

Dallimore and Jackson state that in the genus *Agathis* the male and female cones usually occur on the same tree, and often on the same tree in *A. australis*. Kirk, Cockayne and Cheeseman all state that *A. australis* is monoecious but not one of them makes any comment that this contradicts standard authorities or that the New Zealand kauri is an exception in its family.

A recent Italian record from the Botanical Gardens, Rome, states that a specimen of *A. australis* was regarded as being female for 40 years until about 1943 it suddenly put out male as well as female flowers. This indicates that some doubt exists as to whether *A. australis* is monoecious or dioecious.

Recent observations at Waipoua Forest show that all trees greater than 10 in. d.b.h. have male and female flowers; those in the 4-10 in. class often have flowers of both sexes, while most smaller trees have no flowers of either sex. It is important to note that no occurrence of staminate flowers only has yet been recorded. One specimen of *A. australis*, now bearing flowers of both sexes, was planted in the open at the forest headquarters in 1931; it is now 18 ft. high and 4.8 in. d.b.h., but unfortunately the age at planting is not known.

From these observations it can be concluded that *A. australis* as a species is monoecious with this characteristic becoming apparent only at a certain stage of development. Not only is this of some botanical interest but of considerable silvicultural importance, as the prospects of natural regeneration are much better in a monoecious tree.

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NOTES ON FRENCH FORESTS AND FORESTRY

Ten years ago in the 1940-41 issue of the Journal, I recorded some fragments of the pattern of French forest policy under the German occupation as far as it was discernible from information that filtered through to New Zealand during that period. Amongst the fragments was a note on the dedication of a "Chene Maréchal Petain" in the ancient oak forest of Trongais.

Last week, I encountered a forester who had viewed and worked in that forest only a few months ago, and from curiosity enquired if he had seen the "infamous" oak or if he knew of its fate after the liberation. He narrates that it still stands, a magnificent tree of 75 cm. d.b.h. with 30 metres of clear bole. No longer, however, is it a venerated and dedicated tree: nor can it ever be converted to useful timber. During the later stages of the war, it was deliberately selected and used as the clandestine practice target tree by members of the Maquis movement: and its bole was filled so full of lead that even now, the callusing scars are still visible. The subtlety and the

sardonic mockery of this method of perpetual desecration of a symbol of treason is in true Gallic vein.

My informant further states that the forest, possibly from being a little remote, was not seriously overcut during the War ; but the regeneration blocks were somewhat neglected from lack of labour ; and only now is the hornbeam, which in places has outstripped the young oak, being headed back to free the oak saplings in many places.

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