CLAIMS:

1. Tree anchoring apparatus comprising:

a plurality of interlocking anchor units, each anchor unit having connection means allowing the anchor unit to be secured to at least one adjacent anchor unit;

an anchoring point provided for each anchor unit; and

a cable or strap securable to at least one of the anchoring points; wherein:

the plurality of interlocking anchor units are transportable disengaged from one another and can be interlocked with each other in situ to jointly provide a surface for supporting an overburden of soil;

the cable or strap can be used to secure the interlocked anchor units to a root ball of a tree located there above;

each anchor unit has a periphery which is generally polygonal when viewed in a top plan view, and a plurality of side faces of the polygonal periphery are each provided with connection means to enable the anchor unit to be connected to a neighbouring anchor unit.

2. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the connection means of each anchor unit allows the anchor units to be secured to a plurality of adjacent anchor units.

3. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 3 wherein each anchoring point comprising a slot extending from an opening in the soil supporting surface through the anchor unit to an opening in an under surface of the anchor unit.

4. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3 wherein the anchor units are stackable for transport.

5. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 5 where the anchor units are provided with co-operating features which allow a pair of anchor units to be stacked with their upper surfaces spaced apart by a first distance when the anchor units are stacked in a first orientation relative to each other and which allow the pair of anchor units to be stacked with their upper surfaces spaced apart by a second distance greater than the first distance when the anchor units are stacked in a second orientation relative to each other.

6. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 5 wherein each anchor unit is provided with a planar layer providing a planar upper surface and at least one cup which has a mouth formed in the planar upper surface and which extends away from the upper surface with a side wall which extends from the planar layer to a base of the cup; and when the pair of anchor units are stacked in the first orientation the cup(s) of one of the anchor units are inserted into the cup(s) of an other anchor units located therebeneath.

7. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 7 wherein the planar upper surface of each anchor unit is provided with at least one recess and when the pair of anchor units are stacked in the second orientation the then base(s) of the cup(s) of one anchor unit are inserted into the recess(es) of the other anchor unit.

8. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of the plurality of side faces is provided with connecting means comprising of at least one pin extending from the side face anchor units and a recess provided in the side face.

9. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 8 having a first anchor unit and a second anchor unit wherein the connecting means of the first anchor unit can form a dovetail joint with the second anchor unit and the pin is of trapezoidal shape and the recess is a matching trapezoidal recess.

10. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 9 wherein one of the pin and the recess has a tab extending from a face thereof and the other of the pin and the recess has a niche formed in a face thereof.

11. Tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in claim 10 wherein the face with the niche has a ramped portion leading to the niche.

12. A tree anchoring kit comprising: the tree anchoring apparatus of anyone of claims 1 to 11: and a plurality of cables or straps, with each cable or strap having a disc secured at an end thereof, the disc being insertable through the slot of an anchor unit in a first orientation and then rotatable to in a second orientation in which the disc can engage the upper surface of the anchor unit.

13. A tree anchoring kit comprising: the tree anchoring apparatus as claimed in any of the claims 1 to 11; and a plurality of cables or straps, each cable or strap being fastenable to one of the plurality of anchoring points provided by the plurality of anchor units.

14. A method of anchoring a tree using the tree anchoring kit of any preceding claim comprising:
transporting to a planting site of the tree, each anchor unit having connection means allowing the anchor unit to be secured to a plurality of adjacent anchor units;

interlocking the plurality of anchor units together to provide a surface for supporting an overburden of soil;

securing a root ball of the tree to the plurality of interlocked anchor units using a cable or strap which is attached to one or more anchoring points provided by interlocked anchor units; and

covering the root ball and the plurality of anchor units with soil, with the interlocked anchor units buried beneath the root ball and an overburden of soil on top of the interlocked anchor units; wherein

the anchor units are interlocked with each other such than an upward force applied to one anchor unit is transmitted to all of the anchor units interlocked therewith.

15. A method as claimed in claim 14 in which:
anchor units are used which when aligned in a first orientation relative to each other are stackable with the soil supporting surfaces thereof spaced by a first distance and when aligned in a second orientation are stackable with the soil supporting surfaces thereof spaced by a second distance larger than the first distance; and

for transportation the plurality of anchor units are all stacked in the first orientation relative to each other.

16. A method as claimed in claim 15 in which:

in situ a first plurality of the anchor units are interlocked together to form a first layer: and

in situ a second plurality of the anchor units are interlocked together to form a second layer: and

the second plurality of interlocked anchor units are stacked on the first plurality of interlocked anchor units with the anchor units of the second plurality in the second orientation relative to the anchor units of the first plurality.

17. A method as claimed in claim 15 or claim 16 wherein;

in situ some of the anchor units are interlocked to form a layer for supporting the overburden of soil and the root ball; and

in situ others of the anchor units are stacked alongside the root ball with each anchor unit in the second orientation in relation to each anchor unit stacked thereon.

18. A method as claimed in any of the claims 14 to 17 wherein:

at least some of the anchor units used each have a cup formed therein; and

the cups are used to store water to irrigate the root ball of the anchor tree.