I pose there is a pandemic of the botany of Taxus baccata in Europe in the last quarter of the 20th century. Taxus has been a popular tree in Europe for centuries, with some species reaching 500 years of age. In the last few decades, however, a number of Taxus species have experienced major population declines, particularly in North America and Europe.

Through the centuries, the principal problem of the botany of Taxus baccata has been the threat of yew longbow. The yew longbow was a traditional weapon used by European archers, particularly in England and Scotland. The yew tree was considered sacred and was often associated with the Druids, who were the religious leaders of ancient Britain.

Today, yew still plays a role in indigenous rites of passage among Pacific North America’s First Nations, and the indigenous name of yew translates as ‘Tree of God’. The sacred yew and conservation efforts in the UK

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