

Message from the Chief Executive, Prof. Jim Lynch

Thanks to all the staff I have met so far who have made me feel welcome at Alice Holt, NRS and Exeter field station. I must thank in particular Peter Freer-Smith for the excellent job he has done in the acting position of CE and making the hand-over so smooth; I am looking forward to working with him and the senior management team. My first impressions after one month in post are the very pleasant working environment we have and the excellent co-operation with the Forestry Commission as our sponsoring government department. I have already seen some very good quality research – but I wonder if all of it gets the national and international recognition that it deserves?

I believe we have some very exciting new opportunities ahead. For example, the research councils are opening up their funding to government agencies like us and so I will be meeting the Chief Executives of BBSRC and NERC in coming weeks, to discuss this and wider issues of co-operation. Forest Research already has extensive interactions with a large number of influential science and policy bodies, and this will give us a good base to build up our relationships in the months ahead. There appear to be some very good opportunities for increased co-operation with universities, research council institutes and of course Defra. In the very near future I want to produce a catalogue of all the interactions FR already has - the list seems to be more extensive than many people realise.

A much more specific opportunity to bring to your attention – which is open to staff and your collaborators only until 30 September – is that of applying for an OECD Biological Research Management Programme fellowship. Provided your intended subject falls within one of the programme's themes, full funding is available for workshops and for 2-26 week fellowships. Do take a look at the website <http://www.oecd.org/agr/prog> and give me a call if you are interested, as I am co-ordinator of the programme.

People News

Welcome to:

- Jane Poole who has joined Stats & IT Services at Alice Holt as a Statistician.
- Stephen Bathgate who has joined Stats & IT Services at NRS as an Analyst/Programmer.
- Una McEvoy (Stats & IT Services), Callum Gordon (Central Services) and Sam Jones (ERB) who are joining FR this year as Sandwich Students.
- Joe Hope who has joined WEB at NRS as a Research Assistant.

Congratulations to:

- Heather Moreland (Admin @ NRS) who was married to John Edmonds on 1 July at Gretna Green.
- Duncan Williams (TSU N) who has successfully completed his HND in Environmental Science.
- Martin MacKinnon (TSU N) who will now be staying for another year at NRS as a Research Worker.

Transfers:

- Nigel Connor (TSU Shobden) has transferred to Sherwood FD.

Farewell to:

- Elma Wilson, who has retired from TSU Cairnbaan, all best wishes for your retirement.



- Luis Dieguez (Stats & IT Services), Matthew Williams (ERB), Angela Rowston (ERB), Ruaraidh Milne (WEB), Oliver Rendle (ERB) and Hayley Oldale (Admin), Sandwich Students who are leaving FR to resume their studies at University next term.
- Franki Lowe who has been working in Ento at AH.

Eight weeks in Addis Ababa

Pauline Simson is taking an eight-week break from TSU N to work in the Mother Theresa hospital in Addis Ababa. Pauline's colleagues wish her well in this very worthwhile gesture.

Hugh's music festival

Hugh Mackay (TSU N) recently hosted a music festival featuring seven different bands and a range of solo performers at his house near Newton. The event raised enough money to provide educational scholarships for three underprivileged children from Humla in NW Nepal, facilitated through the Himalayan Innovative Society. Hugh will be meeting the children later in the year when he visits the area to work with the Society.

Science & Business News

Costing the Earth

Hugh Evans (Ento) & Nick Fielding (TSU S) were recently interviewed for the BBC Radio 4 programme 'Costing the Earth', a programme that attempts to assess man's effect on the environment and how the environment reacts. The topic of the interview was biological control, in particular the use of *Rhizophagus grandis* to control the great spruce bark beetle *Dendroctonus micans*. Hugh and Nick were interviewed in a forest near the TSU field station at Shobden, where with much effort, they managed to find only one *D. micans* attacking a tree; as explained to the interviewer, this was a good indicator of the success of a biological control programme in action. Further information about the programme and a recording of the most recent programme can be found at www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/science/costingtheearth.shtml.

FR on show at the Royal

FR in collaboration with FC West Midlands was present at the Royal Show at Stoneleigh Park earlier this month. Our stand was in the Forestry section of the showground together with the FTA, Deer Initiative, RFS, FEI, SWA, Heartwoods and others. The title of our display was 'The quest for sustainable energy: woodfuel meets the challenge'. The idea was to inform potential growers and the public of the beneficial reasons for a return to woodfuel and the importance of woodfuel in achieving the government's renewable energy targets. Please click [here](#) to view the leaflet published to compliment the display and links to other sites of interest.

The BBC's Countryfile at Alice Holt

The BBC filmed some of the work being carried out by Pathology Branch at Alice Holt on *Phytophthora ramorum* for their 'Countryfile' programme (scheduled to be shown on Sunday 10 August @ 11:30). *P. ramorum* the 'Sudden oak death' pathogen, is causing heavy mortality of oaks in California and parts of Oregon, where tens of thousands of trees have died because of the disease. A different strain of the same pathogen has also been found mostly on Rhododendrons and Viburnum in nurseries, in Europe and the UK. There is major concern about the damage that this pathogen could cause to British forests and vegetation. In Pathology Branch at Alice Holt research is being carried out so that a pest risk analysis can be made on the threat this pathogen could pose to British forestry.

Nematode applications exceed expectations

Under the leadership of TSU staff at Newton and Kielder, FR has treated 135ha (85 Newton and 50 Kielder) of forest with applications of nematodes. This was achieved at an average application rate of 6.5ha/day, which exceeded the expected 5.0ha/day. The use of nematodes as a biological control for *Hylobius abietis* (the pine weevil) is part of integrated pest management trials on the FE estate.

Merrist Wood and Guildford College to merge

The merger of Guildford College and Merrist Wood College will take place on 1 August. The merger aims to safeguard and strengthen the long-term viability of local specialist education provision in the Guildford area. The full press release that can be viewed at <http://www.merristwood.ac.uk/>





Conundrum

One of many to come from ten,
Bi-generic thus sterile then.
Urban menace, fast wall of green,
Spawn of Satan that should never have been.

Last issue's answer was Eucalyptus, an evergreen tree from sunny Australia whose essential oils are commonly found in vapour rubs. The species mentioned were Spinning gum *E. perriniana*, Blue gum *E.globulus*, Mt Wellington Peppermint gum *E.coccifera*, Lemon-scented gum *E.citriodora*, Varnish-leaved gum *E.vernicosa*, Silver-top gum *E.nitens*, Cabbage gum *E.pauciflora* and Ribbon gum *E.viminalis*.

Forthcoming Events

4 & 5 Sept: 'Genetic Conservation and Management of British Native Trees' a conference organised by the British Ecological Society in association with the Forestry Commission, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Royal Scottish Forestry Society will be held at Battleby near Perth.

18 Sept: Workshop to be held at Alice Holt between members of FR staff and visitors from BBSRC at Rothamsted. The objective of the meeting is to explore areas in which partnership work may be mutually beneficial in the future.

Next Newsletter

The deadline for contributions to the next newsletter is Monday 15 September.

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