# "Bringing Old Coppice Woodland Back Into Cycle, *Without* Killing It!
# New Research Findings in Coppice Restoration"

With Clive Taylor - National Trust Volunteer Forest Ranger – Hatfield Forest

**Agenda:** Friday 25th June from 7:30pm, Oxford Arms, Kington

## My Background

*Started woodland conservation work in 1999*
*Local nature reserve at Sherrardspark Woods, Welwyn*
*Up to 60% of old coppiced stools did not regenerate*
*Many of those that did had stunted growth*
*Joined Hatfield Forest conservation group in 2016*
*Introduced to coppice restoration techniques*
*A continuation of Oliver Rackham's work*

## Why coppicing?

**Restore lost habitat**
Wildlife adaption over many hundreds of years
Dormice, nightingales & butterflies at Hatfield Forest
Analogous to impact of climate change

## Types of new growth

**Adventitious** (cambium layer shoots) **vs Epicormic** (dormant buds)
Adventitious preferred for preventing decay fungus
**Encourage by**
Simulating natural breakage
Coppicing at ground level

## Biological systems

**Upset the balance of tree root-mass vs leaf-area**
Restoration period for preventing root mass decline
Regrowth needs to be sufficiently vigorous
**Severing a tree stem**
Produces a combination of growth hormones and shock
**Analogies to Human biological system**
Hair washing and amputations
**Dangers of removing high vegetation around veteran trees**
Simulates drought conditions
Death of ancient tree

## Coppicing cycle

**Important for ensuring sufficiently vigorous regrowth**
Outside coppicing cycle, staged cutback in proportion to stem diameter
Non-adherence may produce stunted regrowth, decline and death
Ancient coppiced stools need incremental approach to minimise shock

## Rotational coppicing sequence

**Important for wildlife biodiversity**
Coppiced compartments (coupes) at different stages in coppicing cycle
Supports many varieties of wildlife in changing conditions of sunlight & shade

*See the following link for further information:*
*http://www.countrysideinfo.co.uk/woodland_manage/coppice.htm*

## Some interesting facts about trees

**Oldest trees often in more difficult ground conditions**
Trees near end of life when branches become too heavy

**Complementary woodland trees**
Oak-Hornbeam (Schwarzwald-Alsace region)

**Woodland regeneration process**
Pioneering birch trees provide dappled sunlight conditions
Secreted heartwood preservative limits trees lifetime