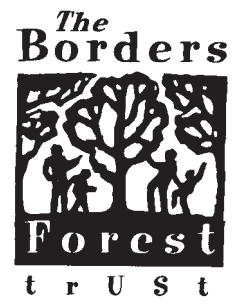


# The Green Shed



Autumn 2009 Issue 24

News from the Borders Forest Trust

## Bringing the Devil's Beef Tub into Conservation Management



Corehead Tups, September 2009

On the 15th of July 2009, Borders Forest Trust became the proud owner of Corehead Farm and a flock of nine hundred Blackface sheep. This auspicious event was made possible by an avalanche of donations from our members and from individuals who were inspired by a vision for large scale ecological restoration in the Southern Uplands. From the 1st of January 2008 to the end of June 2009, over £700,000 was donated towards the Devil's Beef Tub purchase and we managed to

secure a further £200,000 towards the management of the land from the Tubney Charitable Trust. Our thanks go to everyone involved in this magnificent effort. A special Stakeholders Day is planned for spring 2010 to enable donors to visit this special place.

Since July we have been busy getting to grips with the fact that the Trust has become a farmer, albeit at present we rely on our contract farming partners, Brian and Andy Ryder of the

neighbouring Newton Farm, for the day to day management of our livestock. The Trust has been fortunate in being able to tap into a number of sources of sheep management expertise: from Og Jackson, a sheep farmer in the Ettrick Valley who is the husband of BFT Trustee Daphne Jackson; Mike Baker, BFT Trustee and ex hill sheep farmer and John Hume, ex of Sundhope Farm in the Yarrow Valley who is providing some professional advice on hill farming.

As was articulated in our vision for Corehead, the Trust is committed to reducing the grazing pressure on sections of the land and has therefore sold over 320 sheep; 200 ewes and 120 ewe lambs. All of the ewes sold have been removed from the Top End heft, an area of land covering some three hundred hectares on the eastern (Hart Fell) section of the site. This stock removal is our first step towards reducing sheep grazing pressure to a point where plants such as heather and blaeberry can recover and flourish.

From now until the end of 2009 we will be working to: produce a draft management plan; raise funds for the post of Corehead Site Manager; and to prepare a grant submission to the Scottish Government for tree planting, grazing management and practical restoration efforts. Much of the management planning and practical work will be guided by a volunteer Corehead Steering Group who provide advice and management input as well as advising on our first steps in community engagement.

Corehead presents a remarkable opportunity for Borders Forest Trust. Sincere thanks to everyone who helped make this project possible.

## Rory Bremner – BFT's New Patron

In August, the Trust was delighted to announce that Rory Bremner had agreed to become its new Patron. Edinburgh-born and with family in the Borders, Bremner is a frequent visitor to the region and is keen to support the work of the Trust. Rory said: "the Borders landscape is one of the most dramatic and beautiful in the country, with its hills, native woodlands and wild places. I'm delighted to support Borders Forest Trust's vision and encourage local communities to help these wonderful

places flourish. I can't wait to get out there and plant some trees."



Rory Bremner and Willie McGhee at the Border Union Show, Summer 2009.

Willie McGhee

# News from Borders Forest Trust

Welcome to the Autumn edition of The Green Shed Newsletter. As most of you will know, 2009 has been a landmark year for Borders Forest Trust with the purchase of Corehead Farm. The Devil's Beef Tub Land Appeal was a priority, but the Trust's other work with communities, schools and woodland habitats continued apace. We hope you enjoy reading about these projects in the pages that follow.

## 2009 AGM & NEW TRUSTEES

This year's AGM was held at The Townhouse Hotel in Melrose on 18th June. Chairman John Hunt gave a thorough overview of the previous year's achievements and Professor Stephen Blackmore of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, was this year's guest speaker, giving a well-received talk titled "Gardening the Earth."

Two Trustees resigned at the AGM - John Bathgate and Jeremy Thompson. The Trust is very grateful for the time, hard work and commitment they have both given. The resignations led to the appointment of two new trustees, Michael Baker and Pierre-Alban Guy. The Trust would like to extend a warm welcome to Mike and Pierre, both of whom are already making a valuable contribution to our work.

## MICHAEL BAKER



Mike was brought up and spent twenty years working on a farm near Stow. He pursued a career in access and the environment and, after two years of training with SWT, NTS and RSPB, was employed as a Ranger with Scottish Borders Council for nearly nineteen years. He recently took early retirement from SBC Countryside Service and is now able to commit more of his time to help further the aims of the Trust.

## PIERRE-ALBAN GUY

Pierre comes from France and has lived in the UK for nine years, working in the hotel business. He owns two

top quality hotels at Peebles and near Moffat. As a lover of trees and woods he is a keen supporter of BFT helping particularly with Venlaw Community Wood at Peebles. He helped greatly with the Corehead purchase appeal by hosting events at his two hotels. As a successful entrepreneur, Pierre brings valuable experience to BFT from the world of business and marketing.



those of us who couldn't get the hang of making fire no matter how hard we tried, there were marshmallows to toast and mugs of hot tea. Thanks to everyone who came along.



*Willow weaving at the open day*

## STAFF UPDATE

Bridie Ashrowan, the Trust's Fundraising Manager, left in August to take on a new role as Project Manager at Youth Borders. Bridie made a valuable contribution to the Devil's Beef Tub Appeal and the Trust would like to wish her well in her new role. Since Bridie's departure, Louisa Finch has taken on the role of Communications Officer and is working on fundraising as well as press and marketing.

Stop press: The Trust is now recruiting for a new Site Manager thanks to recently approved funding from The Scottish Borders Leader 2007-2013 programme. Deadline for applications: 30th Nov – call the office or visit the website for full details.

## BFT ANNUAL OPEN DAY



*Toasting marshmallows at the open day*

BFT's 2009 Open Day was held at Wooplaw Community Woodland. After a drizzly start, the sun came out and some 50 visitors enjoyed woodland activities such as story telling in the cabin with Emma Rawling and willow weaving with Toni Coyle (a giant bee sculpture created on the day was donated to Stow Primary School). Bob Fleet and friends demonstrated green woodworking skills while Rab Erskine divulged some of the techniques used for traditional fire lighting. For

## EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

An EGM was held at the Buccleuch Arms Hotel in St Boswells on 6th October. The meeting had been called to revise the recruitment process of Trustees and increase membership subscriptions. The proposed changes to the Articles of Association were approved - please see the article on page 11 for full details of changes to membership subs. Thanks to all who attended or sent in proxy voting forms and comments.

## NEW E-BULLETIN

In August 2009, BFT sent out its first E-bulletin to over 300 people. The aim of the bi-monthly bulletin is to keep members and supporters up-to-date with news, events and opportunities to get involved. To sign up for the E-bulletin or to receive the Green Shed in electronic form, please email [louisa@bordersforesttrust.org](mailto:louisa@bordersforesttrust.org)

## THE FAIRIES OF ETRICK MARSHES

Young readers will enjoy learning about some of the lesser-known inhabitants of the Borders in *The Fairies of the Ettrick Marshes*, written by Willie Barclay with illustrations by Cath Rutherford. The book costs £7.50 (including P&P) and is available from the BFT office: call 01835 830750 or email [enquiries@bordersforesttrust.org](mailto:enquiries@bordersforesttrust.org)



*A Fairy of the Ettrick Marshes*

## SPECIAL DEAL ON CHRISTMAS AND GREETINGS CARDS



*BFT Christmas cards on sale now*

Buying your Christmas cards from BFT helps to support our conservation work. The Christmas selection contains four cards, each with a different seasonal image from the Borders landscape. Two other collections – *Woodland Moods* and *Woodland Flora* – are also available. Each pack contains four cards plus envelopes and costs just £1 per pack (plus P&P) - why not order yours today! Fill in the enclosed order form, call 01835 830750 or email [louisa@bordersforesttrust.org](mailto:louisa@bordersforesttrust.org)

## Woodland Habitats



*Fence repairs at Arkleton*

The summer months have seen a great deal of maintenance work, herbicide spraying, fence line checks and pruning of trees to help them develop stronger stems, thus gaining more stability. The work has been carried out on a number of sites from Berwickshire to Ettrick and Yarrow. This has given the volunteers a great opportunity to see many areas of the Borders they would otherwise be unable to access due to their remote locations. The variety of locations has also given us all the chance to experience some less common sights, such as planes flying below where we were standing at Hermanlaw and Muchra in the Yarrow valley.

Arkleton experienced problems with feral goats sneaking through an old fence so we managed to remove an internal fence and reuse the materials to make good the problem areas. This work was done on the hottest day of the year. Volunteers Sean Swan and Shawn Scott from Carnegie College in Galashiels removed the posts and wire and carried them over 500m in order

to lay them out for the contractors who would complete the work. It would prove to be the only day of the year we all ran out of liquid refreshment with still half the day still to go.

The very wet August caused some problems with water-logging and flooding, especially in the Ettrick valley where the boardwalk and many areas of path along the lower areas of the flood plain were completely submerged. Some remedial drainage work was attempted but water has a habit of doing its own thing - only time will tell if this work will be lasting.

This year's voluntary contributions have so far totalled 566.5 hours. Thanks to the volunteers for all their hard work. This year BFT was again nominated for an award as placement provider by the Borders Supported Employment Network. We did not win on this occasion, but it is great to see our work with young people being recognised.

*George Moffat*

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## Woodland Volunteering and Youth Training Project



*Zoe gets to grips with the chainsaw*

In our last edition of the Green Shed, we shared the good news that funding had been secured for a Woodland Volunteering and Youth Training Project. This funding was generously provided by Forestry Commission Scotland, Lloyds TSB, Voluntary Action Fund and the Scottish Government and European Community Scottish Borders Leader 2007-2013 Programme.

Nine months into the project, our first tranche of trainees have successfully completed the training courses, gaining valuable skills, qualifications and experience and the second group of trainees are progressing well.

One trainee, eighteen year-old Zoe Seth, shares her experience:

"I had been volunteering with the Borders Forest Trust for a while when Lisa told me about the five certificates I could gain through the Youth Training Project.

The project took us to sites all over the Borders. We went rhododendron bashing up at Yair and we had a good time coppicing hazel at Wooplaw. We even had our very own arsonist, Gregor. (He wasn't really an arsonist but he was very good at getting the camp fire going for us.) The other volunteers were Dan and Liam.

The courses were mostly taught by a guy called Michael Grieve. He'd been on Scrap Heap Challenge and he really knew his stuff. He had so many stories to tell it was unreal! He taught us all about strimmers: taking them apart; understanding what the separate parts do; and putting them back together again.

The chainsaws were objects of veneration until we had been taught how to use them. I broke the same one twice because the recoil starter was knotted and just wouldn't start. In the end I got

to use a Makita with a compression button and it started more easily. We were taught so well I've since been out with my granddad's chainsaw, cross cutting fallen tree limbs near my house.

One of the most memorable courses involved being up Peniel Heugh. It was the quad bike course where the temperature was 32 degrees, there were clear blue skies and I had the company of five great guys. What more could a lass want?

It's been a pleasure working with those young men, Lisa and the trainers. I don't know about the lads, but I feel these courses and my volunteering have helped me become a lot more confident in my abilities. Thanks guys! Zoe x"



*Trainees strimming at Wooplaw*

## News from the Orchard Development Group



*Volunteers keep the orchard looking tidy*

Autumn has arrived and all the hard work by Crailing Community Orchard's loyal volunteers is bearing fruit – literally: apples, pears, damsons and plums, honey and hazelnuts.

The old trees, benefiting from the pruning they've received over the past couple of years, have produced a good crop. The 40 young trees planted in 2007 have also fared well and we have put our efforts into pruning, weeding round the bases and mulching them with the

comfrey that grows so prolifically in the orchard.

Our biggest challenge continues to be the grass and weeds. Keeping them at bay is a major but vital part of the work schedule. We're very grateful for the regular efforts of Crailing's and BFT's volunteer brigades. Local farmer, Hugh Fraser, also helped by bringing in his tractor and mower last month. We're still banking on a flock of lawnmowers (sheep!) to help us. The stock-proof



*Honey from the Crailing apiary*

fence is finished but tree guards for the young trees are still required and we'll apply for funding to help us achieve that.

Our bees survived another winter and came out fighting fit. The honey we took off was delicious and, while not a huge harvest this year, the volunteers involved all got something.

*Lise Bratton*

# News from the Community Woodlands

## BORDERS COMMUNITY WOODLAND FORUM

Members of the Borders Community Woodland Forum decided in August last year that they would like to work with BFT to submit a Forestry for People application through the Scottish Rural Development Programme. The aim was to find funding for a three year events and training project for local community woodlands. This application was successful and match funding was secured from the SBC's Community Grant scheme. Thanks go to Forestry Commission Scotland. Now the groups are forging ahead, timetabling events and training. Planned events range from a dawn chorus walk to a study of medicinal plants and training will include woodland management, coppicing and outdoor first aid.

## VENLAW COMMUNITY WOODLAND

There was a good turnout of Venlaw Community Woodland members on Sunday 19th July to help erect two tawny owl boxes in the woodland. The boxes were obtained through funding from a CSV Action Earth Grant. Two different types of boxes were erected; one which was positioned flat against a large beech tree and the other was slung under a sizeable limb of an old oak tree. It will be interesting to see what box will be taken up first by the resident tawnys in the woodland.



A new owl box for Venlaw

## KELSO COMMUNITY WOODLAND



Willow weaving at Kelso Family Fun Day

Kelso had a glorious day of sunshine for their annual family fun day at Wooden Anna at the end of September. Visitors enjoyed pursuits such as long bow archery, doggy activities, willow weaving, pond dipping and green woodworking. Approximately 150 people turned out to enjoy the successful event.

## LEADBURN COMMUNITY WOODLAND

Leadburn Community Woodland's main focus this year has been applying for funding for various works to be carried out within the woodland. The group managed to secure a substantial amount of funding through the Scottish Rural Development Programme for restoration work on the raised bog. The work carried out by the Scottish Wildlife Trust is now nearly complete, with 330 dams installed and regeneration cleared. The group also secured further funding through Awards for All to improve access, drainage work along the old railway lines, seating and signage.

## GORDON COMMUNITY WOODLAND

It's been a busy summer at Gordon with the group tackling ongoing jobs such as tree tube removal, strimming and pruning. One highlight was an interesting butterfly spotted by Lisa during July while out with trainees at the woodland.

A Speckled Wood was recorded, which for the Borders is quite rare. In general more insects have been seen this summer compared to the last two years which is encouraging! The group plan to organise a work weekend in early November for New Caledonian Woodlands volunteers from Edinburgh, to tackle tree tube removal and coppicing of some hazel, oak and willow on the site.



Speckled Wood butterfly spotted at Gordon

## JUBILEE COMMUNITY WOODLAND

Both Reuben Singleton and John Woolliams attended a work day in September to erect bat boxes in Jubilee wood. A total of 25 were fixed to suitable trees within the wood providing yet more suitable roosting sites for the bats.



Bat boxes are installed at Jubilee

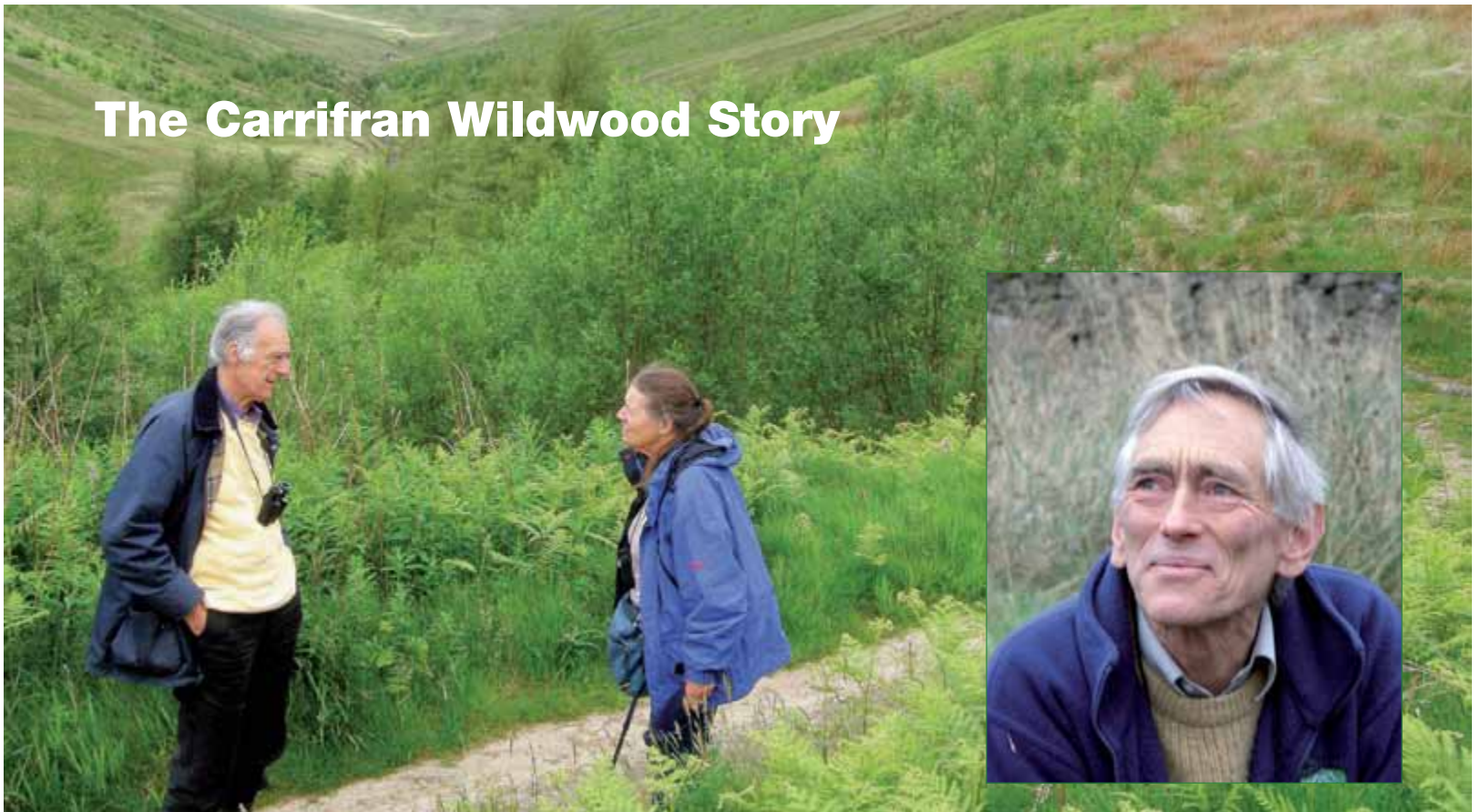
## WOPLAW COMMUNITY WOODLAND

As mentioned earlier in the newsletter, Wooplaw played host to BFT's Annual Open Day in August which was a great success. The volunteers at Wooplaw continue to work tirelessly on the many management tasks throughout the woodland. This year will see a new addition to Axehead Wood with the construction of a new green woodworking building, which is exciting for Bob and the rest of the 'last of the summer wine' crew!

Interested in volunteering in community woodlands?

Please email Lisa Brydon at [lisa@bordersforesttrust.org](mailto:lisa@bordersforesttrust.org) or call BFT on 01835 830750 for more information.

# The Carrifran Wildwood Story



Aubrey Manning & Myrtle Ashmole by the stell. Inset: Philip Ashmole

Elsewhere on this page – and on a postcard enclosed with this issue of The Green Shed – are details of the book about Carrifran Wildwood that we published in September to celebrate the 10th anniversary of purchase of the valley, which will be on 1st January 2010.

When Myrtle first thought about writing a book about the Wildwood project, it was in the realisation that many of the people now involved with Carrifran had little or no knowledge of the start of the project. She also thought that the 1500 or so people who had contributed money would like to hear how the project was progressing. From the start, Myrtle was determined to include contributions from some of the people who have been actively involved in various aspects of the initiative, such as ecologists, planters, boundary wardens and fencers.

Two years ago that was the plan; but as with many Ashmole projects, it soon became a joint enterprise. We also decided to widen the scope so that our potential audience would include both those who might be interested in the progress of a grassroots project and those who might be inspired to initiate similar projects – so the book grew.

The story we tell is of a group of individuals determined to restore, in at least one valley in the Southern Uplands of Scotland, the type of wildwood that

would have existed there 6000 years ago: mixed broadleaved woodland with a rich array of associated wildlife. The book takes us on a journey from the birth of the idea, through the search for a site, the purchase of Carrifran by public subscription, the planning of the work and the first ten years in the life of the developing Wildwood.

The writing seemed to take a long time. We drafted chapters and sent them back and forth, and now neither of us can remember who wrote what! Just as we were wondering how we would get the book into a publishable format, a local graphic design student walked up to a BFT stall one day and asked if they needed help. Wildwood magic once again! Cathryn Hill worked with us as a volunteer for several months on the layout of the book, and although she left before the end, she gave Myrtle the confidence to tackle the rest of the design, plunging into the complexities of Adobe InDesign.

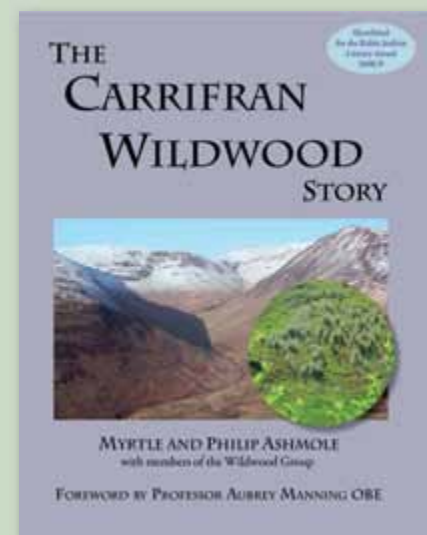
We want to take this opportunity to thank over 30 people who contributed text, photographs and illustrations, bearing in mind that no one at any stage has been paid (apart from the printer). At the moment the book is available only from BFT and all proceeds go to Carrifran. Please send it to friends and relatives as a Christmas present!

*Myrtle & Philip Ashmole*

**The Carrifran Wildwood Story: ecological restoration from the grass roots. By Myrtle and Philip Ashmole, with members of the Wildwood Group. Foreword by Professor Aubrey Manning OBE. Supported by Scottish Natural Heritage.**

Full colour with 220 photographs; illustrations and maps by nine contributors, including Darren Woodhead and John Busby; 'Boxes' by over 30 contributors. Standard Price £15, Gift Aid price £25, plus £5 p&p.

Available only from BFT (send a cheque, buy online at [www.bordersforesttrust.org](http://www.bordersforesttrust.org) or telephone 01835 830750).





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## Wildwood Update

Since the last report in the spring issue of the Green Shed, Wildwood has been visited by many people - some as regular Tuesday volunteers or in organised parties from near and far. In June there were two visiting parties. On the 12th of the month 35 members from the Tryolean Forestry Association from Austria visited Wildwood as part of a study tour organised by Michael Osborne from Scottish Woodlands Ltd. Earlier in June, twelve students from the Scottish Forestry School made their annual pilgrimage to lend a hand and enjoy the valley.

Corporate visits over the years have become another way of engaging the business community in the valley. In May, ten employees of Standard Life Insurance Group carried canes up to Firth Hope in preparation for the high planting weekend. They also managed to plant about 200 trees at Wildwood's highest planting site. Thanks go to Pete Shaw for the idea. In August, over twenty people from Edinburgh Renewable Devices walked up the valley to the cairn and returned collecting vole guards and

hand-weeding. A big thanks to Rebecca Horton.

By the time this newsletter comes out, tree planting will be underway. Over 6,000 oaks, 2,000 hawthorn and a mixture of various shrubs will keep our volunteers busy over the next few months. The oaks in particular are important to fulfil our grant obligations. The acorns for these oaks were collected by volunteers over the past few years when good mast was available. Now they have grown to a sufficient size to plant out across the valley in the better ground amongst bracken. The bracken was sprayed off earlier in the year to help tree establishment.

Volunteer help is always gratefully appreciated and in many cases vital as volunteers often carry out tasks which would otherwise fall off the radar. Over the summer months, volunteers have delivered over 190 days of work which is equivalent to over £9,700 of paid work.

*George Moffat*

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## Volunteering at Carrifran Wildwood

### Volunteer Sundays

15th November; 17th January; 21st February; 21st March.  
Meet at 10am at Carrifran car park, on A708 Moffat to Selkirk road, grid reference NT 159115.

Please bring weatherproof clothing, boots and a packed lunch, and be prepared for a fairly strenuous day.

### For more details contact

**George Moffat:**

[george@bordersforestrust.org](mailto:george@bordersforestrust.org)

**Tel: 01835 830750**

**Mob: 07939 784387**

Please note that after March 2010 we shall probably not organise monthly volunteer Sundays, though parties of volunteers will always be welcome by arrangement.

### 10th Anniversary Planting on Friday 1st January 2010

Why not start the New Year on a high note? Meet at Carrifran at midday to celebrate the new decade and the 10th anniversary of the first planting at Carrifran. Admire the changes in the valley, plant some trees and enjoy mince pies.

### Contact:

[myrtle.ashmole@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:myrtle.ashmole@yahoo.co.uk)

or [philip@ashmole.org.uk](mailto:philip@ashmole.org.uk)

**Tel: 01721 721321**

### High planting weekend 27th/28th March 2010

Hugh Chalmers will be leading the only high camp this spring, at 650m in Firth Hope. We hope to add at least 1000 trees to the unique treeline woodland planted in the last three years. If you would like to camp on the Saturday night, please contact [hughchalmers@live.co.uk](mailto:hughchalmers@live.co.uk) You can also come for the day on the Saturday or Sunday, meeting at the car park at 10 am, but please let us know in advance (email [philip@ashmole.org.uk](mailto:philip@ashmole.org.uk)).

### 10th Anniversary celebration for Wildwood Founders and Stewards

Saturday/Sunday 22nd/23rd May 2010. Put this date in your diary now. More information will be sent out closer to the time, to all Founders and Stewards.

## Forest Schools Update

As ever, the last few months have been very busy on the Forest Schools, Forest Kindergarten and woodland education front! I've worked with Earlston and Kelso High Schools' Learning Support pupils along with classes from Chirnside, Heriot, St. Ronan's, Newtown St. Boswells, Sprouston, Knowepark and Swinton to name but a few.



Edenside Forest Kindergarten

Outdoor learning is now written into the early years' framework (curriculum), which means that Forest Kindergartens are in great demand! Word of mouth, following the success of the Morebattle Forest Kindergarten pilot project, has led to further fantastic projects with Sprouston, Broomlands, Edenside and Stow Nurseries. Although a variety of different locations (woodlands and green areas within school grounds as well as Wooplaw and Bowmont Forest) were used for the projects, each project had a similar set of objectives and themes i.e. exploration, imaginative/nature play, health and wellbeing and communication skills.



Edenside Forest Kindergarten pupils get muddy



Sprouston Forest Kindergarten pupils find the puddles irresistible!

I generally go armed with a variety of props and bits of equipment such as bug pots, buckets, spades, gallons of water, beakers and the like and provide a little activity or two. However, the structure of sessions is very informal and the children tend to get stuck into whatever they fancy e.g. ditch digging, mud pie mixing, nature collages, playing families in the woodland den and so on. It's really amazing (and often hilarious) to see them all in action and listen to what they say to each other!



Stow Forest School pupils on the fitness trail

## Forest Schools Teacher Training

We've been talking about the Forest School Teacher Training project for a long time now! At last, we have proposed dates, a venue and the trainers geared up for the first course to take place in late Nov/ early Dec this year. This will enable up to sixteen teachers to gain a Level 3 Open College Network qualification in Forest School Leadership, which it is hoped will aid the sustainability of outdoor learning in the Borders, help me keep up with demand and benefit hundreds more pupils over the coming years.

Anna Craigen

## Tool Talk

A new addition for the Green Shed newsletter will be a regular blog from the woodland girls Anna and Lisa. In this issue the girls are discussing the subject of tools. As you know, BFT requires the use of tools for a variety of woodland management tasks such as coppicing, thinning and pruning. The main tool on the agenda this month is the Japanese Silky saw.



Anna and her pocketboy

For anyone who hasn't experienced one, the Silky saw is the forester's friend: light, strong and cuts through limbs like butter! There are lots of different types of Silky but the ones used by Anna and Lisa are predominantly the smaller Silkys: the Super Acel 21, F100 and the real champ - the Pocketboy. This wee beauty comes complete with sheath and belt loop which can be attached to your waist.

The Silkys are designed to cut on the pull stroke. The thin blades will not bow because they are under tension while being pulled across the surface to be cut. Silky's precision engineering results in a fine kerf and very little force is needed to saw. It's definitely our best friend out in the woods. To find out more information on silky's visit [www.silky.jp](http://www.silky.jp)

Lisa Brydon & Anna Craigen



The Silky Saws

# The First Community Forestry International Conference – Nepal 2009

In September 2009, BFT's Community Liaison and Education Officer, Anna Craigen, travelled to Pokhara, Nepal. Here she recounts the highlights of the trip.



Some CFUG members



Looking lovely!

I couldn't believe my luck when I was offered the opportunity plus sponsorship and expenses to attend a Community Forestry conference in Nepal.

Arrival in Kathmandu was an eye-opener. First the heat and humidity hit you, followed quickly by the smell, and within two minutes of leaving the airport I was ripped off. A Euro note was whipped out of my hand by a random fellow who shifted my rucksack from my shoulder one metre to the back of the taxi cab!

200 delegates from 32 countries made the eight hour journey to Pokhara. The scenery was amazing. At the Pokhara Grande Hotel we were met by heavily armed soldiers and a welcome party who gave us red spots on our foreheads and flowers. We realised that Community Forestry in Nepal is taken very seriously - the President opened the conference proceedings.

Nepal is the world leader in Community Forestry and we can learn a great deal from the model. In the 1970s, timber export, industry and fuel wood harvesting meant that desertification threatened, remaining forests were degraded, landslides were common place and poverty/ disease was rife. During the 1970s/ 80s, international organisations and the Nepalese government started re-planting the steep valleys and subsistence/ forest farming projects were developed.

The 1990's saw a second generation of projects, where state land was handed back to communities. Since 2000, this movement has increased, as issues such as climate change, poverty and changes in governance

and rights have come to the forefront. There are 15,000 community forest user groups (CFUGs) managing 1.3 million ha of forest. CFUGs must involve the poor, women, youth and members of different ethnic groups.

The Nepalese Forest Act and Regulations ensure that CFUGs benefit from the sale of forest products. This income goes back into forest management and community development. Since CF has developed, poverty has reduced; community capacity has increased through drinking water facilities, schools and training; forest fires are fewer and the health of Nepal's forests has improved. The Nepalese State Foresters work with communities and this 'bottom up' approach means that communities buy in to a project at the outset. The Forest Officers develop Forest Management plans and offer

training in forest management and forest business, e.g. charcoal briquettes. A number of NGOs and International Development Organisations assist groups (like BFT and the Community Woodland Association's works).

It is truly impressive stuff! My appreciation of was further enhanced by visits (up mountains) to meet some CFUGs. The communities were so welcoming and generous, despite the fact that they have so little by our standards.

I will never forget the experience. I'd like to thank BFT management for agreeing to let me go, the International Organisation of Development (IOD - based in Edinburgh), Development Trusts Association Scotland and the Community Woodland Foundation for their sponsorship and funding assistance.

## Trees, Hedging, Landscaping, Screening & Environmental Plantings

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## The Borders Big Tree Hunt

Earlier this year, Borders Forest Trust teamed up with the Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission and Treefest to help to find ancient, veteran or notable trees across the UK, as part of the National Ancient Tree Hunt.

A number of tree survey days have been held in the Borders to help volunteers embark on their tree hunting ventures. Some fabulous trees have been found. In the pasture land at Kailzie Gardens, a wonderful avenue of veteran limes mark the route of the original driveway to the house and within the same pasture a big squat, ancient ash was found: short in stature and totally hollow. Over the years it has spread out with sideways growth reducing the height of the crown as a survival strategy, which could well see the tree last into another century.

The Hirsell Country Park Estate has some magnificent specimens and two very keen volunteers have been systematically surveying the Estate.

They began their search at the Flodden Tree, which is a remarkable sycamore with a huge girth, reputed to have been planted at the time of the Battle of the Flodden in 1513.

238 remarkable trees have been entered on to the database map so far for the Borders, but there are many more still to be found and we are hoping to reach at least 800 trees. If you know of an interesting tree which deserves to be recorded onto the database then please get involved. It is easy to take part and anyone can do it. Visit the website: [www.ancient-tree-hunt.org](http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org) for more information.

A number of copies of the beautiful 'Heritage Trees of Scotland' book will be given to those who find the most interesting trees and plot them onto the Ancient Tree Hunt website.

*Diane Bennett*



*Measuring a beech tree at Harestanes*

**Get involved:** If you would like to get involved in tree hunting but feel that you would like a bit of help to get started, then contact Diane Bennett at [diane@bordersforesttrust.org](mailto:diane@bordersforesttrust.org) or phone for a chat on 01835 830750 or mobile 07908 098026.

## Real Wood Studios



*The new Real Wood Studios showroom*

It was Thomas Edison who said "there is no substitute for hard work" and over the last six months, those words have been taken to heart by everyone involved with Real Wood Studios. Following the restructuring of Woodschool, the makers and timber manager who now run the workshop and woodyard as a not-for-profit enterprise have been putting in stacks of overtime to transform the site.

In September, a new on-site showroom was opened, coinciding with the Crossing Borders Open Studios weekend. Extensive repairs and renovations had been required to convert an old workshop and storeroom into a light and airy exhibition space. The hard work has paid off and we now have a showroom to complement the workshop, wood

store and timber yard all on one site. Items on show include a burr elm dining table, tiger oak bedside tables, flamed beech coffee table, mirrors, coat trees and more. Each piece is unique and stock is constantly being updated.

Raising the profile of the new business is a priority and as well as setting up a website ([www.realwoodstudios.com](http://www.realwoodstudios.com)) we attended a number of events over the summer. The Edinburgh Treefest was particularly memorable as we took the Woodmizer with us and Keith was able to demonstrate how this mobile saw operates. It was good to be able to showcase the timber side of the business (Real Wood Studios is an FSC-accredited supplier of Scottish hardwood) along with our bespoke

furniture. Despite some fears that our tent might fly away overnight, the weekend was a big success.

*Stephen Finch*

**Stop Press:** Real Wood Studios has studio space available for rent. As well as the inspiring woodland setting, we can offer a machine shop with full duct extraction, wood store with makers discount and onsite timber processing. Call 01835 830767 or email [info@realwoodstudios.com](mailto:info@realwoodstudios.com) for further details.

# Membership

Members are the lifeblood of Borders Forest Trust. Revenue from subscriptions enables us to continue our conservation work; time given by volunteers provides hands-on support; and input from members helps to shape our projects. The BFT membership rates have not been increased in six years and following a review, it was realised that they are significantly below comparable conservation organisations. The Board of Trustees proposed an increase of the rates and this proposal was approved at the EGM on 6th October.

The new rates are as follows:

Membership Type	Existing Rate	New Rate
Individual	£15 (Overseas £20)	£20 (Overseas £25)
Family	£20 (Overseas £30)	£30 (Overseas £35)
Group	£35	£50
Corporate	£120	£250
Life	£250	£500
Unwaged/student	£5	£7

Members enjoying woodland activities at the 2009 Open Day



We hope you will agree that these rates represent value for money and that you will continue to support the work of Borders Forest Trust.

## MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of the consultation process, a membership questionnaire was sent out in early September. A large number of members responded, providing an excellent overview of how the Trust is performing and ways in which we can improve – many thanks of those of you who participated. Comments included: **“Are your proposed subs increases enough?”** **“I very much support your objectives of returning the Borders to their natural woodland.”** **“Is there a big annual social event to bring members together?”** **“Keep up the good work!”**

## Grant Funding Awarded for New Planting

Borders Forest Trust is delighted to have been successful with two applications to the Scottish Rural Development Programme for 174 hectares of new native woodland creation. We have been acting as agents for private landowners and we are delighted to be able to work with people that are as committed to bringing back native woodlands to the south of Scotland as we are.

The largest site is 160 hectares at Over Kirkhope in the Upper Ettrick Valley. This planting includes three valleys and a small riverside compartment along the Ettrick Water. Approximately 40% of tree planting will take place from October 2009 to March 2010 with the remainder in the 2010/2011 season. The landowner has recently purchased neighbouring land at Broadgairhill and is keen to further expand the native woodland cover of this area.

BFT planted 40 hectares of native woodland on Broadgairhill in 2002 and we are now working on an application with the Olivers for a further 195 hectares of new native woodland which will create an exciting large scale forest habitat network. Broadgairhill and Over Kirkhope are located just over the hill from the Carrifran Wildwood and if successful, the combined new planting

on all three of these sites will total nearly 700 hectares and make a significant contribution to the Trust’s vision for the restoration of the Ettrick Forest.

The second site will include 14 hectares of new native woodland at the Steele which is at Nine Mile Burn outside Penicuik. The site has good soils and low elevation so is perfect for mixed ashwood and lowland oakwood. The landowners have been keen to plant this site for years but, due to lack of sufficient forestry grants, they had been

unable to secure sufficient funding to make the planting possible. Now that the newly increased woodland creation grant rates have been approved, this planting is feasible and the revised rates will encourage more native woodland planting in the south of Scotland.

Nicola Hunt

Kirkhope Burn ready to be planted



Borders Organic Gardeners is an association of gardeners throughout the Scottish Borders and North Northumberland who are keen to use and support organic methods. We run a number of public events throughout the region, including Potato Day and Apple Day.

In addition, members have a regular newsletter, workshops, garden visits, talks and social events. For just £5 a year, per household, you can get access to information, support, advice and the chance to exchange plants, seeds, ideas and experiences with other friendly and enthusiastic gardeners.

So, if you would like to grow food free of insecticides etc., garden in harmony with nature or know more about organic gardening, why not get in contact?

**For more information, visit our website:**  
[www.bordersorganicgardeners.org.uk](http://www.bordersorganicgardeners.org.uk)  
 or call 01750 76259.

# Devil's Beef Tub Stakeholders



The Trust would like to gratefully acknowledge the donations made to the Devil's Beef Tub Appeal. Listed below are those who contributed to the Stakeholder scheme from 1st March 2009 onwards in the names of:

Julia Airlie  
 Tim Allen  
 Dominic Ashmole  
 Philip & Myrtle Ashmole  
 The Ashrowan Family  
 C O Badenoch  
 Maureen Ball  
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 Kirsty, Caitlin and Gregor Wright  
 Sylvia Young

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...rooted in the community