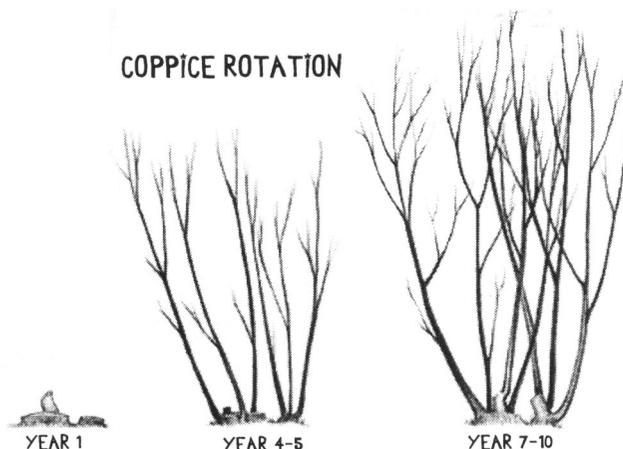


J. Tools:

Loppers, 21" Bowsaw, Gloves, Sharpening Stone and a Pitch Fork or Rake.

Also First Aid Kit, Hi-Viz Jacket, Hard Hat (when working on tall old stands), a Fire starting kit, Mobile phone with good reception, food & drink and a minimum of 2 people per session.

Southern Billhooks & Pruning saws are useful tools but are not always available.



The above is based on Rob Sowter's notes Nov 09.

DM/ TF

Friends of Selsdon Wood

Working to improve our wood



HARVESTING COPPICE

20.9.12

As applied to the FSW, with its limited tools & skills.



A. Remember:

1. **Safety comes first - be aware of your own and your co-worker's safety at all times.**
2. **Timber must be of good quality – Straight, Smooth poles & stakes**
- Run your bare hand along them.
3. **Pen timber to prevent rot.**
4. The general public will be buying your products, so put yourself in its shoes. **Say to yourself every time - would I buy this?**
If not; then on the fire it goes!
5. **Burn your rubbish** - we want the sun to reach and warm up the ground to encourage new growth – branches and twigs left lying about prevent this.

B. Preparation for storage:

Construct 7 raised holding pens. These allow rain to drip through and avoids the timber rotting. Make each of them of horizontal logs every metre and 4 uprights.

Pens for:

1. Binders (for weaving into fences),
2. Pea sticks,
3. Bean poles,
4. Hedging stakes,
5. Deer fence stakes.
6. Tree guard stakes,
- 7/8. Logs for sale or charcoal.

C. Before starting work:

1. Clear up trip hazards and brash from the site and around each stool before harvesting starts.
Use some for a brash pile for insects – see over ●>.
2. Always work with a tidy up fire, this keeps the site safe.

D. Initial work sequence for all products:

1. Cut off all side branches up to head height flush to the stem with loppers,
2. Remove all entwined climbing plants like ivy, clematis & bramble.

E. Harvesting sequence:

1. Binders (for weaving into fences):

- 1a. Select flexible stems as thick as your thumb **2cm** (3/4") at the base/butt end and **3m** (10ft) **or longer**. Note that Binders may be branching out at your head height in old stands.
- 1b. Use loppers to cut and trim* them.
- 1c. Place Binders in their pen.

Pea sticks, Bean poles & various stakes:

Use your Bow-saw to cut out all 2½ to 8cm (1" - 3") thick straight timber, about 5cm (2") from the ground. Angling the cut helps when the customer pushes the timber into the ground.

(Now or later make another lower cut at a slight upward angle towards the centre of the stool - try to create a domed, even, trip free finish that rain will run off – usually we leave it to later – see G.) If there is a lot of timber then cut about 25% of the stand at a time.

- 2. Is there a pea stick at the end? If there is, Pen it immediately.**
- 3. Trim* & Pen all poles, posts & stakes together - grade later.**
- 4. Trim* & Pen all logs together – sort them later.**

* If you have a billhook for trimming, use the curved section of the billhook to **cut** off each small branch up **from below**. Cutting from above causes splitting.

2. Pea Sticks:

Cut pea sticks from the top of suitable timber using loppers - stems between **1.2m to 1.8m** (4 - 6 ft) long overall with flat fan shape branches - like your hand. Place in holding pen directly they are cut to prevent damage.

3a. Bean Poles – 2½cm (1") thick x 2½m (8') long.

3b. Hedging stakes – 2½ to 4cm (1" - 1½") thick x 1¾m (5ft 8") long.

3c. Deer fence stakes – 5 to 8cm (2" - 3") thick x 2m (7ft) long.

3d. Tree guard stakes – Material too short for poles or stakes. They are used to support the guards placed around newly planted tree whips, etc.

4a. Logs for Sale: Pen timber **8 to 10cm** (3 - 4") **thick**, to dry. Later it can be cut to approx. **25cm** (10") **long**. Thicker timber can be split. Logs for sale need at least 6 months drying*.

4b. Logs for Charcoal Making: Pen timber **10cm** (4") **or more thick** to dry, ready for Charcoal making. Later it can be cut to size or split, ready for the kiln*.

* If timber is going to be left in the open it is better to leave it in long lengths, to reduce the chance of it being stolen.

F. Move onto the next stool and repeat the process.

G. You may now have to retrim parts of the crown for the domed, even and trip free effect, before it can be left for another 7 or more years, depending on the site rotation. Use a chainsaw if available.

- Any really thick material can either be chopped up for firewood or left to rot for the woodland life. Otherwise, burn it.
- Leave some **brash piles** for the insects - about **2m** (6ft) **long** by **60cm** (2ft) **wide** by **60cm** (2ft) **high** - only 3 per acre.
- With old thick trees use a very sharp chainsaw - blunt blades fray the edges and encourages rot.
- **Keeping that small fire fed with the unwanted brash keeps your work site safe at all times.**

H. Binding material if it is for sale:

Do not use green gardener's string, it rots too soon. Cut string or binder twine to arms-length in advance and knot a loop in the end for tying off the bundles. Binders (Ethering Rods) in 15s, Pea Sticks in 20s, Poles and stakes in 10s.



I. Planting:

Plant hazel whips to fill gaps between crowns – this encourages vertical straight growth.