

Message from the President



Mexico.

A word that conjures up images of extraordinary trees:

Quercus acherdophylla, *Q. magnoliifolia*, *Q. corrugata*, *Q. insignis*...

growing in places with extraordinary names:

Tlaxcala, Acaxochitlan, Zacacuautla, Huautusco...

vaguely evocative, if only in their sound, of gold, chocolate, mysterious birds and fierce heavens that have ceased being.

Mexico shares with only one other place in the world what appears to be an inextinguishable number of *Quercus* enigmas and surprises. Although understandably difficult to organize, I hope that this first IOS conference in Mexico is not the last. We have seen only a very small part of Mexican *Quercus* diversity, on the one hand, and, on the other, it is particularly appropriate that our Society provide a platform for Mexican researchers to present their work and make known their opinions about conservation policies and activities. I heartily encourage other plant societies to make this country their venue for field trips, conferences, etc...

An undeniably essential component of the success of the IOS Conference in Mexico was Dr. Maricela Rodríguez-Acosta. Equally, but more importantly, she is an invaluable part of Mexican research and conservation efforts in general and of *Quercus*-related projects in particular. The International Oak Society is indebted to Maricela, her students and entire team for we now have a new quality standard by which to set our sights for future conferences.

The first International Oak Society US event in 2010 will be at the UC Davis Arboretum Shield Oak Grove (2 May 2010). How fitting in light of an “oak” event that has marked the start of this new decade : the discovery by, amongst others, UC Davis researcher Jeffrey Ross-Ibarra, of the Jurupa Hills oak, a 13,000 year-old (clonal) *Quercus palmeri* Engelm. in Riverside County. This event is organised by Emily Griswold (UC Davis Arboretum, Horticultural Curator), who can be contacted at ebgriswold@ucdavis.edu to sign up for the VIP tour that is planned for IOS members.

The first European event in the new year, organized by Shaun Haddock (France), will be a guided tour to Kew Gardens (London) in the summer of 2010. In *Plant Hunting For Kew* (HMSO, ed. F. Nigel Harper, 1989), accounts of botanic expeditions all over the world (including Mexico) remind us of the importance of visiting the world to discover and propagate the plants that are our passion.

Which ones will germinate? which not? which species will produce the healthiest seedlings? what surprises await us in terms of hardiness? or frost-tenderness? For those of us growing oaks, these are the exciting things we have now to think about. Indeed, depending on the publication date of this journal, some of these questions will have been resolved and our thoughts already turned to future planting possibilities, and, of course, towards our next adventure.

Béatrice Chassé