



Wild harvests

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Apple juice – a woodland product?

Apple juice is not a classic woodland product. If we had known where you could buy Borders-produced sycamore sap or elderflower cordial, we might just have stuck with that for today's event. But there are some good reasons for promoting orchards and fruit trees as part of Scotland's woodland culture. Old orchards can provide very fine woodland habitat – for people, as well as for lichens, fungi and the rest. And apples which grow on local trees are often left unused – while at the same time we expend resources transporting apples from around the world. Using an abandoned tree crop is a form of foraging – and one which connects you to your local trees.

Making a commercial product from local apples is one step further – which is why not all the juice we have sourced comes from Borders apples. The juicing is done in the Borders, but to get reliable apple varieties – and enough apples – businesses are mostly sourcing outwith Scotland – at present.

Interest both in our surviving heritage orchards and in the planting of new fruit trees is on the increase in Scotland just now. Laprig have recently identified a local source of apples to try out in the coming season. Cuddybridge produce both juice made from imported apple varieties – and juice made from local apples which would otherwise have gone to waste. Here is a chance to compare the two – and to celebrate the culture of using apples that is emerging again here in the Borders.