



# Orchard news

As time marches on, the early February signs of spring came to a grinding halt in a cool March and April, but things are now kicking back in nicely. The plums have mostly set their fruit and pears, apples and cherries are blooming. In this PTES Orchards roundup we have news about our grants programme, varieties database and our upcoming slot on the Beeb. **Please help save paper and PTES funds by signing up to the email version of this newsletter. Contact [orchards@ptes.org](mailto:orchards@ptes.org).**



## NEW ORCHARD WEBSITE

Our new website is up and running with information about orchard wildlife as well as practical guides to management. Please visit [www.ptes.org/orchards](http://www.ptes.org/orchards) for more information. ●

## FRUITFINDER

With thousands of fruit varieties in the UK, it can be hard to know where to start if you are looking for a new tree or planting an orchard. There are many fruit varieties which have historical associations with particular places. We are in the process of creating a database, FruitFinder, that will provide information about where varieties were raised or discovered as well as other information like culinary use. It will provide links of where the varieties are available to buy, or obtain graftwood so that you can graft your own. ●

# Orchard grant scheme

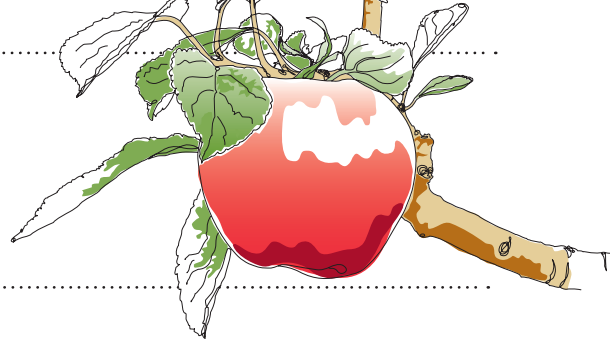
Over the last eight years we have been gathering information about traditional orchard habitat around the UK. The data we've collected has illustrated a dramatic decline of area, around 90% since the 1950s, but it has also helped us understand where to direct our conservation efforts. With almost half of remaining traditional orchards in a 'declining' condition for wildlife, we discovered that almost all of these would be improved by replacement planting. This led to our first ever orchard grant scheme. If you haven't yet told us about your orchard, or have updates that you can tell us about, please fill in the quick survey at

[www.ptes.org/orchard-updates](http://www.ptes.org/orchard-updates).

Get in touch to request a paper form.

As the orchard grants come to an end for the year, the tally stands at up to 1400 new traditional orchard trees planted around the UK. Orchard owners, schools and community orchard groups have been busy grafting new trees with their free rootstock and grafting kits, while others have planted pre-grafted trees. Planting young fruit trees in your orchard is the best way to ensure continuity of habitat, resilience, and could potentially mean the orchard survives into the 22nd century, so we are thrilled to have been able to help in this way. ●





# A year in an orchard

Just as the wildlife in your orchard changes from season to season so do the management requirements. Unlike with most gardening, winter can be a busy time in the orchard, but your feet barely touch the ground before the blossom comes and goes and it's time to get on with the summer tasks, and soon comes the harvest. To help you keep track we've created a handy printable chart. Visit [www.ptes.org/planner](http://www.ptes.org/planner) to see and download this free chart or contact us if you would like a printed version sent to you. ●

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Plant young trees	■						
Collect scionwood	■						
Wassail (around 17 <sup>th</sup> )	■						
Protect peaches, apricots and nectarines from frost		■					
Formative prune plum, cherry, apricot, peach and nectarine			■				
Bench graft new trees		■					
Remove blossom from trees three years or younger				■			
Prune established peach, nectarine and apricot trees				■			
Cut grass and other growth under small or young trees					■		
Blossom celebrations					■		
Framework graft if required					■		

# BBC Countryfile Diaries

See the orchard team's very own Megan in glorious Technicolour on a feature about orchard wildlife and grafting fruit trees. Megan spent the day filming in Wiltshire with the BBC Countryfile Diaries team discussing orchard management, grafting, tree planting and fruit varieties. Airs on BBC2 Tuesday 17th May. ●



# Let us know what you grow

We want to know what is growing where, even varieties that no one can identify. Send us your variety lists online at [www.ptes.org/varieties-update](http://www.ptes.org/varieties-update) or at the address below opposite.

If you don't know what is in your orchard, get in touch and we can help you get your fruit identified. We are compiling the information

to make distribution maps of UK varieties still in cultivation, to support work to secure the future of the rare ones, and to rediscover those lost in the slippery mists of time. ●

### Contact us

People's Trust for Endangered Species  
3 Cloisters House  
8 Battersea Park Road  
London SW8 4BG

### www.ptes.org

orchards@ptes.org  
020 7498 4533

- f facebook.com/ptes.org
- t twitter.com/PTES
- i instagram.com/ptes\_org

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