

OAK NEWS & NOTES

The Newsletter of the International Oak Society
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Our Second Triennial Conference

There are many potential benefits to be obtained from membership in the International Oak Society. Most members of any international organization cannot attend conferences, and for them a conference report sometimes might sound like the gloating of the privileged few. Still, so much energy can be drawn from such an event that it ripples out to every member — in the form of future journals and proceedings, increased opportunities for seed exchange, ideas for potential regional events, inspiration for the officers and directors who coordinate other member benefits, and recruitment of new members who can add so much to our collective resources. Those of us who were able to participate in the 1997 Triennial Conference in California came away with a rejuvenation of spirit that cannot be fully described to anyone who missed it — but I'll try!

Our reception program at the hotel was a welcome chance for participants to mingle and unwind from the rigors of travel, complete with wine tasting (from oak barrels) and presentations by *The Life of an Oak* author Glenn Keator and publisher Malcolm Margolin. The Huntington Library and Botanic Garden provided a magnificent venue for our seminars, complete with the perfect weather for which southern California is famous. Jerry Turney and the staff of the Huntington covered every angle behind the scenes, solving logistical problems before they arose. And Amy Larson and all our friends from the California Oak Foundation—Janet Cobb, Deborah Reid, and Elizabeth Proctor—worked 20-hour days to handle everything else that needed to be done.

The educational program coordinated by Rick Standiford and Mike Reichenbach went like clockwork, and featured perhaps the most notable and diverse collection of oak authorities ever assembled at one time in one country. The audience included Californians, those from other states, and those from other nations, in nearly equal proportion. Even the lunch period was educational, with a special presentation on oak lore by Mark Pitman of Kew. Every member will have the opportunity later this year, when the Proceedings are completed, to experience the full range of information presented in the seminars. This truly should be a volume destined for every fine reference library. But there was so much more —

Our seed exchange covered nine library tables, overflowing with more than 100 taxa of labeled oak seed plus a few other interesting species. The seed came from throughout North America, plus Europe and Asia under the special

(non-fumigation) import permit we obtained from the USDA. When the dust settled, there remained only a few empty bags and a shell-shocked acorn worm or two. Any participant could build a world class oak collection, starting from scratch, from so much different seed.

And there were the field trips — the incomparable field trips — replete with camaraderie and with uninhibited members climbing and attacking oak trees for still more seed, like schools of hungry piranha! Rob Hicks of The Nature Conservancy showed us beautiful stands of *Quercus agrifolia*, plus a scrub species that turned out to be our first encounter with *Quercus berberidifolia*, and the rare *Quercus engelmannii*, all at the Santa Rosa Plateau Reserve. We saw other oaks in the wildlands far to the south and east of our San Marino headquarters with Tom Gaman. We engaged in lively debate

over the nomenclature of the scrub oaks, and later learned some of the unique California oak species and hybrids with Cleveland National Forest naturalist Kirsten Winter. Some of us couldn't get enough, and we "mutineers" ventured forth at dawn for the oak-covered slopes of Mt. Palomar (catching *Quercus cornelius-mulleri* in the desert along the way) where we found our first *Quercus wislizeni*, *Quercus chrysolepis*, *Quercus kelloggii*, and a mixture of hybrids involving *Quercus berberidifolia*. Meanwhile, the others relaxed for a morning in the Anza-Borrego Desert or enjoyed the beauty of Palm Canyon.

A few were still out with flashlights late that night at the Silver Pines Lodge in Idyllwild, gathering more seed of *Quercus kelloggii* and *Quercus chrysolepis*. The following morning, our group became a traffic hazard along the mountain high-

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Pictured above: These dedicated people helped to plan the future of the International Oak Society at the October business meeting in California: **KNEELING, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Ron Lance (North Carolina), Larry Slavicek (Illinois), Hugh Angus (United Kingdom), Diana Gardener (Oregon), Nigel Wright (Pennsylvania), Dan Keiser (Minnesota), Zhekun Zhou (China), Doug McCreary (California), James Trager (Missouri);

STANDING, LEFT TO RIGHT:

Bill Hess (Illinois), Dick Sage (California), Rick Standiford (California), Peter van der Linden (Illinois), Mike Reichenbach (Oregon), Jean Smith (California), Amy Larson (California), Shawn Haddock (United Kingdom), Consuelo Bonfil (Mexico), Larry Schmidt (California), Allen Coombes (United Kingdom), Robert Berry (New Zealand), Maricela Rodriguez (Mexico), Matt Strong (Kansas), Dick van Hoey Smith (Holland), R.A. Rasmussen (Oregon), Peter LaHarrague (Argentina), Ed Holm (California), Mark Coggeshall (Indiana), Wayne Erickson (British Columbia), Riet van Hoey Smith (Holland), Guy Stenberg (Illinois).

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way as Dave Johnson from the San Bernardino National Forest showed us the famous Oracle oak, *Quercus xmorehus*. Later we saw the transplanting of mature *Quercus agrifolia* at the La Vina development with Los Angeles County forester Kelly Kim and developer Kit Carson (a descendent of the original frontier hero).

Rosi Dagit took some of us on a thrilling(!) boat ride through stormy seas, among porpoises and sharks, with the Island Packers to see the endemic oak flora of Santa Cruz Island. Naturalist Andrea Moe showed us magnificent *Quercus agrifolia* trees, plus the endemic *Quercus pacifica*, *Quercus tomentella*, and many other equally rare plants along a half-day hike over part of this huge, uninhabited island. This trip was a special opportunity that few of us could hope to experience without the sponsorship of our organization.

The next day Bob Haller had organized an invasion of the Ventura County backcountry with military precision and unparalleled taxonomic expertise, showing us many species and helping us understand the subtleties of their habitats. Bob's trip gave us additional insights into several oak species we had seen previously, plus our first sightings of *Quercus lobata*, *Quercus douglasii*, *Quercus john-tuckeri*, and some fascinating variants and hybrids. Bob gave maps and written guides to each of us, which later helped us label our photographs and remember provenance data for our seed collections.

Those who missed the Wildlands trip had the option to see Eaton Canyon and visit the extensive collections of famous Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. And those who weren't enticed by the wilds of Santa Cruz Island were able in-

stead to study nine different oak species at the beautiful Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. Some vigorous souls also went forth before dawn one morning to the Los Angeles Flower Mart.

Thirty-one of our really dedicated members (see photo) also stayed behind after the seminars for the business meeting, helping to shape the management of our organization. We took that opportunity to address the future of our publications and other member services, set the next conference locations, and discuss finances and a number of other initiatives, and I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their help. Such meetings cannot be called fun in the traditional sense, but the results we will see years down the road make them very satisfying.

In summary: friends were made, old friendships were renewed, much was learned, future seed exchange partnerships were established, and memories and inspirations were indelibly carved into the minds and hearts of everyone. It bodes well for our future, and it was a landmark experience of my life.

Now for the best part: less than three years from now, in late fall of the year 2000, we will do it all again! The venue this time will be the splendid North Carolina Arboretum. The field trips will explore habitats for perhaps 40 native oak species (none of which will repeat those we saw in California, which themselves did not repeat any we saw three years previously in Illinois). We will visit famous collections, champion trees, and special nurseries. And our host will be one of our Directors, Ron Lance; Ron has attended each of our first two conferences, and knows what makes them work. Even if you go nowhere else for the next three years, don't miss it!

Guy Sternberg

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Points of Contact

As we grow and develop as individuals, we outgrow clothes, houses, and old ideas which served us well in our early lives. So it is with the International Oak Society. We are not yet so large that we can afford a central office and professional staff, but we no longer can manage all affairs from our Pennsylvania address. So we now have several addresses which should be noted for your future reference:

CLIP AND SAVE THIS LIST!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS OR APPLICATIONS:

Dick Jensen, Membership Chairperson
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SUBMITTALS FOR THE JOURNAL OR NEWSLETTER:

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Route 1, Box 272
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ANY QUESTIONS FROM EUROPEAN SOURCES:

Allen Coombes, Vice President
Sir Harold Hillier Arboretum
Jernyn's Lane
Ampfield, near Romsey
Hampshire SO51 0QA
UNITED KINGDOM

CONFERENCE 2000:

Ron Lance, Conference Chairperson
The North Carolina Arboretum
P.O. Box 6617
Asheville, North Carolina 28816
USA

Calendar of Events

September 27-30, 1998

Seventh Workshop on Oak Physiology and Growth Problems in Oak Plantings will be held in South Lake Tahoe, California, USA. For more information on this meeting contact Joni Rippee at:

160 Mulford Hall
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720-3114
Phone: (510) 643-5429
Email: rippee@nature.berkeley.edu

July 16-19, 1998

The 1998 Midwest Regional Meeting of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta will be held at the Kellogg Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI. The meeting will be hosted by the W. J. Beal Botanical Garden. For additional information contact:

Dr. Frank W. Telewski, Curator
W. J. Beal Botanical Garden
412 Olds Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824
Phone: 517 432-1090
Email: telewski@cyp.msu.edu

"Crusaders"

Member **Dan "The Oakman" Kelser** is working with others to rally local support for an initiative to save the ancient bur oaks along the Mississippi River bluffs in Minneapolis from destruction by a highway relocation project. For more info readers can contact Dan at 1-612-872-2255.

Member **Dick Sage** has initiated action on several fronts to halt the destruction of thousands of acres of oak lands for commercial vineyard expansion in California. Dick can be reached at 1-805-688-1628 e-mail: rdsage@silcom.com

Member **Wayne Erickson** is approaching Canadian governmental bodies for official protection of the outstanding remnant Garry oak groves in British Columbia. Wayne's e-mail is: werickso@mfor01.gov.bc.ca

The International Oak Society is not a lobbying organization. Our mission is to increase public awareness of oaks and their ecosystems. This includes making the public aware of actions that protect or threaten oaks and oak ecosystems. The Board has sent letters supporting each of the above preservation initiatives. Members also might choose to lend their personal support as individuals.

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Bios of New IOS Board Members

RICHARD J. JENSEN is a Professor of Biology, Saint Mary's College and a Guest Professor of Biological Sciences and Director of the Greene-Nieuwland Herbarium, University of Notre Dame. He is also an Associate Editor of both the *American Midland Naturalist* and *Systematic Botany* and is a member of the Editorial Board for *Plant Systematics and Evolution*. He has been studying problems in the taxonomy and systematics of oaks since 1972 and recently authored the treatment of the red and black oaks (*Quercus* section *Lobatae*) that appeared in volume three of the recently published *Flora of North America* (1997).

THIERRY LAMANT has been working at the famous National Arboretum of the Barres, under the auspices of the French National Forestry Service, since 1991. He is responsible for the management of the living collections at the Arboretum, as well as seed supply and exchange. Thierry also developed a small private arboretum in the center of France, near the Cantal Mountains, where *Quercus* is a featured genus. He has been a member of the International Oak Society since 1997 and was a featured speaker at the Conference in California. He hopes to coordinate Oak Society activities and recruitment in mainland Europe.

RON LANCE joined the North Carolina Arboretum in 1988 where he manages the nursery and conducts educational programs, while he pursues production of various woody floral guides for the Southeast region. He began his interest in dendrological matters in high school forestry and has been planting ever since. He obtained a de-

gree in wildlife management at Haywood Community College in 1975 and worked as a lab technician there for 8 years. Between leaving Haywood and joining the North Carolina Arboretum he had a diverse string of jobs in forestry, lumber manufacturing, horticulture and industry. Ron will host the third Triennial Oak Conference in North Carolina in the year 2000.

DOUG MCCREARY is a Natural Resources Specialist with the University of California's Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program (IHRMP), whose goal is the long-term conservation of the state's hardwoods (primarily oaks). He has been working for the IHRMP since receiving his Ph.D. in Tree Physiology from Oregon State University in 1986. His principal research interests relate to developing practical methods to propagate, plant and maintain oaks on California's rangelands — especially in those areas where natural regeneration is inadequate. Doug has been a member of the International Oak Society since 1992 and is currently the Editor of the IOS Newsletter.

MARICELA RODRIGUEZ ACOSTA is Director of the Louise Wardle de Camacho Botanic Garden, which is part of the Africam Zoological Park in Puebla Mexico. She is also Professor of Economic Botany and Horticulture at the University of Puebla, where she developed the University Herbarium. She is also the vice president of the Latino American and Caribbean Association of Botanic Gardens. Maricela would like to help promote the expansion of the International Oak Society in Mexico and Central and South America.

Tour of Kew Royal Botanic Gardens

The European members of the International Oak Society had a very interesting study day at the Kew Royal Botanic Gardens on 8 March 1997. Kew Gardens has a mild climate, so the place is suitable for many evergreen oaks. This is in contrast with continental places in Europe on the same degree of latitude. Besides British participants, there also were members from other European countries including Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands and Switzerland. We arrived at 10:00 AM and Mr. Nigel Taylor (Curator, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew) gave us a short introduction. There was a presentation of evergreen oak species at Kew on the basis of herbarium material and living material from the garden. After lunch we made a tour in the Garden.

Following is a summary of the most important evergreens at the Garden: The most impressive evergreen oak at Kew is *Quercus xturneri* 'Pseudoturneri', which is about 20 m high and a girth of 5 m. Together with the old *Ginkgo*

biloba they make a wonderful part of the garden. Another attractive evergreen is *Quercus phillyreoides*, a bushy shrub that is native to China and Japan. Some specimens at Kew do very well — the biggest is 9 m tall. There are also some well known hybrid oaks, one being *Quercus xhispanica* 'Lucombeana' (*Quercus cerris* x *Quercus suber*). Another famous *Quercus xhispanica* is *Q. xhispanica* 'Ambroziana'. Raised in the Mlynany Arboretum in Slovakia in 1909, this selection was sometimes placed under *cerris*, since they supposed a hybrid with *Q. suber* was impossible in the severe Slovakian climate.

Quercus suber (Cork oak) is hardy enough to develop at Kew. Native in the West Mediterranean region, the corky bark is the special attraction of this oak. Another oak from the Mediterranean region is *Quercus ilex*. The holm oak is a well-known tree in the southern part of England, and

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Kew Gardens Tour

also near the coast. It is a big tree, as wide as high, with dark green foliage. At Kew we saw nice specimens on both sides of the Syon Vista. Some of them are intermixed with *Q. xhispanica* and *Q. xturneri*. A semi-evergreen, native of California, *Quercus wislizeni* is a slow-growing small tree or large shrub in this climate. The specimen at Kew is from 1874 and is 16 m. high.

Some of the other oaks we had a chance to look at were the following:

Quercus coccifera — an evergreen shrub with small, stiff, sharp-pointed leaves. It is very drought resistant and originated from the Western Mediterranean region.

Quercus canariensis — a semi-evergreen from northern Africa, it is a big tree with leaves up to 20 cm. long. The specimen at Kew measures 30 m.

Quercus xkewensis — a hybrid with *Quercus wislizeni*, it has nice green foliage. Raised at Kew in 1914, the original tree measures 12 m.

Quercus agrifolia — There are some attractive specimens of this oak at Kew. The plant is native of California and Mexico and was introduced in U.K. in 1849. The largest tree in Kew is 20 m and has attractive conical acorns.

Quercus rysophylla — A Mexican red oak introduced in the U.K. in 1979 by the late Sir Harold Hillier. The largest tree is in the Hillier arboretum. We saw a small specimen at Kew.

While enjoying a cup of coffee we overviewed the tour and made the conclusion that we had a wonderful, educational day.

Jo Bonner

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In Memoriam

We are saddened by the recent death of two of our members, Dr. John Pair of Kansas State University. John was a long-time member who participated in our first conference as a speaker and who was a leader in the research and promotion of oaks and other hardy plants for the Great Plains. He might be most famous for his work with Osage Orange testing and for his introduction of 'Ozark Spring' flowering dogwood. He died at his home on 25 January at age 60 following a long battle against a brain tumor.

Michael Bonn of the Island of Jersey, UK, passed away on 11 November 1997. He was 70 years old. Michael was Chairman of the International Dendrology Society and had been a vigorous champion of cooperation between that organization and the International Oak Society. He had also been a Jurat of the Royal Court of Jersey since 1985 and was Chairman of the Eric Young Orchid Foundation. He joined our organization in 1995 and will be greatly missed.

New Oak Book Available

THE LIFE OF AN OAK is a stunning, full-color book that takes an intimate look at all aspects of the genus *Quercus*, from a microscopic examination of its cellular processes to a survey of the grand Diaspora by which members of this remarkable family have spread around the world and diversified. This book is an excellent companion for strolls through oak groves during all seasons, anywhere in the world. Below is an excerpt from this wonderful new book by Glenn Keator, with artwork by Susan Bazell.

"Most oaks begin their new cycle of growth and bloom whenever early spring arrives. Each region has its own rhythm: early spring appears in the foothills of coastal California from late March to early April; in the Sierra foothills it may come in early May; in the Great Smoky Mountains, it will be late May to early June. Oaks from Southeast Asia, Mexico, or Costa Rica blossom according to subtle environmental cues that still elude us. They might include gentle swings in temperature and patterns between relative dry or wet periods.

The first rush of new growth neatly coincides with flowering, for the terminal buds at the ends of twigs are also mixed buds, which combine new shoots with male flowers. These unfolding buds burst through the bud scales to release tiny, pre-formed leaves held in close embrace, and male flowers precisely arranged in slender catkins. The timing of this mad rush is finely tuned to tem-

perature. As frigid nights give way to warm spring days, hormones known as auxins promote bud burst by increasing the tree's intake of water. Some years, these events come unheralded in late winter; other years, oak buds may wait through a few weeks of an unseasonably cold spring.

Oaks' reliance on the vagaries of weather has advantages and disadvantages. Flowers and leaves are scorched and burned after an untimely bud burst when a winter warm spell is followed by a plunge into freezing cold. This is often mitigated by leaves that develop from buds held in reserve, but a close accommodation between weather and growth is advantageous most years. When plants rely solely on day length to determine bloom time, they risk encountering conditions out of sync with the best circumstances for growth.

Named for their resemblance to a cat's tail, catkins are chains of minute, wind-pollinated flowers that lack petals. The catkin consists of a long, pendulous stalk to which dozens of male flowers are attached. Catkins are found in plant groups that share the common denominator of wind pollination, including willows and cottonwoods, alders and birches, hazels and hornbeams, and walnuts and hickories. The catkin design evolved independently in many separate plant lines because it works so well for spewing pollen into the wind.

The whole catkin is contained inside the terminal bud, but each male blossom is also enclosed inside its own bud. Individual male flowers will not open until the catkin itself has begun its rapid elongation. Oak catkins are light and streamlined, swinging easily to-and-fro in the lightest breeze. Each flower couldn't be of simpler design: a small green umbrella of four to six green sepals at the base of four to ten slender stamens. Each stamen's filament firmly attaches to the middle of its anther; the threadlike filaments carry the anthers well beyond the sepals, exposing the anther's pollen to any passing wind.

Petals are conspicuously missing, unnecessary to the indifferent medium of wind. The production of petals requires extra food and energy that could be diverted to other needs, and since petals serve no purpose for wind pollination, they've been eliminated. For this very reason, many people think oaks don't have flowers, as petals are what make most flowers so conspicuous."

TO ORDER THE BOOK, contact the International Oak Society membership office, c/o Richard Jensen, Department of Biology, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN 46556, telephone (219) 284-4674, fax (219) 284-4716, or e-mail rjensen@saintmarys.edu. The book costs \$16.00 plus domestic shipping costs of \$3.00 for the first book and \$1 for each additional book shipped to the same address. Overseas shipping is extra.

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News Flash!

1998 Oak Open Day
Kassel, Germany, 26-27 September
Contact: Eike Jablonski

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

As I prepare for my senior year in college I am amazed at the vast numbers of differing oak species. I have come to cherish oaks for their grace strength and longevity. I joined the Oak Society last winter; however, I have not been much involved. The next International Oak Society meeting in California will be incredible, but I will not be able to attend. I know that I will be missing out on the seed exchange. Is there any possibility for me to get some *Quercus mongolica* and *Q. dentata* seeds? I will gladly pay any postage fees.

I am currently doing an independent study on oaks located on the Cornell campus and the Cornell plantations. This study has furthered my understanding of oaks and I hope to eventually become more involved in your society.

Best Regards,
Pietro Cipriano, Jr.
112 Farm Street, Ithaca, NY 14850