

The Tree Register



Newsletter No.26
2017/2018

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Sandringham House gardens, Norfolk

Report from the Chairman

Colin Hall

Five Year Plan exceeds expectations



The Charity is involved in the maintenance of three databases, the Tree Register itself, the Ancient Tree Inventory in partnership with the Woodland Trust and the Ancient Yew database in conjunction with the Ancient Yew group. It is a vital part of the work of The Tree Register to ensure these records are kept as up to date as possible.

Targets surpassed

With this in mind we set ourselves targets in our 2013-2017 five year plan to ensure that at least 75% of our Champion tree records should have been updated in the last ten years and that at least 200,000 trees, including 6000 Champion trees, should have been recorded on the Tree Register. It is a great credit to Owen Johnson and our volunteer tree recorders that these targets have been easily surpassed, with some 230,000 trees now recorded and 6,500 Champion trees of Britain and Ireland being displayed on our website.

European Champion Tree Forum

Last summer, we hosted a very successful European Champion Tree Forum, welcoming many of our fellow tree enthusiasts from across Europe for a three day programme. David Alderman and Philippa Lewis worked really hard in organising a packed tour of estates and gardens to see many of our ancient and veteran trees. This included a day of lectures at Kew's Jodrell Theatre, where we were also pleased to invite and meet some of our members. Read Philippa's report on pages 6 and 7.



Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) at St. Stephen's church, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, visited by the European Champion Tree Forum during their tour. (Photo: Gordon Mackenthun)

Alan Mitchell Lecture 2018, Borde Hill

We are delighted that the owners of Borde Hill Gardens in Sussex have invited us to hold the 2018 Alan Mitchell Lecture at their gardens. The event will include a conducted tour of the gardens, a small reception and our widely acclaimed silent tree auction of rare and unusual trees. Owen Johnson will give the lecture. Places are limited so reserve your tickets early. You will find details on the back page of this newsletter.

We are very grateful to Sir Paul McCartney for his continued generosity in sponsoring this newsletter

Volunteers

The Tree Register owes everything to our volunteers, so thanks are due to all those who have helped and supported us during 2017: to David, Owen, Philippa, Alison, the Ancient Tree Inventory verifiers, Aubrey Fennell in Ireland, all our other tree recorders, Tim Hills and the Ancient Yew Group, Clair McFarlan, our volunteer support officer, and Pamela Stevenson, our hard working secretary and, finally, to you, our members.

Colin Hall

Chairman of the Trustees



Ireland's principal tree recorder, Aubrey Fennell, amongst the massive branches of a Japanese Red Cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*) at Curraghmore House, Co. Waterford. (Photo: David Alderman)

The Tree Register

Registered Charity No.801565

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The Tree Register of the British Isles (TROBI) was founded in 1988 by Alan Mitchell VMH and Victoria Schilling

Registrar's Report

Owen Johnson

No rest following successful year



2017 ended as a record year for the Tree Register, with 1190 champion trees discovered or updated. That represents more than 20% of the total and equates to 1800 country champions, and 8000 county champions, out of a total of nearly 16,000 record-sets added to the database over the season.

As well as boasting our largest concentration of champion trees, the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens in Hampshire is the only collection that organises its own volunteer tree-measurers, and during 2017 Mike Harris remeasured all of the gardens' 446 surviving champions; 150 new ones were also added. Anne Bell, on behalf of Cardiff City Council, has also continued recording and celebrating that city's uniquely rich collection of rare and champion municipal trees (see www.cardiffparks.org.uk/trees/).

Growing team of volunteers

Measuring trips to south-west England, Highland Scotland, Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire, the West Midlands, Suffolk and south Wales helped keep me busy through 2017, whilst several more from our growing team of volunteer measurers have found champions of their own: Judy Dowling, Hugo Egleston, Chic Henderson, Alan Hunton and John Killingbeck, Ron Kemeny, Brian Roebuck, Stephen Verge, Chris Watts, John Weightman and Steve Young. For our partner project the Ancient Tree Inventory, Brian Jones discovered or updated several champions from the Welsh Marches, including an Oriental Spruce (*Picea orientalis*) at Broxwood Court in Herefordshire which had been recorded by Alan Mitchell back in 1975 at 370cm girth and, rather than dying in the interim as I had assumed, has grown on to pip all the Scottish contenders and become the new national champion with a girth of just over 4.5m. Brian's champion discoveries

also include a hollow Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*) 270cm in girth at the Cilcenni Dingle nature reserve at Llowes in Powys. Also in Herefordshire, David Griffith has sprung another surprise by finding a new champion Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) - a managed pollard at Great Parton, Eardisley, with a girth of 272cm on the single bole at 1.2m. Among the select list of common natives, other new champions include a spire-shaped young 32m Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) in woodland on the Audley End estate in Essex, and a 31.4m Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) measured by Rob Lynley in the grounds of Mother Shipton's Cave in Yorkshire.

From Sloane Square to Pucks Glen

Ric Glenn, head gardener at the Cadogan Estate, reported to us a 10.5m Avocado (*Persea americana*) in a communal back garden near Sloane Square in London, and Keith Vernon measured a new champion Papauma (*Griselinia littoralis*), at Castle Toward on the Cowal Peninsular in Argyll, with a short clean trunk 672cm in girth at 1m. Also on the Cowal Peninsula, where American conifers are often the tallest of their kind known outside the Pacific north-west, I was able to raise the bar for White Fir (*Abies concolor* Lowiana Group), to 54m at Benmore Botanic Garden, for Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*), probably to 49m and for Western Hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) to 56m, both in the deep shelter of Puck's Glen.



New champion Papauma (*Griselinia littoralis*), at Castle Toward
(Photo: Keith Vernon)

Once again the cohort of new champions includes a proportion of relatively recent introductions which, in their preferred niche habitats, have been found growing well enough to enter the list as established young trees for the first time; debutantes for 2017 include *Lithocarpus craibianus* at Exbury Gardens in Hampshire, the evergreen Magnolias *M. compressa* and *M. maclurei* at Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens in Dorset, the laurel *Phoebe shearerii* at John Marston's Gorwell House garden in north Devon, *Quercus x schuettei* (endemic to Wisconsin) in the national Oak Collection at Chevithorne Barton in east Devon, *Sorbus ligustrifolia* at Nicholas Smith's magnificent young arboretum at Wynkcoombe Hill in West Sussex, and Peter Cox's introduction of the lovely Chinese lime *Tilia callidonta* at Glendoick in Perthshire.

I do not know how we can follow such a year, but one thing is certain: none of us are going to be resting on our laurels. We shall, of course, be out there through 2018, looking for even bigger ones.



Oriental Spruce (*Picea orientalis*) at Broxwood Court in Herefordshire
(Photo: Brian Jones)

The Tree Register Blue Label Scheme

New Labels for Champion Trees

David Alderman



The Tree Register has promoted the use of a blue laminated botanical label to identify a champion tree, for several years, and they can now be spotted in a few collections in Britain and Ireland. The use of the colour blue was started by Tony Kirkham in Kew Gardens where, today, their blue anodised aluminium labels have become quite a feature. Useful for the volunteer tree guides, identifying champions for visitors and for the arboricultural team, who are required to get permission before undertaking formative, or remedial, pruning to any trees labelled this way. It is acknowledged that labels are not for everyone, or are appropriate in all locations. On small trees, an additional label to that already fixed, may not be desirable but for feature trees in a garden, where guests or visitors may pass close by, they can create much added interest.



Public interest

This year we have commissioned new labels that denote whether the tree is a county, country, or a Britain and Ireland champion. In response to owners and general public interest in county champions, we hope to see more of these appearing in gardens and collections.

Labels are available in 100 x 75 x 1.5mm thick at £3.55 each or 100 x 75 x 3mm thick at £4.75 each, plus postage.

If you would like to purchase labels for your own champions, or would like to sponsor labels for a garden or owner you know, please do get in touch!

Darkest Hour is not for Winston Churchill's golden Lawson

Charles Henderson

Blue label for new British champion



Meticulous record keeping as Sue and Kerry-Anne help measure the trees.

2017 was a busy year tree recording, updating many champions and surveying one new property, Torrisdale Castle, which revealed no less than thirteen Argyll county champions. I was often accompanied by two new and extremely enthusiastic volunteers, Sue and Kerry-Anne from Zimbabwe, who have taken up residence in Scotland.

Naughton House

At Naughton House, in Fife, I was assisted by Graham Fulton, Head Gardener at Birkhill, and we updated the trees on this delightful

private estate near the River Tay. James Crawford, the owner, is very enthusiastic about his collection and was particularly pleased when Owen Johnson confirmed that his golden Lawson cypress was a new British champion for the cultivar 'Winston Churchill'. James was more than happy to celebrate the trees importance with a new champion tree blue label. I now have the task of providing standard black botanical tree name labels for other notable trees in the garden this spring.

The Tree Register would like to thank Charles Henderson for helping to promote our Champion Tree Blue Labels in Scotland



James and Helen Crawford proudly display their new labels in front of their British champion *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Winston Churchill'

7th European Champion Tree Forum 2017

Philippa Lewis

Tree Tour and Conference



Organising the 7th European Champion Tree Forum began eighteen months before with Leipzig based ECTF Secretary Gordon Mackenthun. As founding members in 2010 this was the first time the growing group of European champion tree enthusiasts would meet in the UK. Tree Register Trustee Tony Kirkham offered to host the presentations at Kew Gardens and so this became the focus for our accompanying tour.

Thursday 21st September - Syon House

The majority of our group met at the Kew Gardens Hotel and, thanks to some Dutch and Belgium communications, we rendezvoused with a Dutch group, representing *Stichting Wereldboom* (Worldtree Foundation), at Syon House, our first visit. Together we represented seven countries including; Czech Republic, Spain and Germany. Some had visited the UK many times but for a few it was their first visit, so it was good to discover that no one had visited Syon before. Head Gardener, Topher Martyn, led an informative walk round the gardens. Highlights included the British champion Hungarian Oak (*Quercus frainetto*), Swamp Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and Turkish Hazel (*Corylus collurna*). Despite light rain, everyone was in high spirits later in the hotel bar, before walking to a nearby pub for dinner.



Syon's Head Gardener, Topher Martin, led the walk

Friday - Burnham to Windsor

The sun was shining as our group were joined by author Thomas Pakenham, who kept our group entertained with anecdotes and photographs. I arrived on time outside the hotel, showing no sign of the panic caused by our choice of location for the over-night parking of our minibus in Kew Gardens. We had inadvertently blocked access for the tourist train. Glad of my early breakfast, I yomped across the gardens but not before the arb team came to the rescue and dragged our bus out of the way! I hope the biscuits I left helped compensate!

Our first stop was Burnham Beeches where we were met by our guide, Helen Read, Conservation Manager for the City of London. This special National Nature Reserve is one of the best examples of ancient woodland in Britain. The fabulous ancient beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) pollards looked amazing in the autumnal sun. Many are more than 400 years old and we could easily have wandered amongst them for hours. Receiving confirmation that the barrier would be up at Langley Park, allowing access for our minibus, we headed off on



The ECTF meet the "Caged Pollard" at Burnham Beeches



Lukas Ameye with his trusty bicycle in Burnham Beeches

the short drive, with the *Stichting Wereldboom* group following behind. Here we visited the ancient yew, which was even a first for Thomas!

Champion Tree Charter

With the good weather holding it looked promising for our planned picnic at the Ankerwyke Yew. Lukas Ameye filled up his bike panniers with refreshments and cycled across to the historic tree. The rest of us helped carry our picnic. After a pleasant lunch and 800 years after the Charter of the Forest had been issued, the ECTF members signed their own Champion Tree Charter under the Ankerwyke Yew.



Our next stop was Windsor Great Park, where we met retired Head Forester, Bill Cathcart. Bill was a wonderful host as, single handed, he served up tea and cake (his homemade lemon drizzle was amazing!) Bill took us to see the Conqueror's Oak and Offa's Oak, a tree none of our group had seen before and where there was much discussion and photograph taking. It was a great tree to finish on and it was a tired but happy group that met for dinner in the hotel that evening.

View from the Treetops and Lies van Lierde: Stichting Wereldboom. Most would have spoken for much longer and it was a shame to cut some people short. After a break we heard again from Gordon on News from the Jungle, before our headline act Julian Hight, who enthralled us with tales of his adventures visiting trees from his latest book, World Tree Story.

Following this ECTF members had a guided walk of Kew Gardens led by Owen Johnson. This included excited re-recording of the great Chestnut-leaved Oak (*Quercus castaneifolia*), confirmed by laser to be 36.6m tall and the tallest in Europe! That evening we drove to our next hotel near St Albans. The minibus was a lively affair once Lubos opened a bottle of Becherovka, a herbal spirit from Czech Republic.

Sunday - St Albans to Cockfosters

After breakfast we checked out of the hotel and travelled the short distance to the historic town of St Albans and a short stop to see a Cedar (*Cedrus libani*) at St. Stephen's church. From here we travelled to Hatfield House for an informal walk amongst the oaks in the old deer park, seeing Old Stumpy and the Elephant Oak.



Offa's Oak at Windsor Great Park

Saturday - The forum at Kew Gardens

After breakfast we walked into Kew Gardens and enjoyed views from the Treetop Walkway. From here we boarded the minibus and after checking out of the hotel, travelled the short distance to the Jodrell Laboratory. We were joined here by Tree Register members. After a general welcome the forum opened with a keynote speech by Owen Johnson, updating us on the latest news and tree discoveries here in Britain and Ireland. Before lunch, scientist and author Aljos Farjon, gave a summary of the research from his book Ancient Oaks in the English Landscape.



Koen Smets and Jeroen Philippona measure The Elephant Oak in Hatfield House Park



Jeroen Philippona measures tree heights from the Treetop Walkway, Kew Gardens.

Our tour ended at West Lodge Hotel, Barnet and the Beale Arboretum. Owner and manager, Andrew Beale greeted us and kindly lead us on a tour of the collection. We finished in fitting style with a traditional afternoon tea in the King Charles Room, where jam and cream was piled high on scones, punctuated with farewell speeches and thanks. From here we went our separate ways and my last port of call with the minibus was Gatwick airport, before finally making it safely but exhausted, home.

I would like to thank all those who came along and to everyone who helped make our guests so very welcome.

"Thank you for this successful meeting, well organised, perfectly managed. We did have a wonderful time and met spectacular trees and great tree-people." **Roel Jacobs (Belgium)**

The afternoon session was packed with short presentations from; Jeroen Philippona: Monumental Trees, Gordon Mackenthun: new ECTF website, David Mingot-Martín & Blanca Niño-Ray: Management of Champion Trees in Madrid, Peter Coles: London's Mulberry Heritage, Libor Sedláček: Monumental Trees in Czech Nature Conservation, Michael Spraggon: A

Philippa Lewis has volunteered for the Tree Register since 2002 and is currently our European Representative.

Sandringham House

Alison Evershed

A Right Royal Garden

Visiting Sandringham on previous occasions, I had always admired the well-kept herbaceous borders and lawns but never really appreciated its importance as a collection of trees. Norfolk's light soils, dry weather and frequently cold easterly winds is not, I am told, ideal for growing champion trees! First opened to the public by King Edward VII in 1908, Sandringham offers a sheltered oasis and many exotic and unusual trees can be found here, with 76 being Norfolk county champions of which 4 are the biggest in Britain.

Clearly labelled

Volunteering for the Tree Register made me realise I should spend more time looking for these specimens and on my latest visit I arrived with notebook and Tree Guide. When it comes to exotic trees some of us are reliant on labels and although I have been told never to believe everything you read, for this novice, I was very pleased to see many trees and shrubs at Sandringham are clearly labelled.

Woodland Walk

From the entrance gate I took the path along the Woodland Walk (Shrub Walk on our database – they have clearly grown!), the variety of hydrangea's particularly caught my eye. I read in

my leaflet that this part of the gardens was redesigned, by invitation of the Queen, in the 1960's by Sir Eric Savill, famous for his gardens at Windsor. Most trees are mature but still of a size where the leaves and fruit are within easy reach to see. As someone who has struggled to identify a hornbeam, meeting the Hop hornbeam (*Ostrya carpinifolia*) with its pale, hop-like, seeds, just added to my confusion! (Photo above) The rough bark being the big clue, according to my well-thumbed Tree Guide. However, not far from this tree I came across another hornbeam, the cut-leafed form (*Carpinus betulus* 'Incisa').



The Desert Willow

From the grand Norwich Gates, I followed the path around the eastern boundary, looking back at the house. On my map and in my mind, I was heading for the Stables Tearoom but was distracted by a recent planting, with pink foxglove-like flowers. The label told me it was x *Chitalpa* 'Summer Bells' and too rare to be in my book. I later read that this is a hybrid between the Indian Bean Tree, *Catalpa*, and *Chilopsis*, a shrub in the same family and called the Desert Willow. Although parts of Norfolk may be described as desert-like, I now fear for its survival, following recent low temperatures.

Norfolk champions

After the comfort of the tearoom and a fresh baked scone, I headed towards the West Lawns and the lake. My stop had allowed me time to login to our website on my smartphone and find that a number of Norfolk champions could be found on the rockery by the upper lake. These included the slow growing *Pinus mugo*, *Pinus sylvestris* 'Aurea' and the brightly conspicuous golden elm, that I spotted far more easily than I could pronounce, *Ulmus x hollandica* 'Dampieri Aurea'.



View looking northeast across the upper lake, towards the rockery and Sandringham House beyond. See also the newsletter front cover.

With the threat of a summer storm brewing and the lack of an umbrella, I made an early exit but have left the lower lake, Stream Walk and the Glade for another visit. 24 hectares of glorious Royal gardens cannot be hurried!



x *Chitalpa* 'Summer Bells' planted in 2016. Will it survive the low temperatures we had in the first week of March 2018?



Sandringham House and Gardens are open daily from Saturday 31st March until Sunday 21st October 2018
EXCEPT 23rd to 27th July inclusive

Mount Usher Garden

Sean Heffernan, Head Gardener

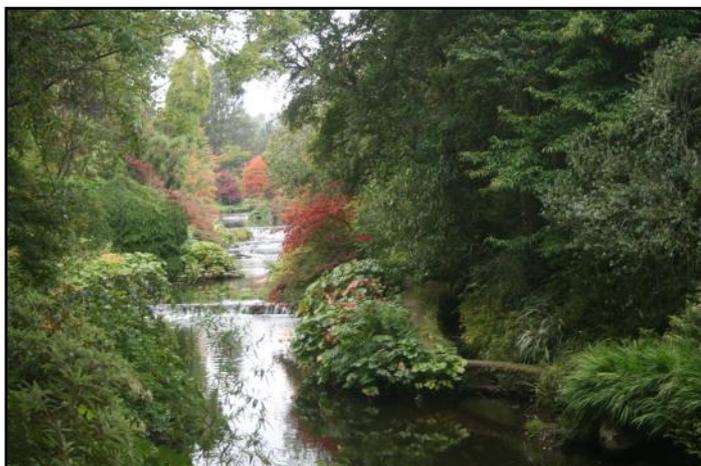
Stunning setting in the Wicklow Mountains



The Mount Usher Garden was created by four generations of The Walpole Family spanning a period of 115 years commencing in 1865. In 1980 the gardens were bought by Mrs Madelaine Jay who leased it to the current tenants, Avoca Handweavers in 2007. The garden, which covers 8ha (22 acres) through which the Vartry River runs, is home to 76 of the Champion Trees of Ireland as well as approximately 4,500 different varieties of trees, shrubs and plants, many of which are rarely seen growing anywhere else in Ireland.

Harmony with nature

The Walpoles were greatly influenced by Ireland's most famous gardener, William Robinson (1838- 1935), who campaigned against the formal layouts popular in his youth which emphasised structural schemes and the mass planting of annuals as seen in public parks to this day. Instead Robinson proposed that gardens should be laid out in harmony with nature and the immediate landscape, maintained naturally and be reflective of nature rather than an attempt to conquer it. He was hugely successful both practically and financially and his legacy are 'Robinsonian' gardens, of which Mount Usher is recognised worldwide as one of the greatest examples.



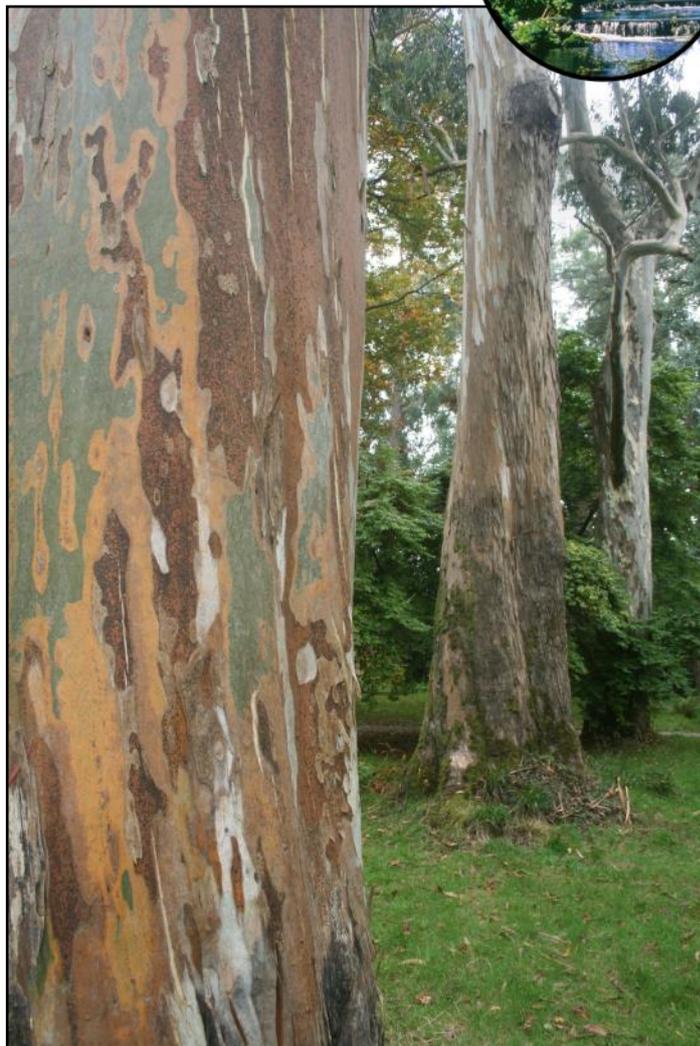
Looking upstream along the Vartry River in Mount Usher Garden.

Organically maintained

Robinson was not what we call an 'organic gardener', this aspect of Mount Usher was introduced by Mrs Jay and, while it makes life challenging for myself and the team, the garden continues to be maintained organically without the use of herbicides or pesticides.

Special garden

The Vartry River is a wonderful focal point throughout the garden, all our visitors love the little weirs in it and the suspension bridges over it which were created by Thomas Walpole, a son of the founder, Edward. Until they were built, the river virtually dried out during dry summers. We know we are totally prejudiced but we feel it is a very special garden which should be experienced and enjoyed by everyone.



The Eucalyptus Grove includes, *Eucalyptus viminalis*, planted in 1911, and now champions of Britain and Ireland at over 40m in height.



Above left - Irish tree recorder Aubrey Fennell updates *Acer laevigatum* (11.5m x 89cm) The latest Irish champion to be identified at Mount Usher.

Above right - *Euonymus bungeanus* 'Pendula' (8m x 112cm at 0.4m). Very weeping and grafted at its base. Roy Lancaster says this is the original Pendula cultivar, which is only known in a couple of other gardens.

Mount
Usher

Find out more at
www.mountushergardens.ie

Wrest Park, Bedfordshire

www.english-heritage.org.uk

Heritage Lottery helps restore Capability Brown landscape



(Above) Trained as an espalier, against the back of the walled garden, this Judas Tree (*Cercis siliquastrum*) is probably over 100 years old and is still meticulously pruned to produce this stunning show of flowers each May. (Above right) Wrest Park House, from the Long Canal towards the south front. (Right) Jeffrey Pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*) a county champion!



Wrest Park is one of the few places in the world where visitors can see the evolution of landscape gardening over the last 300 years.

A twenty year Revitalisation Project began in 2006, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust and English Heritage.

Wrest Park includes 90 acres of woodland, serpentine waterways, colourful parterres, classical statues and elegant buildings.

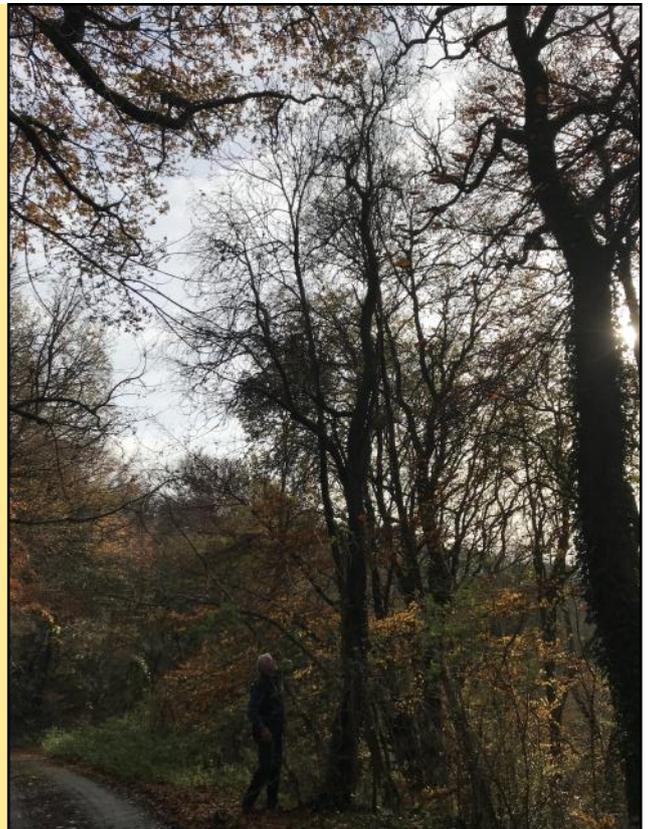
Hawthorn Heightens Interest in Trees

It took seven months to arrange for an exceptionally tall Hawthorn in East Knoyle, Somerset, to be officially measured by laser. But it was worth the wait for Nick Gosse who, on a walk near his home, spotted the tree by observing the ground!

'On a daily walk in April last year I picked up a flower scent whilst walking up a steep lane lined with Beech, Ash and Oak. There was no Holly in the immediate vicinity, so the source of the scent remained a mystery. Then, in early May, I noticed a snow like covering of small white petals on the lane. On looking up I noticed a tall Hawthorn that had managed to establish itself a niche in the canopy of surrounding trees'

Measurements from two clear sightlines recorded 15.8m and ensured the tree claims tallest in Somerset and one of the tallest ever recorded. The current Britain and Ireland champion is one of several Hawthorn heighted at 16m, by the laser of Rob Linley, at Crowcroft Bank, Wetherby, Yorkshire (2013).

Photo right - Nick Gosse and the new Somerset county champion Hawthorn he discovered whilst on a walk near his home (Nov 2017)



From muddy brown to the softest mauve

Owen Johnson

A Purple Passage

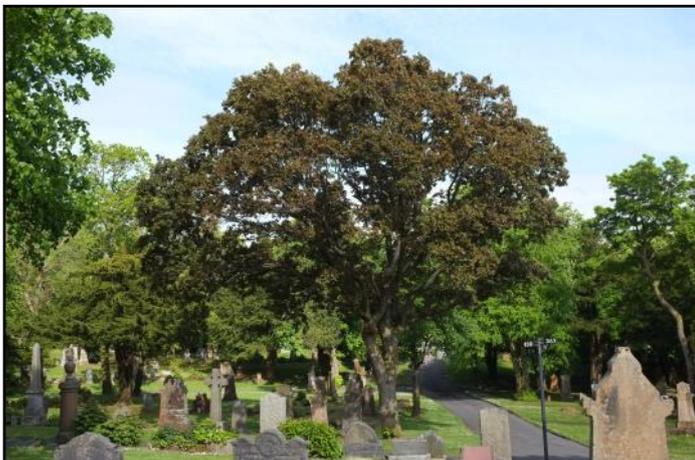
Alan Mitchell, whose lifetime's measurements still form the bedrock of the Tree Register, was notorious for his disapprobation of those sports of trees where the green chlorophyll is masked by purple anthocyanins - though contrary to general assumptions this didn't prevent him adding over 260 Copper Beeches (*Fagus sylvatica* f. *purpurea*) and even 34 Pissard's Plums (*Prunus cerasifera* 'Pissardii' and 'Nigra') to the infant Register. (I do wonder however if he would have discovered the fine pinetum at Glenericht in his beloved Strathardle in Perthshire if the Copper Beeches which completely ring this estate hadn't formed a kind of charmed circle to keep him out.)

Unique

Copper Beech is perhaps unique among sports of common trees in managing to grow as fast and as big as the wild tree does – in 2016 I laser-heighted a 41m example on the Longleat estate in Wiltshire, but was just pipped by Rob Lynley's measurement of a 42m one in Grizedale Forest, Cumbria – and many of us would probably be inclined to agree with Alan that 42m of purple is just a bit too much.

Refreshing shades

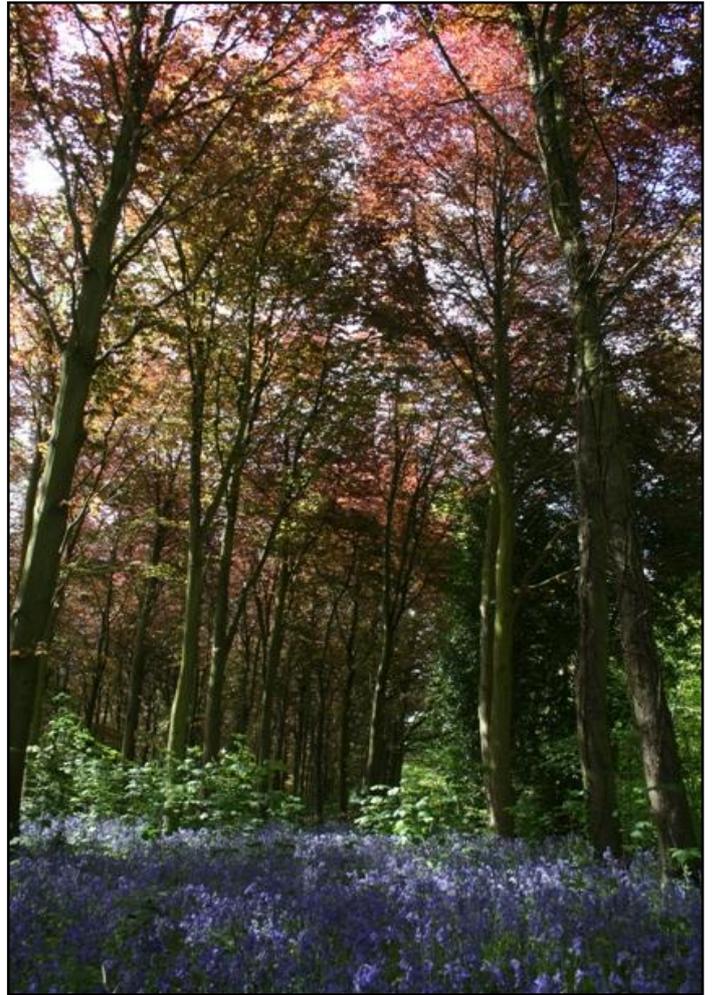
In springtime when sunlight shines through the translucent young foliage of a Copper Beech, they, and the best clones of the Japanese *Acer palmatum*, offer perhaps the purest of purple tree experiences. The rest can turn some distinctly dodgy colours. The purple Honey-Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos* 'Rubylace') goes a bizarre sort of muddy brown, though fortunately on a much smaller scale (6m x 70cm girth this year for a new champion, in front of the flats in Duke Street in central Taunton). The Purple Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus* Purpureum Group) is also brown when you see the sun through it but in more refreshing shades – the leaves are deep green on top, and bright mauve underneath. The common clone (which includes the champion, 25m x 460cm in 2014 in Bath's Henrietta Park) confusingly, and uniquely, starts green in April and only reddens through the following weeks.



Quercus robur 'Purpurascens' at Greenock Cemetery

A piquant palette

Sports which flush royal purple, and fade to muddy green, are more numerous and can offer a piquant palette of colours as the season unfolds. These, too, can be vigorous trees: the champion *Acer platanoides* 'Schwedleri' at Darley Park in Derby had a girth of



A bluebell wood of Copper Beech near Cambridge

426cm by 2015, but was so hollow that I marvelled it still had any life left in it. The Pedunculate Oak whose leaves stay deep purple (*Quercus robur* 'Atropurpurea') may be a sorry little tree, but the forms whose colour is softer and fades into green ('Purpurascens') can luxuriate. Five Victorian plantings in Greenock Cemetery in Inverclyde impressed me greatly last May; the oldest and largest are in Irish gardens.

Richly coloured

Deciduous trees which grow wild at low latitudes but high elevations often flush reddish or purplish for a few weeks in spring: the anthocyanins help shield the developing chlorophyll in the tender young leaves from the intense solar radiation they have to endure. Examples grown in British gardens mostly derive from the mountains of south-west China and the dark flush is usually the surest method of separating species such as the Chinese Tulip-tree, *Liriodendron chinense*, from their eastern American cousins, which in the wild grow further north and nearer to sea-level and which nearly always open yellow-green leaves. In some young and vigorous examples of the Chinese mountain flora, the dusky blush can persist right through the season as new leaves open. It tends only to have been in recent decades that plant-hunters have ventured high enough into the mountains to introduce these most richly-coloured variants, and they are only now beginning to be appreciated and sought-after as garden trees.

Unfurling leaves

The Bluebell Arboretum in Derbyshire in May is a good place to admire many of these new clones, such as *Liquidambar acalycina* 'Burgundy Flush' and *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* 'Strawberry', along with dawn-sky loveliness of the unfurling leaves of *Corylus chinensis* or *Tilia endochrysea*.



Corylus chinensis at Bluebell Arboretum, Derbyshire

Bloodstained

There is one national flora where broadleaved evergreen trees often retain a gamut of purples and reds. In New Zealand, the largest herbivores were not mammals but giant flightless moas which, presumably, had better colour vision and might overlook a tree that wasn't the anticipated green. Many of these species also have leaves whose shape alters wildly as the tree matures (and gets out of moa reach). *Pseudopanax*



Pseudopanax ferox at Morrab Gardens, Penzance

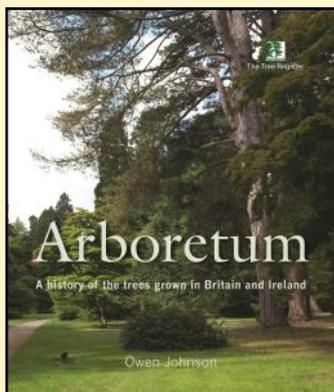
ferox goes through a teenage punk stage when it seems to be brandishing serrated bloodstained cutlasses.



Aristotelia serrata at Underway Gardens, West Porlock

Marbled foliage

In some of the New Zealand myrtles, including the tree-sized *Lophomyrtus bullata*, reds and pinks mottle the leaf; *Carpodetus serratus*, much rarer but 113cm in girth in the walled garden at Brodick Castle on Arran last summer, has comparably marbled foliage. *Pseudowintera colorata*, largest at Innacullin in Co. Cork, has neat little leaves margined in bright blotchy crimson. *Aristotelia serrata* is perhaps my favourite among this tribe: its bark is subtly snake-striped in charcoal-grey and cream, and its heart-shaped piranha-toothed leaves can be soft mauve, especially underneath. A fine example 7m tall is in the late Norman Hadden's garden at Porlock Weir under Exmoor, but these antipodean trees are much harder to cultivate in the drier, frostier east of Britain.



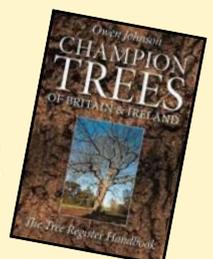
Arboretum

A history of the trees grown in Britain and Ireland – by Owen Johnson

For a short period only we are still offering our **Special 30% discount** Only for Tree Register members using the discount code **TROBI** at www.booksystemsplus.com Meticulously researched yet richly descriptive, Arboretum is essential reading for anyone studying garden history, maintaining a historic landscape, or choosing a tree to plant. It is also the perfect book for anyone who wants to learn more about these largest and most conspicuous yet often-overlooked features of our everyday environment.

Champion Trees of Britain and Ireland - by Owen Johnson

Available online from the Kew Bookshop
Over 5,000 trees are described



Don't miss Owen talking about his favourite trees at Borde Hill Garden on 23rd October 2018 (see back cover page)

The Tree Register Alan Mitchell Lecture 2018

Borde Hill Garden

Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1XP

Tuesday 23rd October 2018
4pm-9pm

Lecture by Dr Owen Johnson
A few of my favourite trees

Guided walk and auction of rare plants



This year our regular, and only, fund raising event is to be at Borde Hill Garden, near Haywards Heath, West Sussex on Tuesday 23rd October. Hosted kindly by the Stephenson Clarke family, the Alan Mitchell Lecture will be given in the Trophy Room of the Elizabethan Mansion, by our eminent Registrar, Dr Owen Johnson.

Ticket holders will have access to the gardens all day and be able to join one of two guided walks. Light refreshments will be provided and there will be our usual, almost famous, rare plant auction!

Tickets are limited so please contact us to book them in advance to avoid disappointment.



Illicium henryi in Gores Wood, one of 84 champions of Britain and Ireland to be found at Borde Hill Garden. (Photo: Owen Johnson)

Borde Hill Garden (Photos by AJ Stephenson Clarke www.bordehill.co.uk)

Book your tickets Now!

It promises to be a very interesting and informative day but tickets for the event are limited to 50. Tickets cost £30 and are on a first come, first served basis. Tickets include, the lecture, garden tour, light refreshments and participation in the Silent Auction of rare plants.

If you would like to join us phone Tel:01234 768884 or email info@treeregister.org

The Gilwell Oak is United Kingdom Tree of the Year

The Gilwell Oak is synonymous with scouting

It sits at the heart of Gilwell Park in Epping, the home of the scouting movement conceived by Robert Baden Powell. The towering oak was adopted by Powell as a neat analogy in 1929 for not only the growth of the scouting movement worldwide, which began with a small trial camp some 21 years earlier, but as a message to young scouts that big things are possible from modest starts.



Find out if the Gilwell Oak won European Tree of the Year 2018

www.treeoftheyear.org