



New Zealand Ecological Society (Inc.)

NEWSLETTER No. 47

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Registered at P.O. Headquarters, Wellington, as a magazine.

PRESIDENT: I.A.E. Atkinson, Botany Division, DSIR, Private Bag,
Lower Hutt.

SECRETARY: S. Timmins, Department of Lands and Survey, Head Office,
Private Bag, Wellington.

TREASURER: J.G. Innes, Forest Research Institute, Private Bag,
Rotorua.

The New Zealand Ecological Society was formed in 1951 and promotes the study of all aspects of ecology. Membership is open to any person interested in ecology. There are four classes of members who pay:

- (1) \$25 for ordinary members,
- (2) \$15 for student members,
- (3) \$ 5 for introductory members, and
- (4) \$ 5 for retired members.

Ordinary and student members receive the N.Z. Journal of Ecology plus the quarterly newsletter. Introductory and retired members receive only the newsletter.

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Editors: M.S. McGlone, Botany Division, DSIR, Private Bag,
Christchurch;
J. Roper-Lindsay, MWD, P.O. Box 1479, Christchurch.

Printing: K.W. Duncan, Zoology Department, University of Canterbury.

Typist: Mrs J. Sturgess

NEWSLETTER: The editors welcome correspondence, interim reports of current research, news items, and other articles. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Ecological Society or its Council.

Deadline for next edition: MAY 31 1987

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* Items marked with an * may require action on your part.

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EDITORIAL

Early this year I received a letter from the secretary of a British group - the "Working Party of Local Authority Ecologists" (see page 16 of this Newsletter). These people are spread through the Councils, Water Authorities and miscellaneous advisory bodies of the U.K. Through the Working Panel they can meet regularly, often in the field to discuss local and national ecological problems and issues. In their own departments they are frequently the single source of ecological knowledge and guidance. Most are located in Planning Departments, some in "Parks" or "Amenities" sections of County or District Councils.

Since the secretary was seeking a "sister" organisation in New Zealand I was led to a rather long reply which wandered through the Town and Country Planning Act, skimmed over the N.Z. population structure and distribution, but landed firmly at the door of political and economic priorities.

The Town and Country Planning Act (at present) directs Councils to consider environmental factors in their planning process, both scheme preparation and in considering applications. And one of the advantages of our small population is that many of the pressures on land and water which have prompted the employment of ecologists to work in the planning system in Britain are not widespread here. But the pressures are here; in Taranaki, on the West Coast of the South Island, in Auckland. Some of the larger local authorities have recognised the need to seek ecological advice in their day to day planning activities and this will be backed up by the Ministry for the Environment's regional approach. However, the smaller regions, counties and districts are less well equipped. With low rating powers and small income they have little left over once the salaries of the necessary clerk, engineer and administrative staff are paid. Yet they are frequently the areas in which environmental issues arise. Lack of ecological expertise and environmental conflict - cause and effect?

In the current environmental changes there have been moves to enhance the relationship between ecological research and practice in reserve management (via DoC) or in major policy decisions (via MFE). But in failing to place a responsibility for good ecological management and planning in the heart of council chambers and county planning, the day to day activities of the communities can continue to nibble away at the integrity of the environment.

Judith Roper-Lindsay

SOCIETY NEWS

NOT LOST BUT GONE TO?

Lost Members

- (a) D.J. Evans (was Taupo, probably Tasman Forestry).
- (b) W.B. Johnson (was 109 Messines Road, Karori, Wellington).
- (c) P.J. Grigger (was Access Road, Kerikeri, Bay of Islands).

Address Changes

There are always address changes trickling through the membership file, and these finish up with Kelly Duncan at Canterbury University who has the job of updating the computer file. However, the changes should be sent to the Secretary so that the Treasurer can alter the membership cards (held at Rotorua) before Kelly receives the notice of change.

For those members involved in address changes during the great melt-down of April 1st (ever thought about that date?), PLEASE ADVISE THE SOCIETY OF YOUR ADDRESS CHANGE if you have one. I'll be quite happy with institutional changes rather than lots of individual cards so long as the individuals involved are listed.

Tracking down lost members is very difficult since they can't receive the Newsletter to realise they're lost (if you see what I mean).

So remember us during the rush and send in new addresses if you have one. Thanks.

John Innes
Treasurer

NB: A copy of the present address list is enclosed with this Newsletter. Please check that yours is correct.

JOURNALS - SPECIAL OFFER

The Society has decided to clean out the cupboards and sell off excess holdings of back copies of proceedings. Ten copies of each issue will be kept but excess are available to members at price \$2.00 each (including postage).

Issues available are:

Volumes 9, 11-19, 22-24 inclusive

also

"Population" special supplement to Volume 21.

If you would like copies, send your order with money, to:
Rod Hay, Ecology Division, DSIR, Private Bag, Lower Hutt.

KEY TO PROSPERITY - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Under the above bold title, the ministerial working party on science and technology, headed by Sir David Beattie, reported back to the Minister of Science, Hon R J Tizard, in early December last year. Its task had been "to review the role of the government in science and technology with particular regard to broader government policy and the place of science and technology in the economic and social development of New Zealand ...", and it was given six specific terms of reference.

The report is a "beauty". It pulls no punches and states, with supporting evidence, the need for a much greater investment in research and development in both public and private sectors. It calls for a much higher profile for science within government, specifically the appointment of a senior cabinet minister as Minister for Science and Technology. Among its other recommendations are:

- * Government to encourage a doubling of NZ's overall expenditure on research and development (public and private) by 1993-94.
- * The maintaining of present salary scales and promotion structures within government research organisations and universities but with above scale rates for excellence and in areas where recruitment and retention proves difficult. It also suggests retirement or resignation for sub-standard performance.
- * Modification of existing school curricula for scientific, technological and mathematical education, and a longer period of secondary education to allow a larger number of students to reach satisfactory levels of achievement.
- * The establishment of a Science and Technology Advisory Board to be the principal independent advisor to government on science and technology matters. This board would also be charged with the responsibility to greatly increase the public awareness of the importance of science and technology in the social and economic development of NZ.
- * The establishment of a Science and Technology Research Council (set up under its own Act) with the prime objective of funding basic and strategic research projects in government laboratories and universities.
- * The introduction of 150% tax deductibility for expenditure on research and development activities throughout industry.
- * Continued government support for research associations and greater use of this mechanism for government-industry partnerships.

- * That the Working Party be permitted to stay in existence to complete a more detailed analysis of the effects of user pays, further consideration of incentives to industry, and to address the research requirements of the new state organisations such as the Department of Conservation.

The last of the listed recommendations is of specific interest to your council. The Ecological Society was one of over 400 organisations and individuals to send a written submission to the Working Party. Our submission concentrated on two main topics: the dangers of the widespread application of the user pays philosophy and the need to rationalise ecological research in NZ. Clearly, the Working Party shares our (and many others') concerns about the application of "user pays". It devotes over 10 pages in the report to the topic and includes such sentences as ... "Scientists should aim to excel in research, not in commercial activities".

The whole section of their report entitled "Accountability in Science and Technology" needs to be widely read and absorbed.

I strongly urge Ecological Society members to get hold of a copy of this report and read it cover to cover. It deserves your attention. Then trot along to your MP and ask if the report has their attention; it does not deserve to be left to fester on political shelves.

It must be acted upon!

Murray Williams

CONFERENCE 1987

GENERAL INFORMATION

Date: 24-28 August 1987

Conference Venue: Turangi Senior Citizens' Club

Accommodation: Tongariro Outdoor Centre

Accommodation for 150 people, mostly in twin-share rooms, has been booked. All meals are available on site. Because of school holidays and the skiing season, alternative accommodation in motels or motor camps should be booked as early as possible.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Monday, 24 August:	Travel and registration.
Tuesday, 25 August:	All day: Symposium on Disturbance in New Zealand Ecosystems.
	Evening: Wine and cheese plus debate.
Wednesday, 26 August:	am: Contributed papers.
	pm: Posters and Workshops.
	Evening: Annual dinner.
Thursday, 27 August:	All day: Field trip.
	Evening: AGM.
Friday, 28 August:	am: Contributed papers.
	pm: Travel.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Contributions are invited for the Symposium, "contributed papers" sessions and posters.

1. Symposium on Disturbance in New Zealand Ecosystems

- * "Disturbance" has been a recurrent underlying theme in New Zealand ecology since the days of Cockayne. In this Symposium, we hope to touch on some of the following questions. What constitutes disturbance? What agents of disturbance are important in our ecosystems, and under what regimes do they operate?

How do our ecosystems respond to disturbance? How similar to natural disturbances are disturbances caused directly or indirectly by man? And, can we predict the effects of future disturbances on our ecosystems?

* Some definitions:

"Traditionally, an exogenous agent of vegetation change" (White 1979).

"A disturbance is a discrete, punctuated killing, displacement or damaging of one or more individuals (or colonies) that directly or indirectly creates an opportunity for new individuals (or colonies) to become established" (Sousa 1984).

"The mechanisms which limit the plant biomass by causing its partial or total destruction" (Grime 1979).

References:

Grime, J.P. 1979: Plant strategies and vegetation processes. Wiley, Chichester.

Sousa, W.P. 1984: The role of disturbance in natural communities. Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics 15: 353-91.

White, P.S. 1979: Pattern, process and natural disturbance in vegetation. The Botanical Review 45: 230-99.

Two "keynote" addresses will be given on abiotic and biotic disturbance. Papers which attempt to place the results of specific studies in a wider context and relate them to ecological theory would be particularly appreciated. Overviews on the role of particular disturbance agents (e.g., fire, vulcanism, climatic factors, human actions, tectonics/mass movement, alluvial processes) would also be appreciated.

Potential contributors are reminded that 1987 is the centennial year of the National Park system in New Zealand.

2. Contributed Papers

Anything considered! Key points are:

* Clarity.

* Succintness.

We welcome student contributions.

3. Poster Session

Anything considered. Key points are:

- * Clarity.
- * Succintness.
- * Visual impact.

Authors should be present during the poster session to discuss their work with interested viewers. Again, student contributions are welcome.

ABSTRACTS REQUIRED

If you wish to contribute a paper or poster to the Conference please send your name and address and an abstract of less than 150 words to the Scientific Organiser before 15 May 1987. If you can offer your contribution either as a paper or as a poster, please indicate this along with your abstract, and your preference. Submission of an abstract implies that, if accepted, it will be published under Conference Proceedings in the 1988 NZ Journal of Ecology as is, unless it is subsequently updated or a full paper on the topic is accepted for publication in the Journal.

WORKSHOP TOPICS

If you want to suggest a Workshop topic, please write to the Scientific Organiser. Contributions will be welcome.

REGISTRATION

Forms will be sent out with the next Newsletter. However, those intending to contribute papers/posters should send in their Abstracts before May 15th.

CONFERENCE ORGANISER

John Newton, 12 Hirangi Road, Turangi.

SCIENTIFIC ORGANISER

Mark Smale, Forest Research Institute, Private Bag, Rotorua.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

1. POSSUMS

Conservation New Zealand
P.O. Box 12-200
WELLINGTON NORTH

Conservation New Zealand must regretfully decline your "Jumping the Gun" award proposed in your November 1986 Newsletter No 46. In response, however, we would like to offer your editors the "Getting it wrong again" award.

The presentation of conservation citations in November 1985 to two of the possum trappers on Kapiti Island was to recognise and encourage the exceptional effort and commitment made by these men at a time when many professional ecologists and possum experts were still rubbishing the possibility of eradication.

Before the campaign the 20,000 odd possums on Kapiti were causing massive damage to the island's forests. By November 1985 when the citations were given, the numbers had been reduced to between 200 and 600 possums. Now, a year later, numbers are at a very low level indeed and it seems that the last possum may be in sight. Conservation New Zealand is keen to support the trappers untiring and worthy efforts, and leave it to the professional possum experts to spend the next 10 years arguing about whether eradication is an achievable goal.

Nada Cottrell
(Information Officer)

2. SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHING CRISIS

Forestry Research Inst.
ILAM

Matt McGlone's editorial in the November Newsletter No 46 raises issues which may have consequences for the NZ Journal of Ecology. One reason why authors have submitted NZ ecological papers to DSIR, FRI or overseas journals rather than to NZ J. Ecology is that in the former they were likely to see the light of day sooner than in the latter. This is not now so and any decline in journal size or frequency of say the DSIR journals will further negate this perceived advantage. It is my contention that the editor of NZ J. Ecology will benefit from an increase in submissions as a consequence of the existing and proposed changes to official publishing in New Zealand.

How many additional papers the Society might receive is unknown. If we look at the available supply of ecological papers (in the broad sense) there is no doubt that the submission rate to our editor could easily double. For example, in the years 1982 and 1983 there were 29 (35%) ecological papers out of 82 published in NZ J. Zoology, 11 (13.5%) out of 81 in NZ J. Botany, 3 (3.2%) out of 95 in NZ J. Science, and 4 (5.3%) out of 76 in NZ J. Forestry Science - or over 20 papers/year published in these journals alone.

TABLE 1. Affiliation of the senior author of papers in NZ J. Ecology Vols 1-9. The affiliation is taken from the address given under the title, ie, presumably where the work was carried out, not the present address

Organisation	No. of Papers	% Total
Comm. for Environment	1	0.7
CSIRO	3	2.2
DSIR - Botany Division	8	5.0
Ecology Division	21	15.6
Entomology Division	3	2.2
Geology Survey	1	0.7
Grassland Division	2	1.5
NZFS FRI	20	14.8
NZFS	3	2.2
MAF	4	3.0
MOW	2	1.5
Museums	1	0.7
Private	6	4.4
Universities - Auckland	5	3.7
Canterbury	17	12.6
Central Inst. Tech	3	2.2
Lincoln	4	3.0
Massey	5	3.7
Otago	6	4.4
Overseas	5	3.7
Victoria	3	2.2
Waikato	3	2.2
Wildlife Service	9	6.7
	TOTAL	135

Suppose, for the sake of the argument, that the NZ J. Ecology received another 10 papers/year of publishable standard. From the editor's point of view this would probably be most desirable as he/she (looking to the future there Nigel rather than reflecting on your gender) could be firm with deadlines and be more selective about quality. However, this editorial heaven may not necessarily serve to fulfill the aims of the NZ Ecological Society to the best advantage.

Papers rejected by journals are liable to end-up, as Matt notes, in in-house grey press things, eg, FRI Bulletins, Wildlife Service Technical Reports, Ecology Division File Notes, Lands and Survey Info Series or whatever DoC dreams up to list but a few. Such information gets lost, the refereeing and editorial standards are variable (to put it kindly), and there is no doubt that such a method of making information available is no substitute for formal publication. Some rejects are, of course, exactly that, but in many cases I can envisage submitted papers with perhaps limited NZ interest or 'for the record' type of information being rejected. This would be a shame as it is often these papers that make up the grist of manager's mills when they come to decide the fate of takahe (a little pun in there) or where and how to set priorities to expend resources. In other words, the NZ J. Ecology must continue to provide for both the theoretical and applied aspects of the science.

The obvious solution to this putative glut of papers is to publish two issues of the NZ J. Ecology per year. The immediate consequences of such a decision would be:

- (1) We would have to obtain the extra money to pay for it.
- (2) We would have to appoint a paid (part-time?) editor or have two honorary editors, one for each issue as it would be unfair to expect one editor to carry double the workload on an honorary basis - even providing his/her employer would accept such an arrangement.

If a paid editor was to be appointed the Society would have to find an extra say \$15,000/annum for say 20 weeks work, plus the extra cost of another issue of say \$7,000. Since members and subscribers would get an extra issue it is not unreasonable to expect them to pay for the actual printing costs. I guess this might be about \$10 per annum extra. However, the cost of a paid editor may make the subscription too expensive for most if it was to be met by members, and in the rest of this letter I wish to suggest some ways the Society could obtain the required money.

- (1) We could attempt to fund part of our costs from grants from various Government or private sources. The costs of producing the Moa symposium has been found in this way, and the Education sub-committee has obtained funds from such sources. However, it is unlikely that any such grants could be expected on a regular annual basis, welcome though they might be in the short term.

- (2) We could, as suggested by Murray Williams, ask authors and especially those with institutional backing, for voluntary contributions. This is done by some journals, eg, Herpetologica.

(3) We could ask authors with financial backing for full page charges as a condition of publication.

(4) We could reinvestigate earlier proposals by Blackwell's to produce and promote the NZ J. Ecology either as an entity in itself or in association with their production of the Australian J. Ecology as was earlier mooted.

Let us look at previous issues of the Journal and see what sort of money we would be demanding or begging under compulsory or voluntary page charging arrangements. Volumes 1-9 contained 1286 pages of papers (excluding resumes and Society official bumf. Of these, 169 (13.1%) were contributed by NZ university staff and 709 (55.1%) by NZ Government employees (Table 1). Assuming all these senior authors could pay page charges, then in an average issue of 142.9 pages, 878/9 or 97.6 pages could be charged to recover editorial expenses of say \$7,500 per issue or a cost to the author of \$76.85 per page.

An average paper is about 10 pages long and so would cost about \$770.00 if full recovery was required. Judging by DSIR's publishing costs as 1% of their budget, I would guess this would still be extremely cheap publication for most Government departments. Whether they can be massaged, as the new user-pays jargon has it, in to paying these costs, or whether they would refuse, or pay and charge the Society for refereeing time or other absurdities remains to be seen. In any event, the present crisis in scientific publishing to use McGlone's phrase, will undoubtedly impinge upon our Journal and we should at least consider our options.

John Parkes

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

FROM S.I.P.C.:

Our National Landscapes. Strategies for Survival; in use, in health, and in beauty by Tony Jackman, Biological Resources Centre, DSIR (128 pages). \$51.70 inc. GST, p and p.

The New Zealand Protected Natural Areas Programme. A Scientific Focus
A review in the light of pilot studies and a format for future action. Ed. G.C. Kelly and G.N. Park, Technical Advisory Group, PNA Programme (68 pages). \$18.70 inc. GST, p and p.

Vegetation of Egmont National Park, New Zealand by Bruce D. Clarkson, illustrated by J. Bruce Irwin. \$29.50 inc. GST, p and p (see separate ad.).

Vegetation Map of Tongariro National Park, North Island, New Zealand 1:50,000 by I.A.E. Atkinson (+ 27 page booklet). \$6.00 inc. GST, p and p.

All the above can be obtained from:

The Publication Officer
S.I.P.C.
DSIR
P O Box 9741
WELLINGTON

The New Zealand Population: Change, Composition and Policy Implication
Population Monitoring Group, NZ Planning Council (64 pages).
\$10.95 from the NZ Planning Council, P O Box 5066, Wellington,
or from Government Bookshops.

Science and Technology in New Zealand - Opportunity for the Future
by E.G. Bollard (26 pages). \$15.00 from National Research Advisory
Council, P O Box 12-240, Wellington.

NZ Biological Resources Centre - Renumbering of Publications and Reports

As from September 1986 the existing publications, unpublished reports, maps, annual reports and newsletters of the NZ Biological Resources Centre have been retrospectively organised into new series and renumbered.

All future publications of the Centre will be numbered chronologically within their correct series. Publications and unpublished reports which had no number in the past have each been assigned a number within their series. A list is available to enable you to correct catalogues, etc.

The Biological Resources Centre Publication Series is now defunct and several new series are established:

New Zealand Biological Resources Centre Publication Series;
New Zealand Biological Resources Centre Report Series;
New Zealand Biological Resources Centre Map Series.

Two existing unpublished reports, Weeber (1983) and Owen and Park (1983), were formally numbered as Biological Resources Centre Publications numbers 3 and 4 respectively. They are now listed as N.Z. Biological Resources Centre Reports numbers 2 and 3 respectively. Librarians are requested to amend all copies, catalogues, etc.

And in case you're a little confused, the present address of N.Z. B.R.C. is: DSIR Head Office
Private Bag
WELLINGTON

but from 1 April will be:

Department of Conservation
P O Box 10-420
WELLINGTON

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Ecopolitics II; Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania. 22-25 May 1987.

Contact: Tasmanian University Research Company Ltd
GPO Box 252C
Hobart
TASMANIA 7001

Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Wetlands Convention; Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. 27 May-5 June 1987.

Contact: D Navid
IUCN
Ave de Mont Blanc
1196 Gland
SWITZERLAND

International Symposium on Grassland Vegetation; Huhehot, China. 15-20 August 1987.

Contact: Li Bo and Yong Shipeng
Department Biology
University of Inner Mongolia
Huhehot
CHINA

Symposium on Forest Hydrology and Watershed Management (IAHS); Vancouver, BC, Canada. August ? 1987.

Contact: IAHS Secretariat
Reading Bridge House
Reading
Berkshire
ENGLAND

AWARDS

GORDON WILLIAMS POSTGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP IN BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Lincoln College Council has awarded the first Fellowship to James David Holloway. He has just completed his M. Agr. Sc. degree in Agronomy at Lincoln, and the award of approximately \$3,600.00 will be available to him on being admitted to a Ph. D. programme this year. He is interested in research on aspects of wildlife management, especially the integration of wildlife and agriculture. He would like to see increased levels of diversity in animal species on farm lands and believes this could occur without undue changes to the agricultural management.

INTERNATIONAL

LOCAL AUTHORITY ECOLOGISTS (?)

I recently received a letter from Dr Martin Cahn who is Secretary of the "Working Panel of Local Authority Ecologists" in Britain. This is an association of over 60 ecologists who work for county councils, district or borough councils, national park authorities, water authorities, etc.

Martin is hoping to arrange international exchanges or study tours for panel members. Since we have no New Zealand equivalent organisation I would like to use this Newsletter to make contacts. (Are there many ecologists out there in our membership who do not work for a Government research organisation or a teaching institution)? I would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in the possibility of an exchange or helping with a study tour.

Judith Roper-Lindsay
MWD
P O Box 1479
Christchurch