



# **An Oak Spring Sylva: A Selection of the Rare Books on Trees in the Oak Spring Garden Library (Oak Spring Garden Foundation Series)**

*Sandra Raphael*

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## **An Oak Spring Sylva: A Selection of the Rare Books on Trees in the Oak Spring Garden Library (Oak Spring Garden Foundation Series) Sandra Raphael**

An Oak Spring Sylva is the first of a series of catalogues describing selections of the rare books, manuscripts, works of art, and related artifacts in the Oak Spring Garden Library, a collection formed by Rachel Lambert Mellon. The Sylva, whose subject is trees, describes nearly fifty books, manuscripts, or drawings, from a tiny 1555 book on oaks to early nineteenth-century advice on large-scale tree-planting--a range including both great books, such as Evelyn's Sylva, Duhamel's Traite des Arbres, and Michaux's North American Sylva, and more modest ones, such as Marshall's American Grove, which helped introduce the riches of American forests to European gardens in the eighteenth century. Each description makes clear the background of each book and its relationship to others, while a generous number of illustrations in color and black and white help to give an impression of their contents. Many of the Oak Spring copies have particularly interesting associations, recorded in inscriptions, bookplates, or binding details, all of which are described.

In these descriptive, discursive catalogues a strictly chronological arrangements has been abandoned in favor of grouping books related by their subject, in order to emphasize their connections. Although there is a brief bibliographical summary of each book, the background essays give the Oak Spring catalogues a historical setting that should appeal not only to book collectors and librarians, but also to garden historians, botanists, and all those interested in trees and gardening in general.

1989, 180 pages. 9-5/8 x 11-1/4 inches, including 112 illustrations, over 20 of them in color.

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