

PRESS INFORMATION
June 2013

RFS
ROYAL FORESTRY SOCIETY



**Media contacts: Wendy Nekar, RFS Communications Officer,
01926 421679/07973 523168, email communications@rfs.org.uk
Stephen and Sarah can be contacted on 01827 286267 or info@pragmasis.com**



Sarah Walters and Stephen Briggs of Tamworth at their prize-winning Alvecote Wood

Alvecote Wood is top of the tree!

Alvecote Wood on the borders of Warwickshire and Tamworth has scooped first prize in the Royal Forestry Society's Small Woodlands Excellence in Forestry Awards after judges described it as "an absolute delight".

Judges Tim Sawyer and Rob Guest praised owners Stephen Briggs and Sarah Walters from Tamworth, Staffordshire, for their work adding: "What really tipped it for us was the excellent new planting they have done in a field they bought adjacent to the mature woodland. They also have good regeneration of oaks in the mature woodlands, use their woodland produce and hold open days. It is one of the best small woodlands we have ever seen."

The woodland beat strong entries from an area that stretched from Worcestershire in the south to Cumbria in the north.

Small woodland owners Sarah and Stephen said: “We were absolutely amazed and delighted to have won this prestigious award. It was our dream to make Alvecote Wood a haven for wildlife and a resource for the local community, and we are so pleased to see our efforts acknowledged. We would like to thank the Forestry Commission and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust for helping us with grants and expert advice, as well as our wonderful friends and volunteers, without whom we could not have made this dream come true.”

The Awards will be presented at an event at Wythenshawe Park in Manchester on 3 July. The Small Woodland Award was sponsored by Wood-Mizer UK.

The RFS is dedicated to promoting the wise management of trees and woodlands. It has 21 Divisions and organises events across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to help share knowledge. To find out more and how to join go to www.rfs.org.uk

Notes for editors

The Royal Forestry Society (RFS) was founded in 1882 and now has **approaching** 4,000 members who include woodland owners, land managers, foresters, students, keen amateurs, arborists, landscapers, timber users and ecologists.

We promote the wise management of woodlands through formal and recognised qualifications; by the exchange of ideas and networking of experiences; by providing information to the public and through our **website** www.rfs.org.uk

Alvecote Wood is 20 acres of ancient and newly-planted woodland between Tamworth in Staffordshire and Polesworth in Warwickshire. Stephen Briggs and Sarah Walters purchased the woodland in October 2007 and have been bringing it back into management since then, adding Betty's Wood to the site in 2010, planting 6,000 trees, wildflower meadows and creating ponds to make the whole site a haven for wildlife.

Alvecote Wood is not open all of the time as priority is given to wildlife. Free open days and open evenings are held for the public, and numerous other events at the woods. Visits can be arranged for community groups, schools, and camping for Scouts and similar groups.

For more information about Alvecote Wood, please see www.alvecotewood.co.uk and www.facebook.com/AlvecoteWood

Stephen and Sarah can be contacted on 01827 286267 or info@pragmasis.com



Sarah Walters and Stephen Briggs of Tamworth at their prize-winning Alvecote Wood