



Suffolk Biodiversity  
Partnership



# Suffolk Traditional Orchard Survey Update

30 December 2010

## Summary

This exciting project involves people in their own communities not only helping biodiversity, but also learning how to grow their orchards in a sustainable, traditional way. By March 2013, the project aims to have mapped all the orchards surviving from the early 1900s, surveyed those orchards to establish their ecological value, restored some of the best and established at least four county collections to maintain Suffolk's fruit varieties for the future. Good progress has been achieved, with a high level of media interest, although more surveyors are needed to complete the survey.

## Project achievements

- Provided advice on the creation of 17 amenity orchards, including 5 Ipswich parks.
- Advised 31 landowners on orchard restoration under the Higher Level Stewardship agri-environment scheme.
- Provided guidance and support for 10 privately owned orchards.
- Undertaken Phase 1 surveys for 130 orchards and Phase 2 surveys at 4 sites.
- Conducted 5 volunteer surveyor training workshops and organised a regional collection management seminar.
- Given 9 presentations about the project.
- Published a Suffolk Traditional Orchard Project poster which was displayed at various shows and events.
- Organised fruit days at SWT's Redgrave Farm and Foxburrow; Banham, Thornham Walled Garden; Wandlebury plum festival; Little Ouse Headwaters project, Palgrave and Barwoods.

County collection sites are being discussed at 3 potential sites at present, in the south, the west and the centre of the county.

The project has also provided the following e-advice notes:

- 1 *Fruit varieties for Suffolk traditional & amenity orchards.* Version 2, Jan 2010.
- 2 *New plantings of traditional and amenity orchards in East Anglia, with special reference to Suffolk and the claylands.* Version 3, July 2010.
- 3 *Protecting new & old orchard & parkland trees.* Version 2. Aug 2010.
- 4 *Live collections of orchard fruit varieties for Suffolk.* Version 3, July 2010.
- 5 *Notes on the traditional cultivation of hazel, cobs and filberts (with specific reference to East Anglia)* Draft version 1 issued for comment, Dec 2010.

The next event will be a grafting workshop – Watch this space!

The project has been successful thanks to the dedication and hard work of Paul Read, the consultant who leads the project, and Diane Ling (Suffolk Farming and Wildlife group) who never misses an opportunity to record orchards and interest people in their history and management.

*Funding through Natural England's Countdown 2010 programme*



Wassailing an old apple tree at Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Foxburrow Farm apple day.  
Photo: Paul Read



Roadside view of an orchard near Fressingfield  
Photo: Paul Read



Above and below: Charles Partidge's sheep grazed cherry orchard at Cherry Tree Farm, Lower Layham. Winner of the Tim Sloane Hare! Award 2010. Old dead cherry trees have been left as stag beetle logs. Photo: Paul Read



Pear blossom - a variety called "Chanticleer"  
Photo: Paul Read