



SUFFOLK TRADITIONAL ORCHARDS GROUP

NEWSLETTER

Orchard Survey progress

We're delighted to welcome some new surveyors to the Suffolk Traditional Orchard survey team. We now have people recording the orchards of

Dallinghoo, Elmswell, Little and Great Glemham, Tunstall and Blaxhall, Dennington, Reydon and Shotley.

There are many more parishes still waiting to be surveyed, please contact us if you'd like to get involved.

Success for Grafting and Surveyor Workshops

In February 2011, we ran the first two grafting courses, really as an experiment to find out if they were as much in demand as we had been given to believe. We also had the idea that we might propagate fruit trees on the large standard rootstocks that are difficult to obtain, but are so essential for traditional orchards. These are far more rewarding to grow than the shorter-lived, dwarf rootstocks used by most suppliers.

36 enthusiasts attended the two events, first grafting trees for themselves and then grafting a few each for STOG to grow on and pass on to new amenity orchards in Suffolk. To our great surprise over 120 trees were grafted for us, and by the end of further workshops, volunteers had raised this number to 216 grafted trees. These were mostly apples, but there were also some pears, plums and even three quince. These grafts are being grown on in pots by Paul Read at Home Farm, Thrandeston.

Over last winter 180 grafted trees were distributed to a number of new amenity orchards. These included the Scattered Orchard Project (see page 4), one new Suffolk collection for the claylands in Debenham, another new Suffolk collection for the Sandlings in Sutton and some to two farm orchards being restored under the Higher Level Stewardship scheme.

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The organized chaos of a STOG grafting workshop!



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In February we ran four courses and two demonstrations, with over 50 people attending. Two days of volunteer grafting produced even more trees, so that we now have a fruit cage full and another 100 planted out in a rabbit proof enclosure at Home Farm.

We have still to count them all, but there are probably in excess of 300 trees! The hose pipe ban could have had a serious effect on these plans as some artificial watering is always required for new grafts, but the Eye area is supplied by Essex and Suffolk Water which is almost the only water supplier in eastern England not to impose a ban.



A few new grafts potted up and waiting to shoot!

Orchard wildlife

I was surprised that two recent articles on traditional orchards published in *British Wildlife* (October 2011: 8-16 and 17-22) made no mention of the stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*. Orchards can provide ideal habitat for them and show significant potential to benefit this Biodiversity Action Plan species. I regularly come across these large charismatic beetles during field work and occasionally find their larvae, for example at Dodnash and Uplands Fruit Farms in Bentley.

The key habitat within an orchard is the damp, decaying broadleaved wood, which can be found at or below soil level in the trunk and/or roots of the fruit trees. Stag beetle larvae are dependent on this for food. Female beetles search out such wood and dig down into the soil to find a suitable spot where they can deposit their eggs adjacent to the wood.

Many of the older orchard fruit trees provide this habitat, though mostly it is hidden from view. Stag beetles are found in habitats on well drained, sandy soils.

The adult beetles can be observed during the period from mid-May to the end of July, provided the weather is suitable.

They are crepuscular and therefore most active in the late evening from around 21.00 to 22.00 hrs, and then only when the temperature is high enough. The best

time to see them and watch males in flight is on a warm (16 C) summer's evening in mid-June.

Colin Hawes, stag beetle researcher

Please contact Colin at c.hawes@homecall.co.uk if you see any adult stag beetles or find their larvae.



Male stag beetle



Stag beetle larva



Charles Partridge's cherry orchard at Cherry Tree Farm, Lower Layham, being restored under HLS. The site has part buried dead cherry tree trunks as a habitat for beetles.



APPLE DUMPLINGS

There are a number of dishes referred to as Apple Dumplings. They vary in the type of pastry used, whether the apples are used whole or sliced, and how they are cooked. Hannah Glasse (writing in 1747) uses puff pastry and the dumplings are cooked by boiling individually in floured cloths. Eliza Acton (incidentally brought up in Ipswich, and writing in 1845) gives a recipe for “*Fashionable Apple Dumplings*”. The pastry specified is “a good crust rolled thin”. These dumplings are boiled in small knitted or close-netted cloths which creates a decorative pattern on the surface.

The pastry used can be suet, shortcrust or puff. If used whole the apples should be peeled and cored, and then filled with a sweet filling, as with baked apples. The apples are then usually wrapped individually in the pastry of choice and then boiled, steamed or baked.

There appear to be many variations, with related recipes such as Apple Pasties and Turnovers, and Apple Hat (a pudding steamed in a basin lined with suet crust and filled with sliced apples).

There are different local names for some of the recipes. According to Mary Norwak (who collected East Anglian recipes), Baked Apple Dumplings in shortcrust were known in Norfolk as Apple Johns (also the name of an old apple variety described by Parkinson and referred to in Shakespeare). Apple Hoglins aka Apple Jack are a type of apple turnover containing sliced apple.

Do you know of any variations to the Apple Dumpling recipe below? Do you know of any unusual local names for these recipes? If so, we'd really like you to share your recipes with us!

Baked Apple Dumplings (Serves 4)

Shortcrust Pastry made with 8 oz / 250 g plain flour, 2 oz / 130 g butter, 2 oz / 120 g lard (or, for vegetarians, cookeen or similar), a pinch of salt, and a small amount of water to mix.

4 medium-sized apples (preferably a variety which will hold its shape when cooked ----- try Ribston Pippin or Orleans Reinette or similar), peeled and cored
A filling of your choice ----- choose from butter mashed with brown sugar and cinnamon, a mixture of dried fruit with sugar and lemon zest, mincemeat, quince jelly.

Make the pastry and leave to one side for at least 30 mins (this prevents shrinkage during cooking).
Preheat the oven to 190C / Gas Mark 5.
Peel core and stuff the apples with your chosen filling.
Divide the pastry into 4. Roll out each piece fairly thinly to form a circle. Place each apple in the middle of each pastry circle. Dampen the edges of the pastry and draw it up around the apple. Pinch the pastry edges together, and trim off any excess. Place the apples on a greased baking sheet, with the join underneath. Use the pastry trimmings to make pastry leaves to decorate the dumplings. Brush with beaten egg. Bake for 30 mins. Serve hot with cream (or for a modern, slightly sharper twist Greek yoghurt or creme fraiche).

Monica Askay

Traditional fruit varieties healthier?

New research by Unilever has shown that the Egremont Russet apple (first recorded 1872) may be richer in nutrients and fibre than some modern varieties.

Scientists from Cranfield University are working with the Royal Botanic Gardens and Kew to study traditional fruit and vegetable varieties to find out if they are better for our health than more modern ones. To find out more visit [ITV >](#)



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Waldringfield, Newbourne and Hemley Scattered Orchard Project



Scattered Orchard volunteers at work on the playing field

March 2012 saw the first fruit trees planted by a community group seeking to bring back orchards as part of Suffolk's rural landscape.

Villagers from Waldringfield, Newbourne and Hemley have come together to create a scattered orchard across the three villages. They have planted groups of mixed fruit trees on various pieces of

land that are accessible to the general public. Village residents as well as visitors to the villages are welcome to forage from the trees once they are bearing fruit. Over 30 trees were planted in March and the group aims to plant a total of 60 trees by the end of 2012 in celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

A mixture of apples, pears, plums, cherries and cobnuts have been planted, most of which will eventually grow to be large trees on vigorous root stock. The group has worked closely with Suffolk Traditional Orchard Group, who promote the planting of traditional fruit varieties and, in particular, the delicious but currently rare Suffolk varieties. Varieties planted this week include Dunwich Heath and Thorpeness apples which originally come from those locations.

Most fruit trees available at commercial nurseries are grafted on dwarfing root-stock so that the trees will not grow too large for most gardens. These trees will only last about 25 years before they become much less productive and eventually die. By planting fruit trees on vigorous root-stock one is investing in trees that will live for up to 200 years. As well as providing fruit for humans, these trees are a vital source of food and habitat for much wildlife.



Mariah Skellorn planting at the church

The project has been supported by Suffolk Acre, Transition Woodbridge, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Suffolk Traditional Orchard Group and Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership's Green Web project. If you would like to sponsor a fruit tree and dedicate it to someone you can do so for £20. This will enable more trees to be planted later this year.

For further information, contact Maria Skellorn at mariahskellorn@hotmail.com



STOG Plum Day

Saturday 18th August 2012 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Orchard Barn, Rural Skills Development Centre, Far Ringshall, IP14 2LY.

You know what an apple day is! Well, our plum day will be a little different. Plum events are held in the west country, but in East Anglia they have only previously been in Huntingdonshire, an area with a tradition of commercial plum orchards, combining guided walks, identification, and sale of plum products.



At Orchard Barn it will be a little less formal! Paul Read and Monica Askay of STOG will be available to identify the plums you bring to us (or try to identify, as it is not at as advanced a stage as apple identification), and Monica will demonstrate some interesting plum recipes. Mid August is the middle of the plum season and we hope to see early plums (perhaps those kept in refrigerator), as well as ripe ones, from garden orchards. And don't forget plums from hedges as there are many feral plums in Suffolk! We are hoping to concentrate on plums but if you have early apples and pears that won't keep until October apple days, bring them too.

There will be a display of plum varieties. Last year in Huntingdon, we had 36 varieties by the end of day and we hope to beat that this year.

Orchard Barn has an old orchard with several plum trees, including an old and very large, unidentified small yellow one and greengages, but there is also an opportunity to see the work carried out by the Centre using this old farm yard site for training, see www.orchardbarn.org.uk/courses.htm

This is a small site with limited parking so please car share if you can. There will be more information nearer the time on our [website](#) and on the [Orchard Barn website](#).

NEW ORCHARDS

One of our long term plans is to help local Suffolk organizations such as parish councils, amenity trusts and associations, allotment groups, schools, farm estates and landowners to plant their own orchards in the local traditional manner.

We can provide advice and guidance, sometimes donate a few trees that are particularly interesting, and, if we can, help to source suitable trees at realistic prices.

As you will see from our Project List, we have started this work already.

We would now like to hear from you about any amenity groups that have

done this or are planning to do so, so that we can build a database of all the new orchards in the county . We would be happy to provide advice if requested.

Contact details are shown on page 8.



APPLE / AUTUMN FRUIT DAYS

The Suffolk identification team will be attending the following Apple Day events in East Anglia:

Cambridge Past Present and Future, Apple day and Autumn Festival 6th October 2012, at Wandlebury Ring, south of Cambridge, see <http://www.cambridgeppf.org/events.shtml> for details.

SWT Redgrave and Lopham Fen Apple Day, 10-4pm, 14th October 2012. This is one of the largest apple events in East Anglia, and as it is in the centre of the claylands, our identifiers are always faced with plenty of fruit identification challenges.

SWT Foxburrow Farm Autumn Event, date still to be arranged, and will be circulated nearer the time.

Please note when bringing fruit to be identified:

- ◇ It is better to bring too many examples (within reason) rather than too few (the RHS recommend a bucketful!). We suggest 3-5 typical examples.
- ◇ Bring a few leaves too.
- ◇ Keep fruit that might go off before the event in a refrigerator salad draw.

Most people bring apples to apple days, but pears, plum, nuts, quince and medlars are all welcome!

FRUIT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

We plan to hold two **Fruit Identification Workshops**. Details will be available nearer the time on the website and in the next Newsletter. These workshops will not turn an beginner into an expert

fruit identifier but is intended to give some background to the principles of apples, pears and plum, look at some common varieties and at the literature and keys available.

Apple identification will concentrate on the use of **FRUIT ID**, an online identification method

that works well in East Anglia because the designers are from this region.

Plum identification will look at plum stones, and pears will be briefly covered (unfortunately pears are very difficult to identify due to the shortage of good descriptions).

STOG EVENTS

Date	Event	Venue
Sat 19th May	Orchard Surveyor Workshop	SWT Foxburrow Farm, Woodbridge, IP12 1NA
Sat 18th Aug 10 a.m.—4 p.m.	STOG Plum Day	Orchard Barn, Rural Skills Development Centre, Far Ringshall, IP14 2LY

Further surveyor workshops will be organised if there is a demand for them.



PROJECTS

Here are some of the projects we've been working on. There are many more in planning stage. We are very grateful to volunteers who have supplied **138 grafts** towards these projects.

Site	Type of project	STOG contribution
Bayments Farm Orchard	Restoration	Supplied trees
An orchard, Freston	Restoration	Identification of apple, pear and plum varieties
Boxford Suffolk Farms Ltd	Retention of old orchard	Identification of morellos, bryophytes and lichens
Chantry Park, Ipswich	New orchard planting	Planning advice, training
Debenham 2 fields project	New planting of Claylands Orchard Fruit Collection	Supplied trees
Eade's Orchard, Framsdon	Planting into existing woodland and orchard site	Supplied trees
Great Cornard Parish Council, Country Park	New planting on sensitive ancient strip farmed site	Supplied rootstocks - STOG will pole-graft cherries
Holywells Park, Ipswich	Graft trees from old Ribston apple on Fonnerau Nursery site.	Supply trees
Hurstlea Court, Needham Market	Required additional trees on developed orchard site with some trees retained	Supplied trees
Ickworth House Walled Garden (National Trust)	New planting of 5acre walled garden to replicate records from 1910, 600 trees of 230+ varieties.	Advice and planning
Lime Tree Farm, Mellis	Additional planting on ancient site	Supplied trees
Metfield village allotments	New planting	Supplied trees
Peoples Community garden, Ipswich	New planting	Supplied trees
Sandlings Orchard Fruit Collection, Broxted	New planting of Sandlings Orchard Fruit Collection	Supplied trees
Scattered Orchards Project - Newbourne, Waldringfield & Hemley	New planting on range of sites across three parishes	Supplied trees
St Laurence Farms Estate, Ilketshall Hall	New planting	Supplied trees
SWT, Brooke House, Ashbocking		Supplied trees
SWT Martin's Meadow	Restoration	Supply of grafted trees
Thornham Hall Nuttery	Restoration	Supplied trees
Farm orchard near Culford	Restoration	Supply of grafted trees, identification of apples varieties and surveys of bryophytes and lichens



SUFFOLK FRUIT COLLECTIONS

We are planning to help a few local groups set up **Suffolk Fruit Collections**. These will be orchards planted with locally traditional fruit varieties and managed in a local traditional manner. Details of this principle is explained in our STOG Advice Note, STOGAN 5. Several of these are already in the planning stage and three groups started planting last winter.

South Suffolk Cherry Varieties at Great Cornard Country Park

A collection of traditional south Suffolk cherry varieties are being grown as tall standard trees. These will be grafted 2m high on a wild cherry sapling, in the local manner. 24 cherry rootstocks were planted and protected from deer in November 2011 and grafting will probably be carried out in winter 2013/14.

Suffolk Claylands Fruit Collection at Debenham

Over 30 trees grafted by volunteers in February 2011 have been planted on a new site, until now arable, to grow standard trees as the start of a Suffolk Claylands Fruit Collection. These will include all varieties of fruit and will be added to as they become available. We anticipate the planting of several claylands collections as the range of fruit and nuts is at its maximum in this region.

Sandlings Fruit Collection at Sutton

A Sandling Fruit Collection has been started at Sutton, and this will be added to as the trees are propagated. Sandling orchards have plums and pears that tolerate the dry conditions and in this collection, we have also planted some of Suffolk's unusual seaside trees that appear to tolerate salt spray.

**News
flash**

STOG Advice Notes (AN) and Mini-Monographs (MM)

The following will be available on our website very shortly

STOGAN5 *Live collections of orchard fruit varieties in Suffolk*

STOGAN9 *Traditional Suffolk orchard ground flora — natural and planted*

STOGMM1 *Suffolk Thorn*

STOGMM2 *Christmas Lane cottage plums with The anatomy of a plum stone*

Contact us

Gen Broad (Project Manager), New and Old Orchards for Suffolk, Suffolk Traditional Orchard Group, c/o SBRC, Ipswich Museum, High St, Ipswich IP1 3QH.

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www.suffolkbiodiversity.org

To book for the workshop contact Paul Read: Tel: 01379 870422, Mob: 078605 85422, email: paul@home-farm.myzen.co.uk



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