



# RUNNING FOX WALKS



*Beautiful, fragrant Honeysuckle: it's not all about cutting*

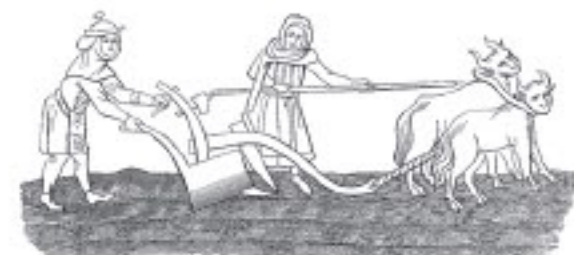
## 6 HEDGE HEAVEN

*The field behind the hedge (to the west) is composed of two fields amalgamated into one: Fossil Pits and Long Shotts.*

*The lower part, nearest to you, is called Fossil Pits: in the 1800s this field was mined for 'fossils' or coprolite (fossilised dinosaur dung!). Coprolite, once heated and ground, is a very good source of phosphate and, as such, was one of the first 'artificial' fertilizers used.*



*In farming a 'shott' is the first, die-straight furrow drawn by the ploughman. The 'shott' in Longshotts is very long indeed - over 1,000 yards (a yard is 0.91 of a metre).*



### **Clay Pit Hedge**

The magnificent hedge in front of you was newly planted in 1984. We used some 20 different woody species; large trees such as Oak, Ash and Hornbeam, smaller trees such as Crab Apple and Field Maple, shrubs such as Dogwood, Hazel, Wayfaring Tree and Hawthorn and climbers such as Honeysuckle. Having been 'laid' during the inaugural East Anglian Hedge Laying Competition in 2004, this hedge is now nearly perfect from a wildlife point of view; it is dense and impregnable, vigorous (it flowers and fruits prolifically), species diverse and contains standard trees;

### *This poo is old. Very, VERY old*

but above all, it is a thing of beauty and restful to the soul! Walk along it and tell us we're wrong! Three main methods of hedge management are employed at Burwash Manor: laying, coppicing and flail trimming.

### **Hedge laying**

The hedge stretching away ahead of you was achieved by laying, the heavy cost of which was helped by funding provided by Natural England's Environmental Stewardship.

Hedge laying is a very old craft (at least 5,000, and perhaps as much as 10,000, years old), which rejuvenates the hedge plants, at the same time thickening the hedge for wildlife and improving it as a stock barrier.

Hedge laying involves the partial severing of the stems, as close to the ground as possible. These stems are then bent over (in the same direction and usually uphill - being careful not to snap them!) at an angle of 30-40 degrees and interwoven with cut vertical stakes driven in 18 inches apart along the line of the hedge. The 'hethering' (long hazel rods woven like a rope to bind the stakes together) is then woven along the tops of the stakes, forming a living hurdle.



*Burwash hedges make the perfect home...*

The result should be very strong and impregnable to stock and very warm and welcoming to songbirds and small mammals

Hedgerow trees and saplings are retained and the opportunity is taken to 'beat up' the hedge (fill in the gaps) with young saplings of a wide range of native species.

*Natural England is here to conserve and enhance the natural environment, for its intrinsic value, the wellbeing and enjoyment of people and the economic prosperity that it brings.*



*Tools of the trade include traditional Bill Hooks and Axes (and a good old chainsaw!)*

