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Summer 2004

ORCHARD LINK *NEWS SHEET*

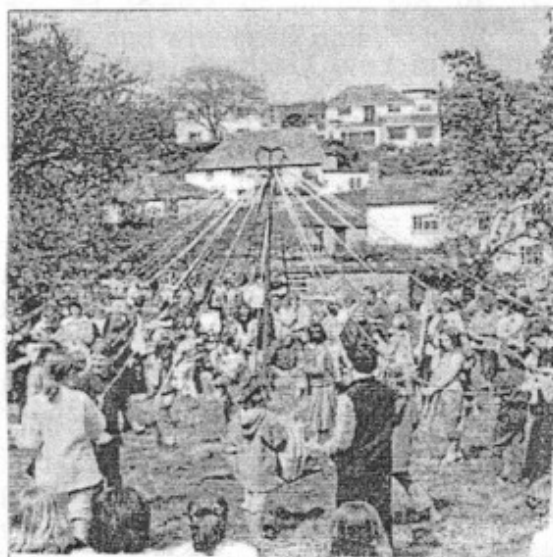
BROGDALÉ BONUS

Did you know that Orchard Link is a member of the Brogdale Horticultural Trust? I visited whilst on holiday near Kent last summer and was astounded, not only by their fantastic national collection of apples, but also of plums, cherries and other fruits – it's a wonderful educational day out.

Our membership entitles Orchard Link members free entry with the membership card – but not only to Brogdale. Now it entitles free entry to :

- Bedgebury Arboretum,
- Harlow Carr (Yorkshire)
- Henry Doubleday Research Association, Ryton (Coventry) and Yalding (Kent)
- Hyde Hall (Essex)
- The Royal Horticultural Society Gardens, Wisley (Surrey)
- Rosemoor (N.Devon)
- The Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew.

So, if your planning holiday trips this summer and fancy taking in one or more of the above, call us in good time and we'll loan the card to you for free entry for two!



Maypole dancing in Yarde orchard Stoke Gabriel.

CAUGHT IN THE WEB ?

Apologies – if you noticed in last season's newsletter two different web addresses for us, please note that our address is

www.orchardlink.org.uk

Sorry for any frustration – and if you haven't visited the site yet please do – its colourful and easy to navigate and we hope will spread the word about orchards and our organisation.

DO YOU HAVE AN E-MAIL ADDRESS ?

If so, don't forget to let us know. We can then email you with the latest events, pressing days etc - why not just contact us via our web page?

WHAT'S ON ?

Special events for orchard link members this summer:

July

Sunday 4th -

Wildlife in Your Orchard (see article in this news sheet). 10.30am at College Way Orchard, Dartmouth. FREE to Orchard Link members.

Sunday 25th -

Learn to Summer Prune - led by expert Charles Stamland in Berry Farm's orchards, Berry Pomeroy near Totnes. 10am till 1pm. £12, £10 to OL members. Call Charles on 01364 653169 to book.

August

Sunday 22nd -

Guided tour of the Dartington Agroforestry garden. 1.30pm. (See the article overleaf.)

The garden is opposite the SPARC building - From the Totnes-Buckfastleigh road, take the right hand turn beside Dartington Church, then second left - SPARC at 'the old chicken home' is signed off the drive.

September

Thursday 2nd -

Wildlife in your Orchard - another walk and workshop - at an old orchard: New Bow Bridge. Meet outside the Waterman's Arms, Tuckenhay at 2pm. FREE to Orchard Link members.

Saturday 25th

Ditsum Plum Day- orchard walks, plum teas, a plum orchard map and

land and water processions! We shall be involved so call if you'd like to help on our stall.

WILDLIFE IN YOUR ORCHARD

Many Orchard Link members tell us how they enjoy the wildlife in their orchards. There's no doubt that traditional old orchards are wildlife havens - the combination of old pasture, mature trees, blossom and all that fruit provides varied habitats for birds, mammals, butterflies and other insects.

If you'd like to learn more about the wildlife, which can be found in orchards, don't miss our two special orchard visits this summer. Led by local wildlife expert Gordon Waterhouse, the two walks and workshops will show you how to identify wild plants, birds, animals and insects in your own orchard - you'll find Gordon's knowledge and enthusiasm infectious. At each event our orchard expert Ben Pike will be on hand to explain how you can manage your orchard both for wildlife and for plentiful fruit - so you will understand how to balance management of your orchard for the best of both worlds.

Thanks to funding through the Life and Landscapes project, both the events are FREE.

Don't forget too that if you own a traditional orchard in the South Hams, you may be eligible for a Life into Landscapes grant to restore and manage it. Just call David Leach at Devon Wildlife Trust on 01392 279244 for details.

VISIT TO FOREST GARDEN ON DARTINGTON ESTATE

Aug 22nd 1.30pm

About ten years ago a field on the Dartington estate was allocated to Martin Crawford to develop as an agro-forestry site. Now, the gate of it opens into a magic garden. Surrounded by tall sheltering trees and bushes, the garden is a haven of warmth and stillness, and fragrance, with many strange and familiar plants. The creation of it has come from the inspiration and careful planning and hard work of Martin Crawford. Small and large trees, bushes, shrubs, climbers and ground cover plants, create a complex mutually-enhancing living system, with little bare soil and much fruit and produce that can be harvested, as well as diverse habitats for wildlife.

Join Martin Crawford's guided tour on this day, and find out how to turn your orchard into a forest garden!

Wendy Strayte

"WORMS - THE NATURAL PRIESTS OF THE SOIL"

by Henry Williamson

Under the apple trees in my garden the first flakes of blossom are lying; and, after dark, when the dew is falling and condensing on the white petals, the worms move up their galleries from the lower earth and put out their heads and

feel the night air. They listen – not with ears but with their entire bodies, which are sensitive to light and to all ground vibration.

Then, feeling that its safe, one after another begins to move out of its tunnel, and with eager pointed head, to search for petals of fallen apple blossom. When a petal is found, it is taken into the worm's mouth and the worm withdraws into its tunnel

When the worm has, and so carefully, gathered about a dozen petals at the mouth of its tunnel, it picks them up in its mouth, one after the other, and then goes down into darkness and eats them. Thus the night-wanderer turns blossom into the finest soil, or humus, which feeds the roots of the tree once more. Worms are soil makers; and their galleries and tunnels act as drains to the top-soil.

So you see they are not really the things one imagines them to be from the constant misuse of the word "worm"; they are poets, choosing at their annual spring festival, the choicest food and converting it, after much enjoyment, into food for the trees again. They are the natural priests of the soil.

From: "Around Dartmoor" BBC Broadcast, transmitted 25th May, 1936, reprinted in "The Listener", 10th June 1936, reprinted again in "Spring Days in Devon and other Broadcasts" published by the Henry Williamson Society 1992 with an introduction by Valerie Belsey.

SHARE YOUR APPLES AND SHARE THE WORK !

As part of a new 'Life into Landscapes' programme, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) are engaging a variety of people in practical conservation work throughout South Devon. The programme is to offer those who may not normally think of trying practical countryside work or even spending time in the countryside, a chance to try something new – offering landowners some help with practical work into the bargain.

The special 'work days' offer more than the traditional BTCV task days – by combining a walk, visit or activity with a practical conservation task. With this in mind, BTCV community projects officer Jemma Shaman is looking for orchards in South Devon – where volunteers can help to collect apples and undertake other tasks - then use Orchard Link's press to turn some of the fruit into juice for volunteers to take home.

So if you have an orchard but are unable to collect all your fruit – and you'd be willing to share it with others (plus use the mill and press for free !) Why not contact Jemma on 01752 301416 / 07764 655707 to find out more?

David Phipps, who owns the orchard near Tuckenhay, is also offering his apples at a very reasonable price to anyone who wants to pick and use them. Simply call him on :-

01803 732279 for details.

PRESSING ENGAGEMENTS

Could you help out at one of our community pressing days or farmers markets? Several members helped out at last years events and really enjoyed meeting people, selling and pressing fruit. We can't pay you but can offer travel expenses and plenty of juice to take home.

We hope to have the big press at Kingsbridge Agricultural show on the 4th September and at Kingsbridge and Totnes farmers markets in September and October. There will also be Apple Day events and the Avon Garden Centre Autumn festival – more details in the autumn newsletter – meanwhile contact us if you'd like to help at any particular venue.

- Don't forget to

Start saving those plastic lemonade and water bottles now ready for the autumn pressing season. Summer is a good time to ask friends to save their bottles for you – when everyone is drinking plenty of cold drinks.

PRESSS HIRE FOR 2004

Orchard Link member Dick Ensor will be storing and hiring out the presses this year. He can be contacted on 01548 831544.

Full details and prices will be posted on the web site and in a separate information sheet.

Meanwhile Ben Pike will still be able to help those with quantities of apples to sell and will be keeping in touch with local cider and juice makers who need fruit. Call him on the usual Orchard Link number- 07792 664710 or

E mail benpike@talk21.com.