



The Borrowdale Yew 2005 (Derrick Holdsworth)

Wordsworth's Temple a victim of nature

Gale force wind and rain battered the trees across Scotland and the north of England earlier this year. Cumbria was particularly badly hit with thousands of trees blown down. Four months on and we are only just receiving information on some of the more notable victims.

Tragically the largest of the Borrowdale Yews has been devastated. The following was reported by Ancient Yew Group member Paul Greenwood.

"I visited on 14th March 2005 and discovered the largest tree has been devastated by recent storm damage. Needless to say it was a personally upsetting experience having visited the location on many occasions prior to its depletion in the last decade and being within the 'green temple' which the combined canopy of the close growing pair of yews of the grove created. But the damaged yew remains alive and will regenerate, as this apparently drastic event to our eyes is nevertheless part of a life cycle which more evidence suggests is quite normal to the yew; the loss of large branches around and above 10 - 20 ft (3 - 6 m approx) after a prolonged stage of hollowing. Perhaps it may influence the development of an aerial root. A clean up operation at Borrowdale following recommended best practice to leave fallen yew wood in situ, as fragments are proven to regenerate into a new tree long after being separated from the root system, is being managed by Maurice Pankhurst of the National Trust."