

Restorative pruning of 5 significant Black Poplars in the Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund project CF2223/7

The Shropshire Hills AONB is a stronghold for Black Poplars and their conservation is a priority in the AONB Management Plan. The AONB is home to a significant proportion of the national population which is estimated at only 7,000 trees.

Black Poplars are often at risk from neglect as much as from direct damage, and this project has rejuvenated 5 old black poplar trees at Crowsnest Dingle by reducing their crowns.

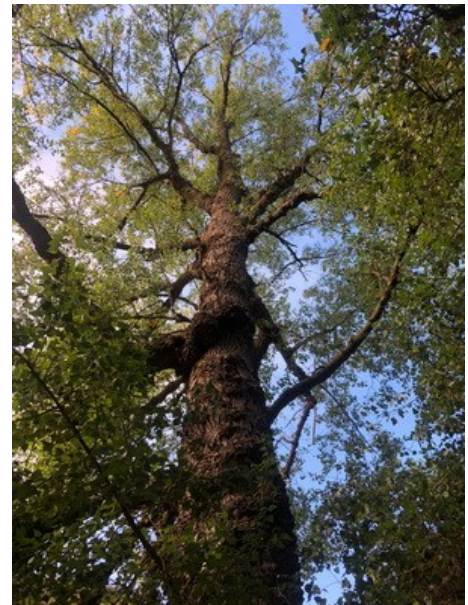
The tree surgery was completed over 3 days in September by Ben Jones and his team from Wood Matters.

They carried out a 30% reduction on the standing trees to alleviate end weight to reduce the likelihood of them being blown down or limb failure. Any dead wood present was removed and the upper crowns and major forks were inspected.

Apart from a small number of cavities and decay the trees are in a fair condition and Ben recommends a ground based visual inspection every two years to check on reaction growth from the recent pruning works.

The fallen tree was also tidied and cut back as some of the root plate is still embedded in the ground and regenerative shoots are developing on the main stem.

Work on fallen tree to encourage regrowth



The work was a challenge due to the height of the trees (tallest over 30 metres), the constraints of the site and winds picked up during the course of the work.

Most of the brash was chipped and removed from site with some discreet small habitat piles left in-situ along with some log piles.

Western Power were also on site to isolate the electric lines and power disruption was kept to a minimal.

We put up signage locally about the tree work prior to it happening and we also included a short article into our local parish newsletter, Snailbeach News.

This work has lowered the risk of future failure and has given these old black poplars a new lease of life.

We are really pleased the Conservation Fund was able to support this project and we will continue to monitor the trees and seek advice and funding when needed to keep them thriving in the Shropshire Hills landscape.



Maggie Tate, 11/11/22

trees after crown reduction

