



ORCHARD LINK *NEWS*

DON'T WASTE A SINGLE WINDFALL!

This autumn, there is no excuse to waste the crop that your orchard produces. Orchard Link now has two presses and two mills available for hire. Our large wooden press is ideal as the focus for a community event (or just a cider making weekend with friends and neighbours). Whilst our small but very efficient stainless steel press will cope with up to a tonne of fruit a day, giving you lots of juice to freeze, pasteurise or turn into cider. We'll even teach you how at our special course on 19th October – see inside.

If you have just a small quantity of fruit, there are several community pressing days across Devon – where you can bring your fruit and take home delicious juice. Alternatively, if you have dessert or culinary fruit, why not come along and sell it at Orchard Link's stall at Kingsbridge Farmer's Market in October or November. You can take 50% of what you make on the day. Call Harvestline if you would like to sell fruit but cannot attend the market yourself.

For members with large quantities of fruit, we are still able to help put you in touch with cider makers or juice makers who need your fruit during the harvest season. Just call Harvestline open 2nd September – 1st November:

Tel: 01548 550516.



JOIN IN THE FUN!

Come and help us with pressing fruit or on our farmers market stall this Autumn. We always need extra pairs of hands and it is great for people to meet members and exchange news on orchards and apples. Whilst helping you can bring your own fruit to press or sell and take home the proceeds or juice. Whats more! You will get hands on experience of using the presses and it is great fun! Call Nicola Herbert at Harvestline if you would like to help out at any of our events featured in 'What's On?'

INSIDE:

- Sell your fruit at our market stalls.
- Plant mulberries and medlars
- Save money on orchard courses.

SHIPPING NEWS

Those who remember Tom Hoblyn, orchard expert who gave advice and visits around South Devon, may have caught an unusual glimpse of him on television over the summer.

Tom, whose interest in apples helped earned him a place on the prestigious course at Kew Gardens, joined the modern day crew on board the reconstruction of Cook's ship, 'The Endeavour', in the BBC2 series 'The Ship'. We saw him climbing exotic trees on the Australian Coast. Amazing where an interest in orchards can lead!

For more details on 'The Ship' voyage
See the website: bbc.co.uk/history.

A PICTURE OF ORCHARDS IN SOUTH DEVON

Thanks to the enthusiasm of local parish wardens and as an Orchard Link member or two, the pilot survey of orchards in the South Hams will start this autumn. Community Tree Officer Julia Pugh will be testing out a simple method of surveying orchards in the South Devon area of *Outstanding Natural Beauty*, during blossom time next year.

If you would like to be involved in the pilot or the full survey (no expertise necessary – all you need is enthusiasm!) Call Julia on: 01803 861367 and leave your name and phone number.

SAVE THOSE BOTTLES!

It is pressing season again – so we need all the clean empty plastic bottles we can get to bottle all the juice, which we make at pressing days. Although we take sackfulls to every pressing event, we are always amazed at how quickly they are filled up and taken away. So we are always happy to

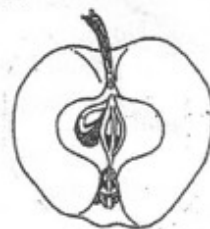
receive clean, rinsed fizzy drink bottles. (Milk cartons can be particularly difficult to clean and remove all traces of milk!) So please bring your bottles to any of our stalls (see 'What's On?' for details) or to Nicola Herbert if you are dropping apples to her farm near Loddiswell and we will ensure that they are used again instead of ending up in the bin.

ORCHARD LINK IN NORTH DEVON.

The South West Forest Woodfair at Roadford Lake, North Devon on the 13th July, provided both a splendid location and fair weather for over 80 exhibitors. Most in small booths around a central demonstration area and two craft marquees, there was the semblance of a mediaeval fair.

Orchard Link was well placed next to a tree nursery from Gloucestershire, who supplied hedgerow trees including wild cherry, medlars and bulaces. Our stand was very busy all day, so it was quite difficult to get out and explore. Some of the more unusual booths featured boat building, bespoke oak wigwams and biomass heating systems. There were some unusual exhibitions also in the craft marquees, including a stick maker and a range of painted and natural hand-whittled flowers made from hazel wood. Although the exhibitor's had come from far and wide, the visitors to the Fair were mainly local.

We now have some new members from North Devon. This was orchard linking at its most enjoyable. It would be a good idea to return to Roachford next year with the added attraction of a cider press.



MULBERRIES AND MEDLARS.

There is a lovely story behind the introduction of the black mulberry to Britain. The white mulberry had been cultivated in China since 2,500B.C. as food for the silkworm used in the production of silk. Slowly its cultivation had spread westwards, reaching the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages. In 1609 James I commanded the planting of mulberries in London for silk production. Unfortunately the silkworm does not thrive in our climate, but these black mulberries did, and some are still alive today. It is said that all black mulberries now growing in this country are descended from those planted by James I.

Whether this is true or not, the black mulberry is a wonderful tree for several reasons. If you have never eaten its fruit it is well worth seeking out. It is like a large black raspberry, bursting with juice, with both a sweetness and tartness. Because of its juicy fragility it can only be eaten fresh from the tree. The usual way to harvest them is to place a sheet under the tree and shake the branches. It is one of those wonderful treats along the lines of summer pudding or strawberries at Wimbledon.

The mulberry is also a fascinating tree visually. From quite a young age it produces gnarled looking branches that often sweep down to the ground. Its leaves are a fresh green and heart shaped. Mulberries prefer a moist, slightly acid soil. They are usually grown on their own roots and are self-fertile. They grow to a height of around 7-12 metres. The cultivation of mulberries is similar to that of apples. They are largely untroubled by pests or diseases. Formative pruning is important, keeping the leader straight for as long as possible, with a framework of 4-6 strong branches emerging from good way up the trunk. Pruning should

always be carried out in the winter when the tree is fully dormant as mulberries are liable to bleed profusely at other times.

The medlar is a most attractive small tree. Even if the fruit is not to your liking, it is worth growing for its large white or pink flowers and its good autumn colour. Medlars will tolerate some shade, though a sunny and sheltered site is preferable. They will grow in most soils except those that are very alkaline or badly drained. Cultivation techniques and pruning are similar to those used in growing apples. Once a tree is mature the pruning is largely limited to removing overcrowded growth to leave an open framework. They are usually grafted onto Quince 'A' rootstocks producing a small tree around 4 metres in height. Occasionally you may find a tree on a seedling pear rootstock that will produce a much bigger tree.

The most unusual thing about a medlar is the treatment of the fruit after picking. The fruit should be left on the tree until a dry day in late autumn. After picking, the stalks should be soaked in strong brine solution, and then the fruits left to "rot"! This process known as bletting allows the fruits to soften and the full flavour to develop.

Finally a reminder for the winter gales. I see more young trees die from incorrect staking than anything else. It is worth checking ties and stakes on all your trees now. Check that the stake is secure in the ground, and that the tie is not too tight or too loose. Most importantly check that the trunk of the tree cannot blow in the wind so that it hits the stake. This often causes a wound that can become colonised by an infection such as canker. Lastly think whether the tree really needs a stake. Many trees only need a stake for a short time, and are then best left to support them, helping to strengthen the roots.

Ben Pike, Devon Orchard Services.

WHAT'S ON?



For further details contact;

- ❖ Orchard Link: Harvestline –
Tel: 01548 550516
- ❖ Coast & Countryside Service
Tel: 01803 861140
- ❖ Tamar Valley Orchard
Volunteers –
Tel: 01822 833804- Sheila
Camplin or 01579 370411 -
Caroline Vulliamy.
- ❖ National Trust – Hedgelaying
Training
Tel: 01752 346585

SEPTEMBER:

Saturday 28th-29th;

- Nut Crops. Forest gardening
Course based at Dartington.
For details. Tel: Martin
Crawford on 01803 840776

OCTOBER:

Saturday 5th

- Orchard Link- Farmers Market
Stall. Bring your apples to sell
or turn into juice at
Kingsbridge Farmers Market
on Kingsbridge Quay 9am-
2pm. We will have the press in
action at our stall and will be
joined by Celia Hyland of the
Women's Farmers Union.
Who will be demonstrating
both sweet and savoury apple
dishes as inspiration for new
ways to use your fruit! Call
Nicola at Harvestline if you
have fruit for the stall but
cannot bring to the market.

- ISEC Local Food Festival –
with farmer's market crafts,
music and Orchard Link's big
wooden press- so bring your
apples and take home juice!
10am-10pm at Foxhole,
Dartington (see article in this
newsletter for more details).

- Apple Pruning Day – bring your
apples and take home juice at the
old school Stoke Climsland. £2.
Booking essential. Contact Tamar
Valley Orchard Volunteers.

Sunday 13th

- Autumn Festival at Avon Mill
Garden Centre, Loddiswell.
Orchard Link will be taking the big
wooden press and pressing apples.
11am-5pm so bring your fruit and
take home juice! There will also
be crafts, rural skills, cider tasting,
steam engine, chillies and squashes
and children's activities.

Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th

- Apple pressing and cidermaking
weekend at Keveral Farm, near
Looe, Cornwall.
Contact Oak Wright on:
01503 250135

Saturday 19th

- Learn to make cider. Press apples
and learn to make cider with expert
guidance- participants take home a
container of juice to make cider at
home. Orchard Link are
organising this special workshop at
Coombe Farm, near Loddiswell.
10am-4pm. The day costs £15 or
just £10 to Orchard Link members.

Booking essential Call Harvestline to reserve a place.

Sunday 20th:

- TLC for the Land volunteer to help restore a walled garden and orchard at Hazelwood House, near Loddiswell. Call Wendy Stayte for details on 01803 868305

Tuesday 22nd:

- Learn to hedgelay. With the National Trust at Ringmore, near Kingsbridge. A very useful skill for orchard owners. Booking essential.

Sunday 27th:

- Chateau le Feet! Try your hand at harvesting grapes and treading them at Sharpham Vineyard. Sharpham will turn your crushed grapes into a fine bottle of wine for you to collect later in the year. The day includes a delicious lunch of bread, Sharpham cheeses and Sharpham wines – in a stunning setting! £12 Booking essential. Call Sharpham Vineyard on 01803 732203

Thursday 31st:

- Meet a Hedgehog! Take the children and come and learn how to make your garden and orchard wildlife and hedgehog – friendly too! At Harbertonford Village Hall 2-4pm. Adults £2.50 Children £1.50. A Coast & Countryside Service event.

NOVEMBER:

Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th

- Learn to Hedge lay. With the National Trust at Beesands, near Kingsbridge. Booking essential.

Sunday 24th:

- Learn to prune Old mature apple trees and young trees too in Berry Pomeroy's acres of old orchards led by expert Charles Staniland. 10.30am-4pm. £12 or £8 to

Orchard Link members. Booking essential. Call Harvestline.

JANUARY:

Saturday 18th:

- Stoke Gabriel Orchard Wassail Come and celebrate an ancient tradition in Stoke Gabriel's Orchard. See the Wassail Queen wandering the trees, morris dancing, a mumming play and storytelling. Plus a mid winter barbeque and cider. Victoria & Albert Inn, Stoke Gabriel, near Totnes. 7pm-til late

□

Book ahead for..

FEBRUARY:

Sunday 2nd

- Old Orchards: Restoring & Planting A hands-on workshop at a beautiful old orchard in Harberton, near Totnes. Led by orchard expert Ben Pike of Devon Orchard Services. 10.30am-4pm. Organised by Orchard Link. £12 or £8 to Orchard Link members. Call Harvestline to book.

Saturday 22nd

- Grafting Day. Learn the skills of grafting from expert Kevin Croucher of Thornhayes Nursery at Kentisbeare Village Hall, near Cullompton. £12. Booking essential. Call 01884 266746.

MEMBERS SAVE MONEY ON COURSES.

Learn to prune and plant traditional apple trees or make cider. Members can save pounds on the following courses organised by Orchard Link –

- Learn to make cider: 19th October £15 or £10 to members.
- Learn to prune: 24th November. £12 or £8 to members
- Old Orchards – Pruning & Planting. 2nd February 2003 £12 or £8 to members

ISEC'S LOCAL HARVEST FESTIVAL.

This autumn, the international society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC) will be hosting a local harvest festival as part of the celebrations of Devon Food Week. The festival will take place at Foxhole, on the Dartington Estate on Saturday 5th October from 10am – 10 pm. During the day there will be a Mini-Farmer's Market, local crafts stalls and hands on demonstration, music and theatrical performances, a raffle, and lots of apple juice pressed by Orchard Link's big old fashioned apple press. There will also be local – food, lunches and cream teas available.

In the afternoon there will be several lectures followed by discussions. Speakers include; Helen Norberg-Hodge, the Director of ISEC, on 'Shifting Direction from Global to Local', Stephan Harding, lecturer at Schumacher College, on 'Agriculture and the Natural World'. And various farmers including, Guy Watson from Riverford Organics, and Philip Hosking from the Small Farms Association.

In the evening there will be a local food supper, a ceilidh, and archive film footage of rural life in the South West. ISEC, a charitable organisation with offices in the United States, Northern India and here in Dartington, has been working to promote locally based alternatives to the global consumer culture for over twenty years. In the UK, much of our work is focused around local food issues. ISEC's local-food programme works on raising public awareness about the globalisation of food and farming. It emphasises the rebuilding of local food systems as an essential component of a shift towards a sustainable future.

ISEC's Work to promote local food.

ISEC aims to increase awareness about the benefits of buying local, sustainable produce food, rather than food which is imported or processed and gives people the tools with which to rebuild their local food economies. Our local food road show does just that through an illustrated poster display and slide show. We also recently initiated the Local Food Alliance. This group aims to develop awareness of, strengthen and rebuild local food systems in the South Hams area. The Alliance is interested in developing a community orchard in or near Dartington.

Please come along to the local Harvest Festival and celebrate local food and culture with us. The day events are free of charge. Tickets for the evening meal and ceilidh will be sold in advance and on the day, (£6 or £4 concessions). For more information please contact
ISEC: Tel 01803 868650 or E mail-
local food @ isec.org.uk

FRIENDS OF BROGDALE.

If you are ever travelling to Kent – do not miss a trip to the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale. Orchard Link has recently joined as a friend, which entitles us to a few entry tickets. So contact us before you go if you would like to take advantage of our membership. There is a full programme of events and activities – from a cider festival (28th – 29th September) and a week long Apple Festival from 14th – 20th October. With a programme of talks and workshops; pruning, grafting, pest and disease and more.

GOOD NEWS FOR TEIGNBRIDGE ORCHARD OWNERS!

If your Orchard is in Teignbridge you could get half a dozen Free Trees! Teignbridge District Council's Free Tree's Scheme gives traditional apple trees as well as natives like oak and hazel. The main proviso is that the trees must be visible to the public, improving the view from a road or footpath for instance.

This year we are particularly keen to give out traditional apple trees to orchard owners and we would like to encourage people to apply for varieties such as traditional cider varieties, and varieties local to Teignbridge. The trees could be used to gap up existing traditional orchards, create new orchards on traditional sites or to create new community orchards for the benefit of local people. Private landowners, farmers, Parish Councils, schools and community groups can all apply! Unfortunately trees cannot be given to people in Dartmoor National Park or outside the Teignbridge District.

We generally give maiden sized trees on an M25 rootstock so you will end up with a traditional full size standard. We give up to 6 free apple trees per applicant per year. You can also apply for any of the wide range of native trees we have available, these come in bigger numbers e.g. up to 125 hedging plants.

If you wish to apply for Free Trees please contact Laura Snell, Countryside Trainee at The Teignbridge Council Offices on 01626 215794. Last year we gave out a grand total of 83 apple trees (and 4,300 native trees!) and we hope to beat that record this year, so please get your applications in as soon as possible as trees are given on a first come first served basis!

CUT OUT

Those who read our last newsletter will know that Trudy is off on maternity leave for a while from late October. There will always be someone to deal with your calls however- simply direct ALL calls to our HARVESTLINE NUMBER- 01548 550516 and if not dealt with by Nicola direct, calls will automatically be transferred to Ben Pike (whilst she is preoccupied!) or to Trudy.

Our address is ;
Orchard Link,
PO BOX 109,
Totnes,
Devon.
TQ9 5XR

Email- trudy.turrell@south-hams-dc.gov.uk.

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