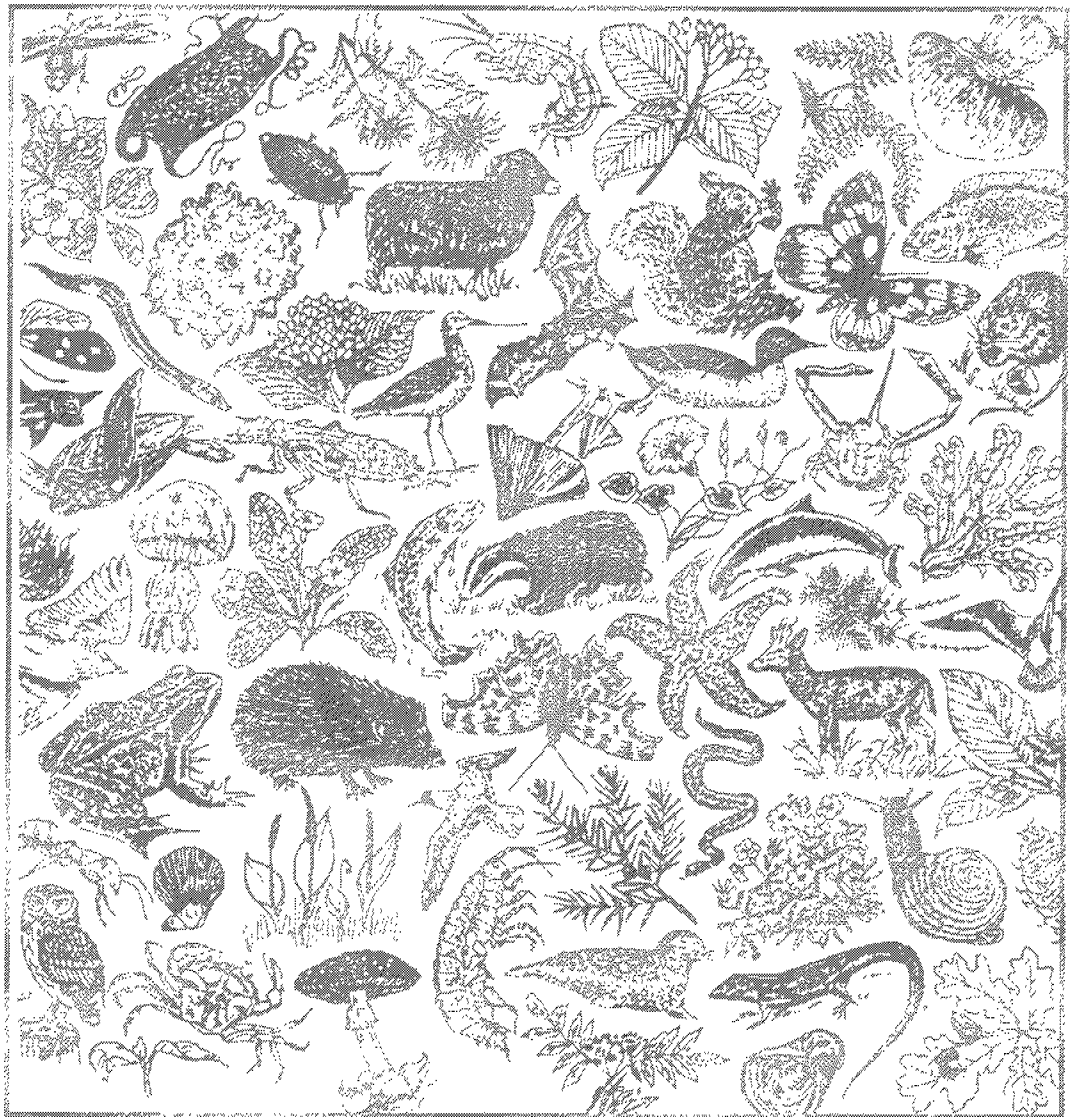


Veteran Trees Initiative
Historical and cultural aspects
A bibliography

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**Veteran Trees Initiative: Historical and Cultural Aspects
A Bibliography**

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Introduction

This bibliography attempts to list some of the more important books and journal articles on the historical and cultural associations of veteran trees in England. I have interpreted this remit to include material on the identification and occurrence of veteran trees in England, the history of individual species of tree which can become “veteran”, the legends, folklore and popular beliefs associated with them in England, their representation in English art and literature and their traditional uses.

I have concentrated on twentieth-century material as this is likely to be more accessible, but I have included a handful of earlier titles when these are of special importance. Equally, I have excluded most individual primary literary works in which veteran trees figure prominently and substituted secondary commentaries on this literature. Although I have included all county-wide surveys of notable trees I have been able to find, I have, for reasons of space, excluded most accounts of the trees of areas smaller than a county.

Those titles unaccompanied by an abstract have not been examined, but other evidence leads me to believe they may bear on the subject of this bibliography.

I would welcome any additional references which users of this bibliography might care to contribute. Please send these to Malcolm Rush at the English Nature Library in Peterborough.

General

Anon. 1853. *English forests and forest trees: historical, legendary and descriptive.* London, Ingram Cooke.

Includes a chapter on the history and legends of various, mainly native, English tree species, with brief information on some notable specimens.

Aburrow, Y. 1993. *The enchanted forest: the magical lore of trees.* Chicveley, Capall Bann.

Baker, R. St. Barbe. 1952. *Famous trees.* London, Dropmore Press.

Briefly describes the habits and uses of 15 native and introduced species of tree in Britain and gives examples, with attractive illustrations, of notable specimens of each one.

Bean, W.J. 1976-1980. *Trees and shrubs hardy in the British Isles.* 8th ed. London, John Murray.

The entry for each species and variety gives brief details of notable specimens in Britain.

Cresswell, R.A. 1947. *Spirit of the trees.* Abbotsbury, Society of Men of the Trees.

Daniels, S. 1988. *The political iconography of woodland in later Georgian Britain.* In: *The iconography of landscape*, ed. by D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels, p. 43-82. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Attempts to show how in the period 1770-1830 woodland imagery was deployed to symbolize varying and conflicting views of what social order was or ought to have been.

Edlin, H.L. 1949. *Woodland crafts of Britain: an account of the traditional uses of trees and timbers in the British countryside.* London, Batsford.

A comprehensive account of the traditional uses of trees and timber in the UK from mediaeval times, from clogs to charcoal, perfume to gun stocks.

Edlin, H.L. 1958. *The living forest: a history of trees and timbers.* London, Thames and Hudson.

Describes, species by species, the native and introduced trees of the British Isles, with information about their traditional uses, the origin of their names and notable specimens of the past and the present.

Elwes, H.J. & Henry, A. 1906-1913. *The trees of Great Britain and Ireland.* Edinburgh. 7 vols.

Describes each species of British tree. Includes in each account a section on remarkable trees, giving the locations and ages of noteworthy specimens, anecdotes connected with them and personal associations.

Evelyn, J. 1664. *Sylva: or a discourse of forest trees.* London.

Contains some early references to individual trees and the ageing of trees in the context of forestry.

Fowles, J. & Horvat, F. 1979. *The tree*. London, Aurum Press.

Grigson, G. 1987. *The Englishman's flora*. London, Dent.

Lists the superstitions and the folk-knowledge attaching to each species - including trees - in the British flora, extracts information from the old herbals, touches upon the literary and artistic symbolism of plant life and provides a comprehensive list of regional and vernacular plant names.

Hallett, V. 1989. The Tree Register of the British Isles. *Arboricultural Journal*, 13, 147-149.

Describes briefly the history of the Tree Register, which aims to record the dimensions, location, planting date (when known) and individual name (if any) of notable specimen trees in the British Isles.

Heath, F.G. 1912. *Tree lore*. London, Charles H. Kelly.

A collection of short pieces on the history and uses of a wide range of native and introduced British trees and of the popular beliefs and mythology attached to them.

Jacques, D. 1987. Girth growth analysis in historical survey. *Arboricultural Journal*, 11, 193-207.

Describes with examples a technique for estimating the ages of older trees without felling them.

Lovett Jones, G. & Mabey, R. 1993. *The wildwood: in search of Britain's ancient forests*. London, Aurum Press.

Richard Mabey's introductory essay attempts to fix the meaning of ancient woodland to man in the past and the present. He then describes his personal responses to visits to fifteen woods throughout Britain, including nine in England. The outstanding photographs by Lovett Jones include many of the veteran trees in these woods.

King, A. & Clifford, S. eds. 1989. *Trees be company: an anthology of poetry*. Bristol, Bristol Press.

An anthology of poetry in English showing the vital influence on literature and our ways of seeing the world that tree-and-woodland images continue to exert.

Loudon, J.C. 1838. *Arboretum et fruticetum Britannicum*. London.

Comprehensive eight-volume listing of trees and shrubs in Britain, with information on introductions, identification, propagation, growth rates and landscape use, together with engravings and some material on historic connections and limited mention of some notable veteran trees.

Mabey, R. 1996. *Flora Britannica*. London, Sinclair-Stevenson.

A cultural flora giving an account of the role of wild plants, including trees, in social life, arts, custom and landscape.

Marren, P. 1992. *The wild woods: a regional guide to Britain's ancient woodland*. David and Charles for the Nature Conservancy Council.

Describes the principal ancient woodlands in each county, with mentions of notable ancient trees and brief accounts of each site's history.

Milner, J.E. 1992. *The tree book: the indispensable guide to tree facts, crafts and lore*. London, Collins and Brown.

A comprehensive general work on trees including fossil trees, folklore, record trees, trees as a source of inspiration through to tree planting for the future. Mainly UK but uses some US material.

Mitchell, A. F. 1996. *Alan Mitchell's trees of Britain*. London, Harper Collins.

Mitchell, A.F., Schilling, V.E., & White, J.E.J. 1994. *Champion trees in the British Isles*. Edinburgh, Forestry Commission. (Forestry Commission Technical paper 7).

Gives dimensions and locations - but not ages - for the largest specimens of 1065 tree species occurring in Britain.

Morton, A. 1998. *Tree heritage of Britain and Ireland: a guide to the famous trees of Britain and Ireland*. Shrewsbury, Swan Hill Press.

Examines, county-by-county, trees which have stories attached to them and are of importance for their associations with history mythology and folklore.

Pakenham, T. 1996. *Meetings with remarkable trees: monumental trees in Britain and Ireland*. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Describes and illustrates sixty trees throughout Britain and Ireland which are remarkable for their age, size, shape and history.

Phythian, J.E. 1907. *Trees in nature, myth and art*. London, Methuen.

Includes chapters on tree worship and on trees in architecture and painting.

Porteous, A. 1928. *The lore of the forest: myths and legends*. London, Allen and Unwin.

Includes chapters on tree myths and the folklore and popular beliefs associated with them.

Porter, V. 1994. *Tales of the old woodlanders*. Newton Abbot, David and Charles.

Records the memories of workers in a range of traditional woodland crafts.

Rackham, O. 1980. *Ancient woodland: its history, vegetation and uses in England*. London, Edward Arnold.

Chapter titles include: *Woodland management, products and uses since 1250; The economic and social history of woods; Wood-pasture systems and products*. The chapters on individual woodland tree species include information on history, uses, age and longevity, with descriptions of noteworthy specimens and sites.

Rackham, O. 1990. *Trees and woodland in the British landscape*. Rev. ed. London, Dent.
An account of the archaeology, history and anthropology of “woods that, in their present form, have not (or not obviously) been planted; with hedgerows; and with the trees of parks, meadows, commons, farmyards and places like Epping Forest”.

Ruskin, J. 1843-60. *Modern painters*. London, Smith, Elder and Co.
Contains sections on trees in vol. 2 (p. 113-137) and vol. 5 (p. 1-98).

Russell, D. 1998. Forestry and the art of frying small fish. *Environmental Values*, 7, 281-289.

Questions some contemporary attitudes towards woods and offers some reflections on the cultural significance of trees and woods, with ideas on the implications of these for woodland management.

Schama, S. 1995. *Landscape and memory*. London, HarperCollins.
Excavates the layers of significance man in North America and Europe has imposed on forests, rivers and mountains. Chapter 3, p.135-184, is entitled: *The liberties of the greenwood*.

Strutt, G. 1822. *Sylva Britannica*. London.
Folio presentation of a series of 49 contemporary 11" x 14" engravings of notable ancient trees, 41 in England and 8 in Scotland, each with an accompanying text on location, history and ownership.

Tabor, R. 1994. *Traditional woodland crafts: a practical guide*. London, Batsford.
A practical guide to green woodwork and the coppice crafts, showing how to use traditional tools and techniques to make traditional products from small round wood.

Taplin, K. 1989. *Tongues in trees: studies in literature and ecology*. Bideford, Green Books.
A series of essays on individual writers since Keats who have celebrated woodlands and trees or responded to their destruction.

Thomas, G.S. 1983. *Trees in the landscape*. London, Jonathan Cape.
Chapter 10, *Trees through other eyes and minds*, examines ways in which trees have appealed to English artists and poets. The book also includes a select gazetteer of parks and landscapes, mainly with tree and woodland interest, in the care of the National Trust.

Thomas, K. 1984. *Man and the natural world: changing attitudes in England 1500-1800*. Harmondsworth, Penguin.
See especially Part VI: *The wild wood* and Part Viii: *The worship of trees*

Vickery, R. 1995. *Oxford dictionary of plant-lore*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
Covers the folklore and traditional uses of plants both as revealed by printed sources and as gathered from contemporary informants.

Watkins, C. 1988. *The idea of ancient woodland in Britain from 1800*. In: *Human influence on forest ecosystems development in Europe*, ed. by F. Salbitano, p. 237-246. Bologna, Pitagora Editrice.

White, J. 1994. (New ed. in press). *Estimating the age of large trees in Britain*. Edinburgh, Forestry Commission. (Research Information Note 250).

Proposes a method of age estimation based upon prior knowledge of likely performance and the early growth of trees.

White, J. 1995. *Dating the veterans*. *Tree News*, Spring/Summer, 10-11.

A summary of Forestry Commission Research Information Note 250.

White, J. 1997. *What is a veteran tree and where are they all?* *Quarterly Journal of Forestry*, 91, 222-226.

Offers a definition of a veteran tree as the necessary first step towards establishing where Britain's veteran trees are to be found.

Wilkinson, G. 1981. *A history of Britain's trees*. London, Hutchinson.

Covers the origins of native and introduced tree species in Britain, the etymology of their names, their traditional uses and some of the folklore associated with them.

Wilks, J.H. 1972. *Trees of the British Isles in history and legend*. London, Muller.

Chapters cover landmark, boundary and marker trees, the tree in literature, trees associated with military and naval history, crime and punishment, religions, healing and the occult, royalty and myths and curious trees.

Wood, P. ed. 1990. *The tree: a celebration of our living skyline*. Newton Abbot, David and Charles.

Counties

Bradshaw, A. 1995. *Ancient, interesting and unusual trees of Cumbria*. Bowness-on-Windermere, Cumbria Broadleaves.

Describes 15 special trees in the county, giving details of age and size and information on folklore and history.

Countryside Commission & Land Use Consultants. 1986. *The New Forest landscape*. Cheltenham.

Includes a chapter, entitled *A source of artistic inspiration*, on the influence of the New Forest landscape on writers and artists. Also provides numerous quotations from books about the Forest from the 18th to the 20th centuries.

Davis, M.R. 1987. *Hertfordshire's Green Mantle*. *Arboricultural Journal*, 11, 53-71.

Includes very brief details of some of the county's "special trees".

East Sussex County Council. 1998. *Remarkable trees*. Published on ESCC Internet site.

English Heritage. 1986 - . *Register of parks and gardens of special historic interest in England.* London.

Each of the 46 volumes describes the sites in a single English county.

Grant, P. 1997. *The Tynedale tree alphabet: a new alphabet in an old tradition.* Haltwhistle, Craftwrite.

Sets out the traditions and folklore associated with 26 local tree species.

Hampshire County Council. 1983. *Hampshire's countryside heritage. 2: ancient woodland.* Winchester.

Includes chapters on the uses to which the county's woodlands have been put since prehistoric times.

Hampshire County Council. 1983. *Hampshire's countryside heritage. 5: historic parks and gardens.* Winchester.

Appendix II gives a "preliminary list" of historic parks and gardens in the county, with a brief mention of the presence of noteworthy trees.

Morton, A. 1986. *The trees of Shropshire: myth, fact and legend.* Shrewsbury, Airlife.

Looks at individual trees in Shropshire that have become unique either because of their size, or their age, or because of the history and legends associated with them.

Smart, R. 1992. *Trees and woodlands of Cheshire: a history and guide.* Chester, Cheshire Landscape Trust.

Chapter 12: *Historic and notable trees* deals with remarkable specimens of trees on a species-by-species basis.

Species

Chetan, A., & Brueton, D. 1994. *The sacred yew.* Harmondsworth, Penguin.

A study of the yew through the eyes of devotee Allen Meredith, exploring the dating of trees, growth rates, their relationship to churchyards and spiritual connections. Many useful tables and gazetteer of individual ancient specimens. Takes forward material from Cornish (1946). *The churchyard yew and immortality* (see below).

Common Ground. 1989. *Orchards: a guide to local conservation.* London.

Includes information on the cultural associations of traditional fruit trees.

Cornish, V. 1941. *Historic thorn trees in the British Isles.* London, Country Life.

Cornish, V. 1946. *The churchyard yew and immortality.* London, Frederick Muller.

Forrester, R.M. 1985. Ash as fodder. *Lakeland Gardener*, VII, 18-24, 37-38.

Attempts to draw together some of the references to the use of the leaves and twigs of established trees, especially ash, as fodder for livestock in the Lake District from mediaeval times to the present.

Grigson, G. 1953. Ancient woods of box. *Country Life*, CXIII, 1240-1241.

A very brief account of historic references to box trees and woods in England and of the traditional uses of its timber.

Lowe, J. 1897. *The yew trees of Great Britain and Ireland*. London, Macmillan.

Includes chapters on notable trees and their measurements, the association of the species with churchyards, its traditional uses, its image in poetry and the history of some of the more remarkable trees.

Mabcy, R. 1996. The native black poplar: a species in the ghetto? *British Wildlife*, 8, 1-6.

Explains the cultural and the biological importance of the species.

Mitchell, A.F. 1966. Dating the 'ancient' oaks. *Quarterly Journal of Forestry*, 60, 271-276.

A brief account of the use of data of increments in growth over known periods indicates the possible range, and most likely actual age, of three big oaks of different kinds. Also discusses the effects of pollarding.

Morris, M.G. & Perring, F.H. eds. 1974. *The British oak*. Faringdon, Clasesy for the Botanical Society of the British Isles.

Includes on pages 123-129: *The oak and its legends*, by M. Hadfield.

Pigott, C.D. 1989. Estimation of the age of lime-trees (*Tilia* spp) in parklands from stem diameter and ring counts. *Arboricultural Journal*, 13, 289-302.

Measurements of the diameter of the trunks of limes in avenues from various parts of England, which can be dated either from documentary sources or from counts of annual rings, are used to establish the relation between diameter and age.

Pigott, D. 1992. The clones of common lime (*Tilia x vulgaris*) Hayne planted in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. *New Phytologist*, 121, 487-493.

Examines material from 14 different English localities.

Radley, J. 1961. Holly as a winter feed. *Agricultural History Review*, 9, 89-93.

An account of the historic use of holly leaves and branches as a winter feed for sheep and cattle, especially in the southern Pennines.

Richens, R.H. 1983. *Elm*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Chapters 12-14 cover the past and present distribution of elm on a county-by-county basis and mention notable trees where they occur. Chapter 9 entitled Utilization II includes a section on Commemorative trees and other sections on various cultural associations of the species. Chapters 10 and 11 cover respectively the representation of the elm in literature and art.

Staples, M.J.C. 1970. A history of box in the British Isles. *Boxwood Bulletin*, 10, 18-23, 34-37, 55-60.

Swanton, E.W. 1958. *The yew trees of England*. Farnham.

Describes over 70 individual ancient yew trees and also includes notes on cultural associations.

Tabbush, P., & White, J. 1996. Estimation of tree age in ancient yew woodland at Kingley Vale. *Quarterly Journal of Forestry*, 90, 197-206.

Reviews methods of estimating the age of yews and concludes that their age cannot be determined accurately using current technology.

Watkins, C. 1998. 'A solemn and gloomy umbrage': changing interpretations of the ancient oaks of Sherwood Forest. In: *European woods and forests: studies in cultural history*, ed. by C. Watkins, p. 93-113. Wallingford, CAB International.

Explores changing interpretations of a small number of ancient oaks by archaeologists, historians, writers and tourists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

White, J. 1993. *Black poplar: the most endangered native timber tree in Britain*. Wrecclesham, Forestry Commission. (Research Information Note 239).

Includes brief details of the age of individual trees and of the history and uses of the species.

White, J. 1998. *Elms: their past, present and future*. In press.

Includes material on the historical ecology of the elm, its occurrence in historical settings and its exceptionally long continuity as a British species.

White, J. 1998. *The origin and history of the black poplar*. In press.

Includes information on the historical ecology of the black poplar, its historical record in Britain and the history of hybrids.

Whitlock, R. 1985. *The oak*. London, Allen and Unwin.

Chapter 6 covers history and folklore and gives brief details of a number of famous ancient oaks.

Wilkinson, G. 1978. *Epitaph for the elm*. London, Hutchinson.

Part 1 (pp. 11-35) is entitled *The elm in the landscape of the mind*, and covers popular beliefs and the image of the elm in English poetry and art. Pp. 137-139 are entitled *Some ancient elms*.