



in association with



DOWN TO EARTH

Coppicing.

What is coppicing?

Coppicing was widely used in the past to sustainably manage woodlands and to harvest wood/timber or branches for use. There are still some woods today that are managed using coppicing.

Young Trees can be cut down to a stump during the winter time when all the sap is in the roots, in spring the stump will produce shoots, and will re-grow. Trees would regrow over a certain amount of years depending on the size of the wood needed and recut again on rotation.

Not all deciduous trees can be harvested and very few ever greens.
Some trees do not recover from coppicing, especially older or sick trees.

We do not recommend cutting down healthy trees to use at forest school, we need all the trees we can get in this climate.

Branches can be successfully coppiced on trees such as willow and hazel, cut the branches in winter and close to the tree trunk angled downwards to save from direct water.

In spring time, the tree will produce new growth.

When coppicing is done mindfully the minimum damage is done to habitats.

What trees can be coppiced?

Strong:

- Most deciduous trees.
- Oak
- Hazel
- Ash
- Willow
- Alder
- Sweet chestnut
- Lime
- Hornbeam
- Sycamore
- Birch
- Blackthorn
- Hawthorn
- Yew
- Eucalyptus

Weak:

- Beech
- Wild cherry
- Popular

Not viable:

- Conifers (except yew, monkey puzzle and red woods)

More research.

Organisations:

- Muintir na coille (the coppice association of Ireland)

Books:

- Grow your own firewood -Michael Little woods.
- Coppicing and coppice crafts- Rebecca Oaks and Edward Mills.
- Woodland craft -Ben Law.
- Norwegian wood- Lars Mytting Maclehose.