

## The Oak in Natural History, History and Literature

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**Start date** 25<sup>th</sup> June 2017**End date** 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge**Tutor** Patrick Harding**Course code** 1617NTX007**Director of Programmes**

Emma Jennings

**For further information on this  
course, please contact**Public Programme Coordinator, Clare Kerr  
[clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk) or 01223 746237**To book** See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746262

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### Tutor biography

Patrick has taught courses at Madingley for nearly 30 years and attempts to include both science (in the form of natural history) and the arts (in the form of history and literature) in the one course. In a former life he taught plant ecology and evolution to undergraduates in Ulster and later organised the science extra-mural programme for Sheffield University. His lectures are profusely illustrated and backed up with handouts – they are rarely dry as he considers humour to be an important part of life. Patrick has considerable media experience and has written eight books including one on trees.

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## Course programme

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### Sunday

Please plan to arrive between 10:00 and 12:00. You can meet other course members in the bar. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

13:00	Lunch
14:30 – 16:00	<b>Session 1 The Oak in folklore and history</b>
16:00	Tea
16:30 – 18:00	<b>Session 2 Identification and natural history of the Oak – part 1</b>
18:30	Dinner
20:00 – 21:30	<b>Session 3 Identification and natural history of the Oak – part 2 The fauna and flora of oaks and oak woodland.</b>

### Monday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	<b>Session 4 The many uses of Oak</b>
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	<b>Session 5 The Oak in poetry and prose with inputs from class members (not compulsory) and the tutor</b>
12:45	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	<b>Session 6 Conclusions, a look at Oak in Madingley Tower and at Oaks in the grounds</b>

**Participants are asked to bring poem(s) or short prose extracts on the subject of Oak for session 5**

**Class members should bring suitable outdoor clothing for session 6**

## **Course syllabus**

### **Aims:**

1. To enable students to evaluate the important role played by the oak in legend and history.
2. To provide students with the practical skills needed to enable them to identify both of our native and the more important introduced species of oak and be able to source material for a more rigorous study of the fauna and flora associated with oaks and oak woodland.
3. To encourage students to integrate information from both the arts and sciences in the acquisition of a broad knowledge base about the oak.

### **Content:**

There will be sessions on legend, history, usage and natural history of oak and oak woodlands. The session on the oak in poetry and prose will be the penultimate one and will hopefully be student led. The final session will examine oaks at Madingley and will offer the chance to put theory into practice.

### **Presentation of the course:**

The first four sessions will take the form of well-illustrated lectures, the fifth will involve student input and discussion while the final session will be a practical one in the grounds at Madingley.

### **As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

1. Identify, with the use of practical skills learnt on the course and backed up with source material, both the native and important alien species of oak in Britain.
2. Evaluate the importance of oak in the context of Britain's natural history.
3. Evaluate the historical and current importance of oak products in Britain.
4. Demonstrate, in discussion, an understanding of the portrayal of oak in literature

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## Reading and resources list

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Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

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Author	Title	Publisher and date
Hemery,G	The New Sylva	Bloomsbury 2014
Johnson,O	Collins Tree Guide	HarperCollins 2004
King,A	Trees be Company (Poetry)	Common Ground 1989 Green 2001
Pakenham,T	Meetings with remarkable Trees	Cassell 2001
Tyler, M	British Oaks	Crowood 2008
Wilks, J	Trees of the British Isles in History and Legend	Muller 1972

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 10 November 2016