

# IRISH FORESTRY

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## An Aspect of Awareness

FORESTRY, at least in Europe, has traditionally been associated with hunting and shooting and the pursuit, for "sport", of various classes of "game".

At the present time resources are being devoted to the development of those pursuits, and the conduct of research aimed at increasing the number of the victims and the ease with which they can be located and destroyed. Much of this research can also be of value in conservation, and conservation can certainly be combined with a controlled amount of shooting for pleasure—that is not at issue.

But as foresters we must remain alert to the changing moods of the general public, lest we wake up some day to find ourselves behind the times.

The feeling against all blood sports is developing steadily. Hare coursing will disappear before long under pressure arising from this feeling, as will fox hunting if it has not already disappeared for other reasons. When this happens it will be difficult to defend any form of "sport" which involves the destruction of life solely for pleasure. Sooner or later, hopefully sooner but probably no later than the end of this century, shooting and hunting for pleasure will have become as generally unacceptable as are cockfighting and bull-baiting now.

Let us hope we never find ourselves in a position where we have to be told by outsiders that we are condoning or assisting in an activity which is condemned by the public at large.