



# Oak News & Notes

The Newsletter of the International Oak Society, Volume 18, No. 2, 2014

## Mudding in Mississippi: Oak Open Days, June 27-29

Rain, mud, mosquitos, great trees, and wonderful people, all contributed to a successful Oak Open Day event held in Mississippi, June 27-29. Visitors from eight states gathered in West Point, MS for an event organized by Dudley Phelps and Ryan Russell. The tours included four venues, each with distinct variations in landscapes. From natural growth forests to unusual urban trees; manicured landscapes to a commercial nursery, participants experienced it all.

Visitors gathered Friday evening at the Mossy Oak\* Biologic and Nativ Nurseries headquarters in West Point, for a rainy carpool to the welcome reception held at a cabin built in 1832 out of American chestnut. There we were greeted by Mossy Oak founder, Toxey Haas, and offered an impromptu vehicular tour of the area surrounding the cabin, to marvel at a mature *Quercus falcata* Michx. It is speculated that this tree is actually a hybrid, but while everyone agreed it was beautiful, no conclusion was drawn about its parentage. Once gathered back at the cabin, our group had supper consisting of grilled kebobs, salad, and rice prepared by Mossy Oak staff.



Mature *Quercus alba* × *lyrata* at the Westpoint Airport. Photo: Ryan Russell

Saturday brought overcast skies and mild drizzle. Participants toured a leased hunting property known locally as the Cotton Mill, just outside of West Point in all-terrain vehicles while being plagued by mosquitos. The first stop was at a grove of *Q. ×beadlei* Trel. ex E. J. Palmer surrounded by *Q. michauxii* Nutt., *Q. sinuata* Walter var. *sinuata* and *Carya carolinae-septentrionalis* (Ashe) Engl. & Graebn.

Chanterelle mushrooms (*Cantharellus cibarius* Fr.) abounded in the undergrowth of these magnificent trees.

A late lunch at the Twisted Burger, a gas station turned restaurant, allowed the group to visit and discuss the trees they had seen.

After lunch, the group carpooled to several trees within the city of West Point, as rain clouds gathered. The first afternoon stop was

at a large *Q. alba* L. × *lyrata* Walter near the City Airport on the northernmost edge of the property we had toured that morning. This tree exhibits characteristics intermediate between each parent almost perfectly. The next stop was at the Mossy Oak brand licensing building in the middle of downtown. The tree here is a large *Q. falcata* × *phellos* L. that grows right on the property line and is divided by a privacy fence. This hybrid can be determined by the rounded base, a characteristic of *Q. falcata* as opposed to the acute base of *Q. pagoda* Raf. seen in *Q. ×ludoviciana* Sarg. As we headed out of town for the last stop of the day,





The broad range of  $F_2$  seedlings from *Quercus nigra*  $\times$  *texana* at Nativ Nurseries. Photo: Ryan Russell

we made a slight detour to the home of a friend of Mr. Haas where we saw a young *Q. x moultonensis* Ashe. This tree has been dubbed "The Generator" as it produces huge crops of acorns each year. After a short drive out of town, with rain threatening, the group stopped to view a handsome *Q.*

*x neopalmeri* Sudw. and a putative *Q. nigra* L.  $\times$  *texana* Buckley on a manicured estate owned by Mr. Jimmy Bryan. These trees have been determined by Dudley after years of growing seedlings and observing traits of the parent tree. Both of these trees were bought from a local landscape company as *Q. shumardii* Buckley. After a long, tree-filled day, the majority consensus was as follows: shower, supper and bed.



*Quercus similis* Ashe at the Cotton Mill. Photo: Ryan Russell

Sunday morning dawned bright and sunny as the group met in Starkville to tour the University of Mississippi (MSU) campus. On campus we were introduced to campus extension arborist, Jason Gordon. MSU was founded in 1878 and covers 4,400 ac/1,480 ha,

which includes campus and several research farms throughout the state. MSU was the second campus in the state of Mississippi to receive the Tree Campus USA status. Jason stated that work on a campus tree inventory was started in 2013 and is ongoing.

The first tree we visited on campus was another mature *Q. alba*  $\times$  *lyrata*. This tree was the first tree that Nativ Nurseries began collecting from. At first, it was thought to be a pure white oak, but after careful observation of seedlings and closer inspection to the parent tree, it was found to be a hybrid. We then stopped at a putative *Q. stellata* Wangenh.  $\times$  *virginiana* Mill. After several minutes of debate, no consensus was reached as to its heritage. The next tree was a conundrum as well. Planted along a row of *Q. phellos*, was a tree that has stumped the Mossy Oak crew. It was finally decided that this tree was likely a *Q. palustris* Münchh.  $\times$  *nigra*. Further observation is needed to confirm the suspicion. The group was astounded by a *Q. macrocarpa* Michx. that was planted in 1976. Many in the group would have dated it at 70-100 years old if found in colder climates. We then stopped at a mature specimen of *Q. nigra*  $\times$  *pagoda*. The intermediate leaves were quite beautiful.

The day concluded with a visit to the Mossy Oak Nativ Nursery greenhouse, where Dudley Phelps walked us through their process of collecting, growing, and mailing their seedlings. Each attendee was able to pick out a seedling to take home. Attendees then said good-bye to old friends and new friends, with promises to keep in touch and hopes to see each other at next year's conference in Chicago.

A full account of the tours will be published in the upcoming edition of *Inter-*



*Quercus falcata*  $\times$  *phellos*. Photo: Ryan Russell

*national Oaks*. I would like to thank the organizers, Dudley Phelps and Ryan Russell for an exciting and informational OOD. I would also like to extend a personal thank you to Toxey Hass, Vandy Stubbs, and Jesse Raley of Mossy Oak, and Jason Gordon of MSU for their hospitality and participation in this event.

*Tammie Russell*

\*Mossy Oak was founded in 1986 as a hunting camouflage manufacturer and has expanded their lines to hunting equipment, Biologic, real estate, Nativ Nurseries, etc. The original camouflage design was based on the bark of *Quercus margaretta* (Ashe) Small.





## A Visit to Plaček Quercetum

On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013, a group of International Dendrology Society members on tour in the Czech Republic visited Plaček Quercetum, property of IOS member Dušan Plaček. I was particularly looking forward to this visit having met Dušan six weeks earlier at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens during the IOS Oak Open Day held there and been struck by his immense enthusiasm.



Dušan showing a newly planted *Quercus ilex* in a protective cage. Photo: Harriet Tupper

We walked up the drive between acacia trees to be met by Dušan and his advisor, Ondrej Fous, who had also been at Hillier Gardens. They welcomed us with a glass of wine and Dušan explained a little of the background. At 25 he had been living in a city near Prague but wanted a place with a garden, in itself unusual for someone of this age. Apparently the first plants that aroused his interest were aquarium plants, which he sold alongside goldfish. Now he was definitely after something much more substantial. After quite a search in 1998 he bought a house and land about 60 km/37 mi east of Prague. This was a house and garden dating from the 1930s, when it was built to be the home of an interior minister (Josef Černý) and his wife. The grounds

were designed by Josef Kumpán, who had studied in Berlin. Research has turned up some of the original plans showing not only the garden but also cherry orchards.

Once we were seated in the garage, which had been cleared for the occasion, Ondrej gave us a presentation on the past, present and future of the Quercetum, with additions from Josef Soček, a dendrologist who works with Dušan, advising him and collecting for him. The property is about 50 ha/123 ac in total, with about 14 ha/34 ac of trees. The historic garden has been restored. The house looks out to a generous lawn which has a fine selection of trees and shrubs planted around it, including weeping willow, birch, conifers and many other ornamental trees. Apparently many have had to be removed or pruned in order to restore the original effect. However, in between and round the edge, oaks have been added, including some very tiny *Quercus ilex* L. grown from seed sent by Thierry Lamant. Of the 30 seedlings that grew from Thierry's acorns and were planted out, only about five or six survived. They have been planted under and around the larger trees to give them protection from the cold. This illustrates perfectly the main difficulty



*Quercus marilandica* Münchh. Photo: Harriet Tupper

for the Quercetum and that is hardiness.

After we had strolled around the garden, we set off into the Quercetum proper. This is the land on either side of the Robinia Allée. The plantation of the oaks is organized according to the divisions once defined by Prantl (Krüssman 1978): *cerris*, *robur*, *albae*, *rubrae*, *dentatae*, *gallifera*, *nigrae*, *phellos*. All of the species that belong



Seedlings in the greenhouse awaiting a permanent home. Photo: Harriet Tupper

to one of these groups are planted in the same area and for each species within a group the botanic taxon is central with its hybrids and cultivars planted around it. The goal is to have trees of known provenance from the wild, but in the meantime Dušan plants the best he can get until he can "trade up." I greatly admire his discipline in planting with plenty of space between trees and between groups of trees. I do wonder if he will be able to bring himself to sacrifice some early planting for the sake of better provenance!

There are several hundred different oaks already growing here, all well cataloged and labeled. I will not attempt a comprehensive list here, but the full story of Plaček Quercetum is to appear in the next issue of *International*





*Quercus robur* L. 'Timuki'. Photo: Béatrice Chassé.

al Oaks following Béatrice Chassé's three-day visit there in June 2014, so reader curiosity will be satisfied! An oak that I found especially interesting was a cultivar of a hybrid between *Q. falcata* Michx. and *Q. rysophylla* Weath., *Q. 'Zehra'* (a name only provisionally accepted because it was published without a description). Dušan is particularly fond of *Q. velutina* Lam. and its hybrids, many of which are rather striking, for example *Q. ×willdenowiana* (Dippel) Beissn., Schelle & Zabel, a hybrid with *Q. falcata*. After a methodical walk through the Quercetum, we were taken into the greenhouse, which is thick with young oaks, some not hardy enough to venture outdoors. I was glad to see *Q. insignis* M. Martens & Galeotti growing in such a way that you could still see the enormous acorn from which it sprouted.

It seems that not all the orchards have gone, because to round off an inspiring visit, Dušan offered us some slivovitz made from his own plums.

Harriet Tupper



## Member Spotlight: Christine Battle

This issue of *Oak News & Notes* turns its spotlight on UK member Christine Battle, who we could describe as a “quercus double-threat”: oak collector and botanical artist—with several exquisite watercolors of oaks in her portfolio.

Her oak collection stands in Congrove Arboretum, site of a recent Oak Open Day (see p. 6). When she and her hus-



Christine Battle standing by a *Cunninghamia lanceolata* 'Glauca'. Photo: Roderick Cameron

band Ben acquired the property, they discovered that it had been a Victorian arboretum. Delighted with the discovery, they decided to restore and develop it, adding thousands of trees, especially oaks, of which over 200 taxa have been planted.

“It was an accident that led me to collect oaks above other genera,” says Christine, “although if you visit Congrove Arboretum you will find quite a diverse collection of plants. I’d invited a great friend of ours down for the weekend, James MacEwen, and when

he saw my nascent collection of trees he was keen to introduce me to a friend of his who at that time was working at Hillier Gardens – Allen Coombes. He was so kind and generous with his time, and was so enthusiastic about *Quercus* that I couldn’t help but be enthused in my turn. And then he sent me some wild-collected acorns from a recent collecting trip in Taiwan. Just holding these extraordinary seeds in my hand was enough to fire my imagination, and then they started germinating – wow! I was well and truly hooked.”

Asked to single out favorite species she confesses a weakness for the “wondrously rich, red, felty new growth” of Mexican oaks, in particular *Q. crassifolia* Bonpl. And there are others: “An oak new to my collection which I think is just delightful is the modest *Q. hypoleuroides*... modest, that is, until you turn over the leaf and see why it is known as the silverleaf oak. In fall, the red oaks come into their own and I am always dazzled by the varying colors to be found on just one tree. *Q. phellos* is particularly fine and its dying leaves offer every shade from lemon yellow through shrimp pink to bright orange and vermillion. Last but not least is *Q. imbricaria*



*Q. repanda* Bonpl. Photo: Roderick Cameron





Artwork by Christine Battle of *Quercus monimotricha*.

which, in my opinion, gives pleasure at nearly every time of year. It has an attractive shape, lovely bark and the leaves turn glorious shiny shades of red, magenta and burgundy in the fall.”

Though Christine had always been interested in plants, she only took up botanical drawing late in life, on receiving in 2006 a two-day botanical art drawing course as a birthday present. She had had no formal training in botany other than school science lessons, but that has not been an impediment: “I guess I was always fascinated by plants and growing things, so what I learned back then stuck with me. But it is important in my line of work to know at least the basics of plant structure, reproduction, etc. It’s particularly important to get details right; like the angle of the leaves on the stem, or the number of stamens in a flower. These can all be diagnostic features – elements a botanist will use to identify the specimen, so you don’t want to get anything wrong! Just painting what you see is fine for a plant portrait, but for a scientific illustration – for Curtis’s Botanical Magazine for instance – it’s vital to ensure that everything is correct.”

As Christine works mainly on commission, her clients tend to dictate what she draws. She has drawn two oaks so far (*Q. guyavifolia* H. Lév. and *Q. monimotricha* (Hand.-Mazz) Hand.-Mazz), but there are more in the pipeline. “Now that I’m illustrating more for Curtis, I paint what is required by the editor, although Martyn Rix is very understanding of my passion for *Quercus*, and has commissioned me to paint some oaks. I am currently working on *Q. lamellosa* and *Q. rysophylla*, both very exciting species.”

Oaks present certain challenges to the botanical artist due to their size: in order to paint life-size, as is tradition in



*Quercus hirtifolia* M. L. Vázquez et al. Photo: Roderick Cameron

botanical art, it is important to focus on the right detail. For Christine the challenge is to find an interesting branch or twig that shows the features a botanist would expect to find, but that also has artistic value. “I try to imbue each plant I paint with “wall appeal”—with varying success I might add. Oaks tend to be modest plants, with a few notable exceptions – such as *Q. insignis* with its showy great leaves – so I have to focus on other attractive aspects. For instance the new spring growth on most oaks is absolutely delightful, and some of the young shoots of Mexican oaks in particular are covered in the

most exquisite red or carmine indumentum, so I try to make a “thing” of features like that. And of course acorns are delightful objects in themselves, and so diverse amongst the genus.”

Congrove Arboretum was recently sold, as Christine and Ben decided to move to be closer to family, but they are confident that the new owners will cherish the trees. In the meantime, we hope Christine will have plenty of time to draw more oaks!

You can read further about Christine’s art and Congrove Arboretum in the Articles section of the IOS website.

*Roderick Cameron*

## Species Spotlight:

### *Quercus georgiana* M.A. Curtis

Georgia oak is known from 15 counties in Georgia and possibly small pockets in Alabama, with an unverified report in North Carolina. One of these locations is Stone Mountain, just northeast of Atlanta, GA. The base of Stone Mountain stands at 1,000 ft/305 m in elevation rising to over 1,600 ft/488 m at the summit.

Taking the foot trail leading up the east side of the mountain, the flora at the bottom includes species such as *Calli-carpa americana* L., *Vaccinium arbo-*



*Quercus georgiana* growing out of a granite fissure. Photo: Ryan Russell





Range of fall color in *Quercus georgiana* seedlings. Photo: Ryan Russell

*reum* Marshall, *Quercus nigra* L., and *Pinus virginiana* Mill. Nearing 1,100 ft/335 m in elevation, dense stands of *Pinus taeda* L. emerge along with *Q. marilandica* Münchh. and *Rhus copalinum* L. A little further up the side of the mountain (nearing 1,200 ft/366 m) are a few *Q. georgiana* and putative hybrids between *Q. nigra* and *Q. georgiana*, along with *Diospyros virginiana* L., *Vitis rotundifolia* Michx., and *Andropogon virginicus* L. Around 1,300 ft/396 m are stands of pure *Q. georgiana* and several *Q. montana* Willd. Many of the Georgia oaks on Stone Mountain are no larger than 3 ft/1 m tall, but a few are nearly 20 ft/6 m in height with a stem diameter of 6 in/15 cm. Approaching the peak, the plant communities begin to divide into small pockets along the sides of the



*Quercus georgiana* showing fall color. Photo: Ryan Russell

trail and the landscape eventually turns to pure granite. *Q. georgiana* found on Stone Mountain survive in small fissures in the solid granite which slowly fills with bits of granite, and broken-down leaf litter. Elsewhere, they are found on granite flat rock ridges on the Piedmont Plateau.

Georgia oaks are beautiful, small trees with wonderful fall color, ranging from bright reds to vibrant yellows. *Q. georgiana* is surprisingly hardy beyond its native range, growing well into USDA zone 5. Georgia oak from other sites may form an upright tree with a single leader and grow to 30 ft/9 m tall\*. Obtaining acorns or seedlings from this species may prove difficult, but if given the opportunity, it is a species deserving of a place in your collection.

*Ryan Russell*

\*Some believe this habit is due to introgression from other species.

### Did you know?

*Quercus robur* L. has the largest number of cultivars selected (around 256 to date) for any one species. Some of the oldest cultivars date back over 200 years. Forms of *Q. robur* have been selected for leaf color, leaf shape, branching habit, dwarf habit, fastigiata habit, etc. There are three recognized groups (Pendula, Fastigiata, and Heterophylla) and six subspecies.

### Oak Open Days in Gloucestershire, UK

July 6-7, 2014

Unexpectedly sunny weather greeted 38 participants as they arrived in Upton Cheyney for the start of two days of marveling at oaks - young and old - in Gloucestershire.

### Congrove Arboretum

The first event, a visit to Christine Battle's Congrove Arboretum, started a few miles from there, at Manor Farm Shop, a lovely place that is at once an organic grocery shop, café, restaurant, and campsite, where we enjoyed a delicious buffet lunch with a grand finale of scrumptious strawberries and cream.

Congrove Cottage has "tree" written in its destiny. Before Christine and her husband Ben arrived it was already an arboretum that Christine then developed enormously, and now, as Christine and Ben are leaving, the new master of Congrove, Tamburlaine Gorst, is also very enthusiastic about trees. This day was Christine's farewell to Congrove at the same time as it was a welcome to Tam.

Christine Battle has been a member of the International Oak Society for many, many years and she was instrumental in organizing members to pool their resources to enable expeditions looking for new species. Many oak collections would not be as rich as they are today if not for her commitment to this initiative.

Carpooling after lunch took us down tiny little roads that wind through thick



*Quercus castaneifolia* C. A. Mey. × *cerris* L. at Leigh Delamere House. Photo: Charles Snyers





The garden at Congrove. Photo: Charles Snyers

vegetation that create a mysterious ambience in this stunning countryside. As we drive the last hundred meters it becomes apparent that someone has been planting many special trees here. A vast majority of the oaks are wild-collected botanic species, undoubtedly the influence of Allen Coombes, whom Christine met thanks to James MacEwen, IOS member, close collaborator of hers, and our guide for the day.

The most surprising trees that are growing here are *Q. insignis* M. Martens & Galeotti, *Q. germana* Schltld. & Cham., *Q. xalapensis* Bonpl., and two *Q. corrugata* Hook. They were planted together in a very sheltered area in 2012 and have thus survived two winters, albeit mild ones (during which they are protected, as are about 15 other species).

I first visited with Christine in 2007 and it was a great pleasure for me to see how Congrove Arboretum has developed in the intervening years. We all look forward to going back there in another seven.

### Leigh Delamere House

The official program of this event included Congrove Arboretum followed by Westonbirt, the National Arboretum. The cherry on the top, or rather, in the middle, was an invitation to end

the first day with a wineglass-in-hand visit of participant Harriet Tupper's garden at Leigh Delamere House. Harriet is Chairman of the International Dendrology Society and also a long-standing member of the IOS. There are many nice oaks here – but so many other wonderful plants as well so that it was a treat to look at beautiful flowers, shrubs and other non-oak marvels. We had a very interesting discussion, provoked by three trees that Harriet has labelled as *Q. castaneifolia* C.A. Mey that are possible hybrids with *Q. cerris* L. Each tree, grown from acorns collected from the same tree in Iran,



*Q. canariensis* Willd. at Westonbirt. Photo: Charles Snyers

was remarkably different: two of them with obvious *cerris* characteristics whilst the third had none.

### Westonbirt, the National Arboretum

The following day our rendezvous is 140 km/87 mi north at Westonbirt, where we are greeted by our guides for the day, Dan Crowley and Hugh Angus, as well as by Simon Toomer, who, though he could not spend the day, took the time to welcome us. The morning is devoted to the oak collection in the newer part of the arboretum, where the planting started during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To get to that part of the arboretum we walk

through an area where several venerable oaks – *Q. robur* L., *Q. pyrenaica* Willd., and *Q. xhispanica* Lam. – can be seen.

In the oak collection, a *Q. macrocarpa* Michx. without the characteristic deep sinus but with the characteristic bark gave Eike Jablonski the opportunity to explain to us that this variation (along with very small acorns) is characteristic of the most northern populations of this species and used to be distinguished from the type under the name *Q. macrocarpa* subsp. *oliviformis* (F. Michx) A. Camus.

The day was marked with thought-provoking discussions on various subjects including strategies for maintaining collections, how to promote interest in gardens as well as the morphological differences noticeable between trees in cultivation in different countries. This is largely due to the fact that the horticultural trade in different countries often do not have the same provenances for either scions or seeds. This is strikingly exemplified by the *Q. canariensis* Willd. commonly planted in the UK and which differs significantly from the form most often seen on the continent.



*Rhododendron* 'Polar Bear' at Westonbirt. Photo: Charles Snyers



The start of the afternoon visit to the older part of the arboretum required rain coats and umbrellas, but these are quickly cast away as the sun reappears to light up this spectacular example of a landscaped arboretum with more than 150 years behind it and a dynamic staff and strategy to lead it through at least the next 150 years.

Of the recent oak introductions to Europe, *Q. acutifolia* Née, *Q. acherdophylla* Trel., *Q. gravesii* Sudw., and *Q. mexicana* Bonpl. are doing well here. A very healthy, 5 m/14 ft tall *Q. pontica* K. Koch was quite lovely to see with its bright yellow petioles and rich green leaves. (Douglas ex Hook.) Hjelmq., a North American member of the family *Fagaceae* and a rare tree in cultivation, was interesting to see especially as it was fruiting!

Many thanks to Christine Battle, James MacEwen, Harriet Tupper, Hugh Angus, Dan Crowley, Shaun Haddock, and all of the participants in these most pleasant Gloucestershire days. A more detailed account will be published in the next issue of *International Oaks*.

*Béatrice Chassé*

## The Oaks at Eastwoodhill

Eastwoodhill is the National Arboretum of New Zealand, located on the East Coast of the North Island 35 km/22 mi northwest of Gisborne. There is not space here to discuss the history of the arboretum, including the colorful life of its creator Douglas Cook and the important cataloging work carried out by IOS-member Bob Berry of Hackfalls (see *Oak News & Notes*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Winter 2011), but you can find these stories in the full-length version of this article on the IOS website. Eastwoodhill, with over 3,600 taxa, has the largest collection in

the Southern Hemisphere of Northern Hemisphere plants, and is a fine example of ex situ conservation. In fact, one of the forces driving Cook to import and collect plants was his belief that the Cold War would lead to a nuclear conflagration that would destroy the European gardens and nurseries he so admired. As world powers stocked nuclear warheads, he stockpiled ornamental plants in the hope that they would serve as a repository from which plants could be reintroduced to the Northern Hemisphere. Of the many trees in Eastwoodhill's collection, we will focus on our favorite genus.

There are over 880 oaks in the collection, representing 81 taxa. Several of these are on the IUCN red list for oaks, adding another layer of interest to them. The oldest were acquired by Douglas Cook and include splendid examples of scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea* Münchh.), which provide some of the best color in autumn, Eastwoodhill's most attractive season. One of the oldest trees in the arboretum is a scarlet oak in the Homestead Garden, featured on their website under "Stars in the Park". Oaks were one of Cook's favorite genera and a scarlet oak leaf was chosen as the Arboretum's emblem. According to an article pub-

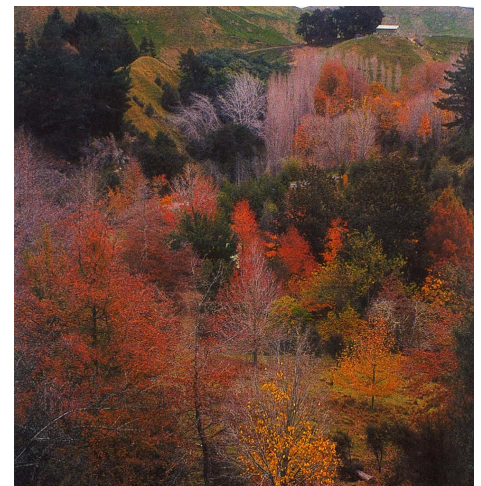
lished in 1998 by then curator Garry Clapperton, the Arboretum provided three local nurseries with over ten thousand acorns of red and scarlet oak,

especially the latter: "The scarlet oak has attracted the nurseries in particular. So many acorns have left here over the last ten years that the autumn face of New Zealand in another thirty years is going to be a

brighter and deeper red." Mr. Appleton also mentions how well oaks endure drought in the arboretum's ash soils (or rather, as he defines them, "growing mediums"), remaining bright green when all around other trees are wilting. He speculates that the deep roots of established oaks are able to reach through the 1.30 m/3.3 ft top layer of pumice and rhyolitic ash to the weath-



*Quercus coccinea* on the edge of the Top Lawn in the Homestead Garden, one of the oldest recorded trees in the arboretum. Photo: Eastwoodhill Arboretum website



Rich autumn colors predominate in April and May at Eastwoodhill. Photo: Gary Clapperton



ered sandstone and mudstone that retain moisture through droughts.

I asked Ben Lyte, current curator at Eastwoodhill, to highlight some of the oaks in his care and he chose three oaks in the arboretum as being particularly noteworthy and representative of the reason for the collection:

“*Q. lamellosa* Sm.: a native of the Himalayas, discovered in 1812 in India by Buchanan-Hamilton, a Scottish



*Quercus lamellosa* at Eastwoodhill. Photo: Ben Lyte

physician and botanist. Sir Joseph Hooker described it as the noblest of all oaks. The leaves can reach up to 45 cm/18 in long in the wild, which matches a specimen collected by Hooker in Sikkim. It also has fine acorns, which are large and flattened with rings forming on the cups. The specimen in the arboretum is our only example, and is still relatively small in stature at around 4 m/13 ft. It was planted out in 1989 from seed collected by Alan Jellyman in Nepal. The specific epithet means layered, which possibly alludes to the fruit, but this is supposition on my part.

“*Q. durifolia* Seemen ex. Loes.: the Mexican Emory Oak, from seed in western Durango, Mexico by Bob Berry. Again, we only have the one plant in the arboretum, but this is taking off a lot quicker than *Q. lamellosa*, achiev-



*Quercus durifolia* at Eastwoodhill. Photo: Ben Lyte

ing over 3 m/10 ft from introduction in 1993. It is an evergreen species, with fine, narrow glossy green leaves growing on a sunny, exposed southerly slope. The soils at Eastwoodhill are predominantly ash, subject to dry summers and wetter winters, so perhaps not ideal for excellent tree growth. However, once established, they will survive most conditions.

“*Q. ×ludoviciana* Sarg.: the St. Landry Oak, one of the jewels in the crown of the arboretum. This oak is a naturally occurring hybrid (of *Q. phellos* L. and *Q. pagoda* Raf.) described in 1913, in



*Quercus ×ludoviciana* at Eastwoodhill. Photo: Courtesy Eastwoodhill Arboretum

Landry, Louisiana. The St. Landry oak is unusual in that it is semi-deciduous and holds its leaves through most of the winter though it will drop the leaves if very cold. The Eastwoodhill specimen was planted in 1949 and has grown very fast, now reaching over 30 m/98 ft. The tree has amazing arching limbs that are broadly spreading with large scaffold lateral branches reaching over 20 m/66 ft. This specimen is a fine example of the rapid growth that can be achieved by temperate trees in a benign climate. However, it has had a lot of work carried out on it over the years, with limbs removed to prevent failure in the future. It provides a good talking point on tours, when asking visitors to estimate its age. A similar sized tree in the Northern Hemisphere would probably be around 200 years old. Certainly, this is an area that requires some considerable research, as many of the European and North American trees are starting to achieve maturity across New Zealand.”

It is interesting to note that in his catalog (1976 update), Bob Berry listed the oak with a height of 18 m/50 ft and diameter of 68 ¼ cm/26.9 in, and noted: “A fine specimen. The most vigorous oak at Eastwoodhill.”

A complete list of *Quercus* in the collection can be accessed on the IOS website. Given the risk to oak habitat posed by climate change, Douglas Cook’s vision of his arboretum as a repository for threatened plants gains new significance. It is hoped that Eastwoodhill’s oaks will continue to thrive and delight and be an integral part of its founder’s dream.

*Roderick Cameron*





## WE NEED YOUR HELP

The IOS is a small organization with limited financial means. It traditionally relies on volunteers for its management as for nearly everything it undertakes.

We need help to reinforce the Website and Finance Committees.

We would like to redesign our main website [www.internationaloaksociety.org](http://www.internationaloaksociety.org) so that it can be viewed on smartphones and on tablets. We would also like to undertake a complete redesign of our website [www.oaknames.org](http://www.oaknames.org). If the words or acronyms Drupal, CMS, MySQL mean anything to you, or if you have an opinion on what oaknames.org should look like or what its content should be, please consider volunteering to help us with this task.

Likewise, we need to reinforce the Finance Committee that oversees finances and membership management. Not only do we need assistance now, we also anticipate changes that might take place in 2015. If you have some financial skills in accounting for non-profit organizations or in membership management, please consider joining the committee.

Contact us at:

[siteadmin@internationaloaksociety.org](mailto:siteadmin@internationaloaksociety.org).

*Charles Snyers*

## Did you know?

The oak species with the largest continuous range in North America is *Q. macrocarpa* Michx.; ranging from New England west to Nebraska, and Manitoba south to Texas. However, the species with the largest natural range in North America is *Q. muehlenbergii* Engelm.; ranging from Quebec south to Florida, and New England

west to Texas, with disjunct populations in Mexico.

## 8<sup>th</sup> International Oak Society Conference October 18-21, 2015

We are excited to announce that The Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois will host the next International Oak Society Conference from October 18 to 21, 2015. The meeting will be particularly meaningful, as it marks the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the first IOS Conference held at the Morton in 1994.

The Conference program will reflect the region's keen interest in oaks, including: current research on oak ecology, natural history and evolution, forest ecology, biodiversity and conservation; selection and propagation; cultivation; pests and diseases; and of course stellar field trips to observe oaks both in garden and wild settings. Hands-on workshops will be a new feature in this conference. Confirmed speakers include:

**Janet Backs**, University of Illinois-Chicago

**Jeannine Cavender Bares**, U. of Minnesota

**Béatrice Chassé**, Arboretum des Pouyouleix

**Antonio González-Rodríguez**, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

**Jennifer Juzwik**, U. of Minnesota

**Matthew Kaproth**, U. of Minnesota

**Antoine Kremer**, INRA-BIOGECO

**Sara Oldfield**, Botanic Gardens Conservation International

**Ken Oyama**, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

**Greg Paige**, The Bartlett Arboretum

**Ian Pearse**, Illinois Natural History Survey

**Jeanne Romero-Severson**, Notre Dame University

**Joseph Rothleutner**, The Morton Arboretum

**Victoria Sork**, UCLA

**Guy Sternberg**, Starhill Forest Arboretum

**Weibang Sun**, Kunming Botanical Garden

**Christina Walters**, USDA Plant Germplasm Preservation Research Unit, Colorado State U.

**Murphy Westwood**, The Morton Arboretum



Participants at the inaugural IOS Conference at The Morton Arboretum in 1994. Photo: Guy Sternberg





The Indiana Dunes along Lake Michigan, first stop on the Post-Conference Tour, less than 30 mi/50 km from downtown Chicago and only a few miles from the international shipping Port of Indiana. Photo: Jim Hitz

The Pre-Conference Tour is scheduled for October 13 through 17, and the Post-Conference Tour is scheduled for October 22 through 24. Registration and call for posters will open in March 2015. Mark your calendars, and start marking trees for acorn collecting! Detailed information will follow in the spring newsletter, but if you just can't wait, contact Megan Dunning ([mdunning@mortonarb.org](mailto:mdunning@mortonarb.org)) or Andrew Hipp ([ahipp@mortonarb.org](mailto:ahipp@mortonarb.org)).

### Pre-Conference Tour

*Event Date:* Tuesday, 13 October to Saturday, 17 October, 2015



One of the stops along the Pre-Tour. Photo: Guy Sternberg

The five-day Pre-Conference Tour will explore Southern and Central Illinois, including oak habitats ranging from classic southern *Taxodium* swamps to sandstone ridges and canyons, flat-woods communities, mesic and riparian forests, barrens, sand prairie, and savannas. We will stay at rustic but comfortable lodges along the way and travel for five days from St. Louis, Missouri down through the Illinois Ozarks and then gradually move northeast more than 400 mi/640 km to The Morton Arboretum. We expect to see about 20 native species and nothospecies of oaks (plus hundreds of others in cultivation at Starhill Forest), including some state and national champion specimens as well as their companion species. One evening will be spent with local wines at the famous Longshadow Gardens and another with a private candlelight tour of the historic village where Abraham Lincoln lived. We also will visit Lincoln's Tomb, during the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of his death. Autumn color, while variable in timing, should be in full display, and it will be seed season for oaks! The trip must be restricted to the first 50 applicants due to limited available lodging and transportation.

*Tour leaders:* Guy Sternberg and Alana McKean, with Henry "Weeds" Eilers.

### 2015 Post-Conference Tour

*Event Date:* Thursday, 22 October 2015 to Saturday, 24 October 2015

2015 Post-Conference tour will take us to some excellent native landscapes along the South Lake Michigan region of Indiana and Michigan. The Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is home to Cowles Bog and Pinhook Bog. Cowles Bog is actually a fen in the dunes while Pinhook Bog is an acid bog that is unique in the region. Black oak is the dominant oak in this area along with some red oak, white oak, and Hill's oak. In Southwest Michigan, Warren Woods is the last remaining untouched beech/maple forest in this part of the country. Fernwood Botanic Garden will be host for lunch one day with time to enjoy some unique plant communities along the St. Joseph River. Other stops will include pin oak bottoms forest and more sites yet to be determined. Our first evening will be in New Buffalo, Michigan, along the Lake Michigan shoreline. It is a great place to relax and stroll along the beach in October. The tour is limited to



50 people so plan to sign up early to reserve your place.

*Tour leader:* James Hitz

### Acorn Collecting for the 2015 IOS Conference

Planning on participating in the seed exchange at the 2015 IOS Conference? For everything you need to know, visit <http://systematics.mortonarb.org/IOS2015/> or watch for details in the spring newsletter.

### From the Board

As we move towards the end of 2014 the most important thing on our minds is the 8<sup>th</sup> International Oak Society Conference that will be held at the Morton Arboretum (Lisle, Illinois) just a little over a year from now. Preliminary information about the Conference and the Pre- and Post-Conference Tours are already available on the Society website. The Conference Committee expects to open registration in March 2015.

Associated with this event are three important moments in the life of our Society: the election of candidates for the new Board that will serve from 2015-2018, the attribution of the IOS Service Awards and the announcement of the venue for the following triennial conference (2018).

Diana Gardener has volunteered to continue organizing and overseeing the election procedures, as she has done since 2006 when she took over these responsibilities from Rudy Light. Once again, we are grateful to her for assuming this important and time-consuming task that she fulfills so meticulously. If you are interested in being a candidate, a short biography and letter explaining your motivation and what it is you feel you could offer to the Society should

be sent to Diana Gardener at [quercusgardener@gmail.com](mailto:quercusgardener@gmail.com) or, Diana Gardener, 409 95<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Salem OR 97317-7607, USA.

The International Oak Society Service Awards honor individuals (non-members as well as members of the Society) who have devoted significant long-term efforts to the genus *Quercus* and or the advancement of the goals of the IOS. There are two types: the Lifetime Service Award (for individuals that are retired from their professions) and the Special Service Award. Nominations for both should be sent to the IOS Secretary, Gert Fortgens at [secretary@internationaloaksociety.org](mailto:secretary@internationaloaksociety.org) along with a note specifying the reasons for the nomination.

It is always difficult to choose a venue for the triennial conference with an ideal combination of accessibility for those wishing to participate, a significant number of oak species to be seen in the wild, and interesting collections to visit. We would like to ask the membership what their preference would be for the locations we are now considering: California, Belgium, Turkey, an Eastern European country, Taiwan, or South Korea. If you are thinking about attending the conference in 2018, please take the time to send your opinion, also to Gert at the e-mail address given above.

Our newly formed Website Committee is eager to recruit volunteers with technical knowledge to help in the running and maintenance of the website. Also, there are many ways to participate in the life of the Society through the website forums and blogs. If you would like to join the Website Committee please contact Charles Snyers at [siteadmin@internationaloaksociety.org](mailto:siteadmin@internationaloaksociety.org)

or if you would like to contribute content to the website but are not sure how to do this, please contact, Roderick Cameron at [website@internationaloaksociety.org](mailto:website@internationaloaksociety.org)

Looking forward to seeing you all in Illinois in 2015!

*Béatrice Chassé*

### Miscellaneous

Our oak database [oaknames.org](http://oaknames.org) has received some badly needed updates, including new cultivars published in issue No. 24 of *International Oaks*. Many more have been added as a result of searching websites, horticulture publications, and trademarks and plant patents. However, this is an ever-changing process and we will strive to stay as current as possible. Several new selections are in preparation now and should be unveiled at the Triennial Conference in 2015.

As always, we look forward to your contributions of articles or ideas for articles for all of our media, *Oak News & Notes*, *International Oaks*, and [internationaloaksociety.org](http://internationaloaksociety.org). If you have an idea or article you would like to contribute, see the contact information below.



### Points of Contact

#### Submissions for the Newsletter

Ryan Russell - Roderick Cameron  
[newsletter@internationaloaksociety.org](mailto:newsletter@internationaloaksociety.org)

#### Submissions for the Journal

Béatrice Chassé - Allen Coombes  
[journal.editor@internationaloaksociety.org](mailto:journal.editor@internationaloaksociety.org)