

area. Last year he was invited to give keynote addresses at conferences in Japan, Chile and the USA. Glenn is currently supervising seven graduate students in forest ecology.

Recently Glenn, along with Andrew Wells and Richard Duncan, had a paper accepted for the *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand* on the occurrence of widespread even-aged stand establishment in Westland. They give evidence for periods of greatly increased stand establishment 200-300 and 500-550 years ago. They suggest this may have resulted from massive earthquakes.

Dr David McNeil has also been promoted to Reader. David is a plant physiologist who has, in recent years, specialised in perennial nut crops. He is the national coordinator of research for the Tree Crops Association of New Zealand.

Other

Dr Hugh Bigsby is on study leave in Canada until the middle of 1998. In addition Dr Sandhya Samarasinghe and Dr Don Kulasiri (specialists in timber drying and wood science) are both on study leave during 1998.

Forestry fusion: School of Forestry and Forest Research Institute prepare for cohabitation

Research scientists and technical staff from the South Island branch of the New Zealand Forest Research Institute will join faculty of the School of Forestry in the newly-completed extension of the forestry building at the University of Canterbury.

A celebration on February 18 has been planned with Vice Chancellor Brownlie introducing the Honourable Dr Lockwood Smith, Minister of Forestry, and Devon McLean, General Manager, Carter Holt Harvey Forests and member of the board of FRI, replying on behalf of FRI. Representatives and leaders from across the forestry sector in New Zealand were invited to attend and tour the new facilities with exhibits of the latest research from FRI scientists, School of Forestry postgraduate students and faculty on display.

School of Forestry personnel and FRI scientists are excited about the new building and the new arrangement sparking new ideas in research and teaching. FRI

and the School of Forestry should become strong partners in their twin endeavours of teaching and research.

Dr Kenneth Hobson, a new staff member at the school, is exploring new research topics in forest entomology with postgrads and colleagues:

- *Hylastes*, black pine bark beetle bio-nomics, host selection, damage and control with doctoral student Stephen Reay;
- insect biodiversity in response to various forest management regimes with masterate student Diane Jones, faculty colleague Dr Nora Devoe and entomologist John Hutcheson;
- *Platypus* pinhole borer chemical ecology, pheromone identification and options for management with post-doctoral scientist Dr Ecki Brockerhoff.

Ken is enjoying getting acquainted with New Zealand colleagues and forests and would like to hear from people who are interested in the above topics.



Indigenous forest fire protection

Sir,

With reference to Colin O'Loughlin's article in the November 1997 issue, "NZIF develops a new indigenous forest policy":

From the summary outlined it is obvious that a very intensive study of indigenous forest needs has been made by the Working Party on behalf of the Institute.

One puzzling omission, however, is that there is no mention in the summary of any need for indigenous forest fire protection?

Summary No. 4 deals with the "enhancement of the current integrated research effort" concerning control of animal and plant pests. Why not forest fire also?

Summary No. 5 says "The NZIF advocates and supports the establishment of a comprehensive national indigenous forest health surveillance system ...". In my opinion, a similar policy should be in place for the protection of indigenous forest against fire.

As most of us surely know, our original indigenous forest estate was greatly reduced by the ravages of fire. R. Cameron 1964 and L. McCaskill 1973 are good authorities.

Forest and Rural Fire Legislation has been developed over the years to help protect our remaining forests and other areas of vegetation. The Minister and DOC are responsible for the protection of State areas against fire (as well as some private ownerships). Protection of private indigenous forests will largely lie with District Rural Fire Authorities.

There is also forest fire research being carried out at NZFRI with an indigenous vegetation content.

Fire has burnt over 20,000 ha of DOC vegetation, including high forest, since 1987 (pers. comm.) and costs have been high — not only in the monetary sense, but ecologically also. Losses have occurred in private indigenous ownership also, but precise figures are difficult to obtain at present.

I have written to the Chairman of the Working Party suggesting some changes to the Draft NZIF Policy as well as to some individual NZIF members, asking for support in rectifying the omission of any policy statement on forest fire.

Hopefully other members will come to the aid of the party?

Neill Cooper

References:

Cameron R.J. 1964. Destruction of the Indigenous forests for Maori Agriculture during the 19th century. *NZ Journal of Forestry* 9, 98-109.

McCaskill L.W. 1973. *Hold this Land. A History of Soil Conservation in New Zealand.* Reed. Wellington.

Draft Indigenous Forest Policy

The draft Indigenous Forest Policy has had a long gestation period and has been put together by people with impressive credentials. I do not intend to comment in detail but rather in broader terms.

1. Indigenous forests are subject to change over time for a variety of reasons. Some of these changes can take place over a relatively short period (the death of totara in a number of North Island forests in the 1960s and 1970s), while others can be long-drawn-out affairs (the displacement of silver beech by mountain beech).

Attempts to manage forests as though they are frozen in time and complex ecosystems will remain constant and will in my view only result in failure. The forests which colonised the last Taupo ash shower give us some idea of how resilient and aggressive our forests can be.

Surely the first problem to be tackled is to develop management systems which will ensure restocking following logging. When this is achieved the other forest values will follow.