



# International Oaks

## The Journal of the International Oak Society

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*...the new classification of oaks, truffles,  
treehouses, oaks of Lebanon and Iran,  
desperately seeking Q. tardifolia,  
the IOS 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary...*

Issue No. 29 / 2018 / ISSN 1941-2061



*This issue is dedicated to  
Michel Timacheff  
whose memory will live on in his beautiful  
photographs and in the hearts of the many in  
this Society who were his friends.*

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**Photos.** Cover: John Harris (*Quercus robur*). Page 7: Béatrice Chassé Page 9: Cécile Souquet-Basiege.

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## INTRODUCTION

# Marvellous Miscellany

Tasked with writing an introduction to *International Oaks*, one instinctively looks for links or common themes between articles in order to slot their summaries together and give the introduction a logical backbone, but this year's splendidly diverse offerings seem to defy such an approach – often their only link seems to be our dear friend Oak himself. Defeated, I commence instead with the items in order of appearance.

For the East Asian warm-climate Ring-cup Oaks, *Cyclobalanopsis* continues even today to be considered as a genus separate to *Quercus* in some parts of the world. Conversely, in the West it has long been treated as a subgenus. However, the phylogenetic pot has been boiling rapidly of late as molecular research deepens its reach: our Editor thus summarizes a radically new proposed classification system for oaks in which *Cyclobalanopsis* finds itself merely as one of three sections (along with *Cerris* and *Ilex*) in a subgenus *Cerris*, with all other oaks being contained in subgenus *Quercus*. But wait, isn't that pot still boiling....?

Allen Coombes has been turning over stones, and entertains us in his “Nomenclatural Notes” with what he has found underneath: *Quercus candicans* is not an oak! To find out what it is, read within. Meanwhile, as they are wont to do, Mexico and Central America have produced more oak species, one described in detail here by Susana Valencia-A, and a further two summarized by Béatrice Chassé and Allen Coombes, who go on to cover additional new species from Vietnam and even from staid old Europe.

Next we cater for the inner man in an article with a truly international flavor. Bogdan Caceu was born in Romania, but has gravitated to Oregon's Willamette Valley by way of Paris, New York and San Francisco, along the way becoming inoculated, or perhaps infected, with a passion for truffles. Here he tells us about his truffle-growing project; in addition one of his French mentors, Joël Gravier, reveals a more science-based approach to truffle production than the semi-mythic folklore of yore.


Inebriation Saves Veteran Ash Tree! To find out more read the article by Thomas Allocca, and you will at the same time learn more of the beauty and romance of treehouses.

Amid the turmoil of the Middle East, it is good to know that in Lebanon, a landscape much altered by man since earliest times, moves are afoot to identify conservation imperatives for seven oak taxa there (Stephan et al.). And speaking of ancient times, our gnarled oaks hold diaries in their tree rings whose secrets they are willing to divulge to

those who understand the language of dendrochronology (Loader et al.).

Two highly contrasting conurbations are researching ways to ensure a future for their green areas in which oaks are important components. Joeri Sergej Strijk describes the diversity found on the sub-tropical islands of Hong Kong, including a creditable fourteen species of oak, one only recently recorded in the territory; whilst Chicago seeks a pragmatic approach to the conservation of iconic native oak ecosystems (Custic et al.). Meanwhile, a workshop of the Oaks of the Americas Conservation Network (OACN) in Puebla, Mexico, signals a welcome and timely continent-wide interest in investigating and preserving the explosion of oaks found in Mexico (pp. 91-98).

No issue of *International Oaks* would be complete without an update on new and recently published oak cultivars, here provided as usual by Eike Jablonski and Ryan Russell. Next, Texas comes in for some rewarding attention, with Emily Griswold and others seeking to collect for ex-situ conservation efforts, and the indefatigable Béatrice Chassé on the road again (and it's a long road from east to west and back!) also in search of oaks and acorns. Béatrice and Charles Snyers give detail on the two 25<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations held for the Society in 2017, the first at Dusan Plaček's arboretum in the Czech Republic, the second at Guy Sternberg's Starhill Forest Arboretum in Illinois. Participants at the former will have met the energetic and effervescent Josef Souček, who on pages 151-160 describes an oak-hunting expedition he made to Iran. Roderick Cameron continues his Central American excursions with a visit to Costa Rica (pp. 181-193), and finally you are exhorted to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> International Oak Society Conference to be held at the UC Davis Arboretum ad Public Garden in California in October – with a wide-ranging array of associated tours in addition, I can't wait!



**Shaun Haddock**