



Forestry England

Bedgebury Apprentice Blog

June 2021
By Sarah



June..... Bedgebury is coming alive with colour! Marshal's lake is covered in the most stunning water lilies, with the bridge in the background it could be something from a Monet painting. The eucalyptus has flowered and as you can see from the photo above it is popular with our little bee friends. All along Dallimore valley the Japanese strawberry trees (*Cornus kousa*) are in full bloom, the best I've ever seen them. These are one to watch as once they have finished flowering, they produce bright pink strawberry like fruits.

So, what have we been up to...



With the weather alternating between sunshine and rain everything is having a growth spurt.

Weekly visits to the visitor beds to keep on top of the weeds

and Matthew, a new member of the team, has been out on the mower keeping on top of the bracken and maintaining the grass paths. The



picture above on the right shows the extent the bracken has grown. *See if you can spot the young Monkey puzzle tree?*



We do not mow all the areas of the pinetum, this is to encourage the fauna and flora. The result of this becomes evident when you see the selection of wild orchids we have around the pinetum.

We are lucky to have Cat on the team who is very passionate and knowledgeable on wildflowers and without her a lot of our species may go unnoticed. Cat is currently working alongside the florilegium, collecting samples for the artists. This is for a project run by the learning team to produce some stunning artwork to create interpretation boards to be displayed around the pinetum, so watch this space!

Below are a few images of the orchids you can find around Bedgebury.



This month Ella and I went on our Silviculture course. This was a weeklong course up in Cannock Chase, another Forestry England location. Silviculture is the study of growing and cultivating trees, silva meaning wood in Latin. I found this course especially interesting. From the initial site visit to assess the soil type, drainage, climate, and topography of the land, how to cultivate the ground to

choosing the right trees to plant. Leading through to the management of the plantation.

One subject I particularly enjoyed was CCF (continuous cover forestry). This is a way of forestry management that creates a sustainable, visually, and biological diverse forest. I don't think I could do the subject justice (yet) so if you would like to know more about CCF please go to our Forest Research website at

www.forestresearch.gov.uk

It really is a fascinating and different approach to forestry.

forestryengland.uk/about-bedgebury-the-national-pinetum



I also got the chance to work with Emma in the pinetum nursery. I was given the task to help her “prick out” some conifer seedlings. This job I love.

You can see by the photos the structure of the seedlings is amazing, this particular tree is Bhutan pine (*Pinus wallichiana*).

We have various species growing on in the nursery. These are for a project lead by Chris Renolds from Forest Research, who has been observing various species around different arboretum sites. His research is to monitor which species are coping well with drought.

Bedgebury has been chosen to host a research plot, this is very similar to our existing plots which were originally created back in 1929 by the Forestry Commission to monitor and gain data from less common conifers and broad-leaved trees. This was to see which tree would work best for timber production. We have various ongoing research projects, which I will touch on in upcoming blogs. This is another reminder how important and special the work at Bedgebury is.



Thank you for taking the time to read this month’s blog. Ella will be next with the latest news!