

## **FRIENDS OF OLIVER RACKHAM #10**

### **UPDATES, UPCOMING EVENTS, RACKHAM RESEARCH NEWS & STORIES, PAST EVENTS, BOOK DEDICATIONS, WORKS IN PROGRESS**

February 15, 2018

---

#### **UPDATES**

##### **THE RACKHAM ARCHIVE**

Thanks to so many of you, we continue to make progress with the Rackham Archive in Corpus, especially the digitization of Oliver's red and blue field notebooks. Your contributions to this effort are deeply appreciated!

Dr Lucy Hughes, archivist at Corpus Christi College where the Rackham Archive is held, reports that when our next batch of notebooks is sent to be scanned at the end of March, we should be nearly half done! Notebooks on Hayley Wood, Bozworth, Bradfield Wood, Buff Wood, Chalkney Wood, Gamlingay, Hardwick Wood, Hatfield Forest, Madingley Wood, Marks Hall, Staverton Park, Tiger Hill Woods, Crete, Laconia, Mt Athos, Sardinia, Japan, Ethiopia, New England (USA), Oliver's early visits to France, Austria and Germany and many other places have now been scanned.

Getting the scanned notebooks uploaded where they can be seen by the public is also progressing, though at a slightly slower pace. We expect a fresh upload in May 2018. At present, about 137 blue and 91 red digitized notebooks can be viewed here: <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/rackham>.

If you would like to sponsor the digitization of one or more notebooks, please contact Dr Lucy Hughes [lcb15@corpus.cam.ac.uk](mailto:lcb15@corpus.cam.ac.uk) to work out the details. Your sponsorship can be acknowledged on the Cambridge Digital Library website with Oliver's notebooks or anonymous, as you wish. If you are a UK taxpayer your donation can also be Gift Aided. It costs about £40-45 for each notebook to be scanned, proofed, uploaded and hosted on the Cambridge Digital Library server.

The Rackham Archive at Corpus also includes about 14,000 Rackham slides. If you are interested in contributing to scanning some of the Rackham slide collection, please contact Dr Lucy Hughes [lcb15@corpus.cam.ac.uk](mailto:lcb15@corpus.cam.ac.uk). It costs about £250 to scan 500 slides.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**JULY 2018** — This summer is the 50th anniversary of Oliver first coming to Crete. He arrived in 1968 to work on his friend Peter Warren's Myrtos excavation project as, he liked to say, the 'expeditionary botanist'. Oliver had a set of photos from 1968 that he repeated every 10 years. Jenny Moody will be repeating Oliver's photos this summer. If you are interested in accompanying her, please contact her at [hogwildjam@mac.com](mailto:hogwildjam@mac.com). Other events to celebrate this anniversary are also in the works.

**19 FEBRUARY 2018** — Place Services <http://www.placeservices.co.uk/> will hold a day-conference on 'The Forests of Essex' on the 19th Feb 2018 at the Gilwell Park Conference Centre, Chingford. The conference marks the 3rd anniversary of Oliver Rackham's death and 800 years since the signing of the Forest Charter. The keynote talk will be by Prof Tom Williamson, 'Trees, Woods and Forests in Essex' it will provide the context for the day and include a discussion of Oliver's work. There will also be talks on Hatfield Forest, Epping Forest, Writtle Forest, Thames Chase and Essex Trees in art.

I am told that the conference is fully booked. If you are not yet registered but determined to go, you could try sending an email to [traditional.buildingskills@essex.gov.uk](mailto:traditional.buildingskills@essex.gov.uk) or telephoning 03330. Tickets cost £65 (including a light lunch).

## RACKHAM RESEARCH NEWS and STORIES

*This section comprises short reports about research or other activity that carries on the Rackham Tradition, or uses the Rackham Archive, the Rackham Herbarium, or other Rackham legacy materials. Short stories about Oliver are also welcome.*

*This time we have two essays. Jonathan Spencer, Head of Planning and Environment for Forest Enterprise England, writes how Oliver inspired his career and recent research at Emmanuel College. He was recently awarded an MBE for Services to Woodlands, Nature Conservation and the Environment. Cliff Cook, a friend from Crete who was active with Oliver in the fight against the Cavo Sidero development, writes about experiencing the Cretan landscape with Oliver.*

*If you would like to share a paragraph or two with us, please email me [hogwildjam@mac.com](mailto:hogwildjam@mac.com).*

### A TERM IN EMMANUEL

#### A TIME TO REFLECT ON WOODS AND FORESTS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY INSPIRED BY OLIVER RACKHAM by Jonathan Spencer



A couple of years ago, after a long career working in woodland and forest conservation, it was not looking as if anything really new and surprising was likely to happen before retirement. Then in 2017, rather unexpectedly, three months of the year was spent as a Visiting Fellow in Emmanuel College, working during the day in the Attenborough Building as a guest of Conservation Science Group, and spending evenings and weekends in the wonderful environment of Emmanuel College, renowned for the friendliness of its Fellows, staff and students and for its beautiful gardens and buildings. This is how it happened.

**Jonathan Spencer and a great oak at Ashstead Common near Epsom, 2016.**  
*Photo Alison Field*

On graduation, I worked as a research assistant at the University of Cambridge in the Department of Genetics. Living in Cambridge was essentially the only qualification I had when I started my career in woodland conservation. Returning from South East Asia in 1981, I applied for a Manpower Services Commission job with the Nature Conservancy Council in Huntingdon, working on the newly conceived Ancient Woodland Inventory. The MSC insisted on applicants being unemployed for a year and living within 15 miles of the post, which eliminated virtually all the competition! So I found myself, with no real knowledge of woodland history or ecology, working alongside the three great names in woodland conservation: Rackham, Peterken and Kirby....and living in Oliver's home city of Cambridge.

From then on I had been in contact with Oliver on many occasions, depending rather on the priorities of the day; he was always a great source of insight on many issues (though rather less up to speed on changes to firearms and timber haulage!). Not long before he died we had discussed working together to write on forest conservation issues, particularly those associated with the uncertainties of climate change and future challenges to woods and forests. In essence we thought it would be great fun to bring together his intellectual grasp of the past with my pragmatic experience of the present and see what might emerge when considering the future. Sadly Oliver's tragic death three years ago brought these aspirations to an abrupt end.

A year or so after Oliver's death, however, I noticed that Richard Mabey had posted a note on his webpage about his term as a Visiting Fellow at Emmanuel, pursuing research for his book "A Cabaret of Plants", and I thought such a fellowship might present an opportunity to pursue the ideas Oliver and I had discussed. The Derek Brewer Visiting Fellowship, set up by a very generous former Master, provides for a term in College with no real commitments, untroubled by obligations at work (or at home) and an opportunity to read, write, reflect and consult; and to thoroughly enjoy Cambridge and the opportunities and advantages of life in College. Advice from Richard was simple...contact the Master.

I contacted the Master, Fiona Reynolds, who was warmly encouraging. What I wanted to do was to catch up on the past twenty years of research into forest soils, climate change, forest resilience, tree species change across Europe in the Tertiary and past interglacials ... you begin to see why Oliver was so sorely missed ... and critically, what measures might we take to build ecological resilience into our plantations and forests. Thus I spent Easter term 2017 in Cambridge, working on woodland and forest ecology, learning a huge amount in the shortest possible time... and working far harder than I had intended. I read books I had not read for many years, papers I had not known existed and attended lectures that led to new ideas and areas of interest. I also had an opportunity to read books brought from home ... taking books to Cambridge; the academic equivalent of taking coals to Newcastle.

I lived in college, enjoying the gardens with each walk to work. Emmanuel has within its grounds a splendid collection of trees. Many are those that occurred in Europe in the Tertiary, such as the *Liriodendron* in Chapmans Garden.





***Liriodendron tulipifera*, Emmanuel College, Cambridge 2017. Photo J. Spencer**

One of the wildlife highlights of the term was spotting a peregrine eyass on the entrance to the Cambridge University Press building opposite Corpus Christi College. The birds had nested a few tens of feet above the busy street. Birdwatching comprised of a sticky bun from Fitzbillies and a spell staring upwards to the puzzlement of passers-by.



It was the most extraordinary time, and a time of making a great many new friends from amongst the Fellows in College and the staff and students in the Attenborough building. As a means of rebooting ones commitment and excitement to the never ending work of conserving the natural world, it cannot be bested.

**Peregrine eyass** perched at Cambridge University Press. 2017. Photo J. Spencer

Some of the fruits of my term in Emmanuel are emerging as a series of papers in the *Quarterly Journal of Forestry* throughout 2018.

## SHOOTING OLLIE

by Cliff Cook



**Some of the crew fighting to save Cavo Sidero from development that resulted in the film *1000 Lost Golf Balls*. Left to right: Vangelis Kalitatzis — director of the film, Cliff Cook — film scriptwriter, Phidias Kontemeniotis — lawyer for the cause, Anaya Sarpaki — paleobotanist, Oliver Rackham — historical ecologist. Photo Jenny Moody.**

We were out for a walk in Cavo Sidero, a peninsula on the NE coast of Crete that was threatened by development by an English company: Vangelis as cameraman and myself as scriptwriter/interviewer. Our guides were Jennifer Moody and Oliver Rackham. The landscape was parched in the summer heat, the gusting wind raising dust.

There was no missing Oliver on that desolate hillside: the not-quite-matching reds of his shirt and socks, his shock of vigorous white hair crowned by a straw hat, his pointed white beard which had something goatish about it. Both he and Jenny seemed to have the eyes of hawks as they scanned the surface and made finds that, until they



pointed them out, were totally invisible to us. In particular I remember coming across an absorbed Oliver sitting on the ground examining a few shriveled leaves.

“Do you know?” he asked, his glasses flashing, “In this small patch of earth there are *four* endemic Cretan species!”

**Oliver at Cavo Sidero, 2006 and 2007. Photos Jenny Moody**

Walking with Oliver and Jenny that day was a revelation; for them almost everything in that ancient landscape told a story that they could interpret, a kind of detective work: ancient olive trees on Byzantine terraces; Minoan field walls, farmhouses, check-dams and a seaside villa. By the end of the day I felt that it had been brought to life for me; I was starting to see for myself.



When it came to interviewing Oliver about the unique forest of Cretan palm trees at Vaï, which we visited next, it seemed appropriate to have him perched on one of the trees that he had so much sympathy for and amidst which he really looked like a genius local, tiger-stripes of light and shade flickering over him. Vangelis, the cameraman, was particularly fascinated by Oliver; not just his appearance but his whole manner.





**Vangelis and Cliff “stalking their prey” (Oliver!) for the documentary *1000 Lost Golf Balls*, Vài, 2008. Photo Jenny Moody**

Another occasion I remember was our meeting with the Abbot of Toplou Monastery which owned the peninsula. When he did appear it was with a furious burst of energy as he launched into a harangue in such rapid-fire Greek that it was practically impossible to keep up with him, leaving almost no space for a word in edgeways. At one point, looking round the company, I saw quite a few subdued faces but Oliver seemed to be unaffected, the Abbot’s barbs bouncing off him like water from a duck’s back.

There were other instances of Oliver’s independence of mind. One of them was his approach to the regular forest fires that break out in Greece, especially in summer, every year the national and local press parroting the same phrases about “Biblical catastrophes”. But Oliver’s contention that fire was important in the life-cycle of many trees, including eucalyptus and pine, and that it was an essential way of clearing the accumulated waste radically questioned this assumption.

It was this ability to view things from a new angle, on the basis of evidence, and to question accepted opinion – an ability he shared with Jennifer Moody – that made the book they wrote together “The Making of the Cretan Landscape” such a wonderfully stimulating and informative text.

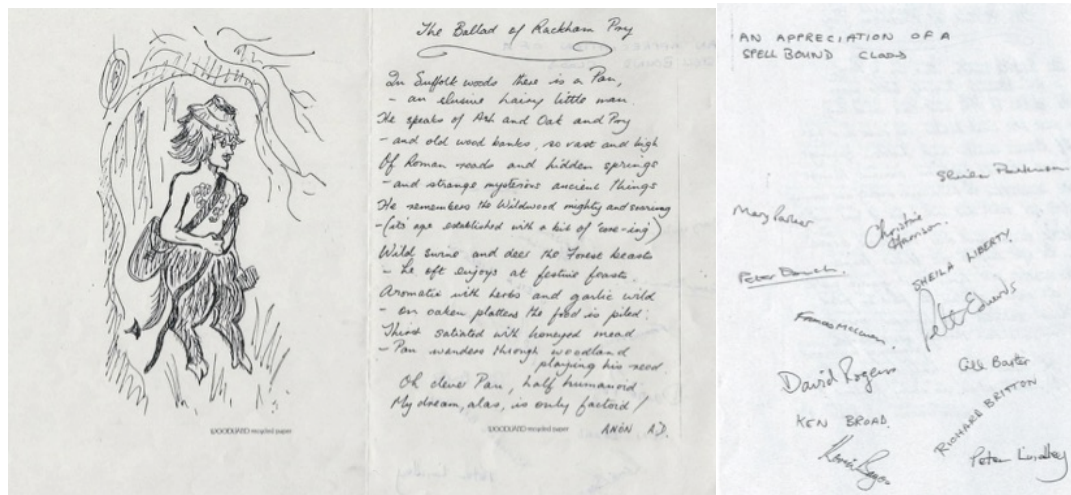
The last time I saw Oliver it was at a public lecture he gave here in Chania on the Cretan landscape. The auditorium was crowded. What I will always remember from that lecture was his gleeful pronouncement that in Crete, in the Eocene, a most extraordinary fauna had developed: “pygmy elephants, giant rats, long-legged, mountain-climbing hippopotamuses” which caused quite a stir among the audience not just because of the bizarre, surrealistic images conveyed but, I suspect, because it confirmed their view of themselves, their island and the man in front of them as being something strangely unique.

## PREVIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS:

### SOLVED! — THE MYSTERIOUS BALLAD OF RACKHAM PRY

The detectives who solved the mystery were George Peterken and Jonathan Spencer. They recognized several names on back of the card and got in touch with them. In particular they contacted Gillian Barter and Richard Britton, who kindly wrote back with memories and photos of the event ... a field class by Oliver at Flatford Mill held in 1989!

Neither remembers whom the artist or composer of the poem was, so that mystery remains.



**The Ballad of Rackham Pry.** Photos courtesy Philippa Sims

Richard Britton remembers attending this excellent Ancient Woodlands Field Studies Council course at Flatford Mill during a sunny week in May 1989. The other attendees were “ ... a mix of Forestry Commission and non-government folk who were all deeply interested in what Oliver had to say and show us. ... Oliver held us all spellbound with his explanations of ancient woodland systems and tales from Greece as we soaked up the history and sunshine in places like Chalkney Wood and Staverton Park. And of course he infected us with his love and enthusiasm for the attributes of small-leaved lime so it’s nice to be reminded of one of the alternative names as in Pry.

I was subsequently involved in helping produce the Forestry Commission’s nature conservation guidelines and a series of native woodland guides which were mainly authored by George Peterken, and I have to say that Oliver’s deep insight and experience of what sorts of woodland management didn’t work particularly well on ancient sites stayed with me and hopefully influenced some of the Forestry Commission woodland conservation training courses that I designed and led. I know a number of other Forestry Commission colleagues were privileged to have attended similar ancient woodlands courses which Oliver led around this time in late 80s/early 90s, and he certainly prompted a bit of soul searching amongst those colleagues who had been involved in the attempted conversion of ancient woodland sites to ‘more productive species’ in the 1970s, prior to the Broadleaves Policy c1982.”





**Flatford Mill 1989 class taught by Oliver Rackham, inspiration of the *Ballad of Rackham Pry*:** Left - Oliver standing in front of an ancient pollard along with several enthralled course delegates (and signatories to the thank you card!). Right - Oliver at work passing on his knowledge of these precious places to a tired but happy class. *Photos courtesy Richard Britton*

Gillian Barter notes that the class visited many woods and also spent a day looking at timber-framed buildings. She remembers Oliver wanting to talk to them at a particular point in a wood, but it was in shade. “Given that it was a beautiful spring day but cool in the shade, some of us suggested that he talk in a nearby sunny glade but he had no intention of doing so — that was the exact point at which he always demonstrated the particular feature concerned and he would do so again this time. I am sure he was right!”

Jonathan Spencer reminds us that ‘The Ballad of Rackham Pry’ is a pun on the 1960 Muriel Spark novel *The Ballad of Peckham Rye*!

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Ballad\\_of\\_Peckham\\_Rye\\_-\\_Critical\\_Opinions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Ballad_of_Peckham_Rye_-_Critical_Opinions)

## OLIVER

by George Peterken

Oliver and I both started out as woodland ecologists in the 1960s, so I knew him before his fame spread. I first saw him in a Cambridge greenhouse in 1963 when, among other surprising things, he asked me how I studied woodland history in the New Forest. Then from 1967 onwards, he and I took charge of the management of two woodland nature reserves in Cambridgeshire and we started exploring the woods of East Anglia, where he opened my eyes to many aspects of woodland ecology, not just their history. My main value to him was, I suspect, as chauffeur.



**George Peterken**, photo courtesy George Peterken

Oliver had a substantial impact on my work for nature conservation in British woodlands, though he never had a formal role. Sometime



in 1970 we had a discussion in which he suggested that the woods I had been labelling 'primary' would be better called 'ancient', and I agreed. This has proved to be an inspired choice, given the British public's predilection for history, tradition and all things old, though both of us were later to learn that this was not original: the term had been current in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. His 1975 *Trees and Woodland in the British Landscape* was the game-changer, step-change, paradigm shift, call it what you will. It not only changed how ecologists looked at woods, but changed public appreciation and understanding and thereby broadened the political base for woodland conservation. I remember hearing about this project for the first time in 1974, when he called it 'just a little book'.

This, in my view his most important book, made it easier for me as a woodland ecologist for the Nature Conservancy Council to negotiate the 1985 Broadleaves Policy, which resulted in the official recognition of ancient woodlands and transformed the fortunes of native woodland generally. Without ever making it explicit, we formed a double-act, me bridging the gap between forestry and ecology as an 'insider', Oliver providing many of the ideas and also stoking public awareness through his spirited and informed writings (which sometimes offended senior foresters). The national consensus this represented still holds.

### **'SMELLS OF DRAINS' AND 'TASTES LIKE CUCUMBER': A UNIQUE HERBARIUM VOICE**

by Christine Bartram

Oliver Rackham's herbarium of vascular plants, bryophytes and fungi, diagrams and coal ball peels now forms part of the holdings at Cambridge University Herbarium. His collection contains specimens gathered almost exclusively by him from 1950 onwards. Most of the plants were gathered outside Britain with Europe (4736 sheets), Greece and the Greek Islands (6481 sheets) forming the major part of the herbarium. Australia (350), Japan (316), and North America (968) are also represented.

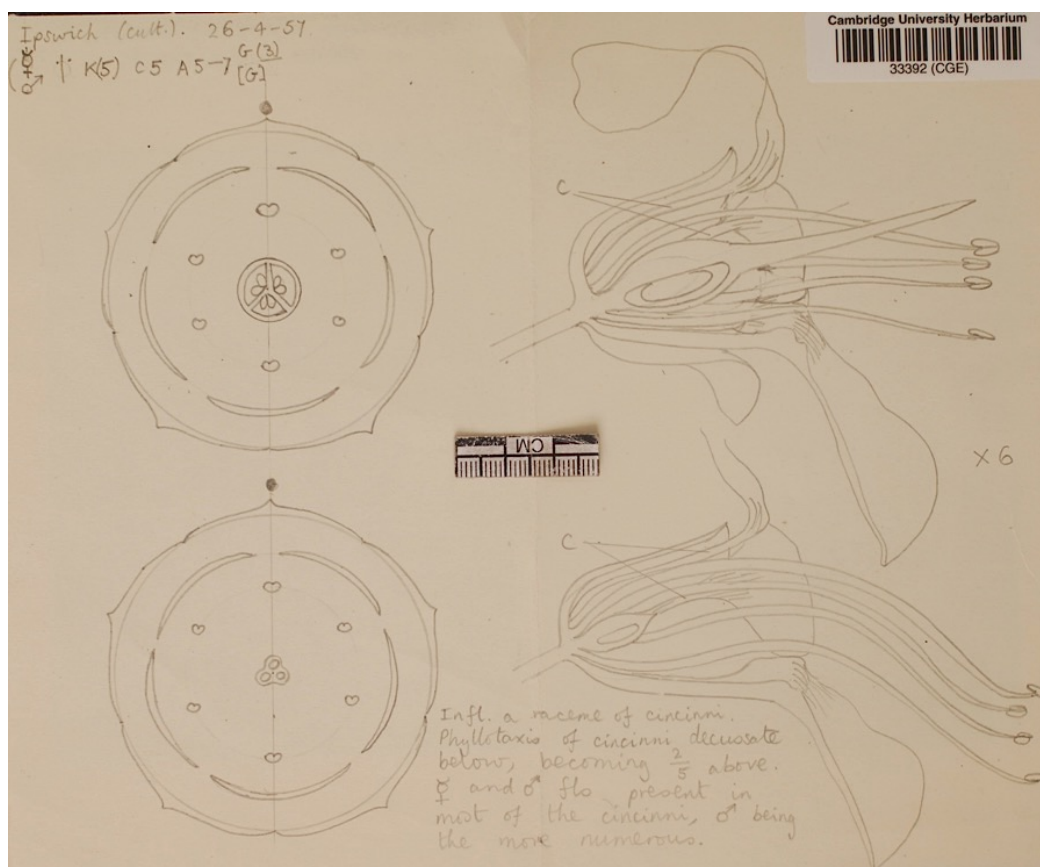
The British material (2302 sheets) has its strongest representation from *Ulmus* (276 specimens) many annotated with details of the onslaught of Dutch Elm Disease in the 1970s. Geographically the British collection is biased towards East Anglia, unsurprising as this was Oliver's base, with 69% of the specimens collected in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex.



*Ulmus minor*, W. Cambs, Grantchester  
Irregular line of old pollards. C. 2 ½ ft. dia. Along a big baulk parallel with ridge-&-furrow.  
First hedge N. of Grantchester village along the footpath to Newnham.  
Trunk very crooked. Bark flaky –fissured. Branches wide-angled (nearly 90°) with straight to ascending tendency. Epicormics fairly numerous with slight tendency to two rows. Twigs rather divaricate, thin, slightly pendulous.  
Fairly strongly suckering.  
Moderately susceptible to elm disease.  
O.R. 29 Aug 1977

**Elm specimen with typical annotation.** Photo courtesy Christine Bartram.

His collection shows that he developed his interest in botany very young, aged 10, and his early specimens were his learning tools for the identification of British species. Oliver was not a taxonomist and his herbarium is a tangible record of his research interests through plant physiology to landscape history.



Ipswich (cult.) 26-4-57 (♀♂) 1 K(5) c5 A5-7 G(3)  
[G]

Infl. a raceme of cincinni. Phyllotaxis of cincinni decussate below, becoming  $\frac{2}{5}$  above.

♀ and ♂ flo present in most of cincinni, ♂ being the more numerous.

**Diagram drawn by Oliver whilst studying botany in Norwich in 1957. Photo courtesy Christine Bartram**

While Oliver did not have the tribulations of herbarium staff and volunteers in mind when he put together his personal herbarium he nonetheless produced a collection that is unique in its 'voice' and which is a joy to digitize. Volunteers databasing Oliver's material never leave without saying they have learned something new from working with his herbarium. On a cold, grey, Cambridge afternoon it is delightful to be momentarily transported to the 'laurisylvan sacred forests' of Japan or the 'great Eucalyptus rainforests' of Tasmania even if certain shrubs, as he noted on the *Coprosma* he collected, 'smell of drains'. Detailed annotations describing plant physiology, soil, underlying rock, patterns of grazing, and even the palatability of the plants he tasted himself, make this collection not just a taxonomic tool but an invaluable resource for teaching and research.



*Anthemis parnasica* (BAH) Fernandes  
CLXIX/57/47  
[*Anthemis samariensis* Turland (2008) N.J.  
Turland 9 Jun 2016]  
Receptacle with long rigid scales. Achenes  
rhombic in section, obscurely ribbed, with  
membranes corona 1/3 of length of achene.  
W-facing (but sunless) Plattenkalk cliff, 'Vasiliki'  
pass at head of Kalókampos gorge, Samariá (Sf)  
Crete. Collected by W. R. Dossett at risk of  
neck. 8 July 1992  
New in Crete; massive woody stock is rather  
untypical. 1750 m

**Plant discovered on Crete by Oliver many  
years before it was described by Nick Turland.**  
Photo courtesy Christine Bartram



*Gastrolobium spinosum*, Leg. WA  
York Road Poison.  
A fluoroacetate plant.  
Bush. Common in dry savanna on bauxite soil.  
Avon Valley Nat. Park. O. R. 8 Dec 1996

**Toxic Australian Gastrolobium plant  
containing fluoroacetate.** Photo courtesy  
Christine Bartram

Please send enquiries to The Curator, Cambridge University Herbarium, Sainsbury Laboratory, Bateman Street, Cambridge UK CB2 1LR Tel: 01223 330217.

## SWEET CHESTNUT IN BRITAIN -- DELVING INTO OLIVER'S NOTES

by Rob Jarman

Zoe Hazell (Historic England's Senior Palaeoecologist) and I recently spent a very productive morning working through Oliver's files on sweet chestnut and also his notebooks for the Forest of Dean. We were searching specifically for information that Oliver had gathered in the 1970s for his *Ancient Woodland* book and its references to ancient sweet chestnut woods and veteran trees in Britain. This is to inform our research on the origins of sweet chestnut in Britain – is it really a Roman introduction, as so often alleged? Or an earlier, or later, introduction? Or not an introduction at all, but indigenous? We were delighted to find detailed records of chestnut woods that Oliver had visited and noted from historical records (and not just in East Anglia!); and some insightful correspondence with a wide range of people who had sent Oliver



information on sweet chestnut trees and also possible building timbers of sweet chestnut. It was especially rewarding to find Oliver's detailed notes of the visits he made with me to Chestnuts Wood & Welshbury Wood in the Forest of Dean in 1993 and 1994: although we wrote a joint paper on Welshbury and its limewoods, I had never seen his detailed site notes and field sketches – fabulous! Lucy was extremely helpful in highlighting relevant extracts and picking notes from the archives for us, ready for our visit. We were allowed to photograph some items – making subsequent research so much easier – thank you very much! Thanks especially to Oliver for keeping such wonderful records...

## PAST EVENTS

### 2017

#### SEPTEMBER 2017 —

- In the Rackham tradition, September 8-10 Kingcombe offered a very successful field course on the [Historical Ecology of an Autumn Dorset Landscape - 8 Sep 2017](#).

#### MAY 2017 —

- The 1st Woodland Trust Oliver Rackham Memorial Event took place on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at the beautifully restored coach house of Marks Hall Estate, where Oliver knew the woods and buildings well <http://www.markshall.org.uk/about-marks-hall/history/>.



**Lecturers holding forth at the 1st Woodland Trust Oliver Rackham Memorial Event:** Michael Lear (upper left), David Morfitt (upper right) and Ian Rotherham (lower left). Thank you display set up by the Marks Hall Estate Team (lower right). *Photos courtesy Charlotte Johnson*

Following a warm welcome by Michael Lear, Marks Hall Estate Trustee, there were lectures by Dr David Morfitt on 'Echoes of the Wildwood? A journey in

search of small-leaved lime woodland in Warwickshire' and Prof Ian Rotherham on 'Ancient Woods & Shadow Woods — a legacy of Oliver Rackham'. Dr Lucy Hughes, archivist for the Rackham Archive at Corpus Christi College Cambridge, also talked about Oliver's field notebooks on Chalkney Wood and Markshall Estate, which were digitized for the occasion.

The lectures were followed by a buffet lunch and guided walks on a bright spring day led by Jonathan Jukes (Marks Hall Estate) and Simon Leatherdale (formerly of the Forestry Commission).



**Jonathan Jukes engaging the crowd and Simon Leatherdale demonstrating limebark at the 1st Woodland Trust Oliver Rackham Memorial Event.** *Photos courtesy Charlotte Johnson and Paula Keen.*



**Organizers, speakers and participants** (left to right: Simon Leatherdale, Melissa Moody, David Morfitt, Paula Keen, Camilla Lambrick, George Lambrick, Jo Burgon, and two others) at the 1st Woodland Trust Oliver Rackham Memorial Event at Marks Hall. *Photo courtesy Paula Keen*

#### APRIL 2017—

- The Cambridge Conservation Forum (CCF) held its third Oliver Rackham Memorial Guided Walk in Hayley Wood, Thursday 13 April 2017. Louise Bacon and Richard Dowsett treated participants to a guided wander through the oxlips and spring flora of Hayley Wood. Participants shared stories about Oliver and toasted his memory. <http://www.cambridgeconservationforum.org.uk/event/oliver-rackham-memorial-guided-walk-hayley-wood>

## 2016

#### DECEMBER 2016 —

- The current issue of *The Letter* 95, the journal of Corpus Christi College Cambridge, contains several entries pertaining to Oliver: Stuart Laing's 'Domus' includes a photo of the christening of *Rackham the Red*, the new ladies rowing boat,



and several mentions of Oliver. Peter Carolin's fascinating article 'Working with the past' also mentions Oliver. 'The Oliverium' by Jennifer Moody and Wick Dossett, is a short write-up of the symposium held for Oliver in August 2016 (see below). 'Oliver Rackham and willows: portrait of a photograph' is a thoughtful essay about the man by Susan Ranson. The Bursar reports that the conversion of Oliver Rackham's house in Newnham into two Fellows' flats is complete, and notes: "This is a crucial addition to our housing stock and hopefully will inspire future occupants to levels of distinction comparable to those achieved by the benefactor!" (p. 57). The report on 'Rowing' includes more details about the ladies' boat *Rackham the Red* and their successes this year (p. 98)

<http://www.corpus.cam.ac.uk/about-us/publications/the-corpus-letter/>.

#### SEPTEMBER 2016 —

- 25 September — Trees in Autumn – an Oliver Rackham Memorial Event at Wheatfen. Richard Hobbs took people around the Ted Ellis Trust Nature Reserve at Wheatfen (Norfolk), where Ted Ellis himself introduced Oliver to many of the wonders of the natural world. Philippa Sims reports that the event was a great success. Photos of the crowd can be seen on the Wheatfen Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/108886053969/>,

For more information about Wheatfen contact David Nobbs (Warden) 01508 538036, or follow this link <http://www.wheatfen.org/tethtml/home.html>.

#### AUGUST 2016 —

- 13–14 August — The Commemorative Symposium for Professor Oliver Rackham at Corpus Christi College Cambridge took place on two days with over 200 attendees.

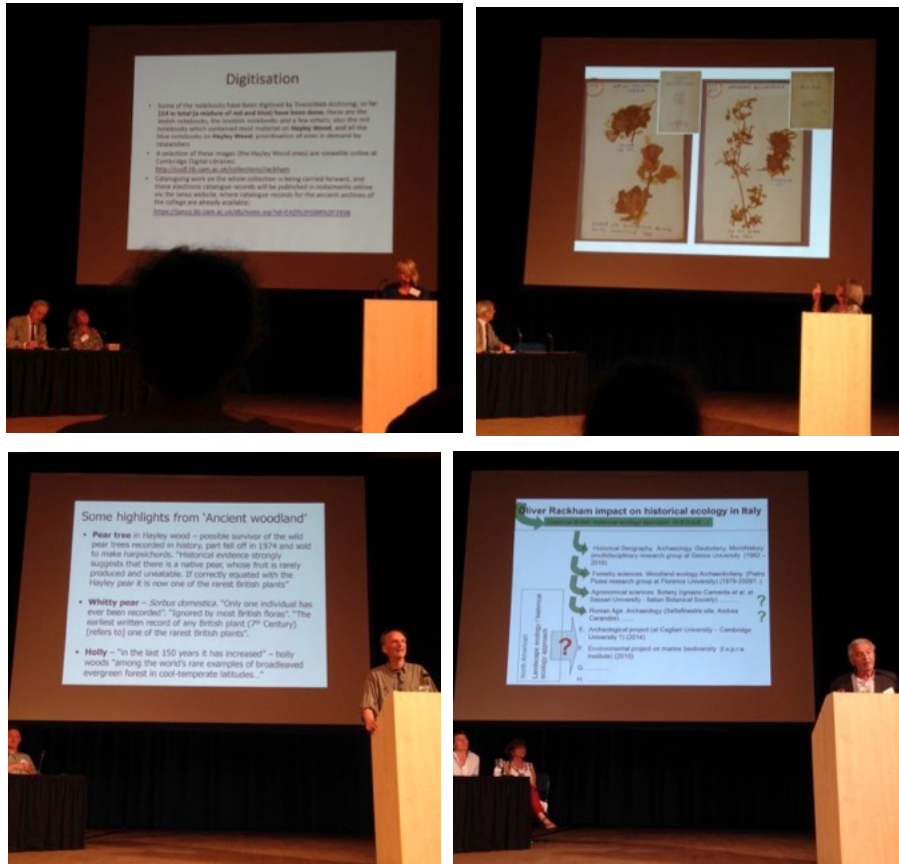


**Participants at the Symposium, West Road Concert Hall. Photos Sarah Wordsworth**

The first day was action-packed, beginning with talks about Oliver at Corpus (Stuart Laing), his archive being curated there (Lucy Hughes), and his herbarium at Cambridge University Herbarium (Christine Bartram). This was followed by a splendid keynote talk by Richard Mabey. After lunch there were presentations on *Oliver and British Woods* (Ian Rotherham, Adrian Newton & Louise Bacon) and *Oliver and the Mediterranean* (Jennifer Moody, Peter Warren, Diego Moreno & Roberta Cevasco). An international panel then discussed *Woodland and Landscape Conservation and Management* (William Sutherland, Henry Art, George Peterken, Paula Keen, Gloria Pungetti, & Kalliope Pediaditi). Peter Grubb summed up the



meeting and thanked all the presenters and panellists.



**Presentations at the West Road Concert Hall:** Dr Lucy Hughes (upper left), Christine Bartram (upper right), Prof Adrian Newton (lower left), Prof Diego Moreno (lower right). *Photos Melissa Moody*

These events were followed by an exhibition in the Parker Library (organized by Christopher de Hamel, Steven Archer, Jo Willmott, Berthold Kress & Lucy Hughes) of College silver, the Ely Coucher Book (kindly lent by Gonville & Caius College), samples of Oliver's field notebooks and herbarium specimens; a moving recital in the chapel (The Revd James Buxton); drinks on the lawn in Old Court and a magnificent dinner with fine wine in College Hall. The menu included 'A walk through Hayley Wood' and 'Rackham of lamb'!



**Dinner in College Hall.** *Photos Wick Dossett*

Day two began with a Communion Service in the College chapel (The Revd James Buxton & The Rt Revd Michael Bourke), and then alternating talks on Oliver's architectural discoveries in Corpus's Old Court and elsewhere (Peter

Carolyn) and excursions to Hayley Wood (orchestrated by Peter Grubb with significant input from Louise Bacon, Ed Tanner, Richard Dowsett, Vince Lea, Rob Jarman, Stephen Tomkins, David Coomes, Jenny Mackay & Mark Ricketts).



**Guided tours of Hayley Wood.** Left: Dr Ed Tanner leading a group around Hayley Wood. Right: Prof Peter Grubb. Photos Wick Dossett and Jenny Moody

For other details please see write-ups on the College's website:

<http://www.corpus.cam.ac.uk/news/commemorative-symposium-for-oliver-rackham/> and in Corpus's journal *The Letter* **95**  
<http://www.corpus.cam.ac.uk/about-us/publications/the-corpus-letter/>.

#### JUNE 2016 —

- Corpus Christi College Boat Club held the Naming Ceremony for the new Women's 1st VIII at 10:30am on Saturday 11th June at the Boathouse. The boat is named *Rackham the Red* in honour of former Master, Prof Oliver Rackham OBE. At the ceremony the Boat Club Senior Treasurer, Dr Ben Pilgrim, gave a short account of the reasons behind choosing the name and thanked all those who contributed towards the boat. The boat was then blessed by the Dean of Chapel, James Buxton, and formally named by the Master, Stuart Laing.



**The christening of Rackham the Red**, Corpus Christi's new Women's rowing boat. Photo sent to me by Revd. James Buxton, but I do not know the photographer.



**APRIL 2016 —**

- 28 April — Paula Keen, of The Woodland Trust, began revisiting woodland sites in Wales recorded by Oliver Rackham, with the view to finishing up the research begun by Oliver many years ago.
- 23 April — PLACE (People, Landscape and Cultural Environment) of Yorkshire held a woodland conference in Oliver Rackham's memory in Ilkley, North Yorkshire <http://place.uk.com/calendar-of-events/>.



**Guided walk around Middleton Woods with Terry O'Connor.** *Photos courtesy Margaret Atherden*

Dr Margaret Atherden writes that 65 people attended the conference and that there were five speakers: Prof Melvyn Jones gave a fascinating talk about Walls, Woodbanks and Worked trees, explaining the evidence for past woodland management that can be gleaned from archaeological features. Tim Laurie spoke about his research work on the distribution of relict limewoods in the northeast Pennines – many of them recorded from inaccessible locations on cliffs or steep riverbanks. Tom Lord considered the documentary and archaeological evidence for former wood pasture in Upper Ribblesdale, including surviving woodland ground flora and stonewalls designed to exclude wolves. John Weir, who works for the Forestry Commission, gave a provocative but entertaining talk about the challenges of managing woodland in a changing climate, such as dealing with a large range of new pests and diseases. John Grimshaw, Director of the Yorkshire Arboretum at Castle Howard, demonstrated the importance of the tree collection there for future conservation.

In the afternoon there was a guided walk around Middleton Woods, led by Prof Terry O'Connor.

The book based on the conference has been published see Book Dedication section page 18. Please contact Dr Margaret Atherden at [place@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:place@yorks.ac.uk) for more information.

**MARCH 2016 —**

- 5 March — The British Bryological Society's two East Anglian groups (Cambridge and Norfolk & Suffolk) organized a Rackham Memorial Excursion to Bradfield Woods on 5 March 2016, 11 a.m. Richard Fisk, Suffolk bryophyte specialist, led the excursion. Bradfield Woods was seminal to the evolution of Oliver's extraordinary career, as were the deep friendships he forged there with James and Ann Hart, Colin and Susan Ranson and so many others.



**FEBRUARY 2016 —**

- 26–27 February — Sarah Morris, a wildlife artist who attended Oliver's courses at Kingcombe, dedicated an exhibit to him at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Botanical Art Show. <http://www.natures-details.com/>.

**2015****DECEMBER 2015 —**

- Posthumous publication of a manuscript found on Oliver's computer after he died: Rackham, Oliver. 2015. 'Brandon Park Fungi 1959–2014: Change and Stability in Occurrence', *Suffolk Natural History: Transactions of the Suffolk Naturalists' Society* **51** 26–32 and Plates 13–15.

Many thanks to Martin Sanford, the editor, who organized the publication and to the executors of Oliver's estate Mr Timothy Harvey-Samuel and Ms Jennie Pratt.

**NOVEMBER 2015 —**

- 27 November — The Cultural Association of Greveniti, a small village in the Eastern Zagori, (Greece) dedicated their 2016 village calendar to their Sacred Forest, the Thalys project and the idea of a tree dedicated to Oliver Rackham's memory. [http://greveniti.blogspot.gr/2015/11/blog-post\\_27.html](http://greveniti.blogspot.gr/2015/11/blog-post_27.html) [you must scroll down through the entries to see the calendar.] (also see August entry below.)
- 26 November — *The Letter* **94** (the journal of Corpus Christi College Cambridge) contains a number of articles and tributes to Oliver. The opening paragraph by Stuart Laing, Master, sets the tone. Other highlights include: Jennifer Moody's article 'A Giant of a Man' describing adventures with Oliver in Crete; Peter Carolin's article 'The Chapel crypt', which reveals the history and rediscovery of the Chapel crypt, where Oliver is interred; Drew Milne's poem *Ash Lichen* dedicated to Oliver; Lucy Hughes's section 'Then and Now', which includes a 1973 note by Oliver on Chapel chairs; The Revd. James Buxton's account of the Chapel describing Oliver's funeral and interment in the crypt; and Peter Grubb's tribute to Oliver in the 'In memoriam' section. <http://www.corpus.cam.ac.uk/about-us/publications/the-corpus-letter/>.
- 14 November — the Cambridge Conservation Forum held their 6th working party in Hayley Wood. They will hold this event annually in Oliver Rackham's memory. Oliver participated in all but one of the previous work parties. <http://www.cambridgeconservationforum.org.uk/news/great-day-out-woods> ; <http://www.cambridgeconservationforum.org.uk/event/6th-ccf-working-party-hayley-wood-memory-oliver-rackham>.

**OCTOBER 2015 —**

- 18 October — Oliver's memorial stone was dedicated during Evensong in a ceremony led by The Revd. James Buxton and Master Stuart Laing at the Chapel of Corpus Christi College, where Oliver is buried in the crypt.



**Oliver Rackham's memorial stone.** Photo Wick Dossett

- 17–18 October — The first National Coppicing Day took place on Oliver's 76th birthday: 17 October 2015. At least five events happened at various woods around Britain celebrating this occasion, including a two-day event at Hardwick Wood organized by the Cambridge Conservation Volunteers (<https://www.facebook.com/coppicedayUK>).
- 13 October — The Wildlife Trust introduced a new award "... in honour of the renowned naturalist Oliver Rackham who died in February. Oliver was a supporter of the Wildlife Trust and warden of Hayley Wood for many years. The award was given to mark an *Outstanding Contribution to Conservation and Wildlife Monitoring* across our three counties. The worthy winner of this award was Colin Carpenter, warden of Flitwick Moor, Bedfordshire." <http://www.wildlifebcn.org/news/2015/10/13/annual-awards-agm>.

#### **AUGUST 2015 —**

- 13 August — Lectures for a veteran tree dedication to Oliver were held in Greveniti, Epirus, and organized by Dr Kalliopi Stara and her colleagues.

#### **JULY 2015 —**

- 17 July — A proposal dedicated to the memory of Oliver Rackham to include the Sacred Forests of Epirus in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO) by the Greek Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious affairs, was approved! <http://ayla.culture.gr/?p=374>. Warm congratulations to Dr Kalliopi Stara and her colleagues listed therein, who organized the proposal.
- 5–10 July — Prof Gloria Pungetti organized a tribute to Oliver at the 9th IALE (International Association of Landscape Ecologists) World Congress held in Portland, Oregon. 'Tribute to Professor Oliver Rackham and Debate on Biocultural Landscapes'.

**MAY 2015 —**

- 29 May — Hay Festival Rackham Memorial Lecture by Clive Anderson, president of The Woodland Trust: <https://www.hayfestival.com/wales/index.aspx>.
- 26–27 May — Marinescapes Conference in Piraeus, Greece was dedicated to Oliver's memory: <http://www.civilscape.eu/civilscape/content/en/news/pages/1423848755.xml>.

**APRIL 2015 —**

- 26 April — Janet Ainsley, the current secretary of Tiger Hill LNR [http://www.lnr.naturalengland.org.uk/Special/lnr/lnr\\_details.asp?C=0&N=&ID=469](http://www.lnr.naturalengland.org.uk/Special/lnr/lnr_details.asp?C=0&N=&ID=469), wrote: “A special gathering took place at Tiger Hill LNR on the 26 April 2015 to celebrate and recognize the immense contribution of three distinguished conservationists in the setting up and running of Tiger Hill Local Nature Reserve: William Palmer (1905–984); Colin Ranson (1936–1989); and Oliver Rackham (1939–2015). A replacement plaque was placed by Rosemary’s great grandson, Edward Austin, beside the oak tree planted by Rachel Price, Rosemary’s granddaughter, in honour of Colin Ranson in 1990. Two new plaques were placed beside the small-leaved limes planted in 1977 - but now dedicated in honour of William Palmer in 1984 and Oliver Rackham in 2015.”
- 23–24 April — ECSLAND Conference on European Sacred Landscapes in Sassari, Italy was dedicated to Oliver's memory: [http://www.cclp.group.cam.ac.uk/conf\\_ecsland\\_goal&topic.html](http://www.cclp.group.cam.ac.uk/conf_ecsland_goal&topic.html).
- 17 April — Cambridge Conservation Volunteers held a guided walk through the oxlips and bluebells in Hayley Wood in Oliver’s memory. This was a walk Oliver guided for the last five years, and he had just agreed to do it on this date the weekend before he died. Over 50 friends, colleagues and woodland experts from near and far participated. They toasted his memory around where the fire had been when he had last joined the coppicing party in the autumn. <http://www.cambridgeconservationforum.org.uk/event/oliver-rackham-memorial-guided-walk-around-hayley-wood-fully-booked>. [http://www.plantlife.org.uk/about\\_us/blog/the\\_oliver\\_rackham\\_memorial\\_walk](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/about_us/blog/the_oliver_rackham_memorial_walk).

**MARCH 2015 —**

- 4 March — Interment of Oliver Rackham in the chapel crypt
- 3 March — Funeral for Oliver Rackham in Chapel, Corpus Christi College Cambridge. <http://www.corpus.cam.ac.uk/news/oliver-rackhams-funeral-service-addresses/>.

**FEBRUARY 2015 —**

- Facebook page set up for Oliver Rackham by Dr Guy Sanders <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1551598301765933/>.
- Almond tree planted for Oliver in the Corinth dig-house garden by Dr Guy Sanders.

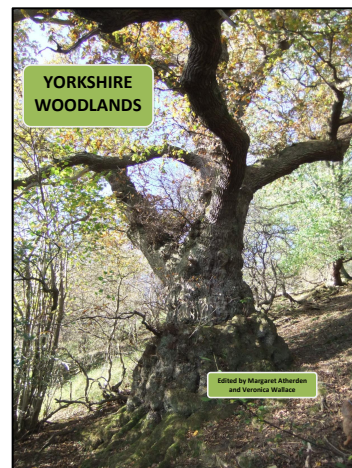


## BOOK DEDICATIONS

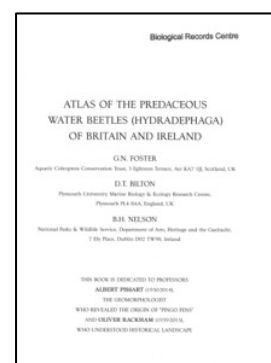
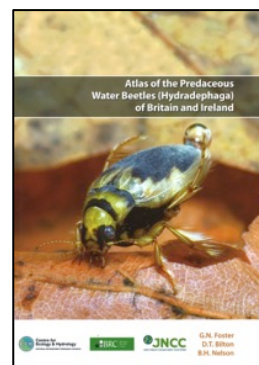
- Professor Ian Rotherham and Dr Jennifer Moody will be editing a volume organized in Oliver's memory called *Countryside History*. It will include chapters on Britain, the Mediterranean, the United States, Japan and Australia. We will keep you posted!
- Professor Alper Çolak, writes that a book he is co-editing with Ian Rotherham and Simay Kirca, *Ancient woodlands and trees: A guide for landscape planners and forest managers*, will be dedicated to Oliver Rackham. Oliver's contribution is titled 'The Archaeology of Trees, Woodland, and Wood-Pasture'. The book should come out in 2018.

- Proceedings of the PLACE conference held in Ilkley (North Yorkshire) during April 2016 in Oliver's memory is published. *Yorkshire Woodlands 2017*. Margaret Atherden and Veronica Wallace (eds), ISBN:978-1-906604-62-2. It includes an obituary of Oliver and feature articles by Melvyn Jones (Walls, woodbanks and worked trees), Tim Laurie (Relict limewoods of the NE Pennine fringe), Tom Lord (Wood pasture in Upper Ribblesdale), John Weir (Forests for the future) and John Grimshaw (the Yorkshire Arboretum). There is also an account of a walk through Middleton Woods, Ilkley. The publication costs £5.00 + £2.00 P & P (UK only). Copies are available by writing to the following address:

Dr Margaret Atherden  
PLACE Office  
York St John University  
Lord Mayor's Walk  
York YO31 7EX



- Chris Preston writes that the 2016 *Atlas of the Predaceous Water Beetles (Hydradephaga) of Britain and Ireland* by GN Foster, DT Bilton & BH Nelson was co-dedicated to Oliver! Oliver's influence has certainly spread far and wide. [http://www.field-studies-council.org/publications/pubs/atlas-of-the-predaceous-water-beetles-\(hydradephaga\)-of-britain-and-ireland.aspx](http://www.field-studies-council.org/publications/pubs/atlas-of-the-predaceous-water-beetles-(hydradephaga)-of-britain-and-ireland.aspx).



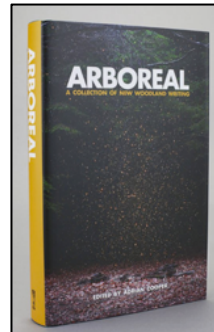
- Derek Niemann's book *A Tale Of Trees: the battle to save Britain's ancient woodland*, published by Short Books in October 2016, highlights Oliver's and George Peterken's roles in the salvation of Britain's ancient woodlands.

<http://www.whispersfromthewild.co.uk/books-by-derek-niemann/a-tale-of-trees/>.

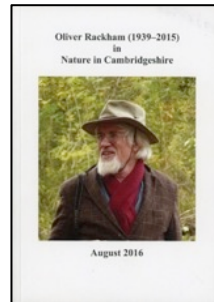


- Arboreal: A Collection of New Woodland Writing* published by Little Toller Books and edited by Adrian Cooper, is a collection of essays and articles exploring what woodlands mean to us. The anthology was inspired by and dedicated to Oliver.

<https://www.littletoller.co.uk/shop/books/little-toller/arboreal/>.



- Nature in Cambridgeshire* published a special issue that is a collection of all the articles Oliver published in this journal. If you are interested in buying a copy please contact Mark Hill at [moh@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:moh@ceh.ac.uk).



- Professor Mauro Agnoletti and F. Emanuelli are editors of the book, *Biocultural Diversity in Europe* (Springer Verlag) that is dedicated to Oliver. The book can be purchased at <http://www.springer.com/us/book/9783319263137>.



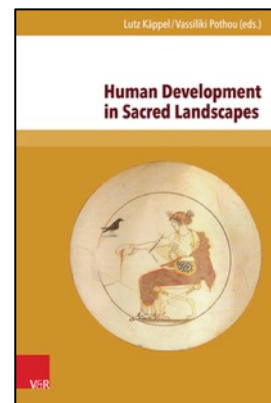
- Professor Diego Moreno writes that the book Gabellieri N & Pescini V (eds.), *Biografia di un paesaggio rurale Geografia, storia e archeologia ambientale per la riqualificazione di Case Lovara* (promontorio del Mesco La Spezia) is dedicated to Oliver. It is published through the Laboratorio di Archeologia e storia ambientale (LASA)) at Università degli Studi di Genova (Italy).

[http://www.oltre.it/biblioteca/store/comersus\\_viewItem.asp?idProduct=3215](http://www.oltre.it/biblioteca/store/comersus_viewItem.asp?idProduct=3215).



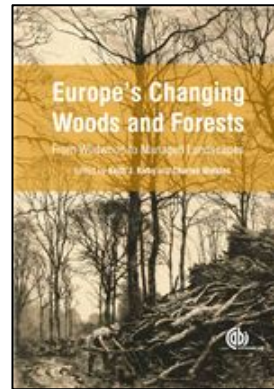
- Professors Mauro Agnoletti and Ian Rotherham edited a special issue of *Biodiversity and Conservation* dedicated to Oliver Rackham: *Special Issue: Landscape and Biocultural Diversity*. *Biodiversity and Conservation* 24.13, December 2015. <http://link.springer.com/journal/10531/24/13/page/1>.

- Dr Vicky Pothou writes that the book Kappel L & Pothou V (eds) *Human Development in Sacred Landscapes: Between Ritual Tradition, Creativity and Emotionality*, Göttingen, 2015, is dedicated to Oliver. It is the proceedings from the conference *Human Development in Sacred Landscapes* held in Delphi Greece in May 2011 and includes an article by Oliver, 'Greek Landscapes: Profane and Sacred'. [http://www.v-r.de/de/human\\_development\\_in\\_sacred\\_landscapes/t-0/1032904/](http://www.v-r.de/de/human_development_in_sacred_landscapes/t-0/1032904/).





- Professors Charles Watkins and Keith Kirby dedicated their book *Europe's Changing Woods and Forests* to Oliver. The book is a follow-up to the proceedings from a conference held in 1996 that marked the 20th anniversary of original publication of Oliver's *Trees and Woodland in the British Landscape* in 1976.  
<http://www.cabi.org/bookshop/book/9781780643373>.



## OTHER WORKS IN PROGRESS:

- THE RACKHAM ARCHIVE** (also see page 1 for an update) at Corpus Christi College consists of Oliver's field notebooks, papers, slides, and photos. It is under the care of Dr Lucy Hughes, college archivist. If you are interested in consulting some of this material please contact Dr Lucy Hughes at [lcb15@corpus.cam.ac.uk](mailto:lcb15@corpus.cam.ac.uk). The goal is to digitize this collection and to make it accessible to interested scholars and friends around the world. Some digitized notebooks can be seen here: <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/rackham>.

If you have a story or memory about Oliver that you would like to contribute to the Rackham Archive for posterity, please write it up and send it to Dr Lucy Hughes [lcb15@corpus.cam.ac.uk](mailto:lcb15@corpus.cam.ac.uk).

- THE RACKHAM HERBARIUM**, stored at the Cambridge University Herbarium <http://data.plantsci.cam.ac.uk/herbarium/>, contains 17,000+ items, mainly from Britain and Greece (especially Crete), but also significant samples from Texas, Japan, and Australia. All items have now been meticulously photographed. Cataloguing continues. Those interested in viewing the Rackham collection please contact the herbarium staff at <http://data.plantsci.cam.ac.uk/herbarium/visit/>.
- OLIVER'S CARPENTRY WORKSHOP**. The preservation and reassembly of this workshop was the brainchild of Oliver's friend and colleague, Valerie Cooper. It is now a collaborative effort between Woodland Heritage <http://www.woodlandheritage.org/> and The Carpenters Fellowship <http://www.carpentersfellowship.co.uk/>, and is a work in progress. In the meantime, Woodland Heritage has supported the digitization of some of Oliver's notebooks, and actively promote this initiative to their members and the press. See the article "Oliver Rackham's notebooks, an amazing archive becomes available" by Guy Corbett-Marshall on page 105 of Woodland Heritage's journal, which can be downloaded here: [http://www.woodlandheritage.org/images/stories/wh/journals\\_img/wh\\_2017.pdf](http://www.woodlandheritage.org/images/stories/wh/journals_img/wh_2017.pdf)

- **WHEATFEN FUND FOR OLIVER RACKHAM.** Wheatfen, near Norwich, played a big role in Oliver's early life and, through the naturalist Ted Ellis, his chosen career. The center is an important nature reserve and education center. Further details can be found on the website: <http://www.wheatfen.org>.

If you would like to donate to this fund, please send your cheques made out to 'The Ted Ellis Trust' to Philippa Sims (Oliver's cousin) at 26C Shotesham Road, Poringland, Norwich NR14 7LG.

- **WOODLAND TRUST'S FUND FOR OLIVER RACKHAM** (also see pages 11-12 for an account of the 1st Oliver Rackham Memorial event at Markshall). The Woodland Trust's Fund for Oliver Rackham will sponsor annual lectures and walks inspired by Oliver's interests. If you would like to offer your ideas or support for a Rackham Memorial lecture or walk, please contact Paula Keen at [paulakeen@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:paulakeen@woodlandtrust.org.uk).