

## Green Group

This session was our **annual 'Walk in the Woods'**, where a small group met in the car park of Thorncombe Woods.

We started by the trunk of a recently felled Oak and read Thomas Hardy's poem 'Throwing a Tree' (see below)

which describes the felling of a 200year old Oak with axe and saw.



Thorncombes Woods is an excellent example of different types of woodland starting with mixed deciduous high forest of Sweet Chestnut, Oak and Ash. The conversation turned to Ash dieback disease as we stood underneath a towering specimen. But just around the corner lay a fallen specimen where we read an extract from 'The House at Pooh Corner' by A.A.Milne.

The wood then changes to coppice with stand which is Hazel coppice, at various ages, interspersed with standard trees. Here we read the poem by Felix Dennis, 'Why are you killing this tree'. One of the standards is a large Oak where we read an extract from Francis Kilvert's Diary dated Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1876.

As we turn back towards the car park the wood changes again to a range of conifers including Larch, Pine, Douglas Fir and Coastal Redwood. Because of the unseasonal cold weather we did not see many flowers but as we got to the last corner there were a few clumps of Primroses which allowed us to read David Bushrod's poem 'Spring Woods' and then discuss the vast diversity within a mixed woodland like Thorncombe.

The **aim** of the group is to **share environmental issues from a Christian viewpoint**. How we can best understand, enjoy and care for God's creation. Meetings are held usually on the first Saturday morning on alternate months

## Throwing a Tree

The two executioners stalk along over the knolls,  
Bearing two axes with heavy heads shining and wide,  
And a long limp two-handled saw toothed for cutting great boles,  
And so they approach the proud tree that bears the death-mark on its side.

Jackets doffed they swing axes and chop away just above ground,  
And the chips fly and lie white on the moss and fallen leaves;  
Till a broad deep gash in the bark is hewn all the way round,  
And one of them tries to hook upward a rope, which at last he achieves.

The saw then begins, till the top of the tall giant shivers:  
The shivers are seen to grow greater each cut than before:  
They edge out the saw, tug the rope; but the tree only quivers,  
And kneeling and sawing again, they step back to try pulling once more.

Then, lastly, the living mast sways, further saws: with a shout  
Job and Ike rush aside. Reached the end of its long staying powers  
The tree crashes downward: it shakes all its neighbours throughout,  
And two hundred years' steady growth has been ended in less than two hours.

Thomas Hardy.

**The next meeting of the Green group will be at The United Church on  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013 at 10.30am when the topic will be 'The Land Rejoices'.**

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