

*Forest Ecology and Management*, *Trees* and *Tree Physiology* are similar in content, but in these early issues *Trees* has mainly included contributions with an emphasis on field work with conifers, whereas *Tree Physiology* has attracted more papers dealing with broad-leaved species in controlled environments.

Geographical coverage in all four journals falls well short of the global, even though all of them imply that they have an international audience in mind (the *Scandinavian Journal* does, however, specify that contributions should be "of relevance to Nordic conditions"). The lack of contributions on work in the Third World is especially striking. In *Trees* and *Tree Physiology* (with one and two papers dealing with the Third World out of 43 and 30, respectively) a bias towards north-temperate research is evident but perhaps to be expected. For *New Forests*, the



preponderance of North American work raises doubts over its ability to attract subscribers in tropical countries — only a single paper, out of 24, has a Third World emphasis.

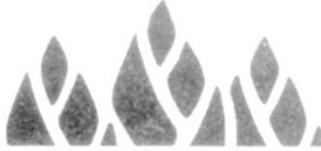
Potential contributors can, in every case, expect competent editorial service. The published versions of papers are well-organized, and readable and direct in style. Illustrations and figures are clear, except in a few cases where reduction has obscured the distinction between symbols — a weakness not restricted to new journals. All are currently quarterlies and, as far as can be judged, submissions appear in print 6–12 months after receipt. Unless articles exceed eight pages (and then only for the *Scandinavian Journal*) there are no page charges. There is provision for review papers in all four, and for research notes in the *Scandinavian Journal*, *New Forests* and *Trees*. Book reviews featured in the issues of *Tree Physiology* and *New Forests* I looked at, and the latter also includes an innovative "Application" section. There must be innumerable journals where such a slot would be appropriate.

None of these journals addresses a new

### Journal prices

Details of editors and frequency of publication, and the subscription rates appearing at the top of each review, are given in most instances for 1989. This information is not complete in all cases. Readers interested in a particular journal should therefore check prices with the publisher before subscribing.

## New Forests



field or bridges a gap. Forestry, however, has long been short of genuinely international outlets that demand the rigour and formality of research acknowledged in other disciplines. If these newcomers encourage innovation, stimulate interdisciplinary work towards the more efficient use of tree resources and raise the profile of forest research they will justify their existence. But I suspect that for all of them except the *Scandinavian Journal*, which is presumably protected by its affiliations, such an outcome will not depend on whether publishable material is forthcoming but on whether they can attract a viable number of subscribers. Forestry and its associated professions and scientific disciplines make only a small market, and journals with no institutional support need a world-wide circulation. From what

I have seen of *New Forests*, *Trees* and *Tree Physiology* I would like them to survive, but if they are to do so I believe they will have to appeal to contributors and readers beyond Australia, Europe and North America — after all, it is in the low latitudes that forestry must progress fastest to counter the effects of changes in land use, and where interest in trees is accelerating most sharply.

In that context, price becomes an issue. The system of subsidizing individual subscribers through higher rates for libraries has no relevance in countries where individuals have no foreign exchange and libraries have minimal resources. The publishers of these journals should note the precedents for offering reduced subscription rates for poorer countries. How many Third World libraries can pay \$37 for a 62-page issue of *Trees*, or, for about 90 pages of *New Forests*, seemingly the bargain of the three, even \$24 per issue? □

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## Fungi for all

Alan D.M. Rayner

**The Mycologist.** Senior editor D.N. Pegler. Cambridge University Press. 4/yr. £8, \$16.

FUNGI probably rival flowering plants in their species diversity, and outweigh the animal kingdom. Whilst wielding great destructive power as agents of disease and decay, they drive the global carbon cycle, sustain our forests and grasslands via mycorrhizal associations, and clothe, as lichens, what would otherwise be bare parts of the planet. Their developmentally versatile body forms provide immense scope for industrial exploitation as well as experimentally accessible systems for studying fundamental biological issues. Yet most people's appreciation of fungi stops at mushrooms, mouldy food and fairy tales.

Challenged by such ignorance, mycologists need to overcome some deeply rooted prejudices. On the one hand, the variety, edibility and toxicity of fungal fruit bodies has always been a source of fascination which can be relied on to deliver new recruits to the cause of mycology. But if that fascination becomes an obsession, the cause is lost.

On the other hand, mycologists working on disease control, taxonomy or some industrial process often find it difficult to communicate the wider interest of what they are doing. Because of the vicious cycle of neglect, their task is made harder

by the need to use 'technical' terms: plant scientists can assume their audience knows what leaves, roots and stems are; mycologists always have to explain what hyphae and mycelium are.

So there are two common images of the mycologist — one of the eccentric amateur, the other of the remote professional working on esoteric problems. Both are damaging. By promising to present a more truthful picture and at the same time convey some of the real excitement of studying fungi, *The Mycologist* represents an imaginative and timely venture of the British Mycological Society. It appeals to all ages and educational levels, containing features on identification, illustration and consumption of fungi alongside book reviews, news items on mycological science and accessible reviews of important topics in fungal biology (recent examples being fungal biotechnology and ascomycete classification). Also published is news about the society's meetings and members.

A combination of journal, magazine and society newsletter, *The Mycologist* is inexpensive, yet well illustrated, with many high-quality colour photographs, and it deserves widespread circulation — perhaps especially in schools and colleges of education. Currently it is a little too parochial and the subject selection is too random for my liking, but on its showing so far it could well evolve to play a valuable role in the vitalization of mycology. □

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