



New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science

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Special Contribution

New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science: past and present

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The need for a scientific journal specifically designed for dissemination of New Zealand forestry research results became apparent in the early 1960s. In 1964, the New Zealand National Research Advisory Council recommended that the New Zealand Forest Service should consider publishing a journal of forestry science in place of the series of research reports and papers that were being published at the time (New Zealand National Research Advisory Council, 1964). This recommendation was repeated at the 1968 – 1969 Forestry Development Conference. The conference was organised by the New Zealand Government to review the increasing complexity in management, development and utilisation of forests and in the use of wood (Forestry Development Conference, 1970). Integrated with a National Development Conference, and coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of the New Zealand Forest Service, this meeting was intended to provide guidance for planning of the national planted forest estate. This had already expanded from 15 000 ha in 1921 to 390 000 ha in 1968 with further substantial planting (21 000 ha per annum) planned. One of the recommendations of Working Party No. 7 (Education, Training and Research) was “That a research journal be established for publishing research papers on forestry.”

At that time, the New Zealand Forest Research Institute under its Director, Dennis Richardson, had expanded in order to devise efficient management methods for the large forest resource. These involved research on nursery and establishment practices, silvicultural tending regimes, protection forestry, soil and site management, harvesting, timber drying, preservation and utilisation. It was essential that the new information should be communicated to the New Zealand forestry community.

In the 1960s most forestry research results were published in the form of New Zealand Forest Service Technical Papers, Bulletins, Research Notes and Research Leaflets, none of which were easy to access. The only regular publication devoted to forestry was the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* which featured articles on silviculture but not on utilisation. Scientific journals tended to be concerned with single disciplines (e.g. *New Zealand Journal of Botany*), with agriculture (*New Zealand Journal of Agricultural Research*) or with general science (*Proceedings of the Royal Society of New Zealand*; *New Zealand Journal of Science*). There was no doubt that the nature and volume of information produced at the revitalised Forest Research Institute would justify delivery of peer-reviewed papers to a targeted audience, or that this audience existed.

The Forest Research Institute was clearly the best base from which to disseminate the new research material. In his preface to the first issue (May 1971), Hugo Hinds, then Director of Research, described the launch of the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science* as a landmark in New Zealand forest research. The new journal would take the place of scattered publications and would consolidate the reporting of forestry research relevant to New Zealand and the south-west Pacific. As such it would help to satisfy the demand for more and better dissemination of information on a wide range of forestry-related scientific disciplines. A year later, Hugo Hinds was able to report that "The Journal circulates to most timber-producing countries, and has become accepted as a vehicle for research papers with reference to New Zealand forestry in its broadest sense." (Forest Research Institute, 1972). Volume 2 coincided with the national Metric Advisory Board decision that scientific and technical publications should change from imperial to metric units.

It was clear from the start of its life that the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science* was intended to complement the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* first published in 1925 as *Te Kura Ngahere* ("The Forestry School") and later developed into the official organ of the New Zealand Institute of Foresters. Originally dedicated to discussion of "forestry in all its aspects", the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* continues to serve forestry practitioners today.

It is hard now to appreciate the nature of publishing at that time. Those were the days of typewritten drafts, hand-drawn diagrams, expensive photography and linotype printing. Figure 1 shows an original cyclostyled notice announcing publication of the new journal. It also details the original price, size, frequency and intended content. Although one volume per year with two issues per volume was planned, Volume 2 (1972) contained three issues. This publishing schedule was retained until 2009 when individual papers were published on-line throughout the year and amalgamated into one printed volume. The cover design changed frequently and examples at ten-year intervals (Figure 2) reflect changes in publishing fashion. In contrast, the size and layout of the Journal were not altered until 2009. In the same year, the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science* became freely accessible online at www.scionresearch.com/nzjfs.

While contributions to the Journal focussed on productivity and wood quality of radiata pine, it wasn't long before basic research results on forest disease control, genetics, tree nutrition and site factors were also reported. Although the original aim was to disseminate New Zealand forestry research results, by the early 1990s, the scope was given as "topics of interest to those involved in forestry and forest research in the south-west Pacific area"¹. The Journal's scope expanded again in 2009 to include manuscripts on a wider range of forestry topics, such as tropical species, but management of planted forests remained a key focus. A number of special issues has been published over the years. Many of these have been collections of refereed papers resulting from presentations given at forestry related conferences held either in New Zealand or overseas.

Editorship of the Journal changed hands a number of times during the first ten years of publication with Frank Bodley, Hugo Hinds, Brian Lowry, Peter Gadgil, John Harris and Cathy Balog each listed as sole or joint editors of one or more issues during this period. Judy Griffith took over from Cathy as both Editor and Journal Manager in 1981 and continued in these roles until her death in 2008. Ruth Falshaw replaced Judy in that same year.

The *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science* prides itself on publication of high-quality scientific papers, a goal that has always been achieved through rigorous peer-review. This process was overseen by an internal editorial committee for the first thirty-five years. In 2005, an international Editorial Board was appointed to assist with the choice of referees. This system was expanded in 2009 when eleven Associate Editors from a range of countries and forestry disciplines were appointed to manage the peer-review process for manuscripts in their area of expertise. Guest Editors have also been appointed to co-ordinate the production of special issues. As well as international editors, many readers, authors and reviewers are based in other countries so the Journal has a truly international audience (Figure 3).

Co-incidentally, the oldest and the newest papers published in the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science* during the last forty years both deal with threats to forest biosecurity. These and the other 1380 articles published in the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science*, provide an important and permanent record of advances in forestry research that is of value to forest-based researchers and industries world-wide.

¹ *New Zealand Forest Research Institute. (1992). Unpublished internal report to the Chief Executive.*



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Content: The journal will include scientific articles, short notes, book reviews, and letters to the editor, covering a wide range of subjects, in the fields of production forestry, protection forestry, forest pathology and entomology, and forest products, which have relevance to New Zealand forestry science.

Format: Page size $6\frac{5}{8}$ in. x $9\frac{1}{2}$ in., printed on art paper. Each issue will contain about 125 pages, the two issues for the year making up a volume of about 250 pages. Illustrations will include line drawings, photographs, and occasional coloured maps and diagrams.

First published: May 1971 (= vol. 1, no. 1)

Periodicity: Two issues per year

Editor: Mr F.A. Bodley

Publisher: Director of Research
Forest Research Institute
Private Bag
Rotorua
NEW ZEALAND

Subscription rates: Full calendar year (one volume comprising two issues:

\$NZ 4.00 net, post free (surface mail)

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Cheques and remittances should be made payable to the NZ Forest Research Institute.

* PLEASE NOTE PARTICULARLY that this is a NEW JOURNAL, and that it does not conflict with the NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF FORESTRY. The latter journal continues to be published twice a year by a separate organisation, the NZ Institute of Foresters Inc., P.O. Box 348, Tokoroa, New Zealand.

FIGURE 1: Original notice announcing publication of the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science*, 1971



FIGURE 2: Cover designs for four different issues of the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science*. (A): Volume 1, Issue 1, 1971; (B) Volume 11, Issue 1, 1981; (C) Volume 21, Issue 1, 1991; and (D) Volume 31, Issue 1, 2001.

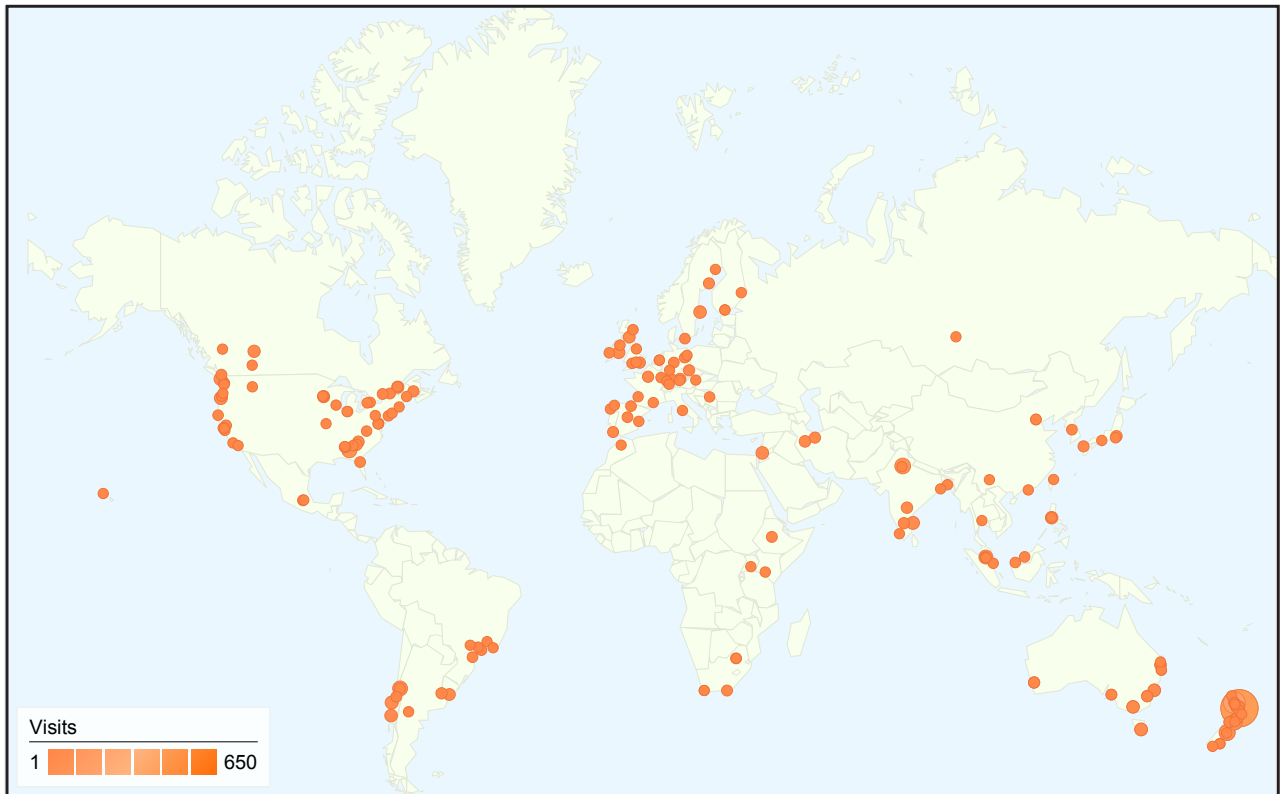


FIGURE 3: Location of visitors to the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science* website for the period 1 October 2010 – 30 September 2011. A total of 6442 page visits came from 908 cities world-wide (Map courtesy of Google Analytics).

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