



ORCHARD LINK *NEWS*

We've got 'Kew-dos'!

Over the summer we've been hard at work preparing a display for Britain's most famous garden.

Back in May we were amazed to be contacted by Kew who had heard of Orchard Link and asked our advice on creating an Autumn cider press and barn scene, in the end of the Prince of Wales Glasshouse. After an initial conversation, I was off on the train to London to spend a hot summer's morning negotiating the tube out to Richmond.

Once out of the city, Kew is another world. Past acres of ponds, formal Victorian glasshouses, and rose gardens in full bloom, my jaw dropped at the futuristic triangular shape of the new 'Prince of Wales' glasshouse, in which Kew hoped people would be able to step back in time to the sights and smells of a Devon cider barn!

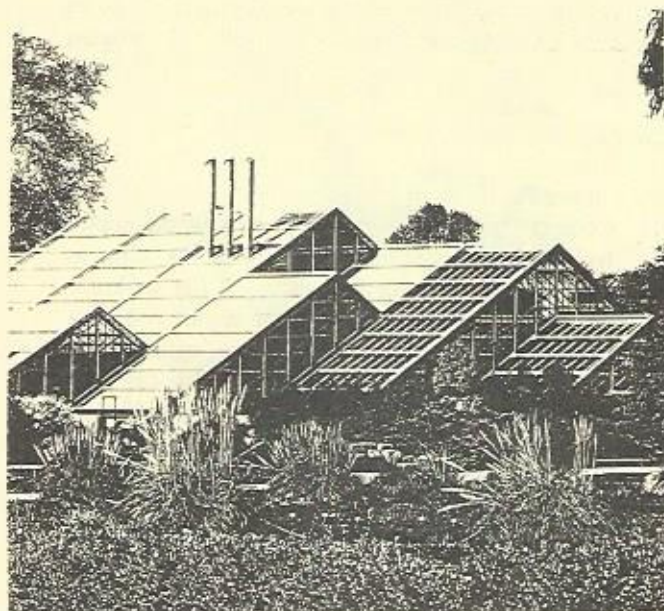
Inside the current display, of an English cottage garden, complete with vegetables, pond and privvy were surprisingly convincing. Given the staff's experience at using the space, our job was to focus on obtaining the display materials.

Well, apples are easy, even if you do have to get 3 to 4 tonnes of good looking fruit up to London. Transporting a cider press poses more of a problem...

Regular readers will remember the wonderful but soon to be homeless old press from Bowden Farm, Yealmspton. Still in limbo in a barn, it would make the centrepiece for our display. Add to that an old press and cider apple crusher from Lyme, barrels from Somerset, old cider jars and other artefacts from all over Devon; two traditional Devon 'maunds' or market baskets, made specially by local basketmaker Hilary Burns, and we were on our way to providing a scene which some authenticity.

Inside:

- ◆ Apple Days galore, a full guide to what's on in Devon this Autumn.
- ◆ Turn your windfalls into cash, find out how.
- ◆ Send for 'Burcombes, Queenies and Colloggetts' – a guide to local apples.



Now I am working on a little text and photographs for their education department to turn into information panels. They'll tell the story of our disappearing orchards, and what is being done to conserve them.

Meanwhile we have a Hiab lorry booked to transport presses, crusher, barrels and more up the M25, so wish us luck!

Trudy Turrell

Visit the Display

If you are in London over the autumn/winter, why not visit our display at Kew? It should be on show from mid October through to February. Call the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew for details of opening times, entry fees to the gardens and how to get there: Tel: 0208 940 1171.

Harvestline's In Action Again

From 6th September, our Harvestline Co-ordinator Nicola Herbert was standing by the phone. The 'Harvestline' is now open until 30th October and Nicola will be on hand at the times shown below to answer calls from anyone who has apples to sell, through Orchard Link. At other times there's 'callminder' to record your calls and Nicola will ring you back as soon as she is 'on duty' again. Harvestline is open:

Mondays 8-11am

Wednesdays 5-8pm

Fridays 8-11am

Call Nicola Herbert on 01548 550516

Using Harvestline and Orchard Link's Collection Scheme

Those who have used Harvestline and Orchard Link's collection scheme last year all received an information sheet explaining our service. If you are now new to the scheme or would like to refresh your memory – here's what to do:

Orchard Link offers a Marketing and Sales service to enable those with small orchards in the South Devon area to sell surplus fruit which would otherwise go to waste. We collect together sacks of fruit and transport and sell it to cider and juice manufacturers. We then pay orchard owners 50% of the proceeds from their apples.

All you need to do is:

1. Contact Orchard Links with details of the apples which you have available for sale, as soon as possible, by phoning Harvestline. Let us know where you are and what type of apples you have (ciders/cookers/eaters). If you can, estimate the quantity you will have available. We can then provide you with good quality, clean woven polythene sacks (which keep the apples in the best condition) so try to estimate how many you will need.
2. If you cannot collect and put the apples in sacks yourself, think of asking friends or family to help, or offering the proceeds from your fruit to a local organisation if their members can pick it. Alternatively call Harvestline, often we have one or two local people who will pick fruit at a price per sack.
3. We'll deliver sacks to you, or you can collect supplies from Combe, Loddiswell.
4. Pick your fruit! Be careful not to include any black or badly bruised apples in the sacks. Black apples make all the others deteriorate very quickly and we and the cidemakers may reject the whole sack. If you have a mixture of cider and eating or cooking apples, collect them as separately as you can – cidemakers don't like cooking apples in with cider apples, but we may be able to sell good quality cooking or eating apples on stalls or to local shops.
5. Either deliver your fruit to our yard at Barkingdon Manor or to Nicola Herbert's farm at Combe, Loddiswell. Ask Nicola to send you maps. When you leave your bags try to register them with someone on site. If no one is about when you call, labelling will ensure that we know which and how many you left. If you cannot deliver but have 10 sacks of apples or more (nb think potato sacks not Somerfield carriers!) call Harvestline. If we are able, we will collect sacks from your gate. As we try to organise the collection like a milk round, joining forces with neighbours who have apples for sale could make collection more viable.

We cannot promise to collect small quantities from longer distances, but we'll do whatever we can!

Where Have all The Pear Trees Gone?

The search is on for old pear trees growing in and around Buckfastleigh. The Local Farmers' Market re-launched the Pear Pie Day Fair last year. Traditionally held on the 2nd Thursday in September, the ancient Buckfastleigh Fair ran for centuries, ceasing only around the time of the First World War.

Old records talk about the blowing of a horn at 8 o'clock in the evening when people without ovens would take their pies to the Sun Inn to be baked overnight, ready for the next morning. There is every indication that pears were readily available in the immediate area.

Richard Rogers, the organiser of the weekly Thursday morning Farmers' Market, imagined that locating local pears would be simple. More simple than that is finding the ingredients for the Lamb Tail Pie Fair Day held recently at the market.

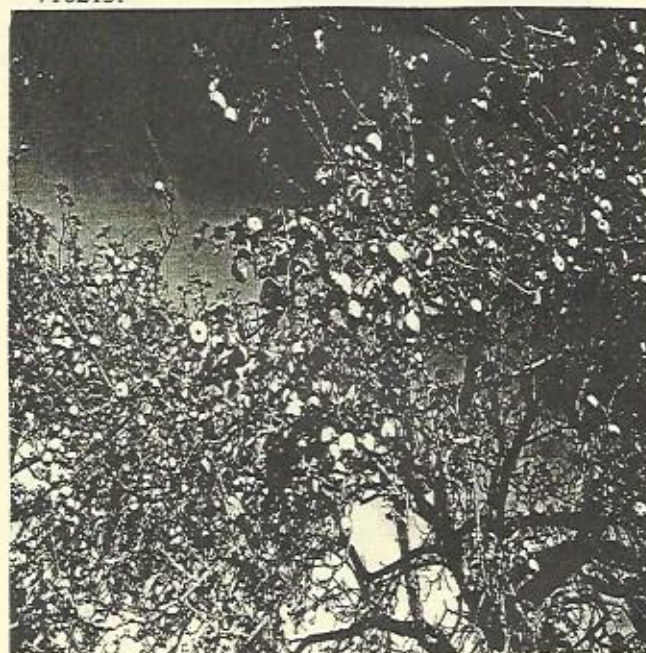
Do you know of any old pear trees from which graft wood may be taken? The long term plan is to graft wood from pears growing locally, so that the tradition Pear Pie day may be maintained, using local ingredients.

If you are able to assist with providing some graft wood or know of old pear trees in a local orchard, please contact Richard Rogers 01803 762 674.

Wanted: Photogenic Orchards!

Anthony Harrison is a Totnes-based professional photographer who specialises in taking pictures of landscapes. Over the Autumn he aims to capture some traditional orchards in fruit and would like to hear from anyone in South Devon who has an orchard which he could photograph. If Anthony uses your orchard he'll also offer you complimentary prints.

Call him for details on 01803 732559 or 017010 716213.



Don't miss APPLE DAY 2000

A unique country fair to celebrate
apples and traditional orchards

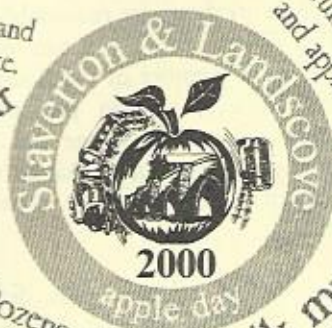
At Landscope near Staverton

Children's activities - from apple crafts
and apple Olympics to storytelling

Press apples and
taste the juice.

Cider bar

Evening apple concert
in Staverton church



Two apple
cafés

Pruning demonstrations
and apple trees for sale

Dozens of crafts
and stalls

Folk music

Cookery
demonstrations

Saturday 21st October

10am to 5pm. Woolston Green, Adults £2, children £1.

Travel by steam train and classic bus from Totnes or Buckfastleigh
South Devon Steam Railway Stations. (Buckfastleigh has a large
free car park). Special all inclusive prices: Adults £5, children £3.
Frequent trains leave both stations between 9.30am and 6pm and
are met by a 1950s bus!

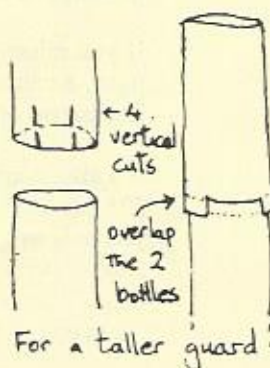
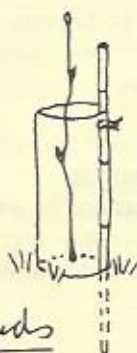
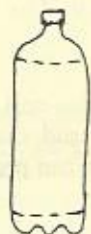
Call South Devon Railway for exact times 01364 642338.

Planting Tips from Teignbridge

As I'm always keen to recycle household rubbish and
save a little cash in the process I thought I'd pass on
two ideas which I saw in a tree planting information
sheet produced by Teignbridge District Council.

The pop bottle tree guards are ideal for any small
whips you might be planting this winter ie a small
copse or gaps in a hedgerow. They would work
equally well around the stems of newly planted apple
trees, to foil rabbits who nibble the bark to get at the
sweet sap inside, or for that matter geese or even
strimmer or mower damage. Just remember to remove
the bottles later when the trunk of the tree grows.

Making a mulch mat out of old carpet or thick fertiliser
sacks is not a new idea, but one well worth
remembering. Mulching will save you work in
weeding around the young trees and it will ensure that
water guzzling weeds don't compete with your young
trees, depriving them of moisture in the Spring and
Summer. Mulch mats also retain moisture around
young trees, so conserve, what's available.



Pop bottle tree guards

For a taller guard!

Judges Sweet on Apple Juice

An organic cider-maker from Devon is sipping from
the cup of success after picking up a trio of top food
awards.

Heron Valley Cider, of Loddiswell, near Kingsbridge
is celebrating winning three medals at the Great Taste
Awards, known as the UK's food Oscars.

The family firm, run by Steve and Shirley Bradley,
impressed judges at the competition with its range of
delicious organic apple juices.



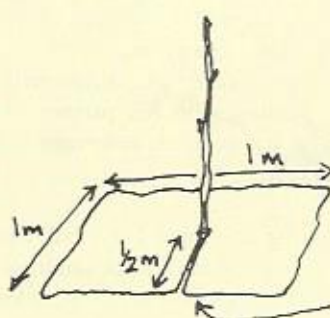
Despite facing strong opposition from fine food
producers from across the country, the company
walked away with two silver awards, for its organic
apple juice and organic apple juice including Bramley,
plus a bronze for its organic apple with grapefruit juice.

This year was the first time the firm has entered the
competition and Steve Bradley said he was surprised
by the instant success of his produce.

"Seeing as this was our debut in the competition I have
to say we were a bit shocked to come away with three
awards, but it was nice to win such a prize" he said.

All the apples used in the award-winning juices are
sourced from organic producers across South Devon
many are provided through Orchard Link.

Success at the food awards has already bought interest
from Fortnum and Masons. The top person's merchant
is looking to sell Heron Valley's juices at its London
Store.



mulch mat of
black plastic,
old carpet, etc.

Cut a slit 1/2 way
in rather than
poking the tree
through a small hole

Don't Hedge Your Bets it's Devon Hedge Week 2000

I'll bet that most orchard owners also own several hedges. Devon Hedge Week runs from Saturday 21st to Sunday 29th October and includes a wide range of events throughout the county such as guided walks, talks, conferences and practical hedgelaying events.

Learn about the history of Devon as reflected by what lives in hedgerows, past management trends and what the future holds! There are also examples of various hedgerow management techniques and the effects they have, discussions on farming, hedges and wildlife, and hedgerow restoration projects throughout Devon.

Since Saxon times hedges have been planted as stock proof barriers and boundary markers; they also provide a habitat for a huge number and variety of species. For example, a hedgerow may support up to 1500 insect species, 600 plant varieties, 65 types of birds and 20 mammal species. However, hedgerow removal, neglect and mismanagement have all contributed to a large decline in numbers of many birds, insects and flowers that rely on hedgerows for shelter and food.

Devon Hedge Group aims to raise awareness of Devon's hedgerows through the annual 'Hedge Week' event; it provides a great opportunity to highlight issues such as restoration and management, to celebrate hedgerows and learn new skills.

If you would like to find out more about Devon Hedge Week a full programme of events is available from Barry Green - Hedge Promotion Officer on 10392 266368. We've featured some of the practical events which may be of interest in 'What's On'.



Make a Date for Apple Day 2000

If you need yet more incentive to come along to Apple Day, come and meet Orchard Link volunteers on our stall! We'll be selling apples, showing our display of books and photos and providing advice. We'll be at the edge of Woolston Green.

We shall also be selling (for Apple Day and a limited period after only) copies of Virginia Spiers excellent book of Tamar Valley apples 'Collegetts, Queeneas and Pippins!' The book contains the collected wisdom of James Armstrong-Evans, expert and enthusiastic collector of old local apples varieties. Illustrated by impressions and style paintings by his partner Mary Martin, this is a beautiful but accurate reference book, as well as an interesting read.

If you don't make it along to Apple Day, but would like a copy send a cheque to Orchard Link (address on back page) for £15.50 (to include postage and packing) and we'll send you a copy.

Green Fingert Courses

If you're interested in gardening and particularly in growing your own food, and live in the South Devon area, take a look at the new range of courses organised by the Tresillian Garden Project for the Autumn/Winter.

From learning to compost, to getting the most from polytunnels, from pruning fruit trees to making green willow trellises and screens, their varied programme of courses and practical workshops are reasonably priced (from 'free to £15). What's more you can join for a reduced cost if you are a member of the South Hams Organic Gardeners Society, or can pay partly in 'bridges' (Kingsbridge's Local Exchange and Trading Currency). Alternatively you can exchange training time for hours spent volunteering in Tresillian's community garden.

For a full programme of courses, plus details of Volunteer days and SHOGS membership call Liz Collins or Anna Bradley on 01548 853220/853298 or write to Tresillian Garden Project c/o Kingsbridge Community College, 112 Fore Street, Kingsbridge.

Join SHOGS for Less!

South Hams Organic Gardeners Society is offering a reduced rate of membership to Orchard Link members. Until June 2001 you can join for just £4 a year instead of the usual £5.

Simply send a cheque made payable to 'Tresillian Garden Project' to SHOGS c/o Tresillian Garden Project, Kingsbridge Community College, 112 Fore Street, Kingsbridge TQ7 1AN.



All Hands to the Pump at the Wood Fair

It was lovely to see so many friends, members and contacts at the Great Wood Fair in Follaton Grounds on 9th September. Our stall on Follaton lawn had the attraction of a mobile apple press, expertly manned by its creator Keith Sinclair.

Working tirelessly he turned seven sacks of apples into fresh juice. We estimate that we made and sold over 600 cups of it (there were 5-6,000 people at the fair!).

If you missed the chance to press apples and taste the juice, Keith's press will be in action at Apple Day in Landscope on 21st October.

It's also available to hire at the very reasonable cost of £25 per day. Keith will deliver, assemble and show you how to use the press and he tells me you can press 2000 gallons of juice in a day, a great idea if you have neighbours with apple trees who want to join in! Call Keith on 01803 867252 for further details.

What's on?



For Coast and Countryside events call 01803 861140. For Tresillian & SHOGS (South Hams Organic Gardeners Society) call Liz Collins or Anna Brindley - 01548 853220

October

Wed 4th

Community Composting Course. Learn how to set up your own community scheme from expert Nicky Scott. 7-9pm. Tresillian, Kingsbridge £5. Organised by Tresillian Garden Project

Sat 14th

RHS South West Fruit Group one day symposium at Rosemoor Gardens, N. Devon. Open to RHS members. Tel 01803 624067 for details.

Sunday 15th

Apple Day at Rosemoor Gardens, N. Devon, in association with Dartington North Devon Trust. 10am-5pm.

Sunday 15th

Apple Day and Rural Skills Day at the National Trust's Killerton House, near Exeter. 11am-5pm. 01392 881345.

Mon, Tue
16th & 17th

Organic Fruit, Opportunities and Challenges. A conference for growers in Kent. A limited number of bursaries are available to enable local people to attend! Contact Johnathan Smye at Devon Food Links. Tel: 01392 382831 for details as soon as possible.

Sat 21st

Apple Day at Landscope, Staverton. Miss this - miss out!

Sat 21st

Hedge Steeping at Sentry Park. Dartmouth National Park Authority Moretonhampstead. Grid ref SX 755 862. Start time 10am. Sally Perryman will be demonstrating steeping a hedge behind the church in sentry. No charge.

Sun 22nd

Apple Day at Cockington, Cockington Court, Torquay, another chance to sample an extravaganza of apples, cider, crafts and apple activities.

Sun 22nd

Carry on Hedge Laying! Exeter City Council Countryside Service and BTCV. Hedgelaying at Ludwell Valley Park. Grid ref: SX 946 911. Start time 10am. Over 16 years. Contact Chris Moulton 01392 265890 or BTCV 01392 666460.

Sun 22nd

Hedge Laying at Coombe Valley Local Nature Reserve Teignbridge District Council Countryside Rangers. Complete beginners welcome. Grid ref: SX 931 742. Start time 10am finish 4pm. Contact Sian Avon 01626 361101

Mon Tue Wed
23, 24th, 25th

Devon Banking at Baggy Point The National Trust. Free three day course on traditional way of building

and restoration of Devon hedge banks. Booking essential, for more information contact Philip Osbourne 01271 870 555.

Mon, Tue, Wed
23rd, 24th, 25th

Have-a-Go at Hedge Laying

The National Trust. Lower Halsdon Farm, Exmouth. Grid Ref: SX 999 824. 10am to 4pm. No charge just bring a packed lunch. Contact Alan Barlow 01395 276 626

Thur 26th Oct

A farm walk discussing hedgerow management. Dartmoor National Park Authority, Sticklepath. Grid ref SX 643 935 2.15pm. Contact Brian Beasley or Sue Halse on 01626 832093.

Fri 27th Oct

Hedges in Devon. Laying, planting and history. The National Trust, Ringmore. Grid ref SX 649 455. 10am. Contact Simon Garner 01752 690 222

November

Saturday 4th

Dartington North Devon Trust's 'Save Our Orchards' annual gathering and party in the evening at Filleigh Village Hall for tickets call 01271 376365

Sunday 19th

Learn to Prune, on a day course in Stoke Gabriel, and you'll be able to tackle large neglected apple trees. £14. Booking essential. Call the Coast and Countryside Service.

December

Sat 2nd

Pruning Course in North Devon, led by Dick Fulcher. 11am-3pm. £6. Call 01271 376365 for details.

January

Sat 20th

Orchard Wassail. Join the traditional celebrations in Stoke Gabriel's beautiful community orchard. 7pm onwards Adults £2, children £1!

Sat 27th

Improve Your Pruning. For those who have done some basic pruning or attended a previous basic pruning course. Based at Berry Pomeroy £14. Booking essential. Call the Coast and Countryside Service.

February

Sat 17th

Learn to Prune in a Kingsbridge orchard with expert tuition from Ben Pike. Organised by Tresillian Garden Project.

Sat 24th

Grafting Course in North Devon with Kevin Croucher or Thornhayes Nursery. 10am-3pm. £6. Call 01271 376365 for details.

Growing Shelter in a Hurry

If you have an exposed and windy site which needs shelter fast, consider planting some fast growing willows or poplars. Gordon Hill at Ottery St Mary specialises in modern hybrid willows and poplars which will grow two meters (6-8 feet) a year! Also resistant to pest and disease attack, hardy and able to cope with the poorest of soils, they are a useful option when considering trees to plant as a windbreak, screen or as 'nurse trees' for slower growing species.

Gordon explains that the willows which reach 20-24 feet in height after three growing seasons will reach a maximum of 28-30 feet and can be kept shorter by pruning. As the base of the willows thicken they can provide fuel logs, be woven into hedges and also offer game cover and encourage wildlife too.

For screens or windbreaks, willows should be planted in a double or triple row at two feet apart in the row, and three feet between rows. For a thicker or dense hedge they can be planted closer still, at 18 inches or even one foot apart.

For coppice or logs a three foot by three foot spacing is adequate. It is becoming increasingly popular to plant four or five rows of willows with the aim of harvesting one row for logs each year and thereby gaining an annual log supply without losing the windbreak or screen. The willows will quickly regenerate after harvest, and will even tolerate an annual harvest of one year old shoots for goat fodder.

Poplars however will, continue to grow at six to eight feet per year to produce large handsome trees with a stout trunk. They make excellent high screens and windbreaks. They are also used to lift game-birds, and for timber. There is also a market for its use in cleft hurdles and garden furniture. Poplars are best planted at three feet apart, with six feet between rows.

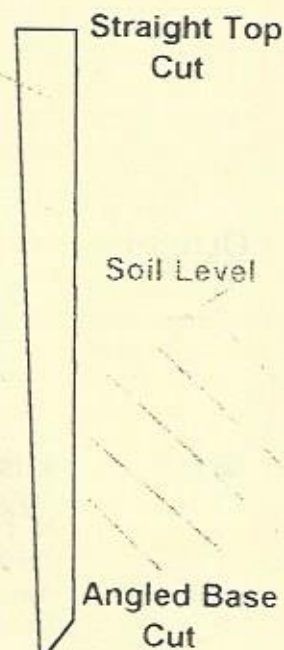
Both species will grow in any soil type, even boggy conditions, although of course apple trees won't! All you need to do is remove all perennial weeds from your planting site and unless the soil is very poor, there is no need to add fertiliser.

Planting and plant size

Planting may be carried out any time in the dormant season, between mid-November and mid-March. It is generally better to plant earlier than later.

Both poplars and willows are available as well-rooted trees and/or unrooted setts. The decision on planting size will depend on how you intend to look after your trees in their first 18 months. If you will keep your trees fairly free from weeds and grass, then Gordon recommends you plant with one foot or two feet long unrooted cuttings. If you keep them weed and grass free, they will produce a tree of six to eight feet tall within. They have the advantages of being easy to plant, cheap, and require no support. The one foot long cuttings are inserted into the soil so that nine inches (three quarters) of their length is below ground. A spade slit may be needed in firm soil, but in loose or soft soil they can simply be pushed in.

cutting



How to plant a one foot long cutting

If you intend to allow any weeds and grass to grow around the base of your trees, then a larger cutting is better. A two foot long cutting is planted with one foot in the soil, and one foot above. This keeps the top of your tree above weed height and gives it a better start.

After-planting care

Keep an eye out for rabbit damage, and protect with wire or spiral guards if necessary as soon as any damage is seen. Devonian rabbits do not seem to like poplar, but he has had reports of damage elsewhere. Good weed control is very beneficial in the first two years after which your trees will shade out any competition. A weed-free area of three feet diameter is adequate around each tree. Mulch mats and black plastic are good as is a straw or manure mulch. Careful use of contact or selective residual herbicides can also be effective. A light dressing of fertilizer in the second year will boost growth further, but do not overdo it.



Poplar tree in hedge.
(18 months after planting)



Same poplar tree in its
fourth growing year.

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01752 898989**

Opening Times:
Mon - Sat 9am - 5pm (6pm BST)
Sunday 10.30am - 4.30pm

DEVON COUNTRY GARDENER is happy to be associated with Orchard Link to publicise and promote their events throughout the year in Devon

Devon Country Gardener magazine is available free from nurseries and garden centres, National Trust and open gardens, or direct by subscription from Landsman Publishing Ltd on 01297 551001

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GIVING 6 TO 8 FEET SHELTER PER YEAR

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For a free information pack or advice telephone Gordon Hill on 01404 812229, or write to Bowhayes Farm, Venn Ottery, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1RX.

Fax No: 01404 815800.

Full web site: www.bowhayesfarm.co.uk

Teign Valley Apples

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Orchard pruning and planting undertaken.

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01647 - 252098

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Turn surplus and windfall fruit into pure, fresh juice (as demonstrated on BBC Gardeners' World).

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Devon EX15 3SE.
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Fax 01823 680807



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Tel / Fax: 01803 868962

Singled Out

If you have a bountiful apple tree and you know its variety and can collect its fruit separately, let us know. Keith Goverd who makes single variety apple juices from up to 80 varieties of apple is particularly keen to sources supplies of old fashioned varieties of apples. He'll need a minimum of 40lbs of any one variety, but if you have this quantity, keep the apples separate and call Orchard Link.

You'll be able to taste Keith's amazing juices and see the apples from which they're produced at Apple Day in Landscope.

Don't Burn It - Turn It!

From time to time we still get asked for chunks of apple wood. Wood turners choose it to make beautiful fine grained bowls. If you are pruning large trees this winter and have sizeable pieces of wood, call us, don't just burn it on the fire, and we'll sell it for you if we can.



Saving Trees and Money

Since Orchard Link started, we have always sent out the newsletter in re-used envelopes. Although they may look a little 'patched up' we have a ready supply of A4 sized envelopes from our own and the Coast and Countryside Service's incoming mail.

Because we hate to see waste and like to watch the pennies too, we hope that members won't mind receiving Orchard Link mail outs in re-used envelopes. It is at least part of our green 'housekeeping'.

Orchard Books by Mail

We have a stock of the following useful orchard publications. Simply send this form with a cheque made payable to 'Orchard Link Limited' for your copies.

'Burcombes, Colleggotts, Queeneas' Virginia Spiers (see inside for details) £15.50 (£15 + 50p p&p)

'Orchards - A Practical Guide to Management' - a pack of twelve informative sheets. Published by Devon Books for Devon County Council £5.50 (£5 + 50p p&p).

Please send the following to:

Name.....

Address.....

.....

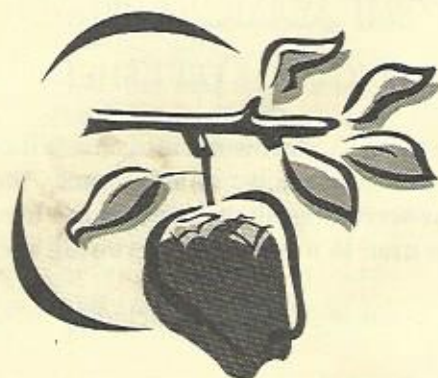
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Branching Out - A Collection Service for North Devon

Over the summer, local authorities and countryside services throughout Devon have shown increasing interest in Orchard Link and its collection service. Although we've focused the collection scheme on South Devon (after all, its not economic to collect apples from far and wide - the transport and labour costs cancel out any profits) it would be possible to run 'sister' schemes in other parts of Devon.

To test the viability of such an approach the Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service, which covers a vast area across North Devon, Torridge and parts of West Devon, has sent out questionnaires to all the orchard owners they know of. The questionnaires will aim to assess the size, extent and condition of orchards in their area and also the need for and feasibility of an Orchard Link collection scheme.

If you live in the North Devon area and wish to be included or have any views on the establishment of a collection scheme write to Dave Edgecumbe, Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service, Old Bideford Station, Railway Terrace, Bideford East, North Devon EX39 4BB. Meanwhile, we'll be looking forward to the survey results and hoping that our scheme can be extended to the North of the county. We'll be keeping you posted of any new developments in future editions of Orchard Link News.



Don't Forget!

Our new address is
Orchard Link
PO Box 109
Totnes
TQ9 5XR

Orchard Link News is produced by Orchard Link. It is free to members. For details on membership contact Trudy Turrell at Orchard Link, at the address above. Tel: 01803 861140
Visit our website on:
<http://telematics.ex.ac.uk/fr-mp.htm>

Orchard Link is supported by South Devon & Dartmoor Leader II Project, MAFF (The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food) and the Coast and Countryside Service.

