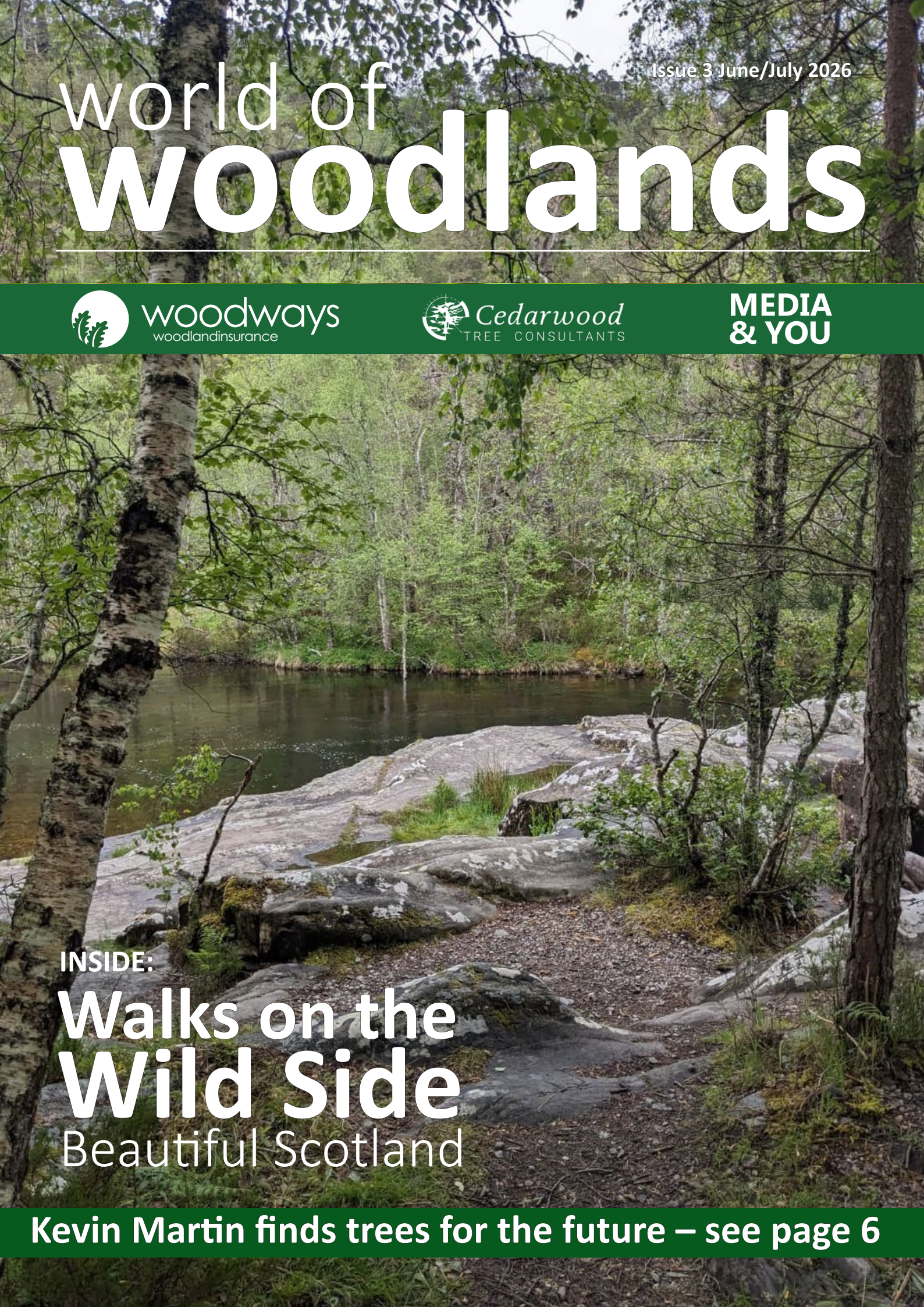
Issue 3 June/July 2026

world of woodlands

woodways woodlandinsurance

Cedarwood TREE CONSULTANTS

MEDIA & YOU



INSIDE:

Walks on the Wild Side

Beautiful Scotland

Kevin Martin finds trees for the future – see page 6

Scheme enters another year

Emma Whittall is the lead on Woodways Woodland Insurance



Woodways Insurance scheme renews each July, with existing and new members running a policy 12 months from that point.

The core scheme is tailored for landowners who hold woodland for private enjoyment across the UK

Standard policies generally encompass:

£5 Million Public Liability: Protects against third-party negligence claims involving injury or property damage.

£100,000 Legal Expenses: Covers legal costs arising from woodland ownership disputes.

Broad Land Coverage: Typically covers plots up to 75 hectares (and up to 150 hectares depending on evaluation).

Public Access Integration: Specifically covers risks associated with public highways, bridleways, byways, and public rights of way crossing the land.

Subject to referral, Woodways Woodland Insurance can also adapt policies to cover more complex land features, including:

1) Open water courses and streams

2) Historical mineshafts or disused quarries

3)Organised activities like forest schools

- *If you're interested in knowing more, or you'd like to get a quote with us – contact our Woodland team at Woodways on 0333 9966 220.*

Key Benefits

- Specialist broker
- Leading Countryside Insurer
- Competitive flat premiums up to 150 Hectares
- Public Liability £5m
- Legal Expenses £100,000
- Covers Ancient Woodlands including woodlands with TPO's
- Employers' Liability covers optional
- Ash die back diseased woodlands

What we can't cover

Whilst we would like to be able to offer cover to all woodland owners, there are some circumstances where we are not able to offer cover:

- Commercial activities
- Fire or Windthrow cover



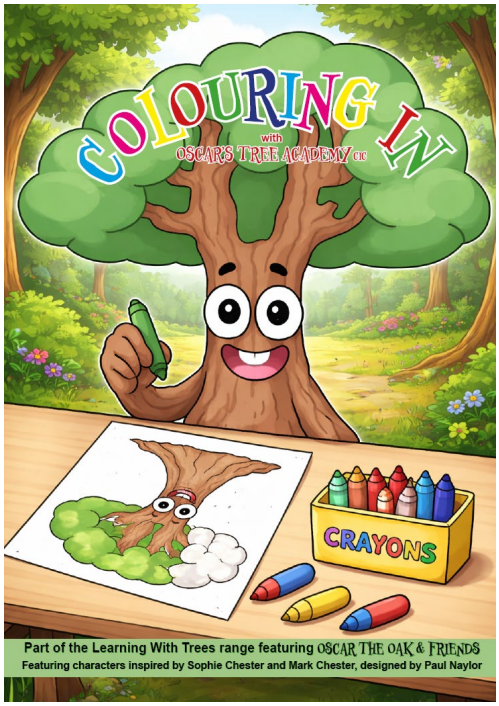
Oscar now has two books

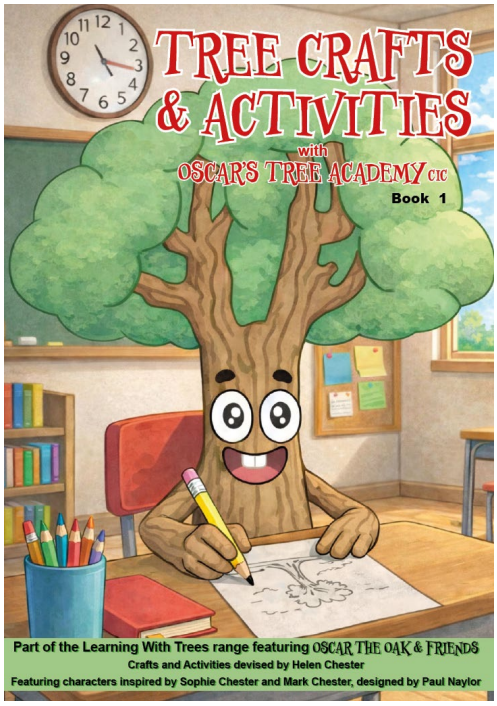
Oscar's Tree Academy CIC is launching a range of books to help youngsters identify trees and enjoy nature in general. The first publication - which is available now - is a colouring book with a difference.

Each page has a tree character to colour in plus a close up image of its foliage and bud. Children will love colouring in all elements on the page and will learn more than they realise as they go.

Future publications will include 'Tree Crafts & Activities Book 1' and 'Oscar Identifies Trees Book 1' - coming soon.

- Learn with nature. Explore the world of trees. Colour in Oscar and his friends and learn about the different shaped leaves and buds too. Oscar's Tree Academy is a wonderful resource that engages with children in a fun, memorable and educational way. Available now, priced just £5. Visit: https://www.thegreatbritishbookshop.co.uk/collections/new/products/colouring-in-with-oscars-tree-academy-cic?srsltid=AfmBOorCLv2dD3KddDfGbzQdc16flElzDLqagBpTy6a17j1zrFMWH5Yt





It's Oscar time – the colouring book and newly-released activity book are both available to order now

- Explore the World of Trees. Bring nature into the classroom with beautifully illustrated, curriculum-aligned resources that make learning about trees fun, engaging, and meaningful. From Oscar the Oak to hands-on activities and creative projects, our materials are designed to spark curiosity and support educators, families, and nature lovers alike. Available now, priced just £5. Visit: https://www.thegreatbritishbookshop.co.uk/products/tree-crafts-activities-with-oscars-tree-academy-cic-book-1?_pos=1&_sid=b9de6a092&_ss=r

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Unusual canker growths covered in moss on this birch



A view of the Caledonian Forest from the summit of Glen Affric



A river at the foothills provided a peaceful moment

Exploring Scotland's historic woodlands

By Mark Chester

Scotland is home to some great woodlands, hidden walks and treasures waiting to be found.

The largely untouched and unspoilt landscape around Glen Affric in The Highlands contains some of the last original Caledonian Forest and is home to two SSSIs (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

Alongside some truly amazing scenery and trees growing without human interference - and thus with some unusual shapes - the setting allows rare ecological features including lichens and mosses to thrive.

I spent several hours exploring the visual delights and soon appreciated what a special place this is and a need to return to explore further.

Very much off the beaten track, but if a setting like this appeals, then it's a place I highly recommend to visit.



Mark Chester pictured near the summit of Glen Affric



Walkers can choose from several paths



The forest inhabits the inaccessible rocky outcrops



Birch colonising open spaces, adding to the mix of species



A diverse landscape, with much more than trees



A view typical of the original Caledonian landscape

Kevin Martin, Keeper of the Collection of Trees at Kew Gardens shares how he identifies species that can cope with droughts with MARK CHESTER...

Here's to Future Days

I recently shared about my journey from a climber to managing the trees at RBG Kew Gardens.

I have watched as the climate at Kew has changed, with several droughts in the past decade. This has affected the trees at the Gardens, and many have died, with drought a key factor. I am responsible for 'future-proofing' the tree collection, ensuring it is here to be enjoyed for the next generation. Identifying the trees vulnerable to drought and alternatives has become an important task for me.

Dr. Andrew Hirons, one of the lecturers at Myerscough University, has been researching drought tolerance in trees for the past decade or so. I have been able to work with him. Some trees are notably vulnerable to drought conditions, with many oaks and the common beech especially struggling.

Having established that the climate at Kew is becoming more like that of places such as Afghanistan, I arranged for a plant collecting trip with colleagues, to that region

Beech struggle because they are shallow-rooted, and so are unable to access water at depth in the soil. Interestingly, whilst oaks do have deeper roots, they have particularly large xylem vessels (the tubes which transport water from the roots to the rest of the tree and the leaves. If, when the roots are drawing up moisture from the soil, and air bubbles form, they stop the xylem vessels from functioning. It is a bit like air bubbles in your central heating. They stop the radiators from heating properly. However, unless the radiator, which can be 'bled' to release the air, the xylem vessel is damaged and stops working. The effect of this can be seen in branches in the crown of a tree dying.

Interestingly, Dr. Hirons has identified that trees more tolerant of drought have narrow xylem vessels, which are less vulnerable to the air pockets. He has also found that some trees have an ability to regulate water loss and thus the need to access water in a drought. This includes the evergreen Holm oak, which has thicker, silver leaves. Dr. Hirons has discovered much, but further research is needed in this area.

Having established that the climate at Kew is becoming more like that of places such as Afghanistan, I arranged for a plant collecting trip with colleagues, to that region. We were able to collect trees and shrubs which may be more suited to the expected climate. That was a dramatic trip, as we were exploring a mountainous region close to the border with Russia, and needed to follow an agreed route otherwise there was the threat of arrest.



Kevin Martin, Keeper of the Tree Collection at Kew Gardens

Two key questions remain with this work. Firstly, will the new plants thrive in the climate at Kew, and secondly, will the wildlife that currently finds a home in native trees such as oak, beech and other species also feel at home in the new plants. These are areas for current research.

The future is unknown. What is apparent is that my role has changed, I am more involved with research and sharing about my work at conferences as a speaker. It is very different from what I expected when I started as lead climber a decade and a half ago. And I am really enjoying it.





A Robinia (False acacia) has found warm winters left it vulnerable to drought (it needs a cold winter to thrive).



This mature Beech shed leaves in mid-summer as heat and drought took its toll. It is unclear if the tree will recover.

One of the specimen trees at Mocca's Park in Herefordshire, planted in the 1800s, found the heat too harsh

Let's 'Ask the Arborist'

Edward Heinrich is an arborist based in Solihull. He has spent more than fifeen years climbing trees and now also works as an accredited tree risk assessment surveyor, via his company Umberslade Arboriculture. He answers some of the questions regularly posed by clients.



Edward Heinrich of Umberslade Arboriculture pictured with Mark Chester

- I've seen young trees with green bags attached to the trunks at ground level. What are they?

These are 'hydration bags'. When the ground is dry - as it has been this summer - water applied to a thirsty tree can easily run away across the surface and be lost.

The bags have small holes at the base, so water can leak out at a rate the soil around the tree can absorb.

Remember that in very hot and dry conditions a young tree may need as much as 50 litres of water, several times a week.

- A large branch broke from a tree in my neighbour's garden one afternoon in the heat. Is the tree safe?

Very hot weather can cause large trees to shed very large branches. This is called Summer Branch Drop.

The tree should be safe, but it may be best not to sit under a large tree in the late afternoon heat as branch drop is unpredictable!

Email edwardh@umbersladearboriculture.co.uk



This Horse Chestnut branch came down in quiet woodland in Herefordshire

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