

Science and Business News February 2006

Forest Research joins INNOFORCE project

Suzanne Martin, of Forest Research's Environmental and Human Sciences Division, has joined the INNOFORCE project. This project seeks to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in forest recreation and tourism and is run by the European Forest Institute in Vienna. Headed by Dr Ewald Rametsteiner, it brings together 23 research organisations from 18 different countries to conduct research on innovation and entrepreneurship in relation to forestry policy and the forestry-wood chain. The aim is to enhance the sustainability of the forest sector and contribute to rural development. Suzanne is a participant in a group which explores innovation and entrepreneurship in forest recreational service provision. For more information visit <http://www.efi-innoforce.org/>

Launch of new website to promote Best Practice for Land Regeneration

A new [website](#) was launched for the Forestry Commission by Forest Research in February, marking an important step forward in efforts to convert the UK's legacy of derelict, contaminated and brownfield land back to usable woodland and greenspace, by bringing together advice on current best practice. Best Practice Guidance for Land Regeneration is a new series of Guidance Notes based on research and practical experience in the restoration of brownfield land for woodland and urban greening after uses. Indispensable for practitioners the Notes, known as BPGs, are also a mine of information for all those responsible for restoring land back to beneficial soft end uses, particularly involving trees and woodland.

Available in PDF format and downloadable free from the website, the BPGs cover topics ranging from soil sampling and testing to weed control and the use of fertilisers, composts, sewage sludge and native and non-native trees. Further Notes, written by Forest Research staff, will be added over the next two to three years.

Although commissioned by Forestry Commission England, the website has been developed for a UK audience, as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have a similar need for the expertise that it brings together.

Formerly developed land can be contaminated with chemicals such as arsenic, cyanide, asbestos, PCBs/dioxins, herbicides, pesticides, solvents and explosives. Such land needs phased investigation and appropriate remedial treatment to make it safe for use, to protect local rivers, streams, ponds, lakes and water supplies from pollution, and often to make it fertile enough to grow trees and other vegetation. The website includes protocols for the commissioning of phased investigation to ensure that developers capture a site's opportunities and constraints, including factors such as archaeology and biodiversity.

Paper copies of the 11 BPGs provided in a polyprop wallet will be available by the end of March. For copies and enquiries email research.info@forestry.gsi.gov.uk



The Forestry Commission's extensive experience in the reclamation of derelict land to a green end use has resulted in the production of best practice guidance and decision support tools.

Getting it together: *Sirex* woodwasp – *Amylostereum* symbiosis on pines

Dr Bernard Slippers, a program leader at the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute, Pretoria, South Africa, delivered a fascinating seminar to staff at Alice Holt on 27 January. The topic was the co-evolution of Siricid wood wasps (*Sirex noctilio*) with their associated fungi (*Amylostereum areolatum*) and Dr Slippers also briefly discussed biological control parasites of the wasps particularly the *Deladenus siricidicola* nematode, and outlined some of the difficulties they are experiencing in getting effective control in South Africa. Siricid wood wasps are native to some parts of Europe where they rarely cause economically significant damage. They have proved to be much more damaging when introduced to southern-hemisphere countries, Australia and Tasmania, South Africa and various countries in South America – Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, as well as into North America, where they are causing serious losses to forestry industries. The wasps bore into pine trees, laying their eggs, together with spores of the wood rotting fungus *Amylostereum*. The fungus colonises the wood and in so doing primes it for use by the growing larvae. The wasps and fungi have an intimate, co-evolved dependency, but ultimately trees die from this insect–pathogen interaction, especially trees growing in non-native, stress (e.g. drought) environments. Dr Slippers other research interests include the phylogeny, taxonomy and population biology of tree pathogenic fungi, with a special interest in changes in host-pathogen interactions, and resulting diseases or epidemics, caused by human interference. Another research focus is fungal-insect interactions affecting agriculture and forestry.



Siricid wood wasps with their associated fungi and biological control parasites.

The Royal Society funding opportunities for UK - South African research

Drs Joan Webber, Sandra Denman and Bernard Slippers exhibited literature on some of the research projects being carried out at Forest Research (UK) and FABI (The Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute, South Africa). The function hosted by, and held at the Royal Society, London, created the opportunity of finding out what funding opportunities are available to UK-SA and UK-SA-European research initiatives.



Drs Sandra Denman, Bernard Slippers and Joan Webber.

Interested parties should visit the Royal Society [website](#) The Tree Health Division of Forest Research hopes to strengthen ties with FABI in South Africa.

New Publications

The 2004-05 Forest Research Annual Report and Accounts highlights outputs from a wide range of new areas of work, including Ash growth and yield modelling, Seed dormancy and climate change, Social research studies in the UK and abroad. The five main articles represent research from every division and cover Birch dieback, Floodplain woodland and the freshwater environment, Innovative tests for nursery management, Yield models for SRC, and Landscape ecology. New for this year, and reflected in a GB and a World map, is an outline of the range of networks FR has been generating both nationally and internationally, from Exeter to Aberdeen, and from Brussels to Beijing. Website www.forestresearch.gov.uk/annualreports
For copies and enquiries email research.info@forestry.gsi.gov.uk



FCPN013 *Managing Brash on Conifer Clearfell Sites*. A Moffat, B M Jones, B Mason, Forest Research. February 2006.

Forthcoming Events

Full details of FR's events are available on FR's internet site:

www.forestresearch.gov.uk/events

1–3 March, Manchester - Woodland Birds: their ecology and management

British Ornithologists' Union – Annual Spring Conference.

3 March 10.15 Alice Holt All Staff Seminar, Main Conference Room

The Professional Skills for Government initiative from the perspective of the Scientist/Engineer profession – presented by Rob Ashmore, Head of Science and Engineering Profession Team, and colleague Rachel Lloyd, Office of Science and Technology (OST).

10 March, 10.10-10.30 Alice Holt Research Update Seminar

Operational aspects of continuous cover forestry by Duncan Ireland.

10 March, 13.30 NRS Research Update Seminar

Enriching the Benmore Collection by Peter Baxter, Benmore Botanic Gardens, Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh.

21 March, Wendover Woods, Buckinghamshire – Grey squirrel control day

Explaining Forestry Commission squirrel policy, critical threat criterion and demonstrations of acceptable approved control methods. Forestry Commission, England.

24 March, 10.10-10.30 Alice Holt Research Update Seminar

Floodplain Forests: forgotten and neglected ecosystems by Nadia Barsoum.

24 March, 13.30 NRS Research Update Seminar

Measuring and simulating spatial woodland structure by Arne Pommerening, Experimental Silviculture, Research Group, University of Wales.

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