

Organisations to Contact

Fruit Identification Services (do not send fruit - ask for further details and the fee applicable):

- RHS Wisley Gardens, Surrey, GU23 6QB. www.rhs.org.uk
- Brogdale Horticultural Trust, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8XZ. www.brogdale.org
Tel. 01795 535286
Custodians of the National Collections of apples, pears, plums and cherries. 100 different varieties of British apples are available, together with an identification service.
- The Henry Doubleday Research Association (HDRA), Ryton Organic gardens, Coventry, CV8 3LG Tel. 01203 303517
Publishes "The Fruit & Veg Finder" (£8.99 inc. p&tp) which details who sells a vast array of old varieties.
Membership of their Heritage Seed Library is also available (£16 pa)

Nurseries specialising in Scottish fruit varieties:

Butterworth's Organic Nursery:
Garden Cottage, Auchinleck House
Estate, Cumnock, Ayrshire,
KA18 2LR. Tel./Fax 01290 551088
www.butterworthsorganicnursery.co.uk

J Tweedie Fruit Trees, Maryfield Road,
Nursery, Maryfield, Terrgles, Dumfries,
DG2 9TH.

Tel. 01387 720880

Other Nurseries specialising in Rare Fruit Varieties (inc. Scottish):

- Keeper's Nursery: Gallants Court, East Farleigh. Maidstone, Kent.
- Chris Bower & Sons, Whispering Trees Nursery. Wimbotsham, Norfolk, PE34 8QB.
- Deacons Nursery, Godshill, Isle of Wight, PO38 3HW.
- Thornhayes, Cullompton, Devon, EX15 2DF.

Common Ground

A UK charity which introduced Apple Day in 1990. Since then thousands of people have made the Apple Day festivals their own.
www.commonground.org.uk

School Orchards Pack

A comprehensive guide to setting up a school orchard is available from "Worldly Goods", 10/12 Picton Street, Bristol, BS6 5QA (£10 plus p&tp).

- "Worldly Goods" also supplies a number of books and postcards - ask for further details and their order form.

An Apple & Orchards Education Pack is available from Margaret Miller, Head Teacher, Gartmore Primary School, By Stirling (£2.50 plus A4 s.a.e.)

Fruit Tree & Orchard Survey



Central Core Network

Central Core Network

Reviving interest in the importance of orchards and local fruit varieties
in Central and Northern Scotland
cathlloyd@ukf.net
www.beehive.thisisnorthernscotland.co.uk/centralcorenetwork

The purpose of this Survey is to collect information across Scotland to learn where there are orchards and to add to the Reforesting Scotland Fruit Database.

Much of the information given in this survey will be retained on a computer database. Your personal details such as name, age, address and telephone number will not be divulged. However, if you would prefer not to have any survey information kept in this way, please tick this box: Any information given will then only be kept in its original paper form.

Your Name

Age and School (if under 18)

Address

.....

..... Postcode

Email Address.....

Tel No.....

Site of fruit tree/orchard

(if possible, give map reference or address with postcode):

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.....

Are you the owner?

If not, please give name of owner (if known)

How many trees?

Approx age of trees (tick if known):

new young old don't know

Date(s) when planted (if known):

Type of orchard (tick if applicable):

part of a farm part of private property estate orchard

school orchard walled community orchard

hospital / health centre grounds business park / industrial estate

currently derelict being renovated

other (please state).....

regularly mown rough grass grazed by sheep

grazed by geese other grazing

Type of surrounding land:

town in village edge of village woodland

grassland scrubland near pond/lake/burn/river arable

heathland upland coastland

other

Soil type (tick if known):

sandy clay loam

Aspect, e.g. on a slope in a valley

facing south north east west

Is the tree/orchard managed:

with inorganic sprays/treatments organically don't know

other relevant information

Is the tree/orchard:

pruned regularly unmanaged

Does any tree have mistletoe on it or has it in the past

Is the fruit sold commercially (if so, give further details if possible)

given away used for personal consumption ignored

other (give details)

Type of fruit trees (give total number of trees on dotted line):

List how many trees in appropriate box below

eating apple cooking apple apple (unknown)

pear cherry plum damson

hazel/cob walnut crab-apple medlar quince

other (state)

Do you know of any orchards lost in your area Yes No

If 'yes' were they lost to changes in farming practice housing development

industrial development road widening

or other (please give details)

The remaining space is for any comments or additional information you would like to give. If you know the varieties of all/some of the fruit trees, please list them here. Please also tell us if they are growing/fruited successfully or if the site has proved to be inappropriate for them. Sketches/photographs of unidentified trees/fruit are welcome, as are orchard plans and wildlife lists.

we cannot offer an identification service

Please return this form to:

Central Core Network, Greenbank House, West End, Abernethy, Perthshire PH2 9JL

A donation of 3 x 2nd class stamps would be appreciated to contribute towards the costs of administering this survey.

Please tick if you are a Central Core member.

Introduction to Orchards

An orchard is “an area of land with a few fruit trees - a place where fruit is produced”. But all orchards are much more than this: they have been used for all sorts of purposes and valued for all sorts of reasons.

Rural orchards have traditionally been grazed by sheep and pigs. Gloucester Old Spots, now a rare breed of pig, were especially popular in orchards as the fallen apples they ate flavoured their flesh. Geese were common too, as they enjoyed the lush grass beneath the trees and kept trespassers away. Bees were a vital part of the orchard as they pollinated the blossom on the trees and added another crop to harvest - honey.

Apple wood was traditionally used in making golf club heads and for mill cogs. Pear wood is still prized as a fine carving wood and was traditionally used in the making of harpsicords. Cherry wood has always been favoured in furniture making.

The fruit was not just harvested to eat straight from the tree. The juice was prized as a refreshing drink, or made into perry (pears) or cider (apples). Fruit brandies are still popular in England and France and cider vinegar is, to this day, widely used in the kitchen. Add to all these uses the myriad ways of preserving fruit and we see that each fruit tree still has its value, as well as being an important part of our heritage.

The number of orchards in the UK, however, has reduced dramatically. Although there are 6,000 British varieties of apple, much of the fruit we buy is imported and only a few standard British varieties are found for sale. As there are some fifty Scottish varieties still known - and many more remaining unidentified, now is the time to re-introduce local varieties and celebrate our rich heritage. Everyone is urged to record the fruit trees they know about and find out how to care for them.

Everyone can help

- Fill in this survey form
- Explore old maps on local Records Offices or libraries and talk to older people about places they knew years ago - pass on any information you find!
- Plant a community orchard or a residents' orchard
- Help restore an orchard - or learn new skills by joining a local Conservation Volunteer Group.
- Talk to your local school or college about planting an apple tree in their grounds - or set up a School Orchard.
- Eat local fruit: ask your greengrocer and nearby supermarket to stock local varieties
- Plant your own Scottish variety - or give an historic variety as a special gift (making sure you pass on as much of the tree's history as possible)
- Start 'Apple Gifting' in October - an old tradition of giving friends and neighbours a be-ribboned apple or a box of local fruit
- Encourage children to decorate apple trees, drink fresh apple juice and make 'toffee apples' every Apple Day (21 October)
- Join in local Apple Day festivals, or introduce your own - involve the local community or school!
- Celebrate a Blossom Day event in spring
- Make jams, chutneys, dried fruit or healthy drinks from the produce of your fruit tree

How to Encourage Wildlife

Whether you have one fruit tree or an orchard, you can help create an important refuge for wildlife:

- leave fallen fruit to feed hedgehogs, butterflies and other insects, and birds such as blackbirds and thrushes
- erect birdboxes to encourage the smaller birds such as tits and warblers to nest (use nylon bolts on trees so as not to damage them)
- put up a bat box to encourage bats to over-winter or use them as summer 'maternity roosts'
- plant a hedge to protect the trees from frost
- ensure some of the hedging plants are fruitbearing (such as hawthorn or blackthorn) to encourage birds to use them for autumn and winter feeding
- leave a small pile of logs undisturbed to give a home to toads and bumblebees
- a hidden pile of autumn leaves between a small plank of wood and a dry wall will provide a hibernation area for hedgehogs
- if you have room, leave a corner of the orchard or garden to go wild. A clump of nettles or a bramble will encourage butterflies and insects. Seedheads from teasel, knapweed and thistle will help feed goldfinches during the winter
- make an insect box to encourage more insects into the garden - which will in turn attract more birds and amphibians

Tips for caring for old trees

- careful pruning will bring an old tree back to life - but seek professional advice first
- Never write off a damaged or wind-blown tree - if the roots are still in the ground and the tree is safe, the tree should still bear fruit for many years!
- Trees with holes are valuable to birds, bats and insects - do not tidy them up too much
- If the tree does not have a companion, plant a new tree, or persuade your neighbour to do so
- Avoid over-tidying orchards and individual trees - leaving areas of long grass, even just around the tree, will improve the habitat for insects
- leave ivy on nearby walls and trees if they are both in good condition - it provides summer nests and winter food for birds, offers the first nectar and pollen for bees and other insects - as well as potential winter roosts for bats
- Keep pesticide use to a minimum to retain the wildlife value of the orchard

Further advice

Contact any of the businesses listed in the “Organisations List” for advice on caring for old trees or for new planting advice.