



### Chairman's Comments

Dear Members,

Can I start by interesting you in coming to our AGM at 6.30pm on **Tuesday 13th February** at the Shropshire Wildlife Trust building in Abbey Foregate. During the AGM we will be looking for a Secretary to the Tree Trust and new Committee Members, and welcome anyone to join us. Following this swift AGM at 7.30pm will be Dr Hamori's lecture as advertised from December- so please do come. Refreshments I should add will be free.

There is change to the venue for our **April** talk. Andrew Allott's talk on the History of the Woods in the Marches will be at **St Peter's Parish Hall, Monkmoor**- so change that one on your calendar. Directions are; Going east on Abbey Foregate, turn left at first traffic lights onto Monkmoor Road, carry on down Monkmoor Road and look for the entrance left into the Church area immediately after the bridge over the Inner By-pass (Robertson Way). Its address is just Monkmoor Road, SY2 5BE. It is not accessible from Robertson way. This has been necessary because from April 1<sup>st</sup> the Wildlife Trust will not be renting out rooms in the evening due to staffing difficulties

I was very pleased to see John Tuer at our last committee meeting. He is driving again but is having to take it easy. We welcome new members brother and sister Sonia and Edward Swain from Bicton.

David

### Our last talk by Dr George Nash on the Tilley Timber Project January 9<sup>th</sup> 2018-01-27

Those of you who were there will remember what a fascinating talk George Nash gave to a record turn out of over 30 members. A report would have been very difficult to do the talk justice with so many facts and photos. Since his talk George has very kindly sent STT a copy of an article he and others involved in the project have just had published (January 2018) in Current Archaeology. It is attached to the email delivering this to those with emails and has been printed out in full and sent with the Newsletter for those receiving the Newsletter by post.

### Our next talk "Some less known and unusual hardy edible ornamental trees and shrubs" by Dr Zoltan Hamori of Jurassic Plants. Shropshire Wildlife Trust Tuesday February 13<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm after the AGM.

Members will remember that due to the heavy snow it was necessary to cancel the talk by Dr Hamori on 12<sup>th</sup> December. Fortunately Dr Hamori is able to give his talk immediately after the AGM on 13<sup>th</sup> February. He runs a small nursery, Jurassic Plants, near St Asaph in North Wales and asked to change the title of his talk from that given in the 2017 Membership Leaflet, which was "Germinating unusual and difficult Mediterranean tree seeds"

Dr Hamori (cont.)

He will therefore concentrate less on how to grow his exotic plants and more on their history and showing how to use the edible parts plus how to use them in the garden.

Dr Hamori will bring with him a number of his exotic plants for sale, and Peter Aspin has already ordered some for delivery on the day. Anyone interested in obtaining some of these plants should consult his website and order them directly from Jurassic Plants so that Dr Hamori can bring them with him also. Peter says that he has a particularly good selection of figs which might interest members. His website is:- [www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk/jurassic\\_plants.htm](http://www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk/jurassic_plants.htm)

We look forward to seeing you on 13<sup>th</sup> February!

### **Something for the February Newsletter**

I asked John Tuer to provide a space-filler for this Newsletter. Here is his offering. Ed.

Occasionally, something concerning trees from our reading catches our eye and is worth passing on. Here is an interesting passage from Richard Frère's book "Beyond the Highland Line", but not something I would wish our own tree planting team to do! This occurred in the Scottish Highlands in the 1950s.

".....When my turn came he thrust a planting spade, a thing like a heavy lawn trimmer, into my hand and looped over my shoulder a haversack containing twelve hundred tiny trees of the species *Pinus sylvestris*. I gathered, not at once, that all of them must be firmly planted by five-thirty or I should not need to come back the next day.

By the time the instruction was finished there were some tattered rents in the eastern sky and a sickly sun was convalescing behind them. We took up our positions about a yard apart, with spades at the ready. In unison we drove our spades into the heather, withdrew them, reinserted at right angles, lifted the flaps of turf thus formed, stuck in a tree and trod down the ground with our feet. It was like bayonetting the helpless body of the moor. We took a single long stride and repeated the process.

I mastered it only slowly. I fumbled with my plants and they fell to the ground but the corporate movement of the squad made it impossible to reverse mistakes. Many of the trees, if they survived, were destined for horizontal growth while others, inserted crown down, might only succeed in New Zealand. We went on marching across the squelching moor as daylight grew in a yellow haze and the rain came down in buckets.

At ten o'clock a halt was allowed for ten minutes. Crouching together, the workers drank tea from their thermos flasks while the Stob drew a half bottle from his planting bag and gulped down a few mouthfuls of whisky. I was distressed to find that while the bags of my companions looked thin mine still bulged with trees. One of the planters, a baby-faced man called Sma' Pim had noticed my cumbersome attempts to insert plants into their flaps and saw fit to offer some worldly advice. Glancing over his shoulder to ensure that the Stob was out of sight he drew me aside. "No' laak that, dinny tak' a' that sweat aboot it, ye'll nae get a medal. See this." He slammed in his spade twice. Here the ground was soft peat and untypical: it was mostly hard shingle which jarred the wrists and made a deep incision hard to come by. "Easy groun', we put a puckle here" said the villain Pim as he seized a handful of trees and consigned them en masse to earth, "yon'll mak up for them ye can't get doon in the harrd." He gave me a darkly fetching grin. "In guid groun' ye can sink a reet bagful and no bugger'll be the wiser. Though seriously doubting the morality of the suggestion it obviously improved my performance!

Richard Frère