

HISTORIC WOOD PASTURES IN CULTURAL LANDSCAPES IN SCOTLAND

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There is growing awareness of the existence of a sizeable area of upland wood pasture in Scotland. Many of these wood pastures are part of ancient cultural landscapes, including the hunting forests of medieval nobility and royalty. Interest in wood pastures developed through historians meeting up with veteran tree enthusiasts, and also with the specialist biologists studying species which depend on very old trees. Ecologists have long appreciated the benefits of mosaic habitats of woodland and grasslands. Meanwhile farmers are ready to take up the challenges on how to manage these historic habitats sustainably. The paper looks at the origins of wood pastures, their values and the options for their future management.