrate one of the most remarkable materials on the planet and some amazing ways we use it! Take part in our crafts using Westonbirt wood.

Monday 13 August – Friday 17 August, 11am – 4pm
Silk Wood Barn

Resins and Oils

Explore the amazing properties of resins and oils and use them in our crafts.

Monday 20 August – Friday 24 August, 11am – 4pm
Silk Wood Barn

Tree Games

Come and play some games inspired by trees and create a game to take home.

**Monday 27 August – Friday 31 August,
11am – 4pm**
Silk Wood Barn



▲ Credit: Paul Groom

Courses and workshops

Bee Keeping for Beginners

Learn the basics of bee keeping on this one day course.

**Saturday 9 June, Sunday 17 June,
Saturday 23 June, 10am – 5pm**



Forest School Course

Develop hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees.

Monday 30 July – Friday 3 August, 9am – 5pm

Mindfulness Photography Workshop

Half day photography workshop with Ruth Davey.

**Saturday 14 July, Wednesday 3 October
10am – 12.30 or 1:30pm – 4pm**

Impressions of Westonbirt Photography Course

Develop your creative photography skills on this one day course.

Tuesday 26 June – Thursday 19 July, 9:15am – 5pm

Sketching in Oils

Come and see how painting outside in oil paint is clean, quick and fun!

Wednesday 15 August, 10am – 4pm

Find out more

Visit our website www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt or call our team on 0300 067 4890 to find out more information about any of our events.

Other

Firewood sales

Every Saturday, 9am – 12pm

Hot air balloon flights

**Sunday 24 June, Saturday 21 July,
Sunday 26 August**

Concerts

Forest Live: The Script

Thursday 14 June

Forest Live: Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott

Friday 15 June

Forest Live: Paloma Faith – SOLD OUT

Saturday 16 June

Forest Live: George Ezra – SOLD OUT

Sunday 17 June



Coming up in the Great Oak Hall...

Exhibitions

10am to 4pm daily (3pm on the final day)

Artists donate 30 per cent of sales to the Friends Charity.

Carole Ingram 'A Wash With Colour'

We are delighted to welcome back an exciting exhibition of watercolour portraits, architecture, nature and wildlife by Wiltshire-based artist Carole, who also undertakes commissioned work.

Saturday 26 – Thursday 31 May

www.caroleingram.wixsite.com/artist

Creative Coterie '2018 Collection'

Creative Coterie return to Westonbirt with a colourful collection of new work including glass art, reflecting their love of nature, the countryside and their lives, which visitors are sure to enjoy.



Friday 3 – Monday 13 August

West Country Artists and Makers 'Diverse Expressions'

Five artists come together to express their art in ceramics, glass, paint and wool. Their diversity promises to provide a stimulating display.

Thursday 16 – Thursday 23 August

British Woodcarvers' Association 'Out Of The Woods'

The Gloucestershire branch showcases their members' work, featuring a mix of carvings by both professional and amateur carvers.

Saturday 25 August – Monday 3 September



Events

Songways Singing Workshop

We are pleased to have Jane Harris back for another popular singing day – no experience necessary, just a desire to sing! Members can enjoy a discounted price of £20.

Saturday 22 September

www.songways.co.uk/product/singing-day-great-oak-hall-westonbirt-arboretum



Summer life in the arboretum

Summer is here and it's time to enjoy longer days out and about in our glorious countryside. After the abundance of new life in spring, the summer brings a sense of tranquillity and rhythm as plants and animals enjoy the warmer months.

Our summer is famously unpredictable with sunny, cloudy, rainy and stormy days all part of the mix. But, like it or not, it's all part of our climate! Our moody summers allow trees and flowers to flourish for bees to collect pollen. The rain fills ponds for kingfishers and herons to feed, and provides a watery home for over 1,000 species of animals.



June

The stag beetle is a magnificent beastie that can grow over 75mm in length. The male's antlers can be as long as their body. Stag beetle larvae are laid in dead wood where conditions are moist. They can take several years to fully develop, before finally emerging to live for just a few weeks, in which they must find a mate and start the next generation.

July



The Red Admiral, with its velvety black wings and striking red and white bands, is primarily a seasonal visitor from Europe. A few are sighted in the early months of the year, meaning that this butterfly is now considered a resident.

The trees are in their full majesty with beautiful shades of green punctuated by bursts of colour, such as the whites, pinks and purples of magnolias and the pinks and reds of the Japanese maples. The white flowers on our horse chestnut collection outside the Great Oak Hall, are also an impressive sight early in the season.

Amongst the many trees enjoying early summer colour is the handkerchief or dove tree, *Davidia involucrata* on Main Drive. This beautiful tree was discovered in China by Père David, a French missionary, in 1869 and introduced to the UK in 1904 by Ernest Henry Wilson. When bringing it back, Wilson survived a shipwreck and managed to save his precious cargo!

Summer at Westonbirt Arboretum is a plentiful time for birds. There's a rich diet of insects on offer and a generous supply of fruits. Swallows nest around the many outbuildings, blackbirds rummage for tasty morsels on the ground and the colourful chaffinch is always busy. The jay, by far the most colourful member of the crow family, can be seen at work. Keep your eyes and ears peeled for the tapping of the greater spotted or green woodpecker, or a glimpse of any of these beautiful birds.

The Indian bean tree, *Catalpa bignonioides* has large numbers of small white and yellow flowers and bright green foliage. Found on Main Drive, this beautiful tree's flowers can be so numerous that they almost entirely obscure the leaves. Contrary to the name, this tree is not from India but from the eastern United States, and doesn't grow beans!



▲ Credit: Gina Mills

August

Have you spotted any summer wildlife at Westonbirt? Share your images on Instagram using #FriendsOfWestonbirt or email them to us at magazine@fowa.org.uk

Membership benefits

There are many reasons to become a Friend of Westonbirt Arboretum. Not least is the fantastic tree collection that we protect, nurture and enhance for our own and future generations.

Our trees also provide homes and a plentiful food supply for our incredibly diverse local wildlife. Trees are the lungs of the world, filtering pollution, absorbing CO² and releasing oxygen. They are an essential and wonderful part of our environment, and with your support we're helping to ensure that they continue to be nurtured and protected.

Here are some of the other membership benefits:

- We're excited to announce a **NEW** membership benefit with **Forest Holidays!** Friends can now receive **10% off** with discount code **FOWA18**
- **Free entry 364 days a year**
- **Kids go free (age 18 and under)**
- **Regular Friends' eNews**
- **Free regular magazine**
- **15% discount with Cotswold Outdoor, Snow & Rock, Runners Need and 10% off Cycle Surgery – use discount code AF-FOWA-22**
- **Earlybird booking notification for Forest Live concerts**
- **Earlybird booking and discounts for Enchanted Christmas**
- **Free entry for adults at reciprocal gardens***

* Don't forget – it's always a good idea to give other gardens a ring before you visit. Occasionally they hold special events and may have restrictions on reciprocal visits during peak times.



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

ESCAPE TO A LUXURY CABIN



Escape to luxury self-catering woodland cabins; choose from ten idyllic UK locations set exclusively on Forestry Commission land, many with private hot tubs.

Forest Holidays are perfect getaways for families, couples, groups of friends and even your dogs in our specific pet friendly cabins!

Call **03330 110495** or visit www.forestholidays.co.uk and enter code **FOWA18** for **10% off** the cost of your cabin

This code entitles the user to 10% off the cost of your cabin at any of the ten Forest Holidays locations. The code must be applied at the time of booking and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers. Holidays must be booked by 31st December 2018 and taken by 31st December 2019.



15% Discount

For Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum Members

In-store and online using code:
AF-FOWA-22

You can also use your discount with:



Full T&Cs apply. Offer expires 31.12.18.

Advice born from experience since 1974
cotswoldoutdoor.com





Journey of a seed | Part two

In the last edition of the magazine Penny talked us through seed selection, collection and germination at Westonbirt. In this edition, she explains how seedlings are nurtured, protected from pests and disease and finally selected for planting.



▲ Penny, our Propagator at Westonbirt

We covered germinating seeds, what happens once the seedlings are making progress?

The seeds start germinating towards spring, popping their cotyledons up above the surface. Once the true leaves start to appear I prick them out into one, or even three litre pots for fast growing species like birch, which have tiny seedlings but grow rapidly and root deeply into the pot. I move them to the growing on house, which is a greenhouse providing warmth and shelter. We have thermal shade screens to protect them from direct sunlight through the glass which also protects the plants from frost during the winter. I water all the seedlings by hand at this stage. Some need less water than others and it's a good opportunity to check for pests and disease.

How long they stay in the growing on house depends on the species. Most stay just a few months but others won't move until next spring. Alders, birch, sycamore and eucalyptus are all fast growing and move through the nursery quickly but others like *abies*, rhododendrons and hollies take a while longer.

Where do they move to next?

The next stop is the tunnels. We have one for deciduous and one for evergreens. The tunnels have drip irrigation systems that are connected to a tap, so I time the watering for each line, usually 7 minutes is sufficient.

Do you avoid chemicals for environmental reasons?

Being considerate of our environment is certainly one reason. Chemicals can seep into the ground, affect our wildlife (especially aquatic life and bees) and can end up in waterways, so avoiding them is good practice. Also, pests can become resistant to chemical pesticides, a bit like humans and anti-biotics. All things considered, avoiding chemicals is best.

“ We use biological controls for pests and disease and this is always an interesting area. By introducing organisms that prey on pests we can avoid chemical controls. ”



Biological pest control avoids the use of chemicals that can cause damage to our delicate local ecosystem.



Red spider mites

Red spider mites (*Tetranychus urticae*) can cause serious damage if not controlled.

Vine weevils

All vine weevils are female and will lay about 300 eggs a year, so the damage they cause can be wide spread.



In extreme cases they produce a fine webbing which covers the plant and prevents photosynthesis and that can lead to de-foliation and death. Under ideal conditions, a female can lay 4–8 eggs each day for about three weeks. The young that hatch are capable of breeding in just a few days and in very hot and dry conditions the population can balloon.

I also water nematodes into the compost around the roots on a monthly basis from April through to October. This controls black vine weevil (*Otiorynchus sulcatus*), which left untreated will lay eggs on the soil, the grubs then eat the roots and chew through young stems. Vine weevils lay around 300 eggs a year, so the damage can be wide spread. A hundred adults can increase to 1 million in two years!

When do the saplings leave the tunnels?

I check the pot bases regularly; I call it bottom checking. When the roots are starting to show through the base of the pot and the sapling is growing well and making good progress, I move them into the shade house. They're still sheltered from excessive wind and sun but the environment is closer to their woodland habitat. Everything in the shade house will go out for planting eventually but some need longer than others. We've got some semi-evergreen maples, *Acer sikkimense* and *Acer laurinum*, that are good examples of a more tender sapling and these stay with us a little longer.

Then they're planted out?

Most will be planted at Westonbirt but not all.

“ I go out into the arboretum with our Curator, Mark Ballard and Dendrologist, Dan Crowley, to select a suitable home for each of the trees. ”

We consider soil type and lighting as well as the landscape plan. The plants are all tagged indicating their destination in the collection, section number and individual tree number. The Tree Team check on all our

What biological controls do you use and what do they control?

We introduce parasitic wasps, *Encarsia formosa*, to control whitefly. It's a slightly grizzly business as the wasp lays its egg singularly into the whitefly larvae, parasitized pupae turn black and new parasitic wasps emerge from the pupae in place of the whitefly.

We also use sachets of predatory mite, *Amblyseius andersoni*, to control red spider mites (*Tetranychus urticae*), which live on the underside of leaves and feed on the sap. They can cause serious damage if not controlled because they introduce a virus to the plant; the leaves become mottled with pale yellow spots.

new plantings for up to three years (these are called unestablished checks), after which time they come off the list.

You mentioned that some trees don't end up at Westonbirt

We take most but what we don't use can be offered to other organisations or individuals. Any trees grown from our wild seed collections can only be distributed to organisations that are credited on the original permit but others are made more widely available.

Do you have a favourite in the current batch?

I like them all but we do have a Lobel's maple, *Acer lobelii*, collected on a recent trip to Italy. I believe this will be the first Lobel's maple to be grown in this country from a wild collected source. The bark is a greenish-grey and it produces yellow-green flowers in early spring.

Thanks Penny, it's been very interesting to follow the journey of a seed and understand how much goes into the process!

Our primary focus is to preserve and continue the Grade I listed landscape according to the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest.



New roots for Westonbirt

Penny Jones, our Propagator at Westonbirt, provides an update on an exciting new season of planting for the arboretum.

Amazingly, planting this year was done in record time despite serious setbacks from snow and wind. Planting started in mid-January and was completed by the 14 March. Quite a feat considering there were 286 plants that needed sites! Luckily, due to some removal of self-seeded natural woodland, a large area was created alongside Broad Drive which enabled us to allocate 99 plants to those sections.

Flowers of *Acer opalus* subsp. *obtusatum*. Credit: Dan Crowley ▲

The plantings included...

80

**WILD COLLECTION
NUMBERS**

24

**NEW TAXA (A GROUP SUCH
AS SPECIES, FAMILY OR CLASS)**

Most of the plants originate from the COWS (California, Oregon and Washington State) trip in 2015 as well as some from the WITA (Westonbirt, Italy) trip last autumn and a few from the 2014 WECA (Westonbirt, East Coast America).

Of those that are new to the collection I've selected two that would be more able to adapt to the predicted hotter and dryer climate of the future. These are plants that meet our Science and Research criteria of our Accessions Policy.



▲ The team on the seed collecting trip in Italy

My selections are:

Acer opalus subsp. *obtusatum*

A tree that is found growing in the hot dry Mediterranean climate in sandy soils with a high quartz content. It has a distribution range of Algeria, the Italian Appenine peninsula and the Balkans and we've planted six of these in the 2050 glade. An extra bonus is that they have amazing autumn colour.



▲ Leaves of *Acer opalus* and *Acer opalus* subsp. *obtusatum*. Credit: Penny Jones

Leptospermum glaucescens

A small leaved evergreen commonly known as the blue-green tea-tree or smokey tea-tree so called because of the colour and size of its foliage. Plants with small silver or grey leaves reflect the sunlight and lose less water in its drying heat and are therefore adapted to growing in deserts. It's a native of Tasmania and a member of the myrtle family.

New additions to our Plant Heritage National Collections this year are:

- Bosnian maple, *Acer opalus* subsp. *obtusatum* (WITA11, 12, 50 and 57)
- Italian maple, *Acer opalus* subsp. *opalus* (WITA72)
- *Tilia callidonta*
- *Tilia endochrysea*
- Noble lime, *Tilia nobilis* KR

New as wild collected specimens in the living collection are:

- Sycamore, *Acer pseudoplatanus* (multiple WITA collections) – we currently have 88 plants but all are without any provenance details
- Western red cedar, *Thuja plicata* (COWS02) – we have 133 plants but none are of known wild origin
- Nootka cypress, *Xanthocyparis nootkatensis* (COWS26) – we have 40 plants but none are of known wild origin

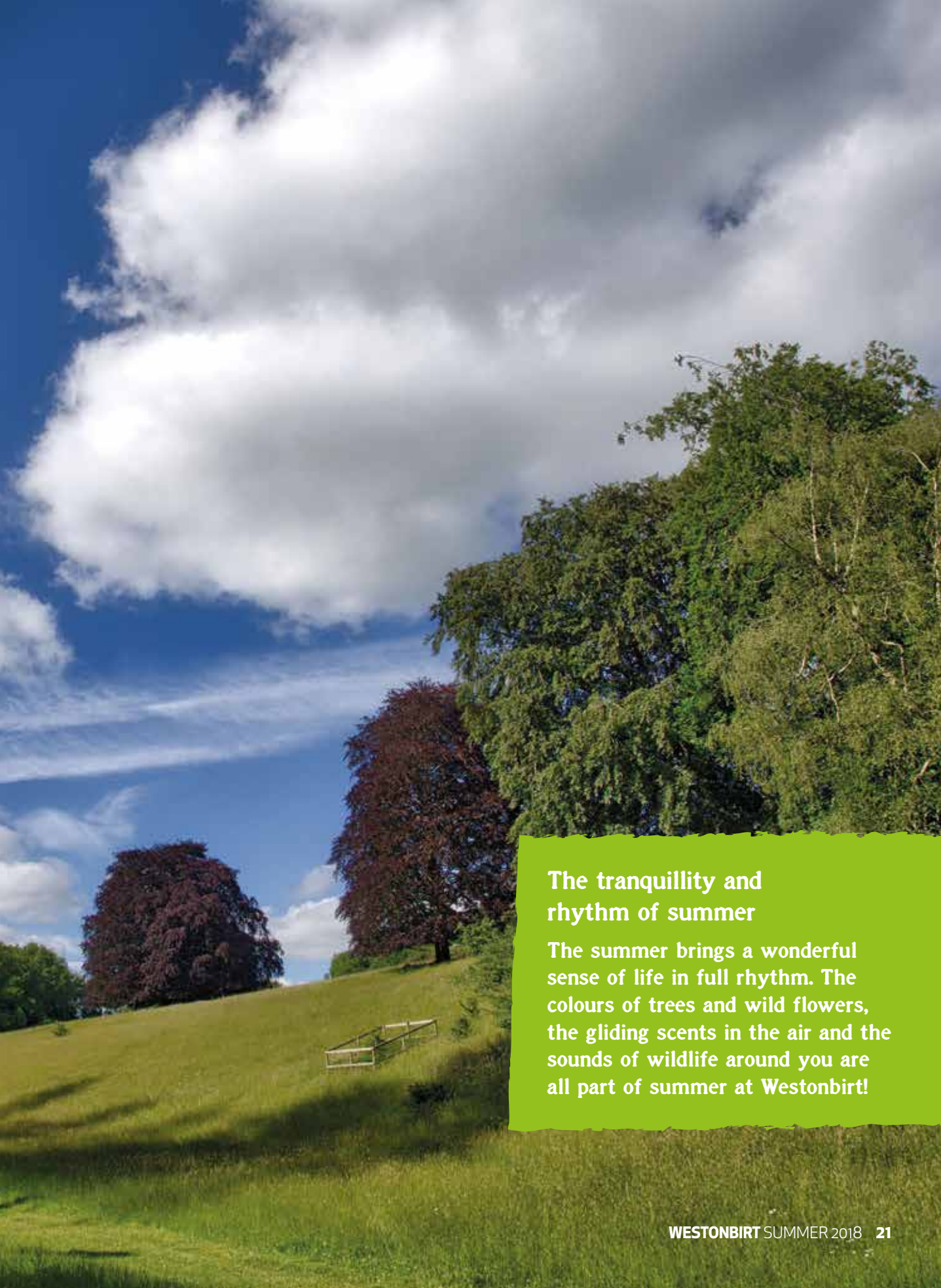
Some new introductions are:

- Western larch, *Larix occidentalis* (COWS21)
- Blue-green tea-tree or smokey tea-tree, *Leptospermum glaucescens* (LANC1768)
- Tan or Tanbark Oak, *Lithocarpus densiflorus* (COWS037)
- *Magnolia laevifolia* × *maudiae*
- *Platanus racemosa* (COWS69)
- Kowhai, *Sophora microphylla*

There are a number of these new additions which are suitable subjects for testing monitoring climate change. Plant, soil and water analysis can all contribute to studies on climate change, providing sensitive, long-term data on subtle changes in the health of ecosystems.



▲ Credit: Paul Box



The tranquillity and rhythm of summer

The summer brings a wonderful sense of life in full rhythm. The colours of trees and wild flowers, the gliding scents in the air and the sounds of wildlife around you are all part of summer at Westonbirt!

Summer tree highlights

Westonbirt has been actively participating in wild seed collecting expeditions since 2005. Staff members representing the arboretum have travelled to parts of Asia, Europe, North and South America on the quest for tree seed. Our propagator, Penny Jones, was on the first expedition in which we were directly involved, being part of a team which went to Turkey in 2005 as part of a Darwin Initiative project.

Seed from this expedition was distributed among participating institutions as well as being banked for conservation purposes. Plants from this expedition are now well established in the collection, with many plants of different species performing impressively here at Westonbirt, as well as at the Forestry Commission's Bedgebury National Pinetum, who were also participants on this expedition.



Our plants of *Alnus glutinosa* subsp. *barbata* collected in Turkey are behaving as many alders do, having grown vigorously since being planted out in 2008. **An eastern subspecies of our native alder, these, like many plants of Turkish origin are proving to be happy in our climate at present,** while western Asia is a part of the world we may look to increasingly in the future for plants that may continue to thrive in the future climate.



The Oriental beech, *Fagus orientalis*, is closely related to the common European beech, *Fagus sylvatica*, with which it is said to hybridise. **The two are morphologically similar, though easily differentiated by the larger, more numerous veined leaves of the Oriental beech.** In the wild, it is found in association with Nordmann fir, *Abies nordmanniana*, in a similar association to that of the more western European beech, which grows with the European silver fir, *Abies alba* in parts of its range.


Summer seasonal trail map

You can use this pull-out map to identify where each of the trees discussed in Dan's summer tree highlights article can be found in the Arboretum.

Each tree has a coloured tree icon next to it. You will find the same coloured symbol placed on the map to show its location. You may wish to take the full article on your next visit.

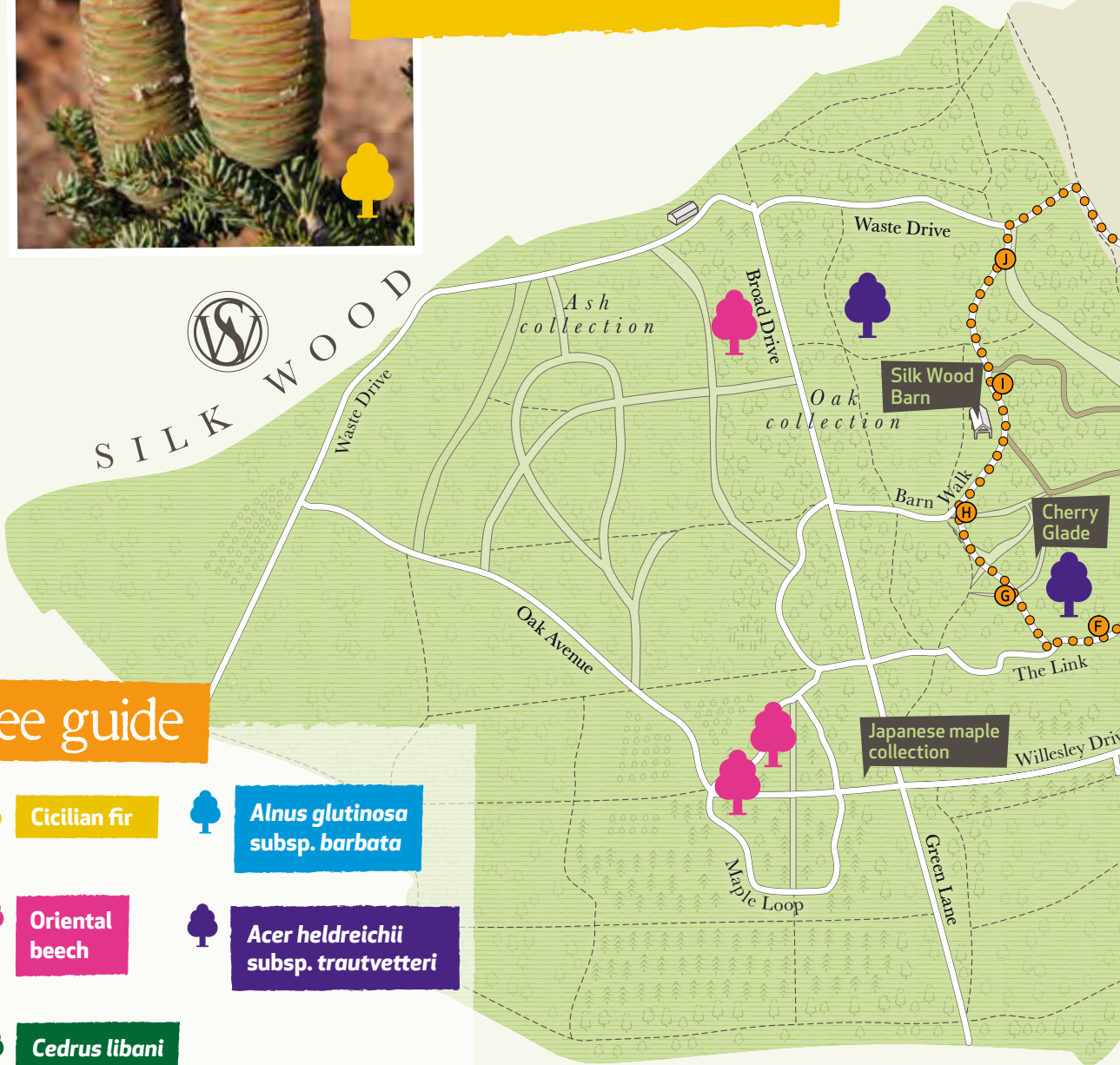
The map is a simplified version of our main map. We've done this to make identification easier. If you would like a copy of the full map, simply pop into the Welcome Building on your next visit.

Pull out map

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




Cicilian fir - The true firs often start off as squat plants, growing out before they grow up. Our examples of *Abies cilicica* illustrate this phenomenon well, though there are many other true fir species represented here that do likewise.



Tree guide

 Cicilian fir

 *Alnus glutinosa*
subsp. *barbata*

 Oriental beech

 *Acer heldreichii*
subsp. *trautvetteri*

 *Cedrus libani*

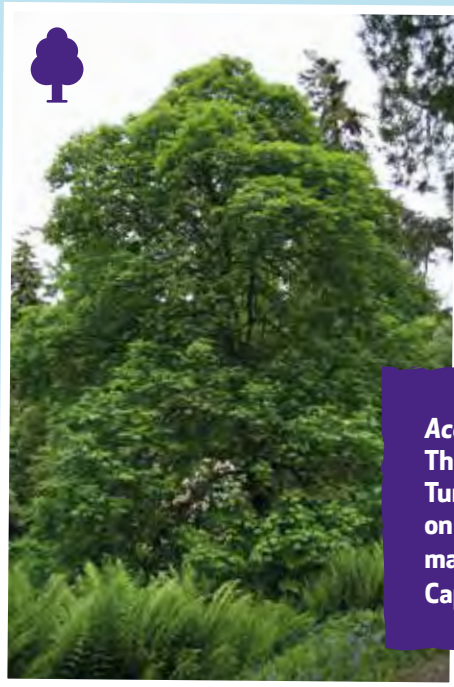


Alnus glutinosa* subsp. *barbata - This one of four subspecies accepted in the World Checklist of Selected Plant Families. The others are *antitaurica*, *betuloides* and *glutinosa*.



▲ Credit: Hugh Angus

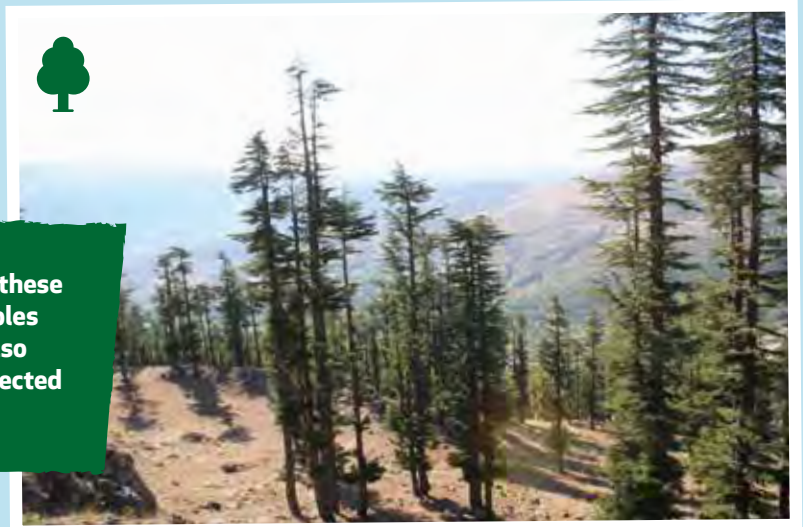
Oriental beech – Our Turkish plants were collected as seed from northwest Turkey, where it grows with the Endangered *Abies nordmanniana* subsp. *equi-trojani*, which is well represented here as well as at Bedgebury, which holds the world's most comprehensive collection of temperate conifers.



Acer heldreichii* subsp. *trautvetteri – There are 10 maple species native to Turkey. Two others were also collected on this expedition – Montpellier maple, *Acer monspessulanum*, and Cappadocian maple, *Acer cappadocicum*.

▲ Credit: Hugh Angus

Cedrus libani – As well as these interesting Turkish examples of cedar of Lebanon, we also have plants that were collected on Mount Lebanon itself!





A number of examples of *Abies cilicica*, the Cilician fir are beginning to gain stature after a slower start to life in the collection than some of our other plants from this expedition. **Representatives of both subspecies were collected in Turkey and are features of the landscape here.**

Subsp. *cilicica* may be distinguished from the more geographically restricted subsp. *isaurica* at this time of year by its faintly pubescent new shoots (glabrous in subsp. *cilicica*), though this may be a somewhat variable character.



Acer heldreichii subsp. *trautvetteri* is somewhat rare outside maple collections as it is not considered among the most ornamental of the genus. **It is closely related to the more common sycamore, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, of which many fine examples can be found here.**

Though *Acer heldreichii* subsp. *trautvetteri* is ultimately a smaller tree than sycamore, we hope that these specimens will grow to become prominent trees in the Westonbirt landscape.



Our cedars of Lebanon collected from this expedition came in under the name of *Cedrus libani* subsp. *stenocoma*.

This so-called subspecies is said to be intermediate between the Atlas cedar, *Cedrus atlantica* and the typical cedar of Lebanon, though it must be said that these two can be very difficult to distinguish between themselves. The plants from which seed was collected differ significantly from typical cedar of Lebanon habit being far more conical. However, recent authors suggest that this difference is likely as a response to their habitat and have disregarded these plants as being a separate subspecies.



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

Westonbirt walkies in the sun

Hi, my name is Charlotte. Last weekend my mum, sister and I visited Westonbirt for a walk with our border collie, Alfie.



It was a perfect spring day: the sun was shining for what seemed like the first time in forever; the birds were singing to their chicks and the #westonbirtwalkies pooches were loving it.

First, we walked across the treetop walkway and explored all the interesting facts. We wandered along the Silk Wood Spring Trail until we came to Ted's fright. It was really funny watching my dog Alfie try to balance on the logs.

Alfie had loads of fun playing with the other dogs and chasing leaves. But when we got to the Silk Wood Barn, we couldn't see or hear anyone else. It was like we'd entered another world and it was wonderful!

Some of the trees in the arboretum are so old and some are absolutely massive! You might like to take pictures or even do drawings of your favourites. My mum pretty much took pictures of every tree she saw.

At lunch, we visited the café. The hot chocolates are amazing, definitely 5 stars. We also had delicious sausage rolls and a tasty slice of cake. There were even some treats for Alfie. Mum stayed with him in the café while my sister and I explored the Old Arboretum. This area of the wood is dog free so it's great if you're not a big fan of them.

There were so many great activities along the way. We stopped at the bird hide, and very quietly managed to spot some blue tits snacking on bird seed. We played tag through the woods and had a go at the activities. We made our way back to the café and began to wander home.

We all enjoyed our trip to Westonbirt, Alfie included. It's really nice to spend some time in nature and just take it all in. I hope I see you there soon!

If you have enjoyed a day out at Westonbirt why not share your experience with us and you might get published in the magazine!
Email magazine@fowa.org.uk.



Exclusive opportunity

Sponsor a superior specimen

In preparation for the Forestry Commission's centenary in 2019, we're delighted to introduce a rare and exciting opportunity to sponsor a tree centrally placed within the arboretum.

Spotlight on

A limited selection of 10 mature and prominent specimens have been personally chosen by Westonbirt's curator, for their significance within the Westonbirt landscape.

This exclusive collection includes champion trees, signature species, and endangered varieties – all available for you to sponsor for a period of 10 years.

Three categories of tree are available for between £10,000 and £20,000.

The tree label will acknowledge you personally, in recognition of your support. You'll also be invited on an annual tour for special guests with a key member of the arboretum team.

Mark a special occasion, commemorate a date, or simply show your appreciation of this remarkable landscape.



1. Atlas Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*)

- Important component of the Westonbirt landscape
- Native to parts of Morocco and Algeria, it has been assessed as Endangered in the wild by IUCN
- The name *Cedrus* comes from the Greek *kedros*, which is the traditional name for trees that have fragrant wood



2. Coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*)

- Native to California and Oregon, it has been assessed as Endangered in the wild by IUCN
- The tallest tree in the world is of this species
- Introduced to Britain via Russia before 1843



3. Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)

- Westonbirt signature species
- Native to the west coast of North America
- Named for David Douglas who introduced a number of notable conifer species from the west coast of North America

Visit fowa.org.uk/sponsor-a-specimen or call 0300 067 3303 to find out more about this rare opportunity.

FAMILY FUN












Forest challenge

Summer's a great time to spot lots of wildlife, so get your detective hat on and see how many bugs, insects and birds you can see or hear!

BUG HUNT BINGO

You might need to look under a few leaves, check out rotting wood and roll over a few fallen branches – see what you can spot!

 Spider	 Earwig	 Ant
 Beetle	 Butterfly	 Honeybee
 Moth	 Ladybird	 Caterpillar



DID YOU KNOW?

Insects are one of the most successful living things. About half of all species on Earth are insects!

Beautiful butterflies

Look out for trees with flowers as they often attract butterflies. Your mission is to spot at least one of the butterflies below.



Peacock Butterfly



Comma Butterfly



Red Admiral Butterfly



White Butterfly

What's that I hear in the woods?

Skylark

The joyful song of the skylark has inspired great poets. See if you can hear the fast changing, high pitch song of the skylark declaring it's territory.



Great spotted and green woodpeckers

Can you hear the tapping of a woodpecker? They tap to find insects hiding in the bark and crevices and make nest cavities. Some even tap to communicate with other woodpeckers as part of their courtship behaviour.



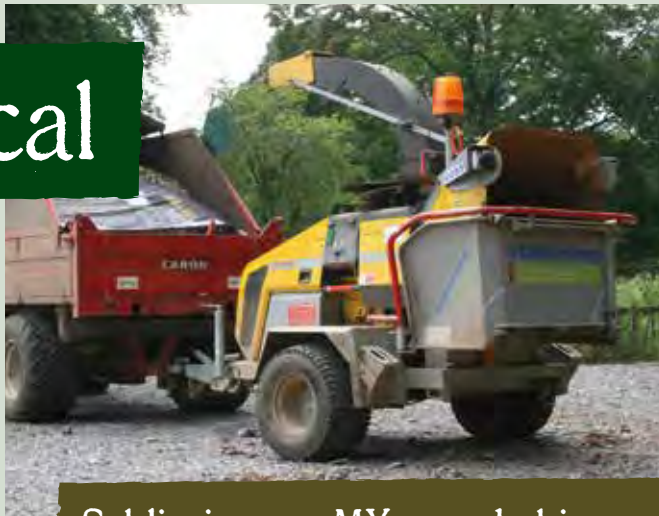
For a butterfly bonus, can you spot any other butterflies?

Remember what they look like and if you don't know the name look them up when you get home. Even better, send us a picture or drawing to magazine@fowa.org.uk



Our mechanical muscles

Looking after the arboretum on a year-round basis presents some interesting challenges. This calls for a range of vehicles and equipment specially tailored to our needs, the likes of which can only be found in a few places in the world. Low ground pressure, good manoeuvrability, and good visibility are some of the criteria our machines need to meet; read on if you'd like to know more about our impressive vehicles.



Schliesing 235 MX wood chipper

Usually seen towed behind the Caron, the Schliesing wood chippers make short work of any branches too small for firewood, turning them into woodchip which we pasteurise and then use as mulch for our trees.

- **Engine:** 35hp
- **Max branch size:** 19cm diameter
- **Weight:** 1.25 tonnes
- **Special features:** Hydraulic chip size adjustment of 5–25mm, twin hydraulic feed rollers, noise and wear reducing Whisper-cut blades



Caron Utility Vehicle

The Caron is a multi-purpose load-lugger, used to pull the Schliesing wood chippers and carry logs and woodchip.

- **Carrying capacity:** 3.2 tonnes
- **Carrying volume:** Approx 3.8 cubic metres
- **No. of gears:** 24
- **Special features:** 3-way tipper body, forward-tipping cab for easy maintenance, low ground pressure tyres

Vermeer SC602 stump cutter

Towed from stump to stump behind our Aebi, the Vermeer grinds even the largest tree stump into tiny pieces. After a couple of years the torn up stump decomposes and we can plant a young tree in its place.

- **Engine:** Caterpillar 60hp
- **Weight:** 1.4 tonnes
- **Cutter max:** RPM1080
- **No. of teeth:** 30
- **Special features:** Hydraulic towbar extends to operate 1.6m from towing vehicle. Can cut stumps as high as 61cm above ground, and 48cm below ground

Scanlift 190 SL Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP)

When climbing a tree isn't safe or practical the MEWP comes into its own; it's great for Yew pruning where we only cut small amounts off the end of branches.

- **Working height:** 19m
- **Weight:** 3.1 tonnes
- **Platform capacity:** 230kg
- **Special features:** 360 degree turret, 3 steering modes (2 wheel, 4 wheel and crab steer)



John Deere 6210

Our tractor does all the big jobs the smaller machines can't manage; from pulling tree trunks on a log carriage to unloading deliveries of compost from the back of lorries.

- **Engine:** 4.5L 90hp 383Nm torque
- **No. of gears:** 48
- **Rear lift:** 2.1 tonnes
- **Ground clearance:** 58cm
- **Special features:** Loader lifts 1.3 tonnes to a height of 3.85m, good all round visibility, good manoeuvrability for size

Terratrac Aebi TT75

The Aebi is an alpine tractor with a low centre of gravity and wide tyres giving unparalleled stability. With its tight turning circle and a flail mower on the front 3-point linkage it's the perfect tool for cutting long grass round cages and between trees.

- **Height:** 2.2m
- **Weight:** 1.6 tonnes
- **Front/rear lift:** 1.2 tonnes/1 tonne
- **Turning circle:** 2.9m
- **Special features:** 4 wheel steer gives excellent manoeuvrability, versatile machine with multiple attachments front and back, very low ground pressure

Meet Martyn

our Active Forest Coordinator

We are delighted to welcome Martyn Reeves, our new Active Forest Coordinator to the Forestry Team. We asked Martyn to tell us a bit about his role.



I am the new Active Forest Coordinator and will be working on delivering the national Active Forest Programme here at Westonbirt. The Active Forest Programme is a new initiative that has been established in partnership with Sport England. In its simplest terms, we are looking to provide engaging, inspirational and motivating sport and exercise opportunities for new and existing forest visitors.

The programme covers all manner of different activities ranging from play on the day opportunities to regular group activities and the possibility of more one-off events like the Westonbirt 10km run.

So, look out for active opportunities within future editions of the magazine as I begin to roll out the programme at Westonbirt!



Refer a friend and receive shop a voucher!

If you bring a friend to the arboretum during June, July and August, and they join as a member, we'll give you a £12 voucher to spend at the Westonbirt shop!

Simply pop into the Welcome Building and let the volunteers know you're referring your friend to become a Friend! Once we process the new membership, we'll pop your voucher in the post to you.

The referring member must hold a current valid membership and the friend must be a brand new member.

You need your membership card to gain free entry!

As a Friend of Westonbirt Arboretum, your membership entitles you to free access to the arboretum. But you do need to bring a valid membership card with you when visiting.

To protect the membership scheme for our members, from 1 July 2018 you will be charged an admission fee at the Welcome Building if you do not produce your card.

Please note that your card is non-transferable and is only for your use.

You can read more about the Friends' membership card policy on page 46.

Share those furry friend moments

Silk Wood is a wonderful place to walk your dog!

We'd love you to share your photos on Instagram of your pooch enjoying their walk. Simply hashtag #westonbirtwalkies when you visit Westonbirt Arboretum.

You can follow fellow Friends' walkies on Instagram at @FriendsOfWestonbirt.



@hannahsdogcare: A bit of a puddle won't put off our four-legged friends, or us either for that matter! That wagging tail is a sure sign of a good walk #westonbirtwalkies #friendsofwestonbirt



@freddie_paws: You'll be pleased to hear that the arboretum was back open today following the snow, so plenty of opportunities for some #westonbirtwalkies! #friendsofwestonbirt

Protecting your data

As a Friend of Westonbirt Arboretum, we regularly communicate with you about events, news and fundraising initiatives by email and post.

With the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May, as a current member with an established relationship with us, we will continue to communicate to you unless you have advised us otherwise. For all new members joining after the legislation comes into play, you will need to provide your consent to receive our regular communications about events, news and fundraising projects by ticking the consent boxes on the membership application form.

If you would like to change your communication preferences at any stage, please contact the Membership Team by emailing membership@fowa.org.uk or calling 0300 067 3300.

Our wonderful membership team



A quick mention for two amazing ladies - Bev and Kelly - who run our membership scheme.

They have over 20 years' experience between them! Immensely proud of the scheme, Bev and Kelly work tirelessly to ensure your membership cards are processed accurately and efficiently ready for your next visit.

Healthy roots

The vast majority of a tree's root system lies just a foot below the surface of the soil. This is partly because the tree roots need oxygen to survive and there's a lot more near the surface than deeper down.

Vertical mulching is a technique used to reduce soil compaction around the roots. When the soil gets too compacted it reduces the efficiency of water and oxygen supply to the roots and can crush or inhibit smaller feeder roots.

Vertical mulching involves specialised tools to create holes in a grid pattern across the root zone of a tree. It reduces damage by aerating the soil for better drainage during wet periods and improving water penetration during dry periods. It also promotes the formation of fine feeder roots.

Our team at Westonbirt have been out and about with their vertical mulching equipment attending to some of the trees around the summer trail.

So if you see some work going on around a tree's roots, do feel free to stop and watch our team in action, they might even explain a little more about the process.

Free car sticker

for all Friends!

Simply show your valid membership card to a volunteer in the Welcome Building to pick up a free car sticker per member. Let's see how far these car stickers travel!

If you see a fellow Friend on the road with a Friends' car sticker, let us know where you saw it by emailing membership@fowa.org.uk

Gauging demand for

our shuttle service



Over the past six months we have been trialling a mobility shuttle service to help our less mobile visitors get from the Welcome Building. The service currently operates on a Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday and is run by a dedicated team of willing volunteers.

Take-up for the service was initially quite good during the autumn but has dropped off quite a bit over the winter months (as was expected). The feedback from customers who have used the service has been excellent and we hope the demand for the mobility shuttle picks up as we move through the year. We will be making a final decision in the autumn as to whether the service should be kept on a permanent basis.

What people said about using the shuttle service:

"To see things you might otherwise not be able to get to."

"Couldn't visit without it."

"Enabled us to walk in the trees rather than use up all our time and energy on the walk to restaurant."

"Good fun - saved us the walk back."



Business meetings in the forest

Our magnificent Great Oak Hall is available for weekday hire for seminars, conferences, workshops and training sessions.

Escape the office and find inspiration on the edge of the arboretum's 600 acre tree collection.

What's more, the proceeds raised from hire directly fund and support the charity's objectives and benefit the arboretum. Attendees are granted access to the whole site and can enjoy spending time in this beautiful landscape.

Hire the Great Oak Hall

Contact **0300 067 3301** email **greatoakhall@fowa.org.uk** or visit our website.

Your hire includes:

- Use of auditorium (11m x 7m) and foyer
- Breakout space to explore the arboretum
- Easy access and free parking
- Capacity of 80 delegates
- Audio-visual presentation
- Flip chart
- Wi-Fi
- On-site caterers

From £315



Return to Vietnam

In April 2017, Dan Crowley, Westonbirt's expert dendrologist, took a trip to Vietnam using his extensive knowledge of maples to identify species across the region. In December last year, Dan returned to Vietnam to visit the herbarium at the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR) in Hanoi and the herbarium of the Institute of Tropical Botany in Ho Chi Minh City. Read about Dan's findings and a fascinating riddle he solved!

The Hoang Lien Son Conservation Initiative (HLSCI) is a multi-institutional conservation project aimed at understanding and conserving the flora of this region of north west Vietnam. In December 2017, I made my second visit to Vietnam to study the maples (*Acer*) native to the region as part of HLSCI. I had been asked to determine the identification of the maple specimens held in the herbarium at the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR) in Hanoi and I also took this opportunity to study the maple specimens held at the herbarium of the Institute of Tropical Botany in Ho Chi Minh City, where many of the type specimens of species described from Vietnam are held.

The herbarium

This study period also served to inform future fieldwork in the region. From information gleaned from herbarium records, we now know more about which areas should be specifically targeted in our efforts to better understand the genus *Acer* and its associates in Vietnam and neighbouring areas.

The herbarium at the IEBR holds around 700,000 specimens and, along with the herbarium at the Institute of Tropical Botany, is one of the most important herbaria in Vietnam. The collections made on previous fieldwork in Vietnam as part of the HLSCI, as well as that of other partners, are held here.

“ At Ho Chi Minh, my study of the type specimens of *Acer* species held there proved to be very productive. ”

There are numerous highlights among the maples held in the herbarium. *Acer davidii* is one such example as, although this species is well known and widespread in China, it is not well recorded in Vietnam and is currently absent from published floras. A number of species are also notable for their absence from the herbarium. *A. chapaense* and *A. fenzelianum*, both described from the Hoang Lien Mountains, are entirely absent and future work will seek to collect these for accession into the collection. Their distributions are not well known, though both are evidently rare and *A. fenzelianum* has been assessed as Endangered for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

A close up of *Acer* aff. *pectinatum* leaves



▲ Credit: Hugh Angus

A riddle uncovered

At Ho Chi Minh, my study of the type specimens of *Acer* species held there proved to be very productive. Prior to my visit I was most keen to find the type of *A. campbellii* var. *fantsipanense*, a tree whose name is a little obscure, and actually invalid under the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature – the set of rules that dictate how plants are named. Plants of a snake bark maple which is not closely related, collected in the Hoang Lien Mountains, have been grown in gardens under this name. This has caused confusion as *Acer campbellii* is quite different from the group of maples known as the snake barks. We have a fine example of the plant in question along Willesley Drive in Silk Wood (31.1382).

The herbarium at the IEBR holds around **700,000** specimens...

and along with the herbarium at the Institute of Tropical Botany is one of the most important herbaria in Vietnam.



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

Before my visit to the herbarium in Ho Chi Minh, I had assumed that those calling the plant *A. campbellii* var. *fantsipanense* had been confusing the characters between different sections of *Acer*. As it turns out, it was F. Gagnepain, who described the species in the mid-20th century, who was confused. He had described this snake bark maple as a variety of an altogether different species of maple! Technically, those who had been calling the snake bark from Fansipan *Acer campbellii* var. *fantsipanense* were in fact correct, it is just that it should never been called that in the first place. A riddle (partly) solved!

I say partly, as for what this snake bark should actually be called is another matter. It is closely related to *Acer pectinatum* (comprising of two subspecies), though differs most obviously from this species in its virtually hairless leaf under surfaces. For now, *Acer* aff. *pectinatum* is the most helpful option. As ever, there is more work to do!



Our fine example of *Acer* aff. *pectinatum* growing along Willesley Drive in Silk Wood.



Keeping it local

We recently reached a major milestone, raising over £27,000 towards the Westonbirt Wood Project. With this we're now ready to purchase a state of the art sawmill, so Westonbirt Arboretum timber can be milled right here on site.

This is a huge positive step for so many reasons. Let's hear from the experts just what this means.

We're a fifth of the way towards our £140,000 target.

Can you help us on the next stage of our journey? Find out more or donate at fowa.org.uk/wood-project

"As the National Arboretum, we are of course always conscious of our environmental impact. Not only will this contribute to a reduced carbon footprint, but the ability to mill and sell timber here on site will aid our increasing financial self-sufficiency, ensuring Westonbirt Arboretum's long term sustainability."

Andrew Smith, Arboretum Director

"Trees are what it's all about. From propagating seeds right here on site, to planting them out into the arboretum, and watching them grow and mature to magnificent specimens - it really is phenomenal to witness this process. A sawmill will give these trees a new lease of life, as quality pieces of Westonbirt Arboretum timber."

Mark Ballard, Curator

"It's astonishing what you can create from a bit of wood. My chair making courses are in their 20th year and 2,000 people have taken part. Having a sawmill at Westonbirt Arboretum will allow us to engage even more people with incredible timber."

Paul Hayden, Westonbirt Woodworks

Alternatively, you can cut out this slip and send it with a cheque made out to 'FOWA', to:
Wood centre 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 any difference.

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



Learning about trees

This summer we have a series of activities for young people to explore some of the amazing uses of trees. But we think it's interesting for people of all ages! So here's a little insight into just a few of the things we rely on trees for in our day-to-day lives.

Come to one of our family events this summer to discover more about trees and have a go at our crafts, see page 7 for more information.

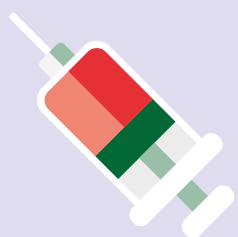


Making medicine

It is thought that one in four of our medicines have some sort of plant in them.

Plants can be found in painkillers, antibiotics, cancer drugs and anaesthetics. Yet only 5 per cent of all plants have been tested for their medicinal properties. How many more cures could there be that we don't even know about yet?

Even the humble plaster is made from up to four plants! The soft absorbent bit is often cotton, the sticky backing is a mixture of latex from the rubber tree and gum rosin from the resin of a Scots pine and the antiseptic may well be an extract of witch hazel leaves.



The plaster is made from up to 4 plants



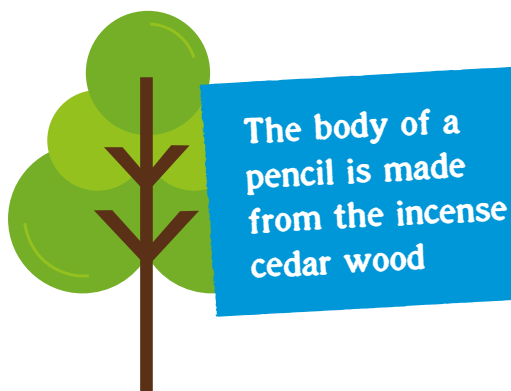
Fabric and fibres



- **Viscose:** Viscose (or rayon) is made of wood fibres, often from the same trees that produce wood pulp for paper. It was first invented in 1891 and was marketed as 'artificial silk'.
- **Modal:** Modal is made from spinning reconstituted cellulose from beech trees. It has a soft silky texture and is stronger than rayon, and resistant to shrinking and stiffening.
- **Rope:** Rope was a life changing invention of early man. It increased our ability to fish, hunt, build and grow crops. Many different plant materials can be used to make rope including the bark of lime trees.
- **Silk:** Without mulberry trees, silk would not exist. The silk 'worms' that produce silk cocoons are actually a species of moth caterpillar that can only eat mulberry leaves.
- **Cellulose film:** Your favourite film was probably recorded onto film made of wood pulp! Although films are delivered digitally, many directors still prefer motion picture film.

Sports specialists

- **Table tennis:** Professional table tennis bats are made from Hinoki Cypress, native to Japan.
- **Cricket:** The bails and stumps are made of Ash. Cricket bats are made of willow. Even the inside of the ball is made of cork.
- **Velodrome:** The Olympic Velodrome track in London is made of Siberian Larch wood. Could that be Sir Chris Hoy's favourite tree?



The body of a pencil is made from the incense cedar wood

Wood wonders...

Birch

The Hughes H-4 Hercules, the largest flying boat ever built almost entirely of birch wood, despite its nickname 'The Spruce Goose'!

Willow

Willow stems are flexible and strong, making them ideal for baskets of all shapes and sizes – from picnic baskets to hot air balloon baskets!

Sweet chestnut

Sweet chestnut is one of the trees traditionally coppiced at Westonbirt. We use some of the sweet chestnut coppiced to make charcoal.

Discover more wood wonders, in the Old Arboretum this summer.

Paper products

About 15 per cent of the world's timber is used to make paper products!

Most paper is made from the Sitka spruce (which is also used in many musical instruments).

Lots of the products we use on paper also come from trees; the body of a pencil is made from the incense cedar wood; Crayons contain waxes from trees to help them run smoothly over the paper; and oil paints contain turpentine made from pine resins.



Size matters

(but it isn't everything!)



On a recent journey back from Slovenia, Westonbirt Volunteer Pauline Thomas couldn't resist the temptation to explore the Bayerischer Wald in Bavaria in search of an even bigger treetop walkway than our own. But would bigger mean better?

We are very proud of our Treetop Walkway. It's very popular, it's won many awards, and it's the longest in the country, but we had heard rumours of something even bigger lurking in the forests of Bavaria near the Czech border. So, when I realised that our return journey from Slovenia last summer would take us quite near, it would have been negligent not to visit.

For something so huge, it was surprisingly difficult to find, with neither satnav nor signposting proving very helpful, but when we arrived, there were hundreds of other visitors enjoying the walkway and the other delights of the

Bayerischer Wald. Don't imagine, by the way, a gloomy and threateningly Grimm expanse of conifers; the Bavarian Forest is an attractively varied and undulating region, scattered with farms and small villages.

And the walkway, the Baum Wipfel Pfad? Well, it certainly is spectacular. The dominant feature is an acorn-shaped tower, 44m high, round which a ramp spirals at an easy angle. Access to it is from the walkway itself, which snakes through forest for about a kilometre, rising to a height of 25m. This is admittedly three times as long and nearly twice as high as ours. In a Top Trumps contest, we'd have to admit defeat! The height, especially of the 'acorn', gives a spectacular view and a great sense of elevation, and I really enjoyed the optional challenges which give you a chance to test your nerve and balance. They made me wonder if we could add more of a frisson to our own adventurous sections, the crow's nest and rope bridge.



“ The dominant feature is an acorn-shaped tower, 44m high, round which a ramp spirals at an easy angle. ”

So does the German giant win the contest hands-down?

By no means. For a start, our walkway is much more elegant and aesthetically pleasing, as it makes its sinuous way through a much more varied collection of trees. It also invites a much greater degree of engagement with those trees. Our interpretation panels and interactive displays encourage visitors to look more closely and discover much more about the arboreal world. In Germany, the sheer size and physical challenge of the walkway tended to dominate. You were more aware of the walkway itself, and of the far-reaching view, than of the trees.

In addition, the Westonbirt walkway serves a practical function, bridging the valley and making access to Silk Wood easier, especially for those with limited mobility. Lastly, it's dog-friendly. In Bavaria we had to take it in turns to walk the walk while the other one stayed with the dog. So for us, Westonbirt definitely comes out on top!



Do you have a story to share? We'd love to hear from you! Please email magazine@fowa.org.uk

Protecting our members

and the interests of the arboretum

As a Friend of Westonbirt Arboretum, you are supporting the sustainable conservation of trees, the lungs of the world.

Our membership policy is designed to look after the interests of our members so we've compiled the following FAQs to assist you with getting the most out of being a Friend.

Can I enter Westonbirt Arboretum without my membership card?

Entry will only be permitted with a valid membership card so please bring your card with you when you visit.

What if I have forgotten my card?

Entry will only be permitted with a valid membership card. You can either return with your membership card or pay a general admission fee. Accompanying children (aged 5 and above) will also be required to pay an entry fee. Admission fees are charged by the Forestry Commission and are non-refundable.

What if I have lost my card?

You can request a replacement card prior to visiting the arboretum by contacting the Membership Team during business hours, Monday – Friday (9am – 5pm) providing a minimum of 24 business hours' notice (voicemail not available). A replacement card will be posted or made available for you to collect at the Welcome Building, whichever is most convenient. A replacement card donation of £3 would be appreciated.

What if my card is damaged?

You can request a replacement card prior to visiting the arboretum by contacting the Membership Team as per with lost cards.



Can other people use my membership card to enter the arboretum?

Your membership card is non-transferable and is for your use only. We do reserve the right to ask members for additional ID when visiting the arboretum.

How many children can I bring into the arboretum with my membership card?

You are permitted to enter the arboretum with up to four children free of charge. The children must be either your children or your grandchildren and can be up to the age of 19 years. Children are not permitted to use their parents' membership cards to gain free access into the arboretum.

Why should I sign-up for Gift Aid?

If you are a UK taxpayer, as a registered charity, we can reclaim 25p in every £1 of your subscription fee from HMRC. This gives us an additional £170,000 a year to put back into the arboretum's conservation – so please sign-up if you can.

For more information about renewing and cancelling membership, reciprocal gardens policy, bringing a carer, gifting a membership and the benefits of paying by Direct Debit please visit www.fowa.org.uk/membership-policy

The Friends of Westonbirt team

Chief Executive Anna-Clare Temple

Business Manager Jacqueline Dalton

Business Support Lorna Butcher

Interim Finance Coordinator Chris Jacob

Membership Manager Jane Shute

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

Trustees

Mike Mintram (Chair)

Sue Bradley-Jones (Vice Chair)

Gavin Grant

John Hammond

Margaret Headen

Mike Howarth

Malcolm Potter

Stephen Segar OBE

Andrew Smith

Beth Weston

Arboretum opening times

9am–5pm (last paid entry Dec – Feb 4pm)
(March – Nov 4:30pm) Closed Christmas day

General enquiries Monday–Friday

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 10am – 3:30pm

Tel: 0300 067 4861

Volunteering

Tel: 0300 067 4862

cheryl.pearson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Westonbirt Shop

Open every day 10am – 4pm

Tel: 01666 880 787

Restaurant and café

Open 9:30am – 4pm

(Closed Christmas and New Years day)

Café open seasonally, Tel: 01666 880064

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



The little book of disappearing trees

Westonbirt, the National Arboretum currently holds around 100 threatened tree species. Discover where to find 40 of them with our 'little book', available for free from the Welcome Building.



The little book of disappearing trees
Westonbirt's rare trees & where to find them



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