

point that it is important to save functioning ecosystems and their processes, not just collections of species . . . The great trap in all of this is to treat all species as being equal, which the simplicity of island biogeographic models tends to encourage." The essence of his paper is that playing a numbers game is irrelevant to determining the minimum requirements for maintaining viable populations of individual species.

In New Zealand, the Forest Service's Indigenous Forest Policy ensures that the ecological areas being established in State forests will not become "islands" in a matrix of exotic forest or farmland, and this, together with their representativeness and large individual sizes, ensures that the numbers game is well taken care of. What is not known at this stage is what is required to prevent potentially endangered species such as the kaka and kokako from achieving the status of the takahe, the kakapo and the black robin. Scientific effort in this direction has a greater potential to produce answers on which sensible decisions regarding preservation can be based.

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**FIELD GUIDE TO FUNGI**, by Greta Stevenson, Published by Canterbury University Press, \$4.95.

This compact little book of 122 well-filled pages explains well the importance of its subject especially to foresters. The first sections set out clearly what the larger fungi do in the field, how they are classified, and how they may be collected and recorded, with full details of how to give a permanent scientific account of any specimen. The later sections define the main classes of larger fungi and give some details of families and common genera and species. For the Agaricales which include the most numerous, conspicuous, and important fungi of our forests, both indigenous and exotic, keys for the identification of genera are given as well as descriptions of common species. The gasteromycetes get a thoroughly modern treatment. The work generally is clear and concise and is supported by accurate line drawings. Bibliography, glossary and index are detailed.

The book has been very carefully prepared and should provide a much needed stimulus for this woefully neglected subject. In New Zealand hundreds of botanists devote their lives to higher

plants while this more numerous group of extremely important organisations is strangely neglected. Even for our few well-known species details of seasonal and geographic occurrence are completely lacking. The higher fungi have been an important part of the work of Kew Herbarium for over 150 years. Why are we so neglectful? Foresters could help to fill the sad gaps in our knowledge of the fungi by using this guide to make useful collections and amass important records.

Copies available from the Secretary, Publications Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag, Christchurch, New Zealand. Post free.

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