

Yew books published between 1896 and 2002

Bibliography

- Baxter, Trevor The Eternal Yew (1992)
Bevan-Jones, Robert The Ancient Yew (2002)
Chetan, A. and Brueton, D. The Sacred Yew (1994)
Cornish, Vaughan The Churchyard Yew and Immortality (1946)
Evans, J.Daryll The Churchyard Yews of Gwent (1988)
Hartzell, Hal The Yew Tree – A thousand whispers (1991)
Lowe, John The Yew Trees of Britain and Ireland (1896)
Mills, Ken The Cumbrian Yew Book (1999)
Swanton, E.W. The Yew Trees of England (1958)
Williamson, Richard The Great Yew Forest (1978)

[Find out more about the content of these books below](#)

Lowe, John The Yew Trees of Britain and Ireland (1896)

1896 Macmillan
270 pp. 39 b/w illustrations

Introduction

- Chapter 1** Taxus Baccata, L. – Varieties – Etymology of Yew – Epithets
- Chapter 2** Geographical distribution – Indigenous – Geological remains – Sparse distribution in England – Reasons for this.
- Chapter 3** Age of yew-trees – Considered slow growing – Mode of estimating age – Traditional accounts – Age of contiguous buildings – De Candolle's method of calculating age – Rings of growth – In young trees, correct – In old, erroneous – Rejuvenescence – Increase by welding of young shoots – Variable growth.
- Chapter 4** Rate of growth – Point of measurement – Sir R. Christison's view – Objections – Instances – Measurements of trees of known age – Increase at fixed points and at stated periods – Examples – Dr. Christison's and Dr. Beddoe's measurements – Mr. Bowman's method – Trepine – Objections – Traditional accounts – Fallacies – Rate of growth in old trees – Periods of rest and growth.
- Chapter 5** Causes and variation in growth – Retardation and acceleration – Pollarding – its meaning – Frequency – Causes – Results – Rings of wood – Hollow trunks becoming solid
- Chapter 6** Notable trees and their measurements – in England and Wales – in Scotland and in Ireland – All trees of 10ft in girth and upwards – Trees of 30 ft in girth and upwards in England and Wales
- Chapter 7** Why planted in churchyards – Druidical, Roman, and Christian customs – Early English writers – Funeral customs – Symbolism – Shelter of buildings – For providing bow-wood – Hansard's objections – Planted in churchyards in Germany and Normandy.
- Chapter 8** Character of Yew wood – Uses – Manufacture – Value – 'Saint's Yew'.
- Chapter 9** Bows – Ancient use – Long-bow – Battle of Hastings – Its value in English wars – English supremacy – Various statutes – Forest laws – Edward II – Edward III – Edward IV – French archers – Statute of Henry VIII – Elizabeth – 'Act of Bowyers' – Prices - Importation of foreign bows – Act of Philip and Mary – Companies of archers – Commission of Charles I – Bow-making – Cross-bows made of yew – Its inferiority to the long-bow.

- Chapter 10** Poisonous properties of the yew – Classical notices – Wood – Leaves – Fruit poisonous – Dangerous statements to the contrary – Effects on man – Taxin in male and female plants – Medicinal use – Valuable as a cardiac tonic – Poisonous effects on animals.
- Chapter 11** Poetical allusions, etc., to the yew in ancient and modern times.
- Chapter 12** Notes, historical, etc., on some of the more remarkable trees in Great Britain and Ireland.

Bibliography

Cornish, Vaughan The Churchyard Yew and Immortality (1946)

1946 Muller and Company
111 pp. 14 b/w illustrations 12 maps and diagrams

Introduction by the Archbishop of York

Chapter 1 Churchyard Yews of England and Wales, and their adoption in Normandy

The Village Church and the Origin of its Yew Tree - The Churchyard Yew of Salcombe Regis - The Diocesan and Parochial Maps of Churchyard Yews - Examples of Remarkable Churchyard Yews - The Churchyard Yews of Normandy - Yew Trees of Circular Churchyards - Associations of Churchyard Yews with Customs of the People - The Churchyard Yew and Palm Sunday - Modern Speculation on the Origin of Churchyard Yews - A Sermon on the Churchyard Yew

Chapter 2 Churchyard Yews of Ireland and Scotland. The Distribution of Graveyard Yews in Scotland in Relation to the Missionary Work of St. Ninian - The Scarcity of Churchyard Yews in the Eastern Lowlands but their Prevalence in the Grounds of Private Mansions - Yew Trees beside Family Vaults in Scottish Churchyards

Chapter 3 Churchyard Yews of Dioceses and Parishes.

Churchyard Yews of the Dioceses of England and Wales – Churchyard Yews of the Parishes of England – Churchyard Yews of the Parishes of Wales – Churchyard Yews of Normandy – Churchyard Yews of the Dioceses of Ireland – Yews in churchyards and burial grounds of Scotland – Churches of St. Ninian's Foundation in Scotland

Bibliography

Swanton, E.W. The Yew Trees of England (1958)

1958 Farnham
54 pp. 11 b/w illustrations

Chapter 1 Introductory Notes

Botanical description – Distribution – Avenues and hedges – The variety fastigiata – Other varieties – Etymology – Place-name – Poisonous properties – Uses – Archery – Cottage gardens – Parasites – Lightning – Poetical allusions – Folklore.

Chapter 2 Growth and Age

Annular rings – Growth rapid in young trees – Do old trees sometimes grow faster than young ones? – Periods of rest – Hollow trunks becoming filled up – Methods of estimating age, De Candolle's, Sir Robert Christison's and Dr. John Lowe's – Notes and observations – How to estimate approximate age – Influence of environment – Exaggerated estimates of age.

Chapter 3 Abnormal Conditions

Topiary work – At Harlington – East Bedfont “peacocks” – The Twyford “umbrella” – Pollarding – Henbury avenue – Root pruning – Recuperative power – Removal of the Buckland St. Mary yew – Freak growth.

Chapter 4 The Churchyard Yew

When and why planted – An ancient custom – Veneration – Memorial trees – Punishment for damage – Evergreen for festivals – Pagan and Christian customs – A remarkable survival – Providing shelter – Connection with archery – Position – Rarely coeval with the Church – Age frequently exaggerated – Domesday reference – Single lead – Replacement – Hollow trunks used as receptacles – Need for protection – W.H. Hudson quoted.

Chapter 5 Some Veterans

Recorded by Lowe – Prostrate yews at Fountains Abbey – List of twenty-two trees – Descriptive notes.

Chapter 6 Additional Records

Yews of particular interest – Forty-eight not recorded by Lowe – Descriptions.

Chapter 7 The Oldest Yews

All are pre-Conquest - Four have hollow trunks that are filling up with internal growth – List of twelve trees with descriptive notes.

Chapter 8 Bygones

Aldworth – Brabourne – Bucklebury – Dibden – Hampstead Marshall – Hedsor – Patterdale – Llanthewy Vach – Windlesham.

Williamson, Richard The Great Yew Forest: the Natural History of Kingley Vale (1978)

1978 Macmillan
208 pp. b/w photos and line drawings
No further details available

Evans, J.Daryll The Churchyard Yews of Gwent (1988)

1998 Archangel Press
167 pp. 25 b/w illustrations

Foreword by The Lord Bishop of Monmouth

Chapter 1 Vandal or eccentric?

Chapter 2 By accident or design

Chapter 3 What manner of tree?

Chapter 4 Measuring up (and across and around)

Chapter 5 You are old, Father William...

Chapter 6 The broader canvas

Chapter 7 The detailed patterns

Chapter 8 The red wood is a red herring

Chapter 9 Seeking the meaning

Appendix 1 Calculation of Theoretic Age of a yew by David L.Prothero, B.Sc., Ph.D

Appendix 2 List of sites visited

Hartzell, Jr., Hal *The Yew Tree – A thousand whispers* (1991)

1991 Hulogosi Press, Oregon, USA
319 pp. 52 illustrations and 36 b/w photographs

PART 1 Old World Yew

1 **Mythic Qualities**

Image – The Classical Record – Celtic Allusions – Longevity – Utility – Robin Hood – William Tell – Lethal Reputation

2 **Sacred Connections**

The Triple Goddess – Funeral Rites – Votive Objects – Celtic Folklore – English Folklore – Scottish Folklore – European Folklore – Yew and the Alphabet – Etymology of Yew

3 **Historical Impact**

William the Conqueror – Henry II – Edward I – The Hundred Years War – The War of the Roses – Henry VIII – The Mary Rose – Elizabeth I – The English Civil War

PART 2 Botany and Geography

4 **The Genus *Taxus* Worldwide**

Ancient *Taxus* – Seven Species – North American Yew – Japanese Yew – Chinese yew – Himalayan yew – Yew Cultivars

5 **European yew (*Taxus Baccata*)**

Distribution – Place Names – Uses as Wood – Poison and Medicine – Yew Forests – Hedges and Topiary

PART 3 Living Witness to Human History

6 **Ancient living yews**

Darley Dale Yew – Determining the Age of Yew Trees – Tisbury Yew – Druid Sites – Early Christianity – Norman Churches – Cad Goddeau

7 **Churchyard Yews**

Religious Functions – Practical Purposes – Supernatural Powers – Famous Preachers – Selborne Yew – Crowhurst Yew – More Old Yew Trees

PART 4 Culture and Geography of Pacific Yew

8 **Native Americans and Pacific yew**

9 **Pacific Yew (*Taxus Brevifolia*)**

PART 5 The Modern Dilemma

10 **Taxol, Cancer, Yew Bark**

11 **Dealing with the Dilemma**

12 **Renewable Resources for Taxol**

PART 6 The Metaphorical Yew

13 **Poetic Image**

Dark Appearance – Sexual Characteristics – Longbow – Funeral Rites – Numinous Intonations – Graveyard Yew

14 **Immortality**

Embodiment – The Haunted Yew – Intimations of Immortality – Yew in the Works of T.S.Eliot – The yew and the Rose

Appendix 1 Yew Trees larger than 20ft girth in England and Wales
Appendix 2 Notable topiary and hedges in England
Appendix 3 Yew species and cultivars
Chapter notes

Baxter, Trevor The Eternal Yew (1992)

Chapter 1 Historical Associations

Chapter 2 Unique Growth Style of the Yew

Chapter 3 Botanical Features

Chapter 4 The Yew in Forest and Woodland

Chapter 5 The Country House Yew

Chapter 6 The Churchyard Yew

Postscript and list of Yew Trees from the Tree Register Of the British Isles

1992 Self Publishing Association Ltd – Hartnolls Ltd, Bodmin, Cornwall
192 pp 106 b/w illustrations

Chetan, Anand and Brueton, Diana The Sacred Yew (1994)

1994 Penguin – Arkana
304pp 35 b/w illustrations

Chapter 1 The Tree of Life

Chapter 2 The Man Who Has Almost Become a Yew Tree'

Chapter 3 Regeneration

Chapter 4 'The Life of a Yew, the Length of an Age'

Chapter 5 Why Are Yews in Churchyards?

Chapter 6 Hidden Clues – the Name of the Yew

Chapter 7 Ankerwyke

Chapter 8 The World Tree

Chapter 9 The Yew and the Goddess

Chapter 10 The Yew in Celtic tradition

Chapter 11 Groves and Lone Trees

Chapter 12 Under the Greenwood Tree

Chapter 13 The Sacred Trees of Ireland

Chapter 14 Yew Medicine

Chapter 15 Guardian of the Planet

Appendix 1 Caring for Yews

Appendix 2 Recorded Planting Dates and Growth

Appendix 3 Recorded Measurements

Gazetteer of Ancient Yews

Notes and references

Select Bibliography

Mills, Ken The Cumbrian Yew Book (1999)

Published by Yew trees for the Millennium 1999
64pp colour illustrations

Foreword by Professor David Bellamy, OBE

Chapter 1 The Biology of the Yew

Chapter 2 Yews in the Landscape

Chapter 3 The Borrowdale Yews

Chapter 4 Other Varieties of the Common Yew

Chapter 5 Yews in Woodland

Chapter 6 Pride of Lorton Vale

Chapter 7 The Spiritual Dimension

Chapter 8 Martindale Old Church

Chapter 9 Yew Timber and Its Uses

Chapter 10 Lanercost Priory

Chapter 11 Old Church Hotel

Chapter 12 The Life Span of a Yew

Chapter 13 Yews in Gardens

Chapter 14 Armathwaite Hall Hotel

Chapter 15 Cumbria's Yeomen Farmers

Chapter 16 Caring for Yews – Caring for the Planet

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

Appendix 1 Register of Ancient Yews in Cumbria

Appendix 2 Girth/Age graph

Appendix 3 Useful addresses

Bevan-Jones, Robert The Ancient Yew (2002)

2002 Windgather Press
205pp. 53 b/w illustrations 14 colour plates

Foreword by Professor David Bellamy, OBE

Chapter 1 Botanical Features of the Yew

Botanical Classifications – Etymology of Taxus and Yew – Some yew place-name evidence – British yew distribution – Toxicity of leaves, roots and bark – The berry, toxicity and variation – Medical treatment after ingestion of yew.

Chapter 2 How Old are British Yews?

Dating research, 1900-1975 – Research, 1980-2002 – Assessing older yews in the field – Hollowing – Conclusions

Chapter 3 The Churchyard Yews

The Church Preen yew, Shropshire – The Darley Dale yew, Derbyshire – The Fortingall yew, Perthshire – Buckland-in-Dover yew, Kent - The Selborne yew, Hampshire – Reasons for planting churchyard yews – The origins of churchyard yews – Churchyard yews of Wales – Conclusions: churchyard yews today

Chapter 4 Yews at Abbey Sites

The Ankerwyke Priory yew, Berkshire – Fountains Abbey yews, Yorkshire – The yews of Strata Florida Abbey, Ceredigion

Chapter 5 Yews at Wells and Springs

Yews at wells associated with early Welsh saints – Yews at wells in England – Yews at wells in Scotland and Ireland

Chapter 6 Old Yews in the Wider Historic Landscape

Court of the hundred yews – Other significant yews in the landscape – Conclusions

Chapter 7 Yews in Woods, Hedges and Gardens

British woodland yews – Newlands Corner near Merrow, Surrey – ‘Druid’s Grove’ at Norbury Park, Surrey – The Kingley Vale yew forest, Sussex – The Borrowdale yews, Cumbria – Hedgerow and boundary-marker yews – Formal hedging avenues and topiary – Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown and yews

Chapter 8 The Yew in Folklore Traditions

A Hertfordshire St George fights a dragon – A Welsh folklore tale – A mermaid tamed by yew and a rowan pin in Marden, Herefordshire – Twm and Iago in Ffridd yr Ywen, ‘The Forest of the Yew’, in Powys, Wales - The yew of Mac Aingis: an ancient Irish legend – The Scottish Glaistig yew – Tales of hangings from a yew – The head of a virgin hung from a yew near Halifax, Yorkshire – Trees of Trystan and Esyllt – The yew in Anglo-Saxon documents – The yew in early Irish traditions – Five legendary tribal trees of Ireland – The yew in the Cattle Raid of Cooley – The inauguration of the first king of Munster under a yew – Yews and Irish royalty – The yew of Suibne, the mad poet-king – Poets, druids and the yew – Yew Ogam – Records of yews at Irish church sites – The oldest of woods.

Chapter 9 Yew: An archaeological Perspective

Yew wood finds of the Palaeolithic period – Yew bows – Bronze Age boats of oak, moss and yew – Yew leaves and branches in a Bronze Age barrow – Bronze Age yew figures from Ralaghan, Ireland – Five late Bronze Age figures from Roos Carr, Humberside – Records of prehistoric deities linked to yew – Iron Age artefacts from Britain – Yew in Iron Age Ireland – Yew stave tankards and buckets.

Notes - A gazetteer of ancient yews Bibliography