

OAK NEWS & NOTES



The Newsletter of the International Oak Society
Summer 2002

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TREE TOUR YIELDS RESULTS

Just prior to our International Oak Conference in North Carolina, about 15 members from several countries joined Guy and Edie Sternberg for a tree tour in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. One of the stops was in Bloomington, Illinois to see a giant bur oak. The tree is part of an historic grove threatened by road expansion, and the owners of the tree invited the local news media to meet with the Oak Society members from around the world who had come to see the grove.

This visit by so many noteworthy tree experts apparently helped to convince the city of the importance of saving the grove. Instead of destroying many ancient trees for the highway project, the city has announced plans to buy and remove an expensive house in order to relocate the road in another direction. During the city council meeting, not a single vote was cast for the other route, which would have affected the trees.

Sometimes, we can help make a difference! If anyone would like to congratulate the tree's owners, they can be contacted at the following address:
Carter and Julie Knutson
3419 Fox Creek Road
Bloomington, Illinois 61704
USA

Ask them to pass your good wishes along to the mayor and city council, who did the right thing despite the added cost involved.

— Guy Sternberg

NEW Oak Books

Several new books on oaks have recently been published. A review of one of these, titled *Arboretum Trompenburg, Green Oasis in Rotterdam*—is included in this issue of the Newsletter. These are other new books:

Oak Forest Ecosystems: Ecology and Management for Wildlife, edited by William J. McShea and William M. Healy was published by The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London in 2002. It contains the following three parts:

- Part 1 - Patterns and Processes of Oak Forests
- Part 2 - Ecology and Patterns of Acorns
- Part 3 - Management of Oaks for Wildlife

There are 22 chapters and the book is 432 pages. The ISBN is 0-8018-6745-2, and the book costs US \$60.00.



READ BOOK REVIEW ON PAGE 3:
Arboretum Trompenburg, Green Oasis in Rotterdam, by J.R.P. van Hoey Smith

A book titled **The Ecology and Silviculture of Oaks** by P. S. Johnson, S. R. Shifley and R. Rogers was also published this year. It is designed and intended as a source of ideas on how to think about oak forests as responsive ecosystems. It is divided into two sections and focuses on oak ecosystems in the United States, as well as providing much application to other regions such as Europe and the Mediterranean. It was published by CABI Publishing, is 528 pages and costs US \$149.00. Its ISBN is 0-85199-570-5.

A book about oaks and ship building was published in 1981, but is highly recommended by Dorothy Holley, the Society's Secretary. It is titled **Live Oaking Southern Timber for Tall Ships** by Virginia Steele Wood and was published by the Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland. Its ISBN is 1-55750-933-6. Dorothy indicates it is a fascinating read about this little known, but once thriving industry.

Fourth International Oak Conference
12 to 16 September 2003

FIRST CIRCULAR & CALL FOR PAPERS

See insert for details

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SEND IN YOUR NOMINATIONS NOW!

Among other things, our Triennial Conferences afford an opportunity for the International Oak Society to acknowledge special accomplishments of our members on behalf of oaks and to present one or two awards to people whose outstanding activities warrant special recognition. The Oak Society award categories are Lifetime Service Award (for retired individuals who have devoted their careers to the advancement of our mission) and Special Service Award (for those who have performed an outstanding service to the organization or completed especially noteworthy oak-related work). In 2000, your Board of Directors selected Dick van Hoey Smith and Stelian Radu to receive the first Lifetime Service Awards. We also hope to present awards at the meeting in Winchester in 2003. We are asking our members to consider nominating one or more of their fellow Society members to compete for one of these awards.



At the 2003 Conference we will also be considering nominations for International Oak Society Board Members since several current members will be rotating off of the Board. Please send your nominations for Awards or Board Members, with justification and background about the proposed nominees, to President Ron Lance at Chimney Rock Park, P.O. Box 39, Chimney Rock, NC 28720, USA or e-mail to him at ronl@chimneyrockpark.com no later than August 31, 2002. Thanks!



OAK OPEN DAYS 2002 Scheduled for Turkey

At the Third International Oak Meeting, Nihat Gökyigit, Co-Founder and Deputy Chairman of TEMA (Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats), presented a paper describing an almost unbelievably ambitious program to plant 10 billion acorns in Turkey. TEMA has now agreed to host Oak Open Days 2002 in Turkey commencing on October 28. This tour has been organized by Biyotematur and is proposed to consist of a 7-day coach trip starting in Istanbul. The total cost per person is \$1,290 USD, not including airfare to and from Turkey. For a description of the proposed Tour, please see the web page of the International Oak Society at <http://www.saintmarys.edu/~rjensen/ios.html>.

The contact person for this tour:
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BOOK REVIEW

Arboretum Trompenburg, Green Oasis in Rotterdam
by J.R.P. van Hoey Smith

ISBN 90 806543 2 9 (English edition),
Stichting Bevordering van Volkskracht,
Rotterdam, 2001.

Price: 15 EURO
(approx. 13 US Dollars)

Our member James Richard Pennington (Dick) van Hoey Smith, former director of the Arboretum Trompenburg, has written a new book about this famous Arboretum. Trompenburg is well known to many members of the International Oak Society, either directly or from Dick's article in the first issue of the *Journal of the International Oak Society* about the Arboretum and its fascinating oak collection.

This book is not a guide book in the ordinary sense. It is a book about the Arboretum, its fascinating history, and the plants in it, and it is filled with personal thoughts and memories. On an area of roughly 6.5 hectares it houses 3590 different woody plants, many of them unique, in a very special collection. One learns that Dick became responsible for the Arboretum as early as 1945, and since that time he has changed the former garden into one of the finest arboreta in the world. The estate had been in ownership of the family since 1857. Today it is maintained by the foundation "Stichting Volkskracht."

After the introduction, the book follows the catalogue of the collections. The Arboretum is divided into 20 parts. These parts all have a separate number, but also a name, such as "Round About the Oak Arbor" or "Hosta Lane." Detailed maps are included for every part, with numbers indicated corresponding with short descriptions of the trees to help the reader find trees in the Arboretum. The descriptions include far more than just the name and the origin. Often they include historical notes, dendrological hints, or the stories behind a particular plant.

One of the three main collections of Trompenburg is the oak collection. That Dick van Hoey Smith loves oaks is clear. He bought his first trees in 1939, with a hundred Guilders which he received from his father for passing his final school exams. For that money he got 10 trees, and five of them were oaks! In total there are 232 different oaks planted in Trompenburg. With 109 species and 123 cultivars, this is one of the largest and most beautiful oak collections in Europe.

The following examples of the descriptions may give you an idea of how Dick speaks about his trees, and the remarkable degree of detail in his oral histories:

"*Quercus vulcanica* was collected as an acorn in Kasnak Ormani, Turkey in 1987. This new species is still extremely rare and was planted here in 1996. It resembles *Quercus frainetto*, but the young shoots are

smooth and red, and the leaves are different and also much bigger. The leaves are glabrous and a shiny dark green." (p. 117).

"*Quercus 'Columna'* is a hybrid of *Quercus petraea 'Muscaviensis'* and *Quercus robur 'Fastigiata'*. We obtained it from Hesse in 1939 for 12 Deutsche Mark, which was a very high price at that time. It was, however, the first time that they sold one of them, on condition that I not give anyone else scions for five years.... It was bought from the 100 guilders reward I received for passing my final high-school exam." (p. 126).

"*Quercus robur 'Pendula'* was grafted by J. Streng in 1954 from scions that I had collected in Hamburg.... I was sitting in a bus from the airport to the city when I saw an umbrella-like shrub that I could not identify in a front garden. I noted the name of the street, the Kehdenstrasse, and after arriving in the city, took a taxi back to that street. Satisfied that it was a beautiful weeping oak, I rang the bell and asked for scions, which I got and on the way back dropped them off at Streng in Boskoop to have them grafted." (p. 148).

Besides the stories and descriptions of the trees, many are illustrated by Dick's high quality color photographs. Dick van Hoey Smith, who received the "Lifetime Service Award" of the International Oak Society at the 2000 Conference in Asheville, has written a fascinating book about his Arboretum and the trees therein. The Arboretum, today maintained by the City of Rotterdam, remains a place which exhibits the more than 50 years of influence of this great dendrologist.

The Trompenburg Arboretum will be visited as part of the Pre-Conference tour of the 2003 Conference (September 2003, Winchester, England). The best way to obtain this beautiful and informative book is to buy it at the visitors center. You can order it also directly via Trompenburg's gift shop. A Dutch edition is also available.

— Eike Jablonski

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SUDDEN OAK DEATH UPDATE



Sudden Oak Death, or SOD, is a new type of mortality in oaks that was first observed to be killing tanoak trees in Mill Valley, California in 1995. At first it was suspected that bark beetles or ambrosia beetles were the primary cause of this mortality, since almost all affected trees seemed to have large numbers of these insects present. Dying trees often also exhibited charcoal black spherical structures of a wood-decay fungus called *Hypoxylon*. Because affected trees often changed rapidly from a healthy looking green color to brown as leaves dried up and died, the name *Sudden Oak Death* or SOD was used to characterize this new type of tree mortality. In the late 1990's, Sudden Oak Death began to kill true oaks including coast live and California black oak. Because these species often occur at the wildland-urban fringe and are highly valued for their appearance and distinctive visual character they lend to the landscape, mortality in these species greatly heightened the level of concern, and stories about the threat of SOD were reported widely in the mass media.

In July 2000, University of California Plant Pathologists Dave Rizzo and Matteo Garbelotto determined that a new and previously unnamed species of *Phytophthora* was the primary agent responsible for Sudden Oak Death and that the beetles and other fungi on infected trees were secondary agents that hastened tree mortality. It was subsequently discovered that this new disease organism, now officially named *Phytophthora ramorum*, was also infecting and damaging rhododendrons in the Netherlands and Germany. In the last two months this pathogen has also been found on *Viburnum tinus* at several nurseries in England, and on rhododendrons at a nursery in Poland. All plants were destroyed. At this time, the origin of all of these infections is unknown.

While initially only reported in one California county, SOD has now been confirmed in 10 counties, ranging from

Monterey County in the south to Mendocino County in the north. It has also been found in the very southern part of Oregon. Accompanying this geographical spread has been a great increase in the number of confirmed hosts—plants which may harbor the disease organism but not necessarily be killed by it. It has now been isolated from 15 different plant species including widely distributed plants such as manzanita, madrone, big leaf maple and bay laurel. So far Sudden Oak Death has been restricted to the coastal regions of California, though there is concern it could spread eastward to the Sierra Nevada mountains. There is also concern that it could spread to the eastern United States and infect the commercially important northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*).

In August 2000, the California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF) was established to coordinate a comprehensive and unified program of research, management, monitoring, education and public policy aimed at reducing the impacts of elevated levels of oak mortality. It is working with researchers to try to figure out where SOD occurs, how the pathogen is spread, and how it can be contained. It is also working with educators to make sure that the latest scientific information on management strategies to limit the spread of SOD is disseminated to appropriate clientele. The University of California, the California State Legislature, the USDA Forest Service, and the private Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, have provided financial support to help address the SOD problem.

We do not yet know how many trees and shrubs will be killed by SOD so it is hard to predict how severe the consequences will be. We do know, however, that anything that kills large numbers of plants will increase risk of wildfires and increase the chances of trees falling on people or property in urban areas. There is also great concern about the consequences of widespread mortality on wildlife, since so many species

depend on oaks for food and shelter. The soil in coastal woodlands is also anchored by tree roots, so the loss of these trees could degrade water quality. Finally, there is fear that the openings created when trees die could allow the invasion by undesirable weed species.

SOD can be transmitted from an infested location to a non-infested region by moving infected plant material so federal regulations are in place that restrict movement of plant parts from host species out of the infested California counties. Canada, South Korea and Great Britain have also instituted quarantines that prohibit import of host plants.

You can learn more about Sudden Oak Death by visiting the COMTF web site at <http://www.suddenoakdeath.org>.

Below is a list of California plant species that have been identified as being hosts of *Phytophthora ramorum*:

- Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)
- California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*)
- Shreve oak (*Quercus parvula* var. *shrevei*)
- Tanoak (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*)
- Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*)
- Bay laurel (*Umbellularia californica*)
- Evergreen huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*)
- Manzanita (*Artostaphylos* spp.)
- Buckeye (*Aesculus californica*)
- Ornamental and native rhododendron (*Rhododendron* spp.)
- Honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.)
- Big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)
- Coffeeferry (*Rhamnus californica*)
- Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)

— Doug McCreary