Cotswold Seeds Ltd
The Cotswold Business Village
Moreton in Marsh,
Gloucestershire GL56 0JQ

Sowing Seeds at Honeydale



esterday, Ian and Danny, Champion of Trees, were busy at Honeydale sowing half an acre of tree seeds, a project being run in conjunction with The Woodland Trust, Jenny Phelps from FWAGSW and Forestart, which specialises in seed collection from sources throughout Britain.

Jenny Phelps's father and the Woodland Commission have previously experimented with this novel way of growing trees, which has several advantages over the traditional method of planting saplings. Firstly, seeds are collected from a wide genetic base, making the trees hardier and healthier. We're also keen to find a different way of growing trees that doesn't require plastic tree guards and gives a more natural scattered growth pattern, rather than the man made lines in which trees are usually planted.

A full list of the native species of tree seeds sown at Honeydale:

- Common Oak (Quercus robur)
- Mountain Ash/Rowan (Sorbus aucuparia)
- Common Beech (Fagus sylvatica)
- Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa)
- Common Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)
- Crab apple (Malus sylvestris)
- Dog Rose (Rosa canina)
- Field Maple (Acer campestre)
- Guelder Rose (Viburnum opulus)
- Hazel (Corylus avellana)
- Silver Birch (Betula pendula)
- Wayfaring Tree (Viburnum lantana)

In preparation, the field was ploughed in the winter and rotavated before the seeds were broadcast by hand and then rolled in. A magic ingredient is buckwheat which has been sown with the seeds and will act as a nurse crop. An annual plant, the Buckwheat will grow very quickly providing an umbrella shelter for the tree seedlings underneath. Predators will be deer and rabbits but we have deer fenced the area and will may have to put up a rabbit guard.

At Cotswold Seeds we're all about grass seed, so it'll be wonderful to see trees grow from seeds too. We'll be watching this space and reporting back on how they are faring.

Date Posted: 19th April 2018