

Black Wood

Hampshire

A Survey of its yews

Peter Norton – 2012



INTRODUCTION

The woodland is situated between Winchester and Basingstoke within the M3 corridor. Its 276 hectares is predominately beech with a scattering of yew. Foot access is via permissive forest roads and tracks. During the week this is a working wood and some areas are out of bounds when felling is in progress, so weekend visiting is recommended. There is limited parking at SU5357541854.

The geology of the area consists of Cretaceous Upper Chalk deposits. The woodlands lie on clay with flints over the chalk. The topography is typical of the Hampshire Downs, with the gentle slopes of the Chalk Plateaux.

The woodland was extensively replanted with beech and some conifer in the post war years of the 1940's and later in the 1950's. Methods used at the time to establish beech plantations on wartime depleted woodlands were far from sympathetic, with the bulldozing of whole areas to maximise planting. Yet it would seem that there must have been a clear Forestry Commission policy to retain the yews, as noted elsewhere in Hampshire, since many are found in clearings surrounded by beech.

All ages of yew are represented here, with the oldest probably 500 years plus, found to the north east, where three large girthed specimens can be seen.

All yew regeneration has been vegetative from seed. Quite a few young maidens are to be found, which are perhaps forty years old. No seedlings were to be seen around any of the recorded females and vegetative regeneration by branch layering was not evident. During my visit I only observed two roe deer so reasons for the lack of seedlings may be due to other mammal activity.

The general habit of these yews is in maiden form. This would have developed at the time when the young yews were competing for light with the surrounding trees, responding with vertical growth as seen in the apical dominance evident in some of the photographs. Foliage was generally sparse.

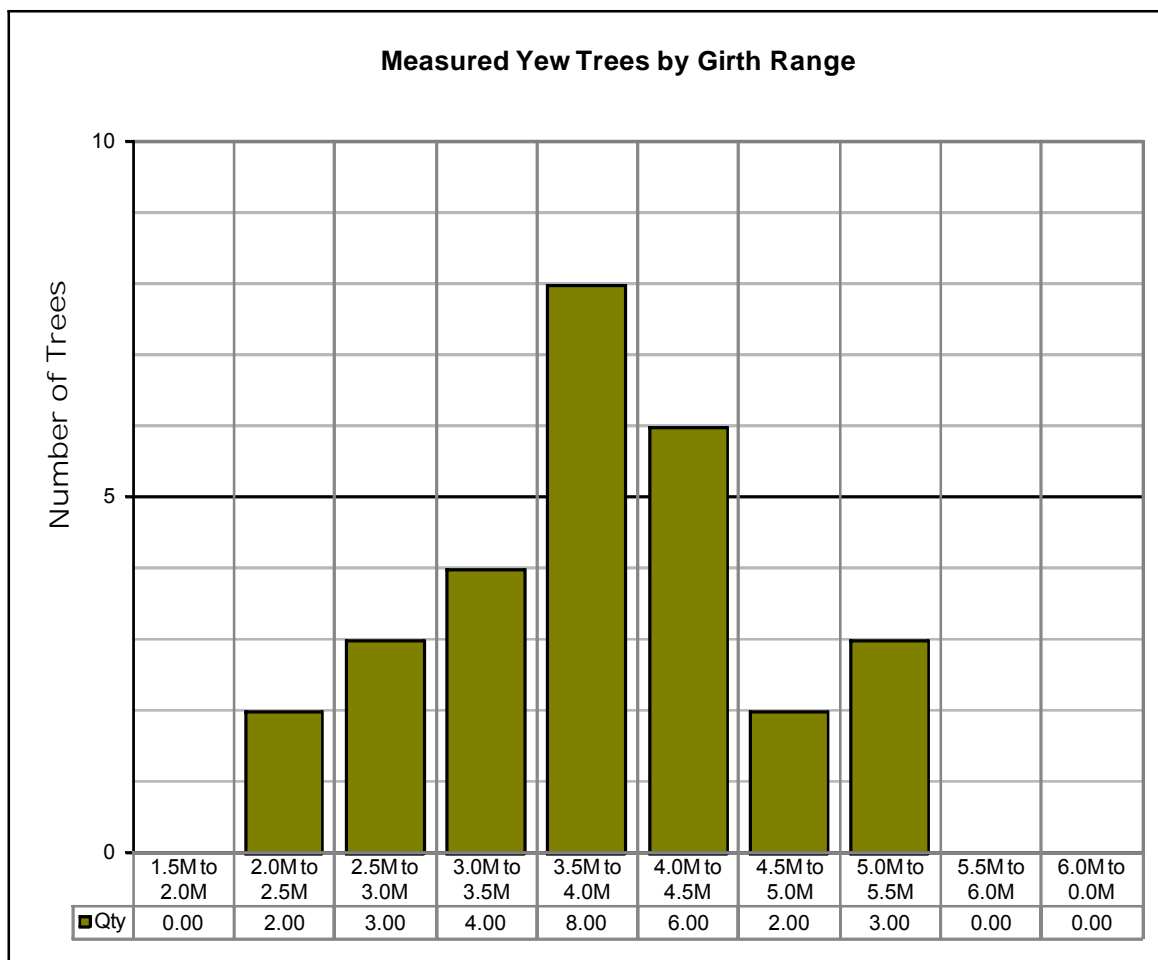


Table of recordings

Grid Loc (SU)	Sex	Girth			Height measured	Comments
		Ft	Ins	Mtrs		
5433342889	Male	17	4	5.283	1'	Also recorded 17' 8" at 2'. 4 leaders from a 5' break of crown, Centre stem has a 1' internal root and 3 smaller. Grows close to footpath.
5442842919	Male	16	8	5.080	1'	Also noted 16' 10" at 2'. 4 leaders from a 6' break of crown. Close to footpath
5449342942	Male	12	8	3.861	2'	also noted 13' 2" at 1'. 2 main leaders from a 8' break of crown.
5432043298	Female	17	7	5.359	3'	Lower twiggy growth. Grows close to green track
5437343058	Male	13	6	4.115	2'	Surrounded by beech, adverse shading, sparse foliage
5437743021	Male	11	6	3.505	2'	As above
5410143732	Female	3	7	1.092		Included in survey to indicate age range of total, others close by and scattered around various compartments where some are less in girth, indicating vegetative regeneration
5400243770	Female	3	5	1.041		
5387343796	Not recorded			0.000		
5372643804	Female			0.000		
5370343822	Female	10	5	3.175	2'	On the edge of a possible marl pit with an active badger sett below. Typical growth pattern for this type of location.
5370943838	Male			0.000		3 stems from a common root - girth not recorded
5363143801	Male	7		2.134	2'	No photo taken
5347643574	Male	16	3	4.953	2'	Also noted 17' 6" close to the ground which included an exaggerated butt. At 3' the tree breaks into 2 leaders
5342243554	Female	13	1	3.988	3'	Also noted 13' 10" at 1', 13' 4" at 2'. Surrounded by beech
5342043536	Unknown	13		3.962	Ground	In terminal decline, a few small branches, high in the canopy still have some foliage. Some epicormic growth lower on the bole. Hollowing underway plus a small internal root. Much Chicken of the wood both on the bole and internally.
5325143574	Male	10		3.048	Root crown	Grows close to junction of tracks, branches dip to the ground
5322143581				0.000		A stand of 7 juveniles
5321543568		9		2.743		Unable to get close - girth is an estimate
5319643551	Female	8		2.438	Root crown	
5315643546	Male	10	6	3.200	1'	Healthy foliage
5315843473	Male	14	3	4.343	1'	Thin foliage, crowded by beech
5316143465	Female	10	5	3.175	1'	
5309443409	Male	11	8	3.556	2'	
5319043341	Female	14	3	4.343	1'	very thin foliage, recent felling of nearby conifer
5319543367	Female	11	9	3.581	Root crown	very thin foliage, recent felling of nearby conifer
5322943341	Male	15	5	4.699	3'	Height measured excluded 2 massive side limbs. At the ground 21' 1" was noted
5324443283	Female	11	7	3.531	Root crown	
5321643279	Male	13	9	4.191	Root crown	Thin foliage, crowded by beech
5361943297	Female	13		3.962	2'	
5374242835	Male	9		2.743	1'	Three yew in a line with girths around 9'
5312043149	Male	14	7	4.445	1'	2 yew grow close the largest was recorded
5303043628	Male	13	7	4.140	Root crown	
5373543594	Male	9	5	2.870	1'	

SU5433342889

Male 17' 4" at 1'



SU5442842919

Male 16' 8" at 1'



SU5449342942

Male 12' 8" at 2'



SU5432043298

Female

17' 7" at 3'



SU5437343058

Male 13' 6" at 2'



SU5437743021 Male 11' 6" at 2'

SU5370343822 Female 10' 5" at 2'



SU5347643574

Male 16' 3" at 2'



SU5342243554

Female

13' 1" at 3'



SU5342043536

Unknown

13' Ground



SU5325143574

Male

10' Root crown



SU5315643546

Male

10' 6" at 1'



SU5315843473

Male 14' 3" at 1'



SU5316143465

Female

10' 5" at 1'



SU5309443409

Male 11' 8" at 2'



SU5319043341

Female

14' 3" at 1'



SU5319543367

Female 11' 9" Root crown



SU5322943341

Male 15' 5" at 3'



SU5321643279

Male 13' 9" Root crown



SU5361943297

Female

13' at 2'



SU5312043149

Male 14' 7" at 1'



SU5303043628

Male 13' 7" Root crown



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Appendix 1

Data as produced by T. Hindson

