

# The Green Shed



Autumn 2007 Issue 20 News from the Borders Forest Trust

## Bird and Bat Boxing in the Borders

BFT has teamed up with local business Emtelle to provide nesting boxes and bat roosts for wildlife in Jedburgh and Hawick. We spent much of May working with pupils from all the primary schools in Hawick and Jedburgh to make more than 300 bird and bat boxes for use in and around the towns. Emtelle sponsored the activity as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility Policy and commitment to engaging with the local community. This provided an ideal way of engaging with many local children about encouraging biodiversity and how you can have fun while helping local wildlife.

Each session involved an introductory talk on birds and bats and was followed up with pupils from 8 schools hammering nails into wood to construct the bird and bat boxes. Borders softwood timber was processed by local sawmill Agraspark and cut into easily assembled packs to make construction easier. The children all had a fantastic time and thoroughly enjoyed the activity. After construction the boxes were either proudly taken home or erected in the school grounds to provide nesting places for birds and roosts for bats.

Nicola Hunt



Parkside Primary bird and bat box building

## Stamp of Approval



The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international organisation that brings people together to find solutions which promote responsible stewardship of the world's forests. You may have seen the FSC logo on timber products, or paper you have bought recently?

To demonstrate to our members, and to add value to some of our sites, BFT have entered 5 of its community woods into the scheme. Not only have BFT joined the scheme on a woodland level, but we are also facilitating and managing a "Borders Small Woods" group in partnership with The Confederation of Forest Industries (UK) Ltd (ConFor).

The group certification scheme is a way of making forest certification more easily and cheaply available to smaller forest owners and managers. The group provides two key functions. Firstly, it provides members with information, training and support to ensure that they reach and continue to maintain the level of management required for certification. Secondly, the group manager takes on the responsibility for monitoring group members' compliance with the standard, thereby reducing the monitoring carried out by the certification body.

The scheme is open to all woodlands which are 100 hectares or less and is also available to private land owners. For more information and an applicants pack contact BFT's Willie McGhee on 01835 830750.

Willie McGhee



Stacked wood at Monteviot Nurseries



### The Green Shed

The name of our newsletter "The Green Shed" comes from the original offices of Borders Forest Trust. We moved in January 2007 to our new office space within the same complex at Monteviot Nurseries, near Harestanes, Jedburgh. Come and visit us if you can!

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## Eshiels Youth Sculpture Project



Wigwam Sculpture

For a second year, BFT worked with the Peebles based Ish'uze Youth Action Group in a woodland sculpture project at Eshiels woodland. Approximately 20 members of the group, along with youth leaders, worked in teams to create innovative timber sculptures in the wood, whilst at the same time carrying out woodland management tasks and improving the woodland aesthetics. The project ended with a Public Open Night, where the young people invited members of local Community Groups, friends and family along for a guided tour of their work, dance, music and live DJ mixing performances and a prize giving ceremony for those who had participated. Prizes were donated by a variety of small businesses in Peebles and were awarded to those that worked the hardest; worked best as a team; displayed the best attitude and for the best sculpture created.



Star Sculpture

Yet again, everyone that took part in the project thoroughly enjoyed themselves and a great deal of quality work was produced.

BFT would like to thank staff and members of the Ish'uze Group, local community members and the local businesses that contributed to the project.

Anna Craigen

## AGM & Dr Oliver Rackham

This year the Borders Forest Trust Annual General meeting was honoured by the presence of one of Britain's foremost woodland historians and writers, Dr Oliver Rackham. The meeting was held in the Town House Hotel, Melrose on the 20th June with Dr Rackham attracting a record audience to a BFT AGM of over eighty people.

The business end of the meeting was dealt with by the Vice Chair of the BFT Trustees, Susan Lockett. Standing in for BFT Chairman Rory MacLeod, Susan handled the added pressure of a large audience with some aplomb. Sadly we lost two outstanding Trustees in the shape of Sam Smith and Dr Philip Ashmole, who stood down from the Board, but we did gain two equally excellent new Trustees, Rosalind Grant-Robertson and Fi Martynoga, both of whom have previously served as BFT trustees. A big thank you to Sam and Philip for all their hard work for BFT over the years.

Oliver Rackham gave a fascinating perspective on British woodlands with accompanying slides and references

to Borders woodland. Listening to Dr Rackham was slightly impaired by the torrential, almost monsoon-like, rainfall that beat a tattoo on the hotel conservatory roof, however he held his audience spell bound for over an hour.

Dr Rackham's talk was structured around the typology (High Forest, Wood Pasture, Coppice with Standards) of British woodlands with references to archaeological evidence, maps, records, and existing site features. He gave examples of the uses and abuses of woodlands, touching on oak and chestnut building materials in medieval structure, the uses of wood pasture by Kings and commoners and ended on a note of uncertainty regarding the threat to British trees from climate, pests and disease.

A couple of points Dr Rackham raised are of particular relevance to the Trust. The first arises from his statement that deer are not woodland animals. This will come as news to many and of course is a point worthy of debate within BFT as we have an ongoing deer control programme in many of our

newly establishing woodlands. The second point relates to Dr Rackham's belief that wood pasture or savannah woodland was a significant component within the British and Borders landscape. This latter point will run and run.

Willie McGhee

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## Community Woodlands: The View from Drew Fraser

Being Convener of the Venlaw Community Woodland Management Committee since it was set up in October 2004 has been a memorable and mainly enjoyable experience for me.

I did find the agonisingly slow process of setting up the various



Drew Fraser putting the finishing touches to the new sign at Venlaw

woodland contracts, agreements and plans extremely frustrating; they seemed to drag on forever, - when all I really wanted was to get out and do something in the Woodland! Nor did it help when I heard that FC Scotland had suddenly stopped their funding grants, just as our grant application was about to be processed, further

delaying the implementation of our plans for the Woodland.

However, with the help and encouragement of BFT's Lee Hollings, we submitted an application for an Awards for All grant. This was approved, but with the proviso that all the money must be spent within one year of its receipt. After two years of relative inactivity, we now had to try and complete all our plans in the space of twelve months - the shock of which fairly concentrated our minds on all the work to be done!

With invaluable input from Lee, a timetable of the work to be carried out during our year of action was drawn up and our first grant-aided project took place almost immediately - the planting of snowdrop bulbs and wildflower seeds in the Woodland. Further activities included the installation of bird, bat and owl boxes, threshold signs, waymarker posts, tree name plates for our Tree Trail and, most recently, five rustic benches.

Pathway improvements have also been carried out, including the removal of several dangerous trees. During all this work, Lee put in more



Venlaw Community Wood

than his fair share of hard physical toil, whilst, at times, I struggled to last the pace! The assistance of a few youthful volunteers was always very welcome in helping to spread the workload.

Although I am delighted with what has been achieved over the past year, I am still mindful that our end-of-October deadline creeps ever closer; and with a newsletter and Tree Trail leaflet still to be produced and an interpretative sign still to be sourced and installed, we can't afford to relax just yet. But we're almost there - and what a difference a year makes!

To finish, I would like to thank Lee Hollings and BFT for all the help and support they have so willingly provided and also the Committee members of Venlaw Community Woodland for all the time and effort they have put in.

Drew Fraser  
Convener

Venlaw Community Woodland

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Welcome to our Autumn 2007 newsletter. We have all had a busy and productive summer and hope you enjoy reading all about it. Please remember that this publication is also available as an electronic copy that can be emailed to you. If you would like to receive your newsletter by email just let us know: [claire@bordersforesttrust.org](mailto:claire@bordersforesttrust.org)

## Green Grounds

Summer has been a busy time for the Green Grounds projects supported by BFT. Four Scottish Natural Heritage Grants were awarded to Parkside, Lilliesleaf, Stirches and Coldingham primaries for environmental improvements in their playgrounds.

BFT are extremely grateful to the Community Service Teams who have carried out much of the practical work to improve these school grounds over the summer months. At Coldingham Primary they resurfaced the path in the school's new wildlife garden and installed a new wooden outdoor seating area. Richard Oldale from the Eyemouth District Disabled Association (TEDDA) crafted 5 oak benches for the school's garden so a whole class can now be

seated outdoors. Work continues there planting and making bird and bat boxes.

At Parkside Primary in Jedburgh the outdoor classroom is taking shape with planters and picnic tables being installed and a new path created for maths trail activities. Community Service have done a fantastic job here, many thanks go to them. Good

news was received recently that Parkside has been successful in its Award for All bid. A grant of £7000 was awarded which combined with the Scottish Natural Heritage grant will fund the project, greatly enhancing the school's learning environment as well as encouraging wildlife and providing a stimulating play area for the pupils.

At Lilliesleaf, parents and the Eco Schools committee have been busy developing a wildlife garden. They have re-surfaced the path, re-instated a wetland area and planted bulbs, wildflowers, trees and shrubs. In June, BFT worked with the pupils on the Eco-committee to



Stirches Primary Eco Committee Tree Planters

set up a tree trail so that the major tree species in the garden can be studied. The knowledgeable pupils on the committee easily identified the local trees and have ordered interpretation panels for the appropriate species.

Stirches Primary in Hawick completed their Green Grounds project before the summer holidays. The improvements were designed by the Eco Schools committee to be robust while also enhancing the school. An outdoor teaching area has been created with picnic tables made by Community Service, tree planting has been carried out around the perimeter of the school and two wildlife murals have been painted to brighten up drab walls in the playground thanks to help from some creative parents.

Nicola Hunt



Preparation for planting a wildflower meadow

## Access Improved at Ettrick Marshes

The Brown Forbes Memorial Fund have generously awarded another grant for access improvements at the Ettrick Marshes. These improvements include new boardwalks over very wet areas, path resurfacing, bench installation, a dipping platform on the main boardwalk and safety signage. Given the high levels of rainfall at Ettrick, it is a continual task keeping the path network up to standard to allow visitors to access the wetlands without getting their feet too wet and muddy. Thanks to the Brown Forbes Memorial Fund for this funding and to Eddy Degnan and the local Scottish Wildlife Trust team for carrying out the practical works up at Ettrick.

Nicola Hunt



Scottish Wildlife Trust working at Ettrick

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## WOODLAND FUN OPEN DAY

We were lucky to have sunshine on 12th August for our Woodland Family Fun Open Day at Harestanes. The good weather enabled us to set up outdoors and the courtyard soon became a hive of activity. Bob Fleet and Jay from One Good Turn, supervised green wood working and gave visitors a chance to try the shave horse and pole lathe. The talented Toni Coyle had designed willow fishes for visitors to weave which was really popular. Lee and George were kept busy making bird and bat boxes with youngsters to

encourage wildlife into their gardens. This was a huge success and only one sore thumb thanks to an overly keen dad!

A Tree Quiz set out around the courtyard tested the children's knowledge about trees and woodlands. More than 60 children took part in the quiz winning a choice of a rowan tree courtesy of Cheviot Trees, a wooden medal or pack of Tree Trump cards thanks to the Forestry Commission Scotland.



Green wood working with One Good Turn



Story Telling in the Butterfly Garden

Borders artist Mary Kenny joined us this year for woodland face painting interspersed with story telling in the Butterfly Garden at buyDesign. This relaxing and quiet garden made a wonderful setting for storytelling, and good use was made of the sculptures and wooden furniture for seating. As we neared the end of the day the heavens opened and a

huge downpour sent visitors scooting under the new Forestry Commission Scotland tents they had generously loaned us for the day. Despite this it was a great day with more than 120 people joining in the woodland fun and finding out about the work of the Borders Forest Trust. Thanks to all those who helped out on the day and made it such a success.

Nicola Hunt

## COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

If one good thing has come from this far from dry summer, it's that trees have had a great growing season. BFT and Scottish Woodlands finished off the planting season by holding a series of volunteer days at the Haining in Selkirk. Most of the local schools and members of the community helped to plant over 700 trees in total.

The Community Woodland Forum was the first group to take advantage of the new Woodland Resource Centre. Eleven community woodlands were



All ready for the Fun Run

represented at the Forum discussion evening, covering topics from training needs to woodland insurance. The evening ended with supper and the opportunity for new members to meet existing woodland groups, and exchange ideas and contacts.

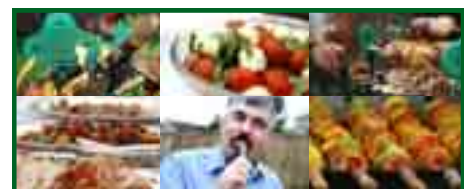
BFT were approached in spring by Scottish Borders Council to see if we could deliver a Woodland Officer's post at Gala Policies, Galashiels. The part time post which was funded by the Forestry Commission Woodlands In and Around Towns Grant aims to deliver responsible access and community engagement in the woodland. Through Lee Hollings (Community Officer) and Anna Craigen (Education Officer) the post has involved regular inspections, hosting events and running educational activities until March 2008.

A big success was the Gala Family Fun Day held on 3 June which attracted more than one hundred people. The highlight of the day was the family fun run which covered a circuit of the woodland. Thanks to all those who helped out and made it all such a success.

Lee Hollings



Planting at The Haining



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## Slovakia and Hungary Exchange Visit

In early September I was lucky enough to participate in a week long nature exchange visit to Hungary and Slovakia to look at a variety of woodland culture projects in the two countries, including wildlife and landscape conservation, woodland interpretation, eco-tourism and education (Forest Schools). This "all expenses paid" trip was organised by the company Archnetwork and funded by the 'Leonardo da Vinci' Programme using funds from the European Union. Many thanks to them for this incredible experience. I have so much to report from my visit, far too much mention in this article.

The main factors I have taken away from the experience are; the networking opportunities – I met many superb, inspirational people on my travels, e.g. my travel mates (four other environmental educationalists from Scotland – I couldn't have asked for a better team of travelling companions); our hosts (staff of the Ipel Union) and a heavily bearded Hungarian Ranger who can scale wild-wooded mountains with more dexterity and speed than a mountain goat.

Throughout our visit we were shown different methods of woodland management, woodland conservation and controlling access within heavily protected wild areas; we took lots of photographs of the

different styles of woodland furnishings, installations and interpretation and were all astounded at the severe contrasts in the landscape e.g. sparse, mass-consolidated (post communist rule) agricultural fields juxtaposed against the vast expanses of wild wood – where there are trees as far as the eye can see!

Throughout our travels it became apparent that although the two countries are geographically close and work in partnership on a variety of different projects there are fundamental differences. The Hungarians still have very strong connections with the environment, e.g. timber construction, coppicing, charcoal production, honey and fungi collecting, profusions of fruit trees and orchards and a seemingly inbuilt knowledge of the medicinal and purposeful uses of native plants. There is also a very strong emphasis on the environment within the curriculum, with most children having the opportunity to attend state funded Forest Schools. In Slovakia things are different. The people have very little



BBQ Slovakian Style

existing traditional woodland or environmental culture. We were told that a large proportion of the population are now TV addicts who lost their rights to the countryside during the Communist rule and who have since lost the skills and interest to reclaim their environmental heritage back.

High up in the Hungarian Wildwood with our bearded ranger



This is where the work of the Ipel Union is invaluable. The Union is a cross-border organisation working towards conserving the remaining natural areas of the otherwise canalised Ipel River watershed. They are working to unite the two countries with this huge conservation project and are slowly, but surely, encouraging more interest in the environment. For example; their offices contain a teacher/student resource centre (to help teachers gain confidence and knowledge in teaching about the environment); they provide educational excursions for schools and visiting groups; they are developing green transport routes and cycle tracks throughout the area; they are also in the process of



Forest Sculptures

developing a Forest Education/Conference/ Tourist base, 'The Kingfisher Centre' – from an abandoned ex-Communist scout camp.

This particular project has so much potential, and aims to enhance opportunities for local people

and local schools to access environmental and woodland education and all that goes with it. They also aim to provide a Northern Slovakian conference venue (and create a sustainable income for the centre), provide services and information for tourists (in the long-term, encouraging more visitors to the area and generating more income for local people and businesses).

The dedication and enthusiasm of the small team of staff at the Ipel Union never ceased to amaze us. Their successes and achievements are immense, and yet, although the organisation was formed over 15 years ago, they still have a membership of under 60 people! As a group we felt that the team deserved much more support and assistance – and we are now all very keen to take some holidays next year and go back and help them in any way that we can.

If anyone would like any further information on my visit please get in touch with me at the BFT offices or [anna@bordersforesttrust.org](mailto:anna@bordersforesttrust.org).

**Anna Craigen**



Anna at the Prayer Tree

## Carrifran Wildwood Volunteer Days this Planting Season

**18th November 2007,  
17th February 2008,  
16th March 2008,  
20th April 2008,  
18th May 2008,  
15th June 2008**

### Mountain Woodland Planting Weekends at Firth Hope

**(meet 10.00am Saturday,  
camp overnight at 650m at  
Firth Hope);**

**16/17 Feb 2008,  
15/16 March 2008,  
19/20 April 2008 and  
17/18 May 2008**

**Further details from Hugh  
Chalmers on 01835 830750**

## Borders Organic Gardeners

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)  
[judithd@bordersorganicgardeners.org.uk](mailto:judithd@bordersorganicgardeners.org.uk)  
Or ring 01289 388501

## Aldo Leopold Inspiration for Today..... and the Future

Aldo Leopold, the American Conservationist, may not be a name as familiar as John Muir, neither does he have any Scottish connection, but his writings are a major source of inspiration to anyone involved in ecological restoration or who appreciates and cares for wild land. Aldo Leopold's best know work, 'A Sand County Almanac', was published in 1949, just after his untimely death as he fought a grass fire in Wisconsin. In the foreword he says "There are some who can live without the wild things and some who cannot. These essays are the delights and dilemmas of one who cannot."

His writings are wide ranging and have that elusive mixture of good sense and

inspiration, which probably sprang from his detailed observation of the natural world and his close involvement with it, as a forester, naturalist and hunter. However, it is his understanding of the behaviour of his own species and how we have plundered the earth, which makes his contribution outstanding.

He could see, like John Muir, that the "whole world was hitched together" and he wrote at length on the relationships between forests, grazers and predators. The problems facing natural ecosystems in the United States in the 1940s are startlingly similar to those we face in Scotland now, with differences only in timescale and extent.

I have selected a few of his best known declarations for your inspiration. See if you can see the relevance today . . .

'One of the penalties of an ecological education is that we live in a world of wounds. Much of the damage inflicted on land is invisible to laymen. An ecologist must either harden his shell and make believe the consequences of science are none of his business, or he must be the doctor who sees the marks of death in a community that believes itself well and refuses to believe otherwise.'

'The modern history of pursuing a universal unlimited wealth, for all its real achievements, has also been the history of ecological plunder and degradation.'

'Acts of creation are normally reserved for gods and poets, but humbler folk may circumvent this restriction if they know how. To plant a pine, for example, one need neither be god nor poet; one need only own a shovel. By virtue of this curious loophole in the rules, any clodhopper may say: Let there be a tree – and there will be one.'

I was delighted to see Aldo Leopold quoted in the foreword to the Eco Schools Programme folder, which all Scottish schools are following, where he talks about our relationship to land. "We abuse land because we regard it as a



Aldo Leopold

## BFT Nominated For An Award

BFT was nominated for a prestigious award on Wednesday September 6th at the offices of Careers Scotland in Galashiels. We were nominated in the Work Placement Providers category in the 2007 Borders Business Diversity Awards which is sponsored by Borders Supported Employment Network. These awards celebrate ability in the workplace and are designed to recognise employers in the Borders Region who are promoting inclusion and equality for disabled employees and trainees. Although BFT did not win it was a privilege to be put forward as nominees in the second annual presentation ceremony.

George Moffat

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commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

The quotes above are from 'The Essential Aldo Leopold' Edited by Curt Meine and Richard L. Knight. 1999. The University of Wisconsin Press.

More about the Aldo Leopold Foundation can found at [www.aldoleopold.org](http://www.aldoleopold.org)

Hugh Chalmers

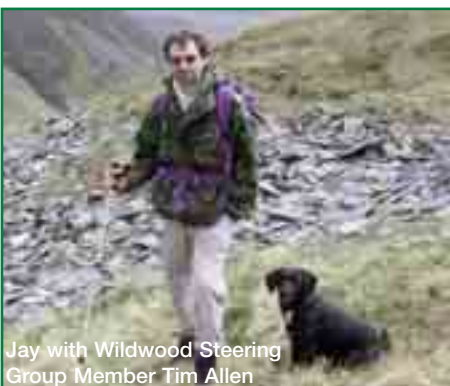
## Progress at Wildwood

Our Mountain Woodland restoration at Carrifran has got off to a flying start! A helicopter eventually found a weather window in January and lifted in the 5 tonnes of juniper, willow, rowan and tree protection materials to Firth Hope at 650m. This would have been impossible otherwise, and we are especially grateful to the Scottish Mountaineering Trust who kindly paid for the helicopter. We had three winter weekends where we camped beside the trees in order to save the time and effort of walking in to Firth Hope. (It takes about 90 minutes with a light pack). We were rewarded with some spectacularly starry nights with only light frosts, and were joined on the Sundays by regular volunteers. There was one rather windy and wet weekend where we found that our home-made dome was not really good enough and we have now invested in a proper large mountain tent where we can eat together without being blown away! We will be repeating the experience again in the 2008 – see the dates in the box on page 7.

Moving supplies by helicopter at Carrifran, January 2007



Sadly, we lost our chief vole catcher in July. Jay, a Spaniel/Labrador cross was my shadow at Carrifran for the last 7 years and was always on the lookout for a tasty furry snack. On more than one occasion she would demonstrate this in front of groups of schoolchildren by sniffing out a nest of voles and making short work of them.



Jay with Wildwood Steering Group Member Tim Allen

An effective way of showing the predator/prey relationship to impressionable youngsters! She is sadly missed by regular volunteers at Carrifran.

We can now add another predator to our list of animals at Carrifran. In May, Chris Cameron, a Boundary Warden, spotted our first ever adder, basking on the old dyke on the way up to Carrifran Gangs. We had always thought that there should be adders at Carrifran as the habitat seems right, but this was the first confirmed live sighting. Adder bites should be treated as a serious first aid incident – we are a wildwood after all!

Another new wildlife record was the spectacular Puss Moth caterpillar. 6 were found in August on young aspen plants, and had not been recorded in Carrifran before. Poplar Hawk Moth caterpillars were also seen on the same plants, whose leaves had been stripped off. In April, a visit to the Black Grouse lek site with Rebecca Johnson of RSPB was rewarded by the sighting of 8 males, making it the largest lek in Dumfries and Galloway. We will continue to monitor numbers and hopefully we will retain or increase these numbers as our woodland habitat develops.



Puss moth caterpillar on young aspen

Matthew Taylor, a student at Sparsholt College in Hampshire, spent a month with us in March this year and helped out on the wide range of volunteer tasks on site. After his acclimatisation to the frozen and wind-blasted North, he enjoyed planting juniper, gathering aspen root cuttings, planting at Firth Hope (at 650m) and removing fence posts high on Firthhope Rig. Many thanks to Matthew for his enthusiasm.

Fence removal has continued over the summer, with most of the lower fence

posts and wire (around 10km!) now removed – a fantastic effort by volunteers, especially our regular Tuesday team; John, Stan, Jane and Les.

In June we welcomed the Woodcraft Folk from Glasgow. This group of adults and kids were very keen to experience the Wildwood and camped overnight at Tibbie Sheils. Bracken was slashed and tree fertiliser applied, with only a few dropping by the wayside – probably due to the late-night campfire fun. It was good for our older (70 years plus) volunteers to meet the young teenagers and explain that they were going to be able to see an established wildwood, something which we older folk can only imagine.



Woodcraft Group from Royston and Wildwood Steering group at Carrifran

Other visiting groups to Carrifran included members of the Borders Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), the Edinburgh Natural History Society and staff from the Radisson SAS Hotel in Edinburgh. There is a continuing interest and enthusiasm for the project, and it is inspiring to see how people react to the scale of the planting and the growth of the woodland.

This coming planting season will see us plant 10,000 trees on Todcastles – the land to the south of the car park, with financial help from Lloyds TSB. We also hope to plant a further 18,000 trees close to the waterfall to link the recent planting with the montane plantings. This will again be a big challenge to volunteers and contractors. Volunteers will also be kept busy planting some of the large aspen trees which we have had grown on from cuttings.

Hugh Chalmers

## Woodland Habitat

Since the Spring, work across our woodland habitats has been focused on tubing 10,000 recently planted trees in 1.2m tubes to reduce deer damage, beginning work on our new native woodlands at Arkleton and Prieststhaugh and carrying out minor fence repairs.

A six wheeled tractor and trailer was used to transport the tubing materials as far as possible on many of the steep hillsides at the recently planted sites. The driver, Willie Hastie showed great skill in accessing Glengaber and Linghope over pretty wet and slippery ground. It was an experience accompanying him in the cab with some long moments of silence when the wheels started to slip on our descents into the steeper gullies. I had visions of sliding all the way to the bottom pushed on by the weight of the tree stakes on the back. Perseverance, great fortitude and skill from Willie kept us going in the right direction.



Tubed site at Dryhope

The tractor however only managed to get the materials to certain locations, the rest of the work being carried out by BFT staff, hardy volunteers and contractor Davie Cairns. Old rucksack frames were used to tie on tree stakes and tubes for the steep climbs and burn crossings. Broadgairhill's materials (5,000 stakes and tubes) were almost entirely moved by hand as the slope was too steep for the tractor. Once the trees were located in the bracken and scrub, they were hand weeded and the tubes were put in place. This process will help us to see where tree losses are occurring and enable a more accurate picture of each site to be gained so targeted replacements can be planned for the planting season.

The tractor hard at work at Glengaber and Linghope



Chasing out marauding sheep has also been a feature of the summer work this year. Not exactly what we would choose to spend our time doing but at least it keeps you warm and fit! Fences are breached from time to time so vigilance is always required. BFT are extremely grateful to our band of regular volunteers for their time and effort in boundary walking to check the fence lines at many of our projects.

The second phase of planting at Arkleton, near Langholm got underway

this summer with the completion of 7km of fencing to create 6 compartments for native woodland in the Ewes valley. The 35.5ha of land in the fenced areas will be planted with a mix of native species woodland over the winter season which, together with the 2ha planted last season, brings the total area of new native woodland being restored at Arkleton to 38ha.

Work on the new riparian native woodland planting at Prieststhaugh Farm, south of Hawick, has also commenced over the summer. Six kilometres of fencing now encloses 36ha of land which will also be planted with native species over this planting season. Due to its location near to a red squirrel priority area only small seeded tree species will be planted here.

These are the last two plantings which BFT will carry out under the Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme and we await with anticipation the announcement of the new woodland creation scheme within the Rural Development Contract.

George Moffat

## Getting to the Core of Borders Orchards

The Breathing Places funded Borders Orchard Project which started in October 2006 is now coming to a close.

The project has seen an array of community activities from Apple Day at Crailing Orchard to pruning workshops at Nursery Orchard in Selkirk. The project paid for four volunteers to attend a beekeeping course to learn about the relationship between orchards and the honey making pollinators. It has also set up Crailing Community Orchard with its first hive. So you may be seeing BFT honey on the shelves soon!



Volunteers off to check on the new bee hive.

The Breathing Places grant has also paid for a researcher to locate the remaining orchards in the Borders. Consultant Louise Seed has found 34 orchards at present, some have little or no trees remaining, whereas others have nearly 300.



Eddleston Orchard



Enthusiastic volunteers at Nursery Orchard, Selkirk

Since the launch of the project the Orchard Development Group have formed and their aim is to carry on the work of BFT through volunteer days and active orchard management.

Lee Hollings

## Woodschool Progress

No butterflies to speak of this year in the Butterfly Garden at buyDesign – hardly surprising with the wet weather we had over the summer. But we have still been busy with plenty two legged human visitors to the yard, workshop and gallery.

Keith Threadgall, our sawmill operator has had a very busy season cutting roundwood for private estates, farmers and other furniture makers all over central and west coast Scotland. The interest in self build and the use of Scottish timber still seems to be gaining popularity. It has taken ten years to get to current levels and who knows where the next ten years will take us!

We have been experimenting on structural grading with the Centre for Timber Engineering at Napier University and are coming up with some good results on home grown larch and Douglas Fir.

The Woodschool and buyDesign teams have been out at many shows, exhibitions and events again this year which has resulted in a full order book in the run up to Yuletide. The annual makers show ran for all of October and was a great success exhibiting the fine work of the workshop designer-makers. The outreach factor that Woodschool and BFT have on influencing the economic and ecological restoration

of Scotland's woodland culture is having quite an effect. We feel there are good times ahead for community growth and value added development. Much unsung work goes on out there by everyone based here at Monteviot.

The workshop has hosted quite a few guest makers and work placements this summer. These are college gap years, career shifters, school leavers and committed enthusiasts all wanting to increase their material knowledge in our local timber resource. This facilitation takes up a lot of time in the workshop particularly of Stuart, Barney and Sarah who have been transferring their skills onto new future makers. We have filled two new bench spaces

through this informal process of bench space recruitment, welcoming Ross Ketteridge and Andrew Patterson into the workshop.

Big projects going out the door this summer have been for Famous Grouse and their Whisky School at Glen Turret. Dan Johnson installed some huge oak pieces in one of the bonded warehouses. Our existing and referred clients are keeping the



Elm and Oak Rocker by Stuart McKinven

makers active with beautiful new designs and work. The commitment of the team and the quality of the product really has emerged over the summer.

So its heads down for the rest of the year and hopefully we will get a bit of time to develop some new products for the Woodschool range and encourage participation in our Albanach brand of woodland products from Scotland. If there are suppliers, manufacturers or producers of furniture, joinery timbers, wild harvest, by products or fuelwood that is grown, made and sold in Scotland we would like to hear from you. More information at [www.albanach.org.uk](http://www.albanach.org.uk).

This year's Christmas Show runs on the 24 and 25 November so come along for some mulled wine and new for this year, Crailing Community Orchard products.

*Postscript : Woodschool would like to respectfully acknowledge the passing of His Grace The Duke of Buccleuch. His Grace, his family and staff have been great supporters of our work over the past ten years. Scotland lost one of the great stewards of her forests this year.*

Eoin Cox



The Lads from Woodschool, Milton Community and Galgael

## Kids Work!

Time to share a few more thank you letter comments from the kids:

A P4 girl from St. Ronan's – 'Thank you for giving me and my class a great day in the woods, and thank you for getting my Mum and Joe out the house for once!'

A P6 girl from Parkside - 'Thanks for coming to our school to make bat and bird boxes. The first one was the hardest because our nails went in squint, the second was easier because we knew how to do it, the third was really easy because Anna did it!'

A P5 boy from Stirches – 'I enjoyed it when we walked in the Forest and seen the badger poo.'



Anna Craigen



South Scotland Forestry Cluster  
at the Woodland Resource Centre

The Woodland Resource Centre is now open for public and group use and has accommodated many meetings including the South Scotland Forestry cluster. To book the room or use resources please contact the BFT office.

## Goodbye and Good Luck!

After 2½ years, our Community Woodland Officer Lee Hollings is moving on to a ranger job closer to home in Northumberland.

Thanks to Lee for all his hard work over the years and all the best down South.



## The Borders Forest Trust

...rooted in the community



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The Brown Forbes  
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