

surrey tree wardens

newsletter

june 2024

The next event in the Surrey Tree Warden calendar is a July meeting with a guest speaker on protecting our pollinators, that vital issue in our nature depleted world. It is also the AGM for the group. We will be guests of the Surrey Heath Tree Wardens.

Date: Saturday 6 July
Time: 10.00 to 4.15 with registration from 9.30
Venue: Tringham Village Hall, Benner Lane, West End, Woking, GU24 9JP

It will be a packed agenda. There is not only the guest speaker, bee and bug enthusiast, Peter Smith. There will also be updates from Sam Village on the national Tree Warden Network, and a talk from Ian Turner, head of Planning and Ecology at the Tree Council. The AGM will have reports on all the many things the Network has achieved over the past year, as well as the election of officers. In the afternoon, a guided walk round the Windlemere SANG. Yes, it's a new word, and means a Suitable Alternative Green Space, in this case a former golf course given over to nature, and including a new community orchard.

Please reserve your place with Membership Secretary Sue Henderson: marchharecottage@gmail.com
Tea and coffee will be provided, but bring a packed lunch. And don't forget cash for the raffle, and any used ink cartridges you might have. They raise money for us.

Remarkable! Dorking Library Goes Green

Don't miss the **Remarkable World of Trees**, an exhibition in Dorking Library. It has just opened and will run to the end of August. The exhibition explores the world of trees, through word, art, photography and events, from the soil they grow in, to the insects, birds, and animals that call them home.



It opened with author Paul Woods who gave a preview talk about his new book: *Tree Hunting: 1000 Trees*. He has travelled the length of the country from Lerwick to Leicester, unravelling the stories of some most remarkable trees, from the Sixpence Tree in Edinburgh to the Lucombe Oak in Exeter.



Other events in the Library will follow through the summer: author talks, guided walks and many activities for children. You can find the full details on the Surrey Libraries website below. The exhibition is a collaboration between the Surrey Tree Wardens – a special thanks here to our Secretary Patricia Brookwick – Surrey Libraries, The Tree Council, and the original creator of the exhibition Kate Bretherton.

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries/your-library/find-your-nearest/dorking/events-and-activities>

Tall Tree Tales from Wisley

So what could possibly link a seventeenth century beheading, the tallest tree ever recorded and the lotus eaters? They were all referred to in a guided tree walk, just for Surrey Tree Wardens, at RHS Wisley Garden in April. The tour guide was Jonathan Newell, head of Public Engagement at Wisley, and he certainly engaged his TW audience with his entertaining tales and detailed knowledge of all things arboreal. Some 34 Tree Wardens joined the event which took place in the Wisley Arboretum – a magnificent collection for those who do not know it. Jonathan was joined by another Jonathan, Jon Stokes of the Tree Council, who added his commentary: we could not have had better guides than these two.

The walk started with **Amelanchier**, (edible fruit) and **Alder** (they resist water so well they form the foundations for Venice, including the Rialto). There was **Zelkova** too. And in between? First, the beheading. We gathered round *Morus alba*, the White Mulberry, and heard the story of James VI and 1st who sent one of his horticulturalists to Italy to bring back the silk worm tree, the White Mulberry, in order to establish a silk making industry in England. But he was misinformed, and bought 10,000 Black Mulberries instead. And lost his head for bringing ridicule upon the King.

The tallest tree in the world? We all would have guessed a Sequoia, and indeed, a Coastal Redwood, *Sequoia sempervirens*, holds the record for the tallest living tree at 116m. But a Douglas Fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, is known to have been taller at 126.5m.

That only leaves the lotus eaters. *Diospyros lotus*, the date plum, bears edible fruits. Was this the magical fruit of legend? We will have to organise a foraging trip to Wisley at the right time of year to find out!



Along the way we remembered Anne Frank, and the Chestnut Tree *Aesculus hippocastanum*, which she could see from her attic window in Amsterdam as she hid from the Nazis:

24 February 1944: Nearly every morning I go to the attic to blow the stuffy air out of my lungs. From my favourite spot on the floor I look up at the blue sky and the bare chestnut tree, on whose branches little raindrops shine, appearing like silver [...] As long as this exists, I thought, and I may live to see it, this sunshine, the cloudless skies, while this lasts I cannot be unhappy.

The tree is no longer there but its descendants have been distributed round the world including one in Wisley - lest we forget.

Thank You and Goodbye

The Wisley visit was also the occasion to say goodbye to two very longstanding tree wardens and committee members, Dave Pope and Dave Woods from Spelthorne. They were each given hand crafted bowls, in wood of course, to say thank you for many years of sensible advice – and wry comment - at our meetings.





News from Groups: Nutfield

Gatton Park, near Reigate, has some splendid old trees. The magnificent landscape around the house was designed by Capability Brown, and, there's no way of knowing for certain as plans were lost in a fire, but some of the trees could be his original planting. There are some very fine Cedars of Lebanon for instance which could be 250 years old. The Nutfield Tree Wardens spent a morning there in the expert company of the Head Gardener Dan Ryan. Among the highlights, the ancient trees apart, were the new cherry plantation, and the restored Japanese Garden.

News From The Committee

Tree Warden Training

These sessions are for all Tree Wardens new and old. They are done online: look out for a new series on hedgerows sometime this autumn. And a note to all TWs: you are covered by the Surrey Tree Warden insurance **provided** you have taken part in Training Module Number One: the Induction course, and provided too of course that you have read and understood the terms and conditions for the policy.

Check out this website: [Home - NHS Forest](#) This is an initiative to encourage tree planting and tree and woodland care in an around hospitals and health care centres. In their own words:

A nature-positive health service is vital for building stronger, healthier and more sustainable communities. We help sites to plan, plant and manage trees and woodlands to create habitats for wildlife and sustainable social spaces for people

We are looking for new **Committee** members. We have - unwillingly - said goodbye to the two Dave's – see above – and this leaves vacancies to fill. You don't have to be called Dave to join the committee!

*Surrey Council are offering to plant **FREE** street trees – part of their ambition to plant 1.2 million trees by 2030. If you want to apply for one or find out more, go to the website:*

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/permits-and-licences/planting-trees>

CONTACT US

www.surreytreewardens.org.uk

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