

## 2010 Study Tour in Bavaria



Members of the Society of Irish Foresters visited the Centre for Climate Change and Forestry in Freising, during this year's annual study tour. The tour included visits to high quality spruce and beech forests near Passau on the Austrian border and farm forestry in the lower Bavarian Alps at Reissbach. An interesting and varied programme also introduced members to Bavaria's impressive tradition of forestry with its emphasis on silviculture and "close to nature" forestry practices.

Front row: John Conneff, Michael O'Brien, Pat Farrington, John McLoughlin. Second row: Derry O'Hegarty, Tony Mannion, Tim O'Regan, Dr. David Knox, Benny O'Brien, Jim Crowley, Richard Clear, Tony Gallinagh, Dr. Gerhardt Gallagher. Third row: Willie McKenna, Jerry Fleming, Liam Murphy, John Bardon, Frank Nugent, PJ Morrissey, Paddy O'Kelly. Back row: John Guinan, PJ Bruton, George Hipwell, Dermot O'Brien, Eugene Griffin, John Connelly, Pat O'Sullivan, Eugene McKenna, Ken Ellis, Kevin Kenny.

## Society field days in Dublin Mountains and Ballygar

Two interesting field days were held this year in the Dublin Mountains and Ballygar. In the Dublin field day, Bill Murphy placed particular emphasis on managing recreation demands in forests close to large urban areas. Other topics addressed by Bill and Daithi de Forge along with Jesper Petersen and Karen Woods, included safety, consultation, dealing with anti social behaviour, and reconciling recreation/public access with ongoing forest operations.

In September, the Society held an excellent field day in Ballygar, Co. Galway where the large attendance saw at first hand how Murray Timber Group (MTG) can process and export a range of sawn

products despite difficult trading conditions. Products include construction timber, pallet and packaging, fencing and garden decking.

The Ballygar sawmill is one of the most efficient and modern plants in Europe. This is apparent in virtually every facet of the mill, especially sawing, grading, planing, kiln-drying and preservative pressure treatment.

The product that created most interest at the field day was the SNR (sustainable natural resource) planed all over, eased edge construction timber. SNR is now recognised as a quality international brand.



At the Ballygar field day: Paddy Murray, Managing Director MTG with John Duane, MTG, Donal Whelan, ITGA, Patrick Murray, MTG and John McLoughlin, Vice President, Society of Irish Foresters.



Bill Murphy (left) and Daithi de Forge presented an overview of Coillte's forest recreation policy at the Society July field day in forests in the Dublin Mountains including Tibbradden.

## Winners of 2010 RDS-Forest Service Forestry Awards



Seán Connick, Minister of State with responsibility for forestry (centre, front row) presented the annual 2010 RDS-Forest Service Forestry Awards at Russborough House. Front row: Martin Murphy, winner of the RDS Special Award; Minister Connick; and Yvonne Foley, winner of the Bio-diverse Forest/Woodland Award with her husband Declan. Back row: Pat Hennessy, Chairman, IFA forestry group, Anne and Paddy O'Reilly, winners of Farm Forestry Award and Declan Foley.



To all our members

*Nollaig shona is gach sonas i gcomhair na h-athbhliana*

Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year

## New members

We welcome the following new members:

### Associate (9)

Mary Bannon,  
Sharon Byrne,  
Wilhelm Franke,  
Michael Furey,  
Ronan Gordon,  
John Hoolan,  
Breda Lyons,  
Eugene McKenna,  
Brenda Molloy.

### Technical (10)

Rudolf Brinkman,  
Ian Fitzpatrick,  
Liz Griffith,  
John Guinan,  
John Landy,  
Kevin McCarthy,  
John Moore,  
Michael Moran,  
Mike O'Mara,  
PJ Trait.

### Student (5)

Stephen Fletcher,  
Luke Heffeman,  
Aaron McNulty,  
James Reynolds,  
Brian James Shaw,

### EDITORIAL:

Pat Farrington  
Pat O'Sullivan  
Donal Magner  
John McLoughlin  
Ray Keogh

### PHOTOGRAPHY:

Dr. Nuala Ní Fhlatharta  
Kevin Hutchinson  
Dr. Ted Farrell  
Donal Magner  
Barry Coad  
John McLoughlin  
RDS Archive (John T. Ohle)  
Edmund Barrow  
Ray Keogh

Society of Irish Foresters  
Glenealy, Co. Wicklow

E: [sif@eircom.net](mailto:sif@eircom.net)  
W: [www.societyofirishforesters.ie](http://www.societyofirishforesters.ie)

# THE Irish Forester

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF IRISH FORESTERS

WINTER 2010

## Larch disease now a threat

The main threats to Irish forests are from insect pests and diseases, mammals such as deer and grey squirrel, fire and windthrow caused by heavy storms. While insect pests and diseases have the potential to cause major damage to forests, Ireland has been fortunate to escape the devastation caused by diseases experienced in other countries. The recent outbreak of *Phytophthora ramorum* in larch is therefore a cause for serious concern.



Infected Japanese larch with visible wilting of young shoots and foliage, which turn yellow.

Detected in Japanese larch in Co. Tipperary earlier this year, it was previously found only in rhododendron in forest areas. The Forestry Inspectorate subsequently conducted a national aerial and ground survey of Japanese larch stands with the assistance of the Air Corps and Coillte staff. "By November the disease was found to be generally confined to the south and southeast of the country but it will be 2011 before the overall position can be fully assessed," said Seamus Dunne, Senior Inspector, Forest Service.

The common name for *P. ramorum* is sudden oak death, because it affects native American oak. However, it is not a threat to European oak species. "Japanese larch though appears to

*contd. overleaf*

## Minister Connick welcomed to AIFC stand at the Ploughing



Despite the horrendous weather at this year's National Ploughing Championships, record attendances were recorded. The Society was represented by AIFC, which reported great interest throughout the three-day event. Minister of State Seán Connick was welcomed to the AIFC stand by Kieran O'Connell, Thomas Hanrahan, Seán Lenihan and Fionán Russell.

## In Brief...

### Funding to support a 7,000 ha planting programme

Government funding for forestry announced in Budget 2011 will be sufficient to support a planting programme of between 7,000 and 8,000 ha according to Minister of State Seán Connick. He said the funding is vital for a viable afforestation programme and added that he was also pleased that forestry features as part of the Government's stimulus programme, which will ensure growth in the sector in the future. The reaction of stakeholders to the announcement was very positive.

### 2020 Food Harvest

Food Harvest 2020 – A vision for Irish agri-food and fisheries, launched earlier this year made a number of positive statements about forestry. The report stated: "The role of Irish forests is key to the country meeting its international climate change targets. Carbon sequestration by eligible forests in Ireland is currently estimated at 2.074 million tonnes per annum. In order to sustain production and processing of timber from Irish forests, a well-balanced age structure is required at national level. This means that the decline in planting levels in recent years will need to be reversed."

### Society makes it to New York Times

The *New York Times* recently featured Treemetrics, the Cork based forestry technology company: "(Treemetrics) is taking forestry high-tech with its 3D laser scanning system to accurately measure the height, straightness, taper and volume of the trees in a section of forest. Treemetrics just received an innovation award from the Society of Irish Foresters, hot on the heels of a special mention from the judges in the IBM smart camp global finals."

be particularly susceptible with damage to all age classes,” said Seamus. “Significantly Ireland and Britain are the only countries worldwide where *P. ramorum* has been found in Japanese larch.”

As part of a control programme, sanitation felling, transportation and processing of infected material is carried out to prevent further spread of the disease. In November 2010, a policy decision was made to suspend Japanese larch as an approved species under the Forest Service afforestation schemes and also for reforestation under the Felling License system.

The Forest Service divisions in the Republic and Northern Ireland have appealed to woodland owners and managers to remain vigilant and report suspicious symptoms. The first indication of the disease on Japanese larch trees is a visible wilting of young shoots and foliage, or later in the growing season, withered shoot tips with yellowing needles, which then become blackened. The infected shoots shed their needles prematurely. Trees may also have bleeding cankers on their upper trunks. While the bleeding canker can be detected throughout the year, foresters and growers will have to wait until the spring, when larch begins to flush. However, growers should inspect their plantations throughout the year.



Infected trees may have bleeding cankers on their upper trunks.

# Deer management in Ireland

Declan Little

Deer are present in most parts of Ireland and are an important national resource. They are an important part of Ireland's biodiversity, especially the Kerry Red Deer herd which is of international importance.



Stag and hind on the Wicklow Mountains.

Deer are also an important recreational asset to the ecotourism and game sectors. As deer are typically a woodland animal they can be very destructive and considerable damage to trees (timber quality) and other plant communities (biodiversity value) can occur where deer numbers are too high.

In addition to woodlands, deer can have negative impacts elsewhere. Grazing of pasture and damage to tillage crops has been reported in some areas while deer can pose a real danger to motorists and to themselves on the roads, especially on motorways and dual carriageways. It is important that a National Deer Management Strategy is developed and implemented to manage this important national asset.

The key components of this strategy include generating good data on an ongoing basis on deer numbers and trends, education of forest managers regarding deer ecology behaviour and management, and culling where populations are unsustainably high. An agreed management strategy, if implemented fully, would also address the poaching of deer which has serious negative impacts on the future viability of deer herds.

Culling of wild deer as part of the implementation of any agreed management strategy should always be carried out by properly qualified and certified deer managers including approved personnel who are certified under initiatives such as the Deer Alliance Hunter Competence Programme. As well as addressing the welfare of the deer, their future viability and health, co-ordinated deer management will also bring

social, environmental and economic benefits, especially to rural communities. These include minimising the threats deer pose as well as generating income from recreational ecotourism, associated with deer stalking and the development of a home-grown venison market.

With reference to timber quality, members of the Society of Irish Foresters could assist in the process of identifying deer 'hot spots'. These are areas where deer numbers are unsustainably high. At a time when economic conditions are particularly challenging it is logical to direct scarce resources to areas that require urgent attention. This is possible through follow-up quantitative deer population surveys, the establishment of local deer management groups and targeted culling, where deemed necessary. Woodlands of Ireland will continue to lobby for the implementation of a National Deer Management strategy that includes these measures.

If you are aware of deer in your area, I would be obliged if you would let me know. Simply state the name of the forest area, grid reference and the nature of the evidence of their presence (visual counts, browsing, bole scoring, etc.). If damage is particularly severe, please state this in your submission.

*Dr Declan Little is Project Manager of Woodlands of Ireland*

# TEAK 21 – supporting developing communities

TEAK 21 is an Irish company, formed by forestry professionals in 2001, with the overall aim of furthering tropical plantation forestry. Its objectives are to:

- Advance information on growing and marketing quality tropical hardwood plantations.
- Relieve pressure on natural forests by promoting plantation hardwoods.
- Assist in setting standards for sustainable tropical forest management.

Ireland is a significant importer of tropical hardwoods. In 2000, imports amounted to €133 million, the highest per capita figure in Europe. Following an initiative by Society member Ray Keogh, a group of foresters formed TEAK 21 to promote sustainable management of tropical hardwood plantations.

The activities of TEAK 21 began with a number of initiatives, particularly in Central America, which were assisted with international funding. Technical and market support was provided to local organisations. TEAK 21 arranged a survey of teak plantations in El Salvador and submitted proposals to the EU and Ireland Aid for assistance. It also drafted a working document for the FAO and published a booklet on the management of tropical hardwoods.

A reassessment exercise in 2009 concluded that TEAK 21 was too small to support field projects by itself, and that its focus should be widened from Central America to include other developing regions and countries. Instead, a more viable approach would be to offer support to the larger aid organizations on tropical forestry matters. Current membership of TEAK 21 possesses an expertise resource, which can be put to this use.

Concern, Gorta and Trocaire were approached to explore potential areas of co-operation. This was followed by a position paper on the role of tropical hardwood plantations in alleviating poverty and reducing pressure on indigenous forests.

Other developments included the relaunch of the website and developing a closer link with TEAKNET, a global network of teak growers. Ray Keogh, who is supported by Coillte, is a key player in the development of OLAT, an organisation of Latin American teak growers. He is currently pursuing links with Fair Trade and will assess potential areas of community involvement in East Africa.

A major concern is the inadequate price communities receive for their timber. To achieve improved prices and address issues such as certification, a closer working relationship between larger growers and communities is essential.

How can Irish foresters help? The first step is to recognise that Irish foresters can make a valuable contribution because they are hugely experienced in sustainably managing plantation forests. They are also skilled in stakeholder involvement and the nuances of community participation. While they may not have an extensive working knowledge of tropical forestry per se they still have the skill base of sustainable plantation management, an essential component of efficient and effective forestry practice. Making their expertise available to a wider international community is, perhaps, the challenge of our time.

Further information: [www.teak21.org](http://www.teak21.org)



Mauricio Pineda, Director of Weinmannia (Costa Rica) beside a mature teak.

## Book Reviews

Stopping by Woods – new guide to 340 Irish woodlands

*Stopping by Woods – A Guide to the Forests and Woodlands of Ireland* by Donal Magner. Published by The Lilliput Press. Available from the Society of Irish Foresters for a reduced price of €20 (paperback) and €30 (hardback), including postage and packaging, restricted to one copy per member.

From time to time a charming book on Irish trees appears for the Christmas market. We think of *Meetings with Remarkable Trees* by Thomas Pakenham and David Hickie's *Native Trees of Ireland*.

*Stopping by Woods* written by one of Ireland's best known foresters, Donal Magner, is a delightful read and is sure to become an encyclopaedia of recreational sites in Ireland. It is a comprehensive guide to 340 forests and woodlands throughout the island of Ireland and contains close to 1,000 colour photographs. The book took more than five years to complete and the author visited each site, sometimes on two or three occasions.

Donal Magner writes perceptively about the forests he has worked in and visited over the years as a forester and a journalist. This book is packed with information and images not only about forests and tree species, but also their associated flora and fauna, history and heritage. *Stopping by Woods* is a celebration and record of this remarkable civic amenity.



Donal Magner, author of *Stopping by Woods* is a former Vice President and PRO of the Society. He has edited and produced a number of publications and writes a weekly column for the Irish Farmers Journal.

New publication on amenity trees and woodlands

*Amenity Trees and Woodlands: A Guide to their Management in Ireland*, edited by Kevin Collins with contributions from Roy Goodwin, Dorothy Hayden, Helena McGorman, Joe McConville, Felim Sheridan and Gemma Carr. Published by the Tree Council of Ireland and is available from the Council priced at €20 plus postage and packaging. Contact Tree Council of Ireland, Seismograph House, Rathfarnham Castle, Dublin 14. E-mail: [mary.keenan@treecouncil.ie](mailto:mary.keenan@treecouncil.ie) or phone: 01 4931313.

This is an indispensable book for those involved directly or indirectly in managing and conserving amenity trees and woodlands including landowners, community groups and individuals dedicated to the care and conservation of their own environment.

When seven writers combine to write a book, there is always a danger that the end product will lack cohesion. However, the editor, has briefed his players well and has orchestrated proceedings with a light but disciplined hand, no mean feat considering there are 12 chapters with subjects as diverse as: tree strategies; consultation with stakeholders; species selection; management of amenity woodlands; and trees, woodlands and the law.

Much of the writing was the work of Kevin Collins. However, he was well supported by a team of six specialists with expertise in arboriculture, horticulture and landscape management. They leave the reader in no doubt that amenity trees and woodlands are an indispensable part of our everyday landscape including parklands and the urban environment.

The care of these trees requires the input of a wide range of professionals and stakeholders. The enthusiastic amateur has a role to play, but tree care including species selection, maintenance, landscape design and corrective work is best left to the professional.

This full-colour 152-page book is well illustrated – the editor is also an accomplished photographer – and while it is aimed at specialists involved in the management and conservation of amenity trees and woodlands, its easy to read format will ensure a wide readership.

# Community forestry – learning from Africa

Edmund Barrow

In Tanzania 1,457 villages have forest reserves which cover an area of 2.3 million ha. More than 1.7 million ha of government reserved forests are jointly managed by 863 villages.

In Burkina Faso and Mali, groups of villages jointly own and manage large woodlands covering approximately 150,000 ha.

In Sudan, the age old Gum Arabic agri-forestry system covers about 225,000 sq.km (three times the size of Ireland). Ghana has over 2,000 legally



The restoration of forest and grassland continues in Shinyanga, Tanzania. A group of villagers inspect a restored forest reserve (above) and a family pictured in their holding with restored wood-grassland in the background (below).



recognized sacred groves which are owned and managed by local communities, while the sacred groves along the Kenya coast (Kaya forests) are national monuments that secure local people's rights and responsibilities. Trees and woodlands in Africa have a strong contemporary importance. They help provision families (fruits, foods, livestock forage), heal (medicinal trees) and are the primary source of fuel and building timber, and are important for cultural and spiritual reasons.

In Ireland, as long as trees and woods were central to farming, they were safe. But with increased demands for timber (export, ships, building) and changes in agriculture, forests had all but disappeared by the early 18th century. This is similar to much of the present day deforestation in Africa. As in many other countries, the importance of the forest sector was downplayed. Programmes to redress this neglect include measures such as legislative incentives to allow tenants to benefit from the trees they planted, and promotion of private afforestation and coppicing especially among the farming community. Farmers currently account for over 90% of private afforestation.

Promoting farm forestry is important for income generation, rural development, and environmental conservation. There are similarities with the privatisation of forestry in Ireland especially in relation to increasing knowledge and examining ways of managing trees as part of lived in landscapes to create connectivity (biodiversity management), restore woodlands, and help satisfy the varying needs of people (economic and cultural), in a manner similar to many parts of Africa where trees and woodlands are part of lived in mosaic and negotiated landscapes. As in Ireland now there is greater emphasis on multi-functional

values of trees – for timber, recreation and amenity values. We could learn from:

- the community forests in Burkina Faso (or Mali) where forests are combined with agri-forestry in the surrounding lands;
- farmers in Ghana planting economically valuable indigenous trees among their cocoa trees;
- farmers bordering Mount Elgon National Park in Uganda having joint forest management agreements for forest restoration; or
- restoring hill and riverine forests with farm forestry and hedgerow restoration.

These examples are instructive. Restored forests must mean something to rural people as they are part of community land use, and have environmental benefits. Success in Africa is not so much a factor of centralized forest management, but the shift to decentralized service provision and responsibility, which is also happening for community forest management, for a number of reasons:

- Recognizing the importance of trees to livelihoods as a source of sustainable products, e.g. honey, herbal remedies;
- How rural people are actively involved with and benefit from forest management;
- How enabling policies and laws support community forest management in Tanzania (forestry and land laws are linked), or Burkina Faso (decentralized forest management);
- Rural communities (and individuals) having legal rights to manage and own their forests; and
- Shared learning about the importance of forest goods and services.

Issues addressed include the role of forests for community benefit versus commercial exploitation and topics such as social needs and carbon sequestration.

*Edmund Barrow, who is based in Nairobi, Kenya, has worked in many countries in Africa during the past 30 years. He is the Regional Forest Advisor for Africa with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). His role is to support the national and regional forest conservation programmes of IUCN with a focus on the Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy.*