

# VINE newsletter

## Autumn 2011



***"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has".***

***Margaret Mead***

Welcome to our newsletter. We hope this brief review of a few of the things we have been doing over the past twelve months will be of interest. We are deliberately keeping entries short so that it all fits on to one sheet of paper. Please do forward this to any colleagues who you think may benefit and

pin this newsletter on your notice board at work.

Although VINE has existed since 2005, becoming a not-for-profit organisation in 2007, this is our first newsletter so perhaps it is worth taking a bit of space to tell you a bit about ourselves.

**VINE is a forum for nature conservation professionals, land managers and all people who care about nature. We aim to promote a broad spectrum of ideas, values and emotions generated by people's engagement with nature. We believe that the process of thinking deeply about what we do and why we do it will help conservationists to be more creative and effective in their working lives. We also celebrate the natural environment for its own intrinsic value.**

That's enough of that! So what do we have on offer and what have we been doing recently?

- We are delighted that research carried out in association with VINE by Cara Roberts and Gabrielle Horup was published in ECOS, the quarterly journal of BANC, the British Association of Nature Conservationists: ***The nature of nature conservationists - freeing the spirit or toeing the line?*** ECOS 31(3/4) 2010. The research has been described as ..... *'helping express the soul of the UK conservation movement'*. ..... We are sure you will find it worth a look. This can be found as a pdf on our website at:  
[http://www.vineproject.org.uk/project\\_documents.html](http://www.vineproject.org.uk/project_documents.html)  
Please feel free to circulate it widely

amongst colleagues. Feedback is welcomed.

- Forest and NNR disposals were a hot topic recently on our ***online-discussion forum*** where VINE members discuss and seek views on issues of the day. Also debated have been various farm and land-use related topics. At the time of writing the summer riots have also produced a huge response. The Steering Group uses these discussions to help formulate responses to Government consultations. The forum can be accessed by e-mail or via the website. If you wish to join please contact Sophie Lake our Secretary at: [sophie@vineproject.org.uk](mailto:sophie@vineproject.org.uk)
- On our ***website*** can be found VINE's response to the autumn 2010 Defra

## VINE seeds

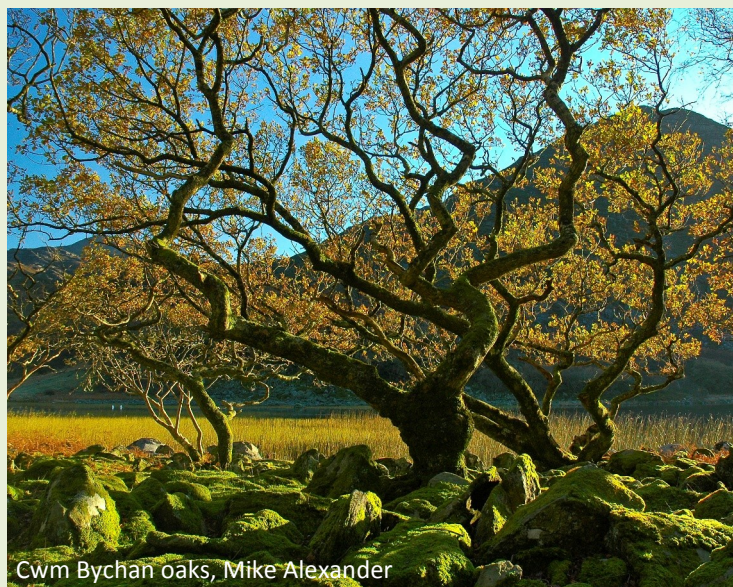
1. **Hero's journey.** *"Intelligent fear is the root of true courage"* Ronald Higgins.
2. **Social proof.** *"The moral development of a civilization is measured by the breadth of its sense of community"* Anatol Rapoport, cited in Thomas Homer-Dixon, 'The Ingenuity Gap' (2000).
3. **Dreambeds.** *"The Earth was small, light blue and so touchingly alone ...our home that must be defended like a holy relic"*. Aleksei Leonov, Russian cosmonaut on seeing the Earth from space.
4. **The elephant in the room.** *Assumptions are the termites of relationships.* Henry Winkler.
5. **Breaking habits – applying new behaviours.** *"When you are through changing you are through"* Bruce Barton. *"The only man I know who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew each time he sees me. The rest go on with their old measurements and expect me to fit them."* George Bernard Shaw.
6. **Triangles.** A Christmas party special ... with deeper meaning!
7. **Pacha Mama.** *"Above all, we have to look at life with respect and wonder..."* Sir Crispin Tickell. To celebrate international Mother Earth Day and Bolivia's Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth.
8. **Naikan** *"See yourself with your own eyes" ...a way of helping us to better understand ourselves and our relationships with nature.*

consultation for their Environment White Paper, which they published in June 2011; also our Forest (and NNRs) sell-off response. Apart from consultation responses such as these our website also contains a mass of inspirational writings and photographs submitted by Members – to cheer you up if you are having a bad day! Also material from our numerous events, news and information. An audio playing facility has recently been added to the website and we welcome appropriate material for this.

- In February 2010 Tim Kemp and Peter Philipson on our Steering Group came up with the idea of 'germinating' some '**VINE Seeds**'. The idea of these 'seeds' was to create some guided reflections which could be used both in our private and work lives. At the time of writing this (September 2011) they have produced eight 'seeds' as short, pithy, thought provoking writings intended to be both stimulating and challenging.  
[http://www.vineproject.org.uk/vine\\_seeds.html](http://www.vineproject.org.uk/vine_seeds.html)

## VINE has four simple objectives:

1. To support individuals in exploring the role of feelings, senses and intuition in nature conservation and in developing a personal nature conservation ethic that encompasses these;
2. To help explore the philosophical framework for nature conservation decision-making;
3. To help enable those working within the nature conservation profession to integrate actions and decisions stemming from the above into their working practices;
4. To promote wider discussion of ethics and values in nature conservation.



***"I don't think any animal other than ourselves is sitting down at this moment pondering its moral responsibilities for the rest of the natural world. That's the unique burden and privilege of humankind"***

John Rodwell at the 2008 VINE conference

Membership is free, and VINE can be contacted through its Chairman, John Bacon, or Secretary Sophie Lake: [john.bacon@phonecoop.coop](mailto:john.bacon@phonecoop.coop), [sophie@vineproject.org.uk](mailto:sophie@vineproject.org.uk) [www.vineproject.org.uk](http://www.vineproject.org.uk)