West Sussex Yews – Stansted Forest

Stansted Park and Forest is situated in the county of Sussex on the border of Hampshire, just to the east of Rowlands Castle village. Stansted Forest is comprised of roughly 230 hectares of woodland growing to the west of Stansted Park and forms the south western edge of the West Sussex Landscape; Western Downs.

In the medieval period the Earls of Arundel had a hunting lodge on the site, surrounded by a vast forested area recorded as in use for hunting and for timber production. Changes in ownership over the years resulted in a new house being built in the 17th century (1686) when the formal gardens were laid out. It is possible that the central avenue through Stansted Forest was created at the same time. In 1804 the estate was sold and it is said the new owner replanted the whole site, including the forest. 1900 saw the destruction, by fire, of the Elizabethan house and all its historical records. The new house was built in 1901 on the same footprint and since 1983 the House and Estate have been owned by Stansted Park Foundation, an independent charitable trust set up by the 10th Earl of Bessborough.

Today the forest is a mixture of woods and small grassy paddocks, still retaining the character of the medieval hunting forest, while large scale sweet chestnut coppicing continues to be carried out.

The estate is crisscrossed with public footpaths and visitors are welcome in the forested area (to the west of the park) but are asked to remain on the paths and rides. This is necessary in order to protect the wildlife, flora and fauna found within the planted areas, and some areas are closed to the public. Please also respect notices of closure due to temporary forest works. Public car parks are open until 5pm and refreshments are available at the Pavilion Tea Room in the Walled Gardens. http://www.stanstedpark.co.uk/

The visit to the forest was arranged with the estate office for the 26th April and we were warmly greeted by the Head Forester who gave us a map of the area indicating the position of yews. Some 50 yews were recorded and are detailed on page 2. Many grow on the hanger to the north west of the forest, a mixture of some notable yews but mostly a colonization of young specimens. Note that the map on page 3 does not contain all the unmeasured yews noted along the hanger.

The form of the trees notably divided into two types:

1. Those with a trunk and a break of crown above.
2. Those that broke in a multi-limbed form below or just above ground level.

This may be a result of former ‘open forest’ type woodland in which the latter grew, allowing the young tree of type 2 to spread in all directions, not being forced by adjacent trees to reach for light.

The remaining three pages have illustrations of some of the more notable yews along with embedded links to Street Map which indicate their precise location.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girth</th>
<th>Grid Loc (SU)</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Ft</th>
<th>Ins</th>
<th>Mtrs</th>
<th>Height measured</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>745210704</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.8608</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>Reduced drip line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7386510817</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.9972</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>4 leaders from a 12ft bole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7394010721</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.8354</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>Evidence of fallow deer debarking, now occluding well</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7395010683</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.4544</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7448811092</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>Young - not measured</td>
<td>Evidence of a wood mouse larder - Hundreds of broken yew seeds near base of tree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7450111129</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.7752</td>
<td>Ground</td>
<td>Tree has 6 large side limbs of which 3 have been cut plus 3 central leaders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7428611091</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.9878</td>
<td>1'</td>
<td>Threaded thru at about 1ft to miss several side limbs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7430411106</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>Young - not measured</td>
<td>3 vertical and 3 side limbs - 5 root layers + evidence of deer debarking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7423111137</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.4704</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7418511131</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.8354</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7420811289</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3782</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7539810755</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5560</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>Also measured at 3ft and 10’ 3” was recorded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7513811090</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2926</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7517011138</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.6162</td>
<td>3’</td>
<td>2 young male yews - one has grown close to an older oak which in turn is coalescing the yew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7516011149</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.4544</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>Group of 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7506811139</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>Young - not measured</td>
<td>Not measured as least two trees having 6 layers from one</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7503211151</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3180</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7503211151</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>Young - not measured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7502011168</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3782</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7503011238</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.8626</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7506811139</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>Young - not measured</td>
<td>grows nearby to the above male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7494811314</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5560</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7440111652</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0132</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>The first of many yews along the hanger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7452111121</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0386</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>this height excludes the side limb at the rear of the photo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7457711715</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>Impossible to measure</td>
<td>The tree grows on the edge of a marl pit with a mass of limbs from a distorted bole. Having 4 succesful layers with one new tree recording a 3' 6&quot; girth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7460111714</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.5814</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>A 4' 6&quot; bole with 2 main leaders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7471711799</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.8354</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7501711915</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.2766</td>
<td>2’</td>
<td>this excludes two side limbs and the last tree measured along the hanger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7549210856</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td>two yews on the bank alongside the road. Not measured as on private part of the estate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7525011561</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.4798</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>Two yews close to each other - the smaller female was not measured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7518011582</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.5814</td>
<td>2’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7518011582</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1496</td>
<td>1’ 6”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7512211755</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.0894</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>The yew grows on top of a spoil heap taken from a marl pit very close by.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7521911674</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.2418</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>7 layers with one succesful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7527011632</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4036</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7531411726</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.2004</td>
<td>Root Crown</td>
<td>Massive low branches with a thin main leader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map of yew positions

- Not measured
- Measured male
- Measured female

Image produced from Ordnance Survey's Get-a-map service.
Image reproduced with permission of Ordnance Survey and Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland.
Click on the embedded link – Street Map will open in a separate window and indicate the exact position. You may have to increase the zoom control on the R/H side of the map to level 3 or 4.

All measurements are taken at the narrowest point being the root crown unless otherwise stated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SU7451210704</th>
<th>12’ 8”</th>
<th>SU7394010721</th>
<th>12’ 7”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SU7450111129</td>
<td>15’ 8” at the ground</td>
<td>SU7428611091</td>
<td>13’ 1” at 1’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU7423111137</td>
<td>14’ 8”</td>
<td>SU7418511131</td>
<td>15’ 6”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General views along the hanger

SU7512211755  13' 5"

SU7521911674  13' 11"

SU7531411726  10' 6"

© Peter Norton & Hugh Milner – April 2011