

LOGSPLITTERS

Our annual look at what's available

A log splitter of any size makes the job of reducing timber quicker, easier and more efficient, taking much less energy and physical strength compared to other more labour-intensive methods. Anyone with experience of back-breaking hours wielding a splitting axe, or worse a sledgehammer and splitting wedge, will testify to that.

There are a variety of log splitters available on the market to cope with all possible requirements, from smaller machines for the domestic market right through to splitters for top end professional users. Here we take a look at some of the models on offer.

The Arbor Split vertical splitter from Arbor Eater Brushwood Chippers Ltd completes their wood processing range. Available in several options to meet domestic or professional requirements, the ram can be adjusted 1-2 inches above the log for more efficient processing, and travels down to table level for easy movement once splitting is completed. The 6- and 8-ton models have a removable splitting table giving 3 splitting heights. The 11-ton machine is built with a swinging table at a height of 18 inches, but when this is swung away, larger logs, just over 1 metre, can be split. Cutting speed is 4.2cm/second.

The two-handle system ensures safe operation; both must be

depressed at the same time to initiate a cut. Release one and the ram stops, release both and the ram travels up to the top.

Special note should be taken of the splitting head angle, a simple idea but this avoids the head getting stuck in the timber.

Optional extras include 4-way split head and wide split head. Each model has full metal construction for professional use and is CE marked.

ArborEater 01273 832009

The Wessex Country LS100 hydraulic log splitter from Broadwood International features a hydraulically powered vertical ram, providing 10 tons of splitting force. Logs of up to 18 inches in height can be split and processed, and the floor-level platform means that loading larger logs onto the splitter is safe and simple.

This year the range has been developed further to include a stand-alone log splitter – the Wessex Country LSW100 – making the LS100 accessible to users without a tractor. Using the same basic design format as the LS100, the W (for wheeled) version is powered by a Briggs & Stratton 6.5hp engine and uses an enclosed hydraulic system to power the ram, which is capable of producing a splitting force of up to 10 tons. "We've kept the design simple and the price low, but in no way at the expense of



Rabaud offer an extensive range of machines from 4 to 40 tonnes.

quality," declares Steve James of Broadwood International. "This unit is built tough for a tough task, and complies with all regulations, incorporating two-handed operation for extra safety."

Other features include the ability to work horizontally or vertically, depending on the job, and an optional ball hitch for towing the splitter between tasks.

Designed and built in the UK, and available from dealers nationwide, the new Wessex Country LSW100 log splitter will become available during August 2010.

Broadwood Int'l 01420 478111

Features on the MK1-15T log splitter from GBT Products include a 4-way adjustable splitting head, an economical 9.5hp Kawasaki petrol engine, and full throttle control so there is no need to rev on full power all the time. It also has fast-tow Indespension wheels and tyres, heavy-duty tow hitch and a loading bay for wood extras.

In the pipeline is a log-loading conveyor which is under test at the moment and should be available by September.

Since its arrival the MK1-15T has been well received from those who have purchased it. The advantage with this machine is it is on a true fast-tow wheel base and so can easily be moved from site to site.

Several GBT customers are hiring it out to their customers to split their own wood on site – an ideal add-on for tree surgeons to offer their customers. With a price of only £3350 + VAT and a daily hire rate of £60 to £90 per day it can easily pay for its keep.

BGT build to order with a 4-6 weeks delivery time.

GBT Products Ltd 0845 652 2005

Rabaud log splitters, distributed by Caledonian Forestry Services, offer an extensive choice of 23 machines,

ranging from 4 to 40 tonnes, driven by single- or three-phase electric motors, Briggs and Stratton petrol engines or a tractor pto.

Splitting clearance under the wedge ranges from 0.53m on the smaller models to 2.35m on the larger F40. All machines are fitted with Rabaud's patented heavy-duty wear-resistant wedge mounting.

The Eco and Farmer models range from 13 to 22 tonnes splitting force. The two speeds for lowering the cylinder increases productivity while preserving splitting power, and they are ideal for farmers and estates.

For serious firewood production the choice goes up to 40 tonnes of splitting force, and machines can be supplied in either a horizontal model, which has a hydraulically operated log lifting system, or vertical models which have a log clamping system. These can be fitted with a top-mounted electric or hydraulic winch with an eye-bolt or tong-style log attachment to assist feeding.

*Caledonian Forestry Services
01764 663798*

Fuelwood offers the Woodline range of log splitters from Italy. New for this year is a development of the WL10 Multipla machine – the WL12 Multipla Plus – with increased splitting force (11.5 ton) and increased maximum log length (800mm).

Both the new WL12 Multipla Plus and the WL10 are available with different drive options – 240v, tractor pto, tractor hydraulic or petrol engine. The ability to change position from a vertical split to an angled split or a horizontal split has proved very useful in splitting many different sized and shaped sections of timber.

Other new developments include the WL20 C/1000 Plus, a 20-ton vertical tractor pto machine. With its 20-ton splitting force, this 2-speed machine copes with very large butts of timber up to a maximum length



The MK1-15T from GBT Products has a fast-tow base and is built to order.



(Left) New from Fuelwood, the Multipla Plus with increased splitting force and log length. (Right) The 30-tonne Posch SplitMaster from Jas P Wilson.

of 1100 mm. It joins the 13- and 16-ton versions, which are lower cost options.

With regard to horizontal logsplitters, the WL20 C/1150 OR Special is probably the most popular with the capability of splitting a 1200mm long piece of timber into split billets, which can be either stacked for drying or processed further into firewood-sized logs. The inclusion of a log lift also makes the job easier.

Many of the logsplitters can be demonstrated at Fuelwood's forestry site or by any of its UK agents.

Fuelwood Warwick Ltd
01926 484673

Lawnflite offers a range of logsplitters from 5 up to 25 tons.

For use in the domestic market where noise may be an issue, the LS1500E has a 230 volt 1500 Watt motor and 5 ton splitting force. Maximum log diameter is 10" and length 20.5". The LS2800E has a 2800 Watt motor and 5.5 ton splitting force.

Where power and the ability to work away from a power point are required, Lawnflite offer two petrol-powered models. The LS65P, with 5hp Briggs & Stratton engine and 7 ton splitting force, with maximum log diameter of 12.5", is fitted with transport wheels and transport han-

dle. The LS550 has a 6hp Briggs & Stratton engine, 25" log capacity, 25-ton splitting force and vertical or horizontal operation. A variety of log lengths can be split and all machines are fitted with two handed operator control systems to ensure operator safety.

Lawnflite 0845 894 1594

Hydrocut pto-driven, screw-type, tractor-mounted logsplitters were first introduced at the height of Dutch Elm disease in 1979, and quickly established themselves as the most efficient way for tractor owners to convert knotty slices of elm and other species into usable and saleable fire logs with minimum effort and cost.

Hydrocut logsplitters utilise up to 25hp/18kW or 50hp/36kW depending on the model. This is equivalent to hydraulic splitters rated in excess of 40 or 80 tons (the norm in this price range being just 2-10 tons) and with greater versatility.

The greater power of the rotating screw-type cone to split the knottiest of logs, combined with simple and continuous operation, make these machines fast and easy to use. The design is very straightforward – one push on the log and the logsplitter does the rest.

Hydrocut 01787 222266

Marshall Agricultural Engineering distributes Binderberger logsplitters in the UK and Ireland. Splitting power in tonnes is denoted by the model number.

The shortwood (5cm) splitter range is comprised of one compact horizontal model, the SP8, and one vertical model, the H6. The vertical H8 and H10 models can give maximum splitting lengths of 55 or 110cm.

Binderberger offers five upright tractor-mounted splitters – the H12,

H17, H20, H25, and H30 – with 115cm maximum splitting stroke, ideal for producing one-metre billets, or shorter firewood when used with the optional intermediate table. Standard features include a log turntable, which saves effort when splitting large twisted logs, adjustable 3-point linkage mounting, fully adjustable splitter stroke adjustment for faster cycle times and an automatic speed control valve. The hydraulic cylinders retract for easy transport and storage. Options include 4-way splitting heads, intermediate tables, winches (manual or radio controlled) and log lifters.

Binderberger's horizontal log-splitter range starts with the 3pl mounted Gigant 20 and 30 which have log lifter cradles. Towed versions of these models are also available. The Gigant 30 and 40 towed splitters are high performance splitters for the long-term professional use and are available as Funkgigant models – with radio remote control for use by one man when they are being loaded by a crane or tractor loader. Different splitting head options are available.

The largest splitter from Binderberger is the Goliath 40 long stroke splitter which can take logs up to 2.55 metres long. The largest splitter option from Binderberger is the Hercules 40 crane- or excavator-mounted splitting grab which can be used to split logs for firewood or to break down large logs for chipping.

Marshall Agricultural 01892 770788
Ireland & Scotland 028 2073 2700

M Large Tree Services Ltd are the sole UK and Ireland distributor of Thor logsplitters. Thor offers a huge range of hydraulic logsplitters from the small, compact 6-tonne Alpino single phase electric model to the 22-tonne Practico tractor powered



(Above) The SP 20 HZH series from BGU has proven very popular. (Below) The horizontal Gigant splitter from Binderberger.





(Left) The HC1XW cone splitter from Hydrocut. (Centre) Thor, from M Large, offer a range of compact splitters. (Right) Wessex Country LS100 splitter.

model.

The most popular in-stock machines are the 6-tonne Alpino, 8-tonne Alpino Sprint, the 7.5-tonne and 10.5-tonne dual single phase and petrol engine powered models, the 13-tonne Magic petrol engine machine, the 13-tonne petrol engine multi-use road tow, and the 13-, 15-, 18- and 22-tonne tractor powered models.

With all modern day logsplitters, safety is a key factor. Unique to Thor is their 'System-Leader' control, which allows the operator to hold any type of wood with his hands, making it easier to position the piece of wood and to stop it falling accidentally. Both hands can then be used to grip both handles, applying full splitting force.

M Large 028 9034 2838

Perry Plant Hire (Devon) Ltd supply German-manufactured BGU log-splitters for both the domestic and retail industries.

The newest model for residential use is the THS 4/THS 5, retailing from only £145.95 + VAT. With a maximum splitting force of 4 tons and a log capacity of 350mm, these mini logsplitters are user-friendly, very affordable machines that still

comply with effective power and quality requirements.

Moving up to the more robust hydraulic splitters, the Spessart Woody HS7 has a 4-way splitter and costs from £640.50 + VAT.

The SM300 is a horizontal splitting machine for hands-free convenience while the popular SP 20 HZH series offers user-friendly and efficient operations carrying a splitting force of 20 tons. Prices range from £2,373 + VAT.

The USP 13 H range of vertical standing logsplitters with combined power sources operate a two-stage hydraulic pump for increased ram forward speed, have mechanical two-hand control, solid steel frame with in-built hydraulic oil reservoir, and standard three-point hitch and a maximum splitting force of 13 tons. The USP 16 HZ in the professional upright log splitting range has its own in-built hydraulic system with pump and 3-point hitch for connection to tractor.

Perry Plant Hire Ltd 01363 866174

The Riko range includes over 120 models of vertical and horizontal splitters from 8 tons to what is believed to be the world's largest at 100 tons. Power options

include tractor, petrol, diesel or electric motors. Optional equipment includes hydraulic side loading, crane loading, winch loading, 2-, 4-, and 6-way knives, window knives and also radio remote control.

Riko believes it is the only company that can supply horizontal splitters to pretty much any length. A number of 2.5-metre log length models have already been supplied in the UK with the largest having a 40-ton splitting force. The range also includes logging saws with or without conveyors, band saws and processors.

"Very few logsplitters or processors are designed for UK-type timber. That's the reason Riko UK has such a wide range. You simply can't offer a solution to everyone unless you have a complete and varied range," explains Stephen Cabrol, of Riko.

Riko UK have an outlet in Hampshire and now also in Yorkshire.

Riko UK 01420 487300

The Ryetec range starts with a 5.5 tonne machine and goes up to 30 tonnes. Ryetec offers versions with electric (single or three phase), engine or tractor driven (pto or hydraulic). Some units are also available with dual tractor pto and electric drive, ideal for remote and yard operations.

Commercial models feature two-speed control valves which allow the operator to speed up operation with fast movement of the axe to accommodate different lengths of logs, combined with a slow, controlled and powerful splitting speed. All machines have an automatic axe return system which means the machine is always ready for the next log when the operator has cleared the last split logs.

All models also have adjustable axe return height control which can be set to suit the length of log being split, reducing waste time waiting for the axe to travel the maximum splitting length when only splitting short logs.

Ryetec 01944 768232

Jas P Wilson are the sole UK importer of the Posch splitter range. Models range from small self-powered home-use machines right up to very large industrial machines. Sales in the UK tend to be mainly to the professional user.

The 8- and 10-tonne self-propelled machines are small but powerful and can often be found in the tree surgeon's yard breaking down rings. Available in self-powered, pto or electric versions, the machines range from the 6-tonne model right up to 55 tonnes.

The two most popular models are the 20-tonne HydroCombi and the 30-tonne Splitmaster. The 30-tonne 3-point linkage pto-driven version can handle lengths up to 1.3 metres. It is generally used to break down timber into billets for processor or saw bench conversion.

Jas P Wilson 01556 612233



The 40-tonne horizontal logsplitter from Riko.



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