

Yew: A History

This is an extensively researched (300+ pages) book regarding one of our most curious trees. One that is the oldest tree species in Europe (at 15 million years old), bears no cones but is a conifer, can be found from Edinburgh to NW Africa but due to massive demand for longbows during the Middle Ages and more latterly for an anti-cancer drug (paclitaxel), is now rare and endangered in the wild.

The author, Fred Hageneder, examines all aspects of this fascinating tree, ranging from its distinct biology, morphology, toxicology and extraordinary ability to naturally regenerate (allowing yews to live for thousands of years) through to its unique ecological niche and survival strategy.

In this fascinating study, Hageneder relates the evergreen, poisonous and 'immortal' qualities of this historically venerated tree to ancient civilizations and their gods and goddesses. A fluent case is also put forward to argue that the yew may in fact be the true World Tree and the Tree of Life... and could have been Jason & the Argonauts' much prized Golden Fleece.

This is a strongly recommended, comprehensively referenced book that is packed with high quality photographs and line drawings... and another good reason: the author donates half his royalties to the Ancient Yew Group ([HYPERLINK "http://www.ancient-yew.org"](http://www.ancient-yew.org) www.ancient-yew.org).

For everything you wanted to know about this unique tree... *Yew: A History* by Fred Hageneder. £25.00. ISBN 978-0-7509-4597-4 Sutton Publishing.

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