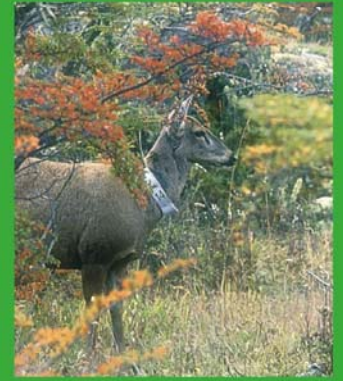


Biotype

The Biodiversity & Conservation Newsletter of Woodland Ecology Branch

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RESEARCH UPDATE

Deer Surveys in Chile

Andy Brunt & Robin Gill



For the last three years, Dr. Robin Gill has been working with Operation Raleigh staff studying the ecology of the Huemul (*Hippocamelus*

bisulcus), a rare species of South American deer found in southern Chile and neighbouring parts of Argentina. Once common in this area, the population is now thought to be between 1000 and 2000 animals.

The research project, funded by a three year grant from the UK Government's Darwin Initiative, was designed to:

- Identify interactions between Huemul, forestry, grazing, and other wildlife in the area
- Increase understanding of the relationship between ranging behaviour and movement patterns
- Look at seasonal and daily movement
- Obtain information for the number of young animals joining the adult population, and sources of mortality

The results, derived from pellet group surveys and radio-tracking, have recently been presented at the Fourth Bi-National Conference on Huemul Conservation in Chile. They found that:

- Huemul are extremely localised in distribution
- They avoid areas grazed by cattle, including woodland, which should be suitable habitat

- They tend to use steep slopes and high ground, avoiding valley bottoms
- Home ranges are quite small – feeding, shelter and escape from predators has to be completed in a small area
- There is little or no seasonal migration
- More study is needed to better understand long distance movements – which may be related to mating or avoidance of predators
- Understanding the effects of logging requires more study

Local managers will use this information to help decide the best course of action for the future protection of the species.

For more information, contact:

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The UK Biodiversity Research Advisory Group (UK BRAG)

Richard Ferris

UK BRAG was created as part of the Biodiversity Partnership in response to a recommendation from the Biodiversity Research Working Group (BRWG) in its report, *Science in Action for Biodiversity* (BRWG, 2001). The group's activities are supported by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and coordinated by a full-time Secretariat hosted by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). Members of UK BRAG represent the main researchers, practitioners, and policymakers concerned with delivering the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). UK BRAG reports to the UK Biodiversity Standing Committee, and works closely with the UK Biodiversity



Reporting & Information Group (UK BRIG), the individual country biodiversity groups and Habitat Action Plans/Species Action Plans Steering Groups.

UK BRAG has three main objectives:

- To promote and facilitate research that seeks to support delivery of the UK BAP – including 6 themes identified by BRWG (see below)
- To provide a forum for sharing ideas and information about biodiversity research
- To co-ordinate UK engagement with related EU and international initiatives

In developing a work plan, UK BRAG is reviewing research gaps and identifying priorities from the policy objectives in the UK BAP. In doing this, there is a need to consider strategic issues and to be opportunistic, linking with other initiatives.

UK BRAG will be reviewing the six cross-cutting research themes proposed by BRWG and considering how they can be implemented:

1. Conservation of genetic and native species diversity.
2. Impacts of introduced species.
3. Roles of biodiversity in ecosystem function.
4. Monitoring of biodiversity and evaluation of actions.
5. Management of habitats and ecosystems.
6. Developing tools to optimise policies to favour biodiversity.

UK BRAG will be developing an online research catalogue, and can offer advice on mechanisms for coordination and collaboration of research. UK BRAG has an important role in influencing research funding bodies, to ensure that the key issues are incorporated into specifications for research programmes. It has an international role, sharing ideas and actions with other national biodiversity research programmes via the European Platform on Biodiversity Research Strategy (EPBRS).

For information about UK BRAG terms of reference, membership, current activities and sub-group actions, visit :

www.ukbap.org.uk/Groups/BRAG.htm,

Or e-mail:

richard.ferris@jncc.gov.uk

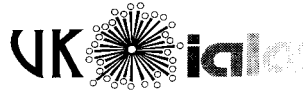
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CONFERENCES

Landscape Ecology of Trees and Forests 21 – 24 June 2004, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, Gloucestershire



Habitat fragmentation and the potential impact of human-induced climate change are encouraging a move away from site-based protection to recognition of the importance of landscape-scale processes. Trees and forests play an important role in the wider countryside, providing a 'patchwork' of wildlife rich habitats as the focus for the development of an ecologically functional and sustainable landscape.

This conference is aimed at conservation policy and decision makers, planners, land managers and researchers and will explore:

- Key concepts in landscape ecology, e.g., landscape thresholds, functional connectivity and physical connectedness
- Spatial conservation strategies, e.g., based on: forest habitat networks, focal species and generic species, functional attributes and surrogate measures, buffering to increase core area, linking to create 'wildlife corridors', and 'greenways'
- Knowledge gaps

The Royal Agricultural College is situated in the Cotswolds, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with a high density of ancient woodland and trees. In addition to the oral presentations the conference will include:

- Field visits by coach to some of the Woodland Trust's ancient woods and new native woods
- An opportunity to see woodland in the wider countryside and to discuss conservation issues
- A poster reception on 21 June

All delegates will receive a copy of the proceedings, which will be pre-published and include papers from all presentations and posters.

For further details and a booking form visit

www.woodland-trust.org.uk

or www.iale.org.uk.

Alternatively contact Mrs. S. Coleman on 01476 581115.

Ecology & Management of Large Native Pinewoods: Past, Present and Future

14 -16 June 2004, Drumnadrochit and Glen Affric, Inverness-shire



British Ecological Society

It is nearly ten years since the conference "Our Pinewood Heritage" brought together current thinking on native

pinewoods. Much has been achieved for biodiversity since then. Pinewoods are recognised as a priority habitat within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and there has been impressive progress made towards achieving targets for the conservation and enhancement of key species and habitats, with new applied research playing a major role. Now, through initiatives such as Forest Habitat Networks, and large-scale habitat restoration, there is increasing need to integrate ecological research at a range of different scales, provide effective input into management practice and identify the most pressing knowledge gaps to be addressed in the future.

The aims of this Forest Research/British Ecological Society conference are to:

- Bring together researchers, land managers and those in the local community with an interest in pinewood ecology and biodiversity
- Synthesise current ecological and biodiversity research
- Share experiences and information relevant to forest planning and management and strengthen the link between research and practice
- Identify future research, conservation and restoration priorities
- Launch a number of pinewood related publications

The conference will focus primarily on ecology and biodiversity and will be centred in the Glen Affric area to celebrate its designation as Scotland's newest National Nature Reserve. It is aimed at forest managers, researchers, and those with a stake in how pinewoods are managed. Indoor sessions during the first two days will be held in the Craigmorie Centre, Glen Urquhart Community High School, Drumnadrochit and will cover:

- Recent advances in historical research
- Management for species, habitats and landscapes
- Future research and management priorities

The field trip on the 16th will be to Glen Affric to discuss current management and research issues in a varied range of habitats.

To submit a paper or poster for presentation, please send a title and abstract (500 words max.) by 1st March 2004 preferably by e-mail, to:
Jonathan Humphrey
jon.humphrey@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Or alternatively by post to:
Forest Research,
Northern Research Station
Roslin
Midlothian, EH25 9SY
Tel. 0131 445 2176

Booking forms available from the same address or downloadable from:
<http://fcnotes/forestry/ggae-5elbu7>

This is the first of two conferences about the environmental, social and economic benefits from Scots pine. The second closely linked conference in September, organised by Forestry Commission Scotland, will look at the wider role of Scots pine in sustainable rural development.

For further information, contact:
Rural Development Advisor
John Risby
john.risby@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.
Tel. 01349 862144

Managing Trees & Woodlands as Habitat for Bats



British Ecological Society

Bats make up a third of our land mammal species, yet many are of conservation concern. This meeting is being

held in support of current initiatives aiming to provide guidance to managers of trees and woodlands, regarding how best to manage these habitats for bats. In particular, we are keen to:

- Profile the results of current research relating to the ecology and conservation of bats
- Identify best practice for management of trees and woodlands

We would therefore welcome offers of presentations describing recent research, or experience of current management practices relevant to bat conservation.



It is proposed to hold the meeting on the 16th and 17th of September, 2004, at Bournemouth University, Poole, Dorset. We are also hoping to hold a field outing in conjunction with the meeting, to visit some local woodland bat habitat.

Offers of presentations or other contributions to the meeting, and suggestions regarding its precise focus and content, would be much appreciated. Details of the programme will be presented in a future edition of *Biotype*.

For details, contact:
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Biodiversity: State, Stakes & Future

7-10 April 2004

This symposium will take place at the Biodiversity Research Centre at the Catholic University of Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium. Theme sessions will include:

- Dispersal and demography in fragmented landscapes
- Genetics and the conservation of biodiversity
- Biodiversity and functioning of forest ecosystems
- Biodiversity and agriculture
- Economic and managerial aspects of biodiversity
- Invasive species

For information visit:
www.bdiv.ucl.ac.be

Or contact
Michaël Pontégnie
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Ecology & Biogeography Unit
Catholic University of Louvain
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PUBLICATIONS

Biodiversity in Britain's Planted Forests

The Forestry Commission has just published a comprehensive report on its Biodiversity Assessment Project, carried out by scientists from Forest Research and other institutes over the last eight years. The authors of *Biodiversity in Britain's Planted Forests* found many forests planted in Britain during the 20th century were rich in life, with new woodlands supporting unexpectedly rich communities of invertebrates and songbirds. More than 2,000 species were recorded in a range of planted woodland types, including Norway spruce, Sitka spruce and pine.

Dr Jonathan Humphrey of Forest Research, said the findings challenged the notion that plantation woodlands were ecological deserts.

"Plantations have matured and been restructured to form diverse mosaics, and as this has happened perceptions of their value for wildlife have changed. In 1995 the Forestry Commission set up a project to assess biodiversity and planted forests. The findings of this project demonstrate that many native species find the forest conditions to their liking.

"The scope for improvement in habitat quality, combined with their large area, means that planted woodland can help UK biodiversity as well as continuing to provide economic and social benefits." *Biodiversity in Britain's Forests*, edited by Jonathan Humphrey, Richard Ferris and Chris Quine contains 12 chapters (by 14 authors) grouped in 4 sections:

- Introduction and context
- Plant and microbial communities
- Invertebrate and bird communities
- Conclusions and future management for biodiversity

The publication is aimed at woodland managers, planners and policy makers concerned with the management and enhancement of biodiversity within managed forests. Copies are available, priced £10, from **Forestry Commission Publications**
PO Box 25
Wetherby
West Yorkshire
LS23 7EW
Tel 08701214180
E-mail forestry@twoten.press.net

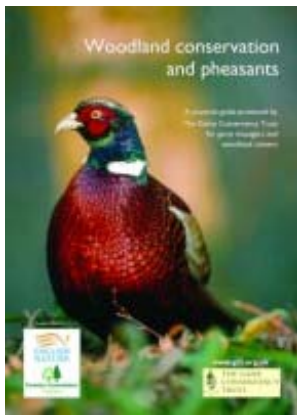
Cattle Grazed Woodlands

Helen Armstrong

A report on a survey of cattle grazed woodlands across Britain can now be accessed from the Forestry Commission website at:

www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5srfjk

Woodland Conservation and Pheasants



This best practice guidance, produced by the Game Conservancy Council with support from English Nature and the Forestry Commission, highlights conservation issues related to the release of gamebirds in woodland. It goes into the whys and wherefores of some game management activities,

discusses areas of potential conflict and suggests how they can be avoided. Importantly, it highlights the benefits to nature conservation that can be a by-product of good pheasant management.

Copies can be obtained from:
The Game Conservancy Trust
www.gct.org.uk/leaflets.html
Tel. 01425 651013.

Or, English Nature's enquiry service, on
enquiries@english-nature.org.uk
Tel. 01733 455100

The Scottish Biodiversity Forum

The Forum is the new newsletter of the Scottish Biodiversity Forum and will be produced every two months. Copies can be obtained from:
www.scotland.gov.uk/about/ERAD/CANH/CF/0014870/page527406402.aspx

For more information about the newsletter, contact:
Scottish Biodiversity Forum
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Victoria Quay
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