

# Colwall Orchard Group:

## Safe Way of Working:

### SWOW06 -

## Use of Pruning Tools

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Review: Annually thereafter (or in the event of an accident)

Reviewed by: Chris Blake 27 June 2023

Next review: by 31st April 2024

### **General warnings**

All blades are extremely sharp and can cause severe cuts. Required precautions

- Store and carry all blades in protective covers (away from children)
- Open blades carefully and slowly with teeth/blade edges facing away from body
- Ensure that you are working in a stable secure position to prevent accidental loss of control of the saw
- Keep other people away from your working area
- Cut branches will fall, so ensure that you, or other people are not standing below the falling branch (wear a hard hat)
- The cutting action will produce fine frass – wear eye protection
- In orchards with livestock, or in muddy conditions, we recommend laying out the tools on a tarpaulin to keep them clean and dry and to minimise contamination with mud and animal faeces

### **Silky saws (Zubat handsaws, Zubat polesaws and Hayauchi Polesaw)**

The blades are hardened steel with extremely sharp teeth and thin blades.

- They are designed to cut on the **pull** stroke, when the blade is under tension from the pulling force.
- They do not cut on the push stroke.
- They require very little force to cut, so do not press down hard – this may result in jamming of the teeth. Use the weight of the saw and let the teeth do the work.

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- If they get caught in a squeezed bough, do not attempt to release the saw by wrenching or pushing – this can buckle or even break the blade. Instead relieve the pressure by lifting the branch

### **Silky Pole Saws (Zubat and Hayauchi) and branch hook on pole saw**

- The aluminium poles are highly conductive. Do not use within 15m of any power lines or electrical wires. (failure to heed this warning may result in electrocution)
- Make sure that no-one else is working or standing within the radius of the extended saw (this includes checking behind you when carrying, raising or lowering the saw!)
- To open/extend the pole saw release all the locking clamps and then depress the locking pins – extend the pole from the lower pole first and then work progressively outwards/upwards.
- The pole is not fully variable in length, and can only be used safely with the locking pins in position. When pins are locked in place, the pole is not fully secure until the locking clamps are also locked in place. Note the base pole has 2 locking positions, outer poles only have one locking position, giving 4 lengths on the Zubat and 6 on the Hayauchi).
- Try to anticipate the point at which the branch being cut will part from the tree and be prepared to take the full weight of the saw as the branch falls.
- To collapse the pole, work from the outer poles first, unlocking and then relocking the locking clamps and pins.

### **Silky Hayauchi Pole saw**

The blade has a sickle cutting edge at the base to allow an undercut in the branch to prevent tearing

### **Silky Pocket Boy folding hand saw**

The folding blade locks into 2 different positions. Ensure that the blade is fully locked into position before sawing.

When closing the blade back into the sheath, ensure that you do not curl fingers or thumbs across the blade recess.

### **Cleaning of saws**

On completion of the work, please clean the saws as follows:

- Hold the saw firmly with the teeth facing away from you, and always working from the back of the blade outwards towards the teeth.
- Brush any sawdust out of the teeth with a scrubbing brush
- Clean the blade using an old rag - make sure the rag is well bunched to minimise the risk of contact with the teeth, or wear thick protective gloves.
- Apply WD40 as necessary to remove persistent resin stains etc.
- Once clean oil the blade with WD40 or light cooking oil.
- Shake any fragments out of the scabbard before refitting it, and ensure that the scabbard clip is engaged on the shaft of the saw.
- On extending saws, wipe down the collapsible sections to remove any mud, animal faeces or other debris.
- Wipe down the handle of the saw to ensure it is free of mud and animal faeces.

### **Secateurs and Loppers**

Do not use beyond capacity of blade (Felco No 9 25mm/1", Okatsune 20mm, Kamaki 40mm, Bulldog TW telescopic ratchet loppers)

Do not chop off your fingers

Store and carry with blades locked in closed position (note telescopic loppers do not have a lock – carry with care, or with plastic sheath on)

Grind outer blades at 23 degrees, inner at 5 on Felco and 15 on Okatsune

### **Mistletoe cutting tools**

These have no protective sheaths, so exercise care when carrying the tools.

Ensure that you are working in a stable secure position to prevent accidental loss of control of the saw, and keep other people away from your working area

Cut branches and mistletoe will fall, so ensure that you, or other people are not standing below the falling pieces.

### **Pruning knives**

Care in shutting as for folding saw

### **Bow Saws**

Ensure that the hand holding the wood is well away from the blade, particularly on the initial cut when the blade is liable to bounce (wear gloves).