

WHAT IS COPPICING?

Coppicing, or cutting down a tree to produce new growth, has been a way of harvesting wood for thousands of years. Coppicing rejuvenates the tree, so stumps or 'stools' can be hundreds of years old, and are an important genetic link back to the ancient woodlands.

In the past, coppice products were used for building, fencing, fuel, furniture and many other uses. Many of these traditional products are still needed and new products and markets are developing.

Coppicing requires only simple hand tools and produces material which can be manually handled, the reason for its importance in the past and its relevance today.



HISTORY OF WOODLAND COPPICING

From earliest times in Britain, woodland needs were fulfilled not by the felling of new areas of wildwood, but by the regular harvesting of coppice plots. In fact, the demand for charcoal, fuelwood for brick and lime kilns and for tanbark sustained woodlands, and following its demise woodland clearance increased.

'Coppice' comes from the French word couper, to cut. Coppices or 'copses' are woodlands cut on short rotations of five to thirty years. One part of the wood, called a 'coupe', is harvested each year. Coppice species, which are all deciduous, respond to cutting by sending up multiple stems from the stools.



DECLINE OF COPPICING

From the late 18th century, coppicing began to decline as many landowners increased the density of oak in their coppice woods through supplementary planting, although much of this was never harvested. From the mid 19th century, many of the important traditional uses of coppice products were replaced by artificial substitutes. However, many coppiced woods continued in use, and many coppices were much the same at the beginning of the 20th century as they had been a thousand years earlier.



TRAVEL INFORMATION

Bus - Regular services operate between the city centre to Carmunnock. Travel times from the city centre are approximately 20 to 30 minutes

Car - Parking is available East of Carmunnock village

Walking - Main access points are: Castlemilk; Carmunnock Village at Windlaw Road

USEFUL NUMBERS

Glasgow City Council Cycling Line
Phone 0141 287 9171

Public Transport Journey Information -
Traveline Scotland
Phone 0871 200 22 33



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CARMUNNOCK COPPICE WOODLAND



Carmunnock Village is a conservation area situated six miles to the south of Glasgow and less than a mile from Castlemilk. The village is in an area covered by Glasgow City Council and illustrates a good combination of conservation and renewal. Today some of the surrounding arable fields are being rejuvenated by woodland coppicing.



COPPICING REVIVAL

Active commercial coppicing has survived throughout the 20th century, Kent and East Anglia for fencing & crafts, Hampshire and willow being the main Northern coppice species. This is partly due to the realisation of the importance of coppicing in maintaining traditional woodlands, and partly due to coppice workers developing new markets and products. These include faggots for bank stabilisation, barbecue charcoal, greenwood furniture, yurts, garden ornaments and many other products.



BENEFITS OF COPPICING TO WOODLAND HABITATS



In a coppice woodland, artificial variety produced by management partly compensates for the lack of structural variation in wildwood, but at a loss of deadwood habitats.

The new Carmunock coppice woodland site is designed and planted to encourage diversity of habitats and diversity of plant and animal species. Plantations, woodlands or arable land suffering from neglect can be improved by increasing their range of habitats, by widening rides, creating and clearing, creating ponds and other management work.

Site surveys have to be undertaken to ensure that valuable habitats are not lost. Recording of invertebrates is difficult and specialised. Invertebrates in particular move slowly and are very site specific. Woods with a long history are often isolated, and if the invertebrate habitat is lost, for example by the loss of deadwood or old trees, the chances of recolonisation are small. Management of the woodland is being carried out with great caution.

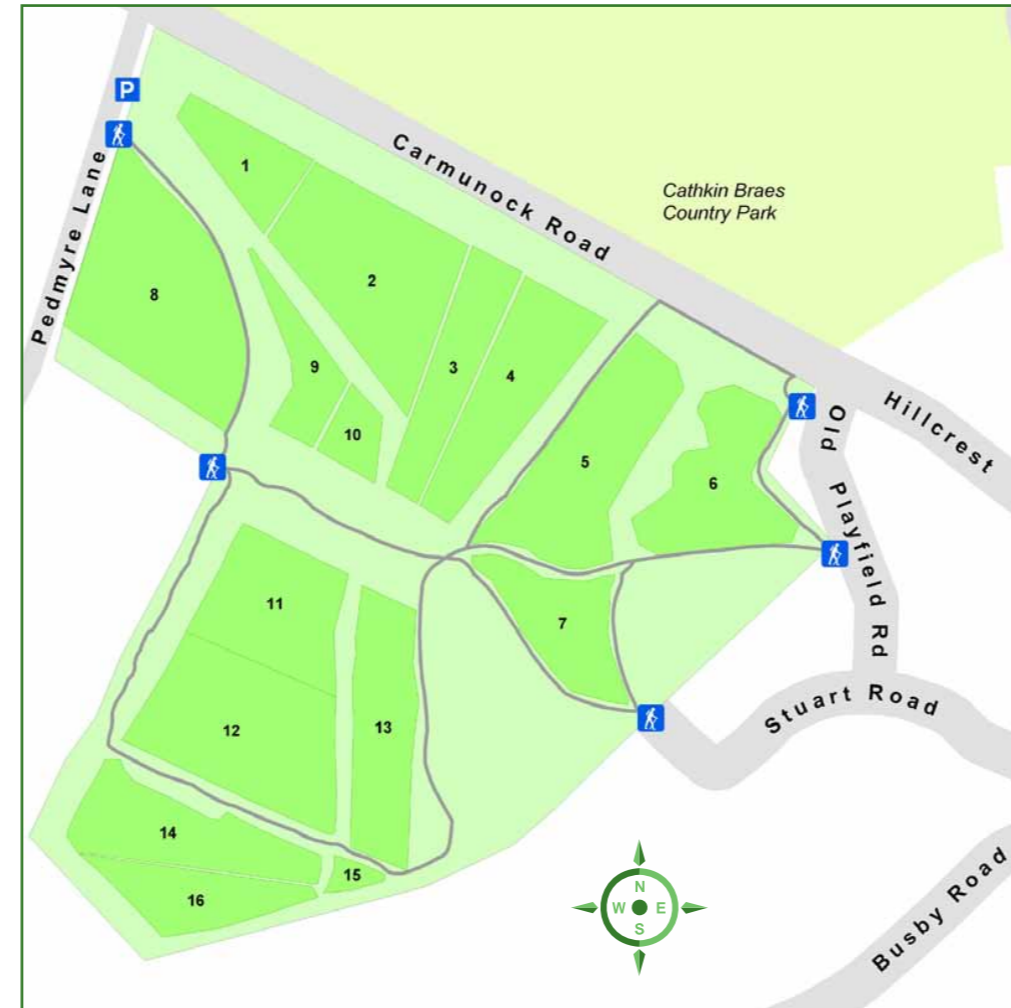
Focussing on the craft aspect of green woodworking, the Carmunock coppice woodland consists mainly of willow species. These produce thin, tall stems, ideal for weaving basket or other fine structures.

The different species have been split into coupes to allow for easy identification and working without disturbing the species not worked. The willow is worked on a rotation basis. Most coupes are on a yearly rotation, i.e. the stems are cut back to the stool once a year to encourage new growth, while some species are better on a two-year cutting cycle. Only working certain coupes in a year ensure there are coupes to be worked every year, guaranteeing a continual supply of willow.

Some small areas of willow are for bio-fuel uses as they grow with thicker stems, they can also be used for structures as they offer strong support.

The main species within the Carmunock woodland are:
 Salix purpurea
 Salix burjatica
 Salix viminalis 'Campbell'
 Salix viminalis 'Bowles Hybrid'
 Salix x dasydodos
 Salix viminalis 'Mullatin'

CARMUNNOCK COPPICE WOODLAND MAP



Legend

-  Carmunnock Compartments
-  Path Network
-  Pedestrian Access
-  Car Park

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The woodland is divided into different compartments, allowing for easy cutting while ensuring that the coppice rotation is adhered to. Compartments 1-7 and 9-13 are all used for productive Willow growing. Compartment 8 is a mix of Hazel, Alder and Birch and it is not part of the productive coppice woodland. Compartments 14-16 are old Poplar coppice remnants that are being turned over to new Willow and Hazel coppicing, but are not currently in productive use.

The table below shows the productive Willow species used on site and the compartments they are situated in. The light craft and structural willows are cut on a mix of annual and bi-annual rotations with both types available for cutting in any one year.

WILLOW SPECIES USED AT CARMUNNOCK COPPICE WOODLAND

SPECIES	COMPARTMENT NUMBER
Light Craft Use	
Salix purpurea	1
Salix burjatica	2
Salix viminalis Campbell	3 & 9
Salix viminalis Mullatin	4 & 13
Salix viminalis Bowles Hybrid	10
Black Maul	5
Whissender	5
Grisette Droda	5
Dark Dicks	6
Brittany Green	6
Dicky Meadows	6
Light Dicks	6
Green Dicks	6
Lancashire Dicks	6
Flanders Red	7
Grisette De Falaise	7
Structural Willow Use	
Salix x dasyclados	11 & 12



Willow coppice



Hazel coppice