

Treswell Wood: Coppicing



Coppicing was the ancient method of woodland management at Treswell Wood and is still important today. Coppicing is simple: cut trees and shrubs down to the base and let them re-sprout and grow small-wood, handy for making farming tools, household implements and firewood. Now coppice has new uses in the garden, buildings using traditional construction techniques and even in education. Hazel coppice is particularly valuable because it produces strong sticks and grows quickly.

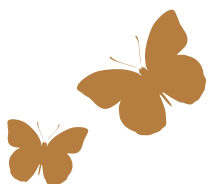
When the Trust bought the wood it was overgrown and neglected. Careful management since, using traditional methods, has increased its value to wildlife and it has become economically self-sustaining.

Traditionally coppice woodland is divided into coupes, which are cut every seven or 21 years. The coupes are in the middle of the wood, with uncut areas to the north and south. Recently cut coupes allow the light to flood in. Useful sticks from the hazel are bundled





and taken away and the rest laid out in long windrows for insects, birds and fungi. Canopy trees are thinned at the same time so flowers and butterflies can thrive in the dappled sunshine and birds have a variety of places to feed or shelter.





Coppicing is good for wildlife but also makes economic sense. Unusually for a nature reserve, the coppice makes an income for the Trust and for a small group of woodworkers who cut it for timber, firewood and coppice products.

It took nearly 20 years to restore the coppice. In the early days volunteers did most of the work and there was no market for traditional woodland products. The coppice was finally restored in the 1990s with the help of a small group of professionals. The hazel was back into rotation, overgrown ash was removed and Treswell Wood started to regain its traditional character. Volunteers and professionals still work here to maintain the wood in its current healthy state.



Treswell Wood is now the most productive coppice woodland in the area. Products from the wood include:

-  **Firewood** - made from poorer quality trees, mostly ash, thinned from the canopy.
-  **Charcoal** - made from wood that is too small for firewood or timber, baked for 24 hours in a kiln.
-  **Timber** – produced from good quality bigger trees for building and furniture.
-  **Besoms** - traditional garden brooms made from birch twigs and a hazel rod, looking just like Harry Potter's broomstick!

-  **Hurdles** - strong, light fence panels made from hazel, traditionally used to make movable animal pens but now used as attractive garden fencing.
-  **Stakes** - made from sturdy hazel rods, useful for fencing, hedging, thatching and traditional building.
-  **Garden products** - including plant supports, bean poles and pea sticks made from the twiggy ends of hazel sticks.
-  **Wood cookies and other educational goods** are new products made from Treswell hazel.
See www.muddyfaces.co.uk for details.

Woodworkers

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Underwood Crafts

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[www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/
volunteers](http://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/volunteers)

www.yorkshirehurdles.com

Product

Hurdles, besoms, plant supports and garden furniture

Hurdles and plant supports

Firewood and timber

Firewood, timber and baskets

Hurdles, hedging stakes and plant supports

Charcoal

Hedging stakes, hazel rods and plant supports

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