

Forestry News

RABBIT CONTROL

A curious prescription one hundred years ago to control rabbits from damaging young trees was to smear the tree with the rind of smoked bacon. One application was thought sufficient for the winter. To protect seedbeds it was necessary only to treat the seedlings on the edge of the beds.

IRISH FOREST CHALETs

On June 19th the Minister for Tourism, Fisheries and Forestry, Mr. Liam Kavanagh, T.D., officially opened the first Forest and Wildlife Service chalet complex in Killykeen Forest Park in Co. Cavan. The complex is comprised of 20 timber chalets, a recreation building and a manager's house. Home-grown timber was used exclusively in the construction of the buildings.

The project was financed jointly through a special EEC fund and funding from the Forest and Wildlife Service. The scheme in its inception was seen to be of direct regional benefit in that it would contribute towards the improvement of the tourism infrastructure in the border counties.

Killykeen Forest Park lays claim to having the best coarse fishing in Europe. Because of this it is expected that the chalets will have a high occupancy rate over the greater part of the year.

PINEWOOD NEMATODES

The EEC Standing Committee on Plant Health (Forestry Experts) is seriously concerned about the potential damage that may be caused to European forests by the pinewood nematode — *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*.

This microscopic eelworm feeds on softwood and can cause rapid wilting and death of *Pinus* species. Some losses have also occurred in *Picea* and *Pseudotsuga*. The nematode is a native of North America. It was accidentally introduced into Japan where it is said to have killed more than ten million pines. The nematode is transmitted by insects such as Cerambycid wood-borers. One such beetle can carry as many as 125,000 nematodes.

Recently Finland has placed a permanent embargo on all softwood shipments from North America. This action was prompted by the discovery of nematodes in imported wood chips. There is evidence that the pest can survive on a fungus that is commonly found in wood chips. Such a flexible life style increases the potential for long distance dispersal of the nematode. Experts agree that

kiln drying of wood from infested areas should be considered as a control measure.

Logs and chips imported into Finland from Ireland have also been analysed — but *Bursaphelenchus* has not been detected.

(D. McAree)

LAWSON CYPRESS IN DANGER?

Native to Oregon and California, where it is a valuable timber tree, *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* is best known in Ireland as a hedging species. Big commercial markets for this tree lie in Japan where prime old-growth logs can command prices of up to \$3,000 per 1,000 board-feet. This market may now, however, have a question mark hanging over its future.

A fatal disease has infected much of the public forests in the USA where this tree naturally occurs. These trees, once they are infected by the root-rot organism, '*Phytophthora lateralis*', generally die within four years. The spread of the disease has proven difficult to retard. Spores can be carried long distances in water or on soil or forest equipment.

Environmentalists have been requesting the U.S. Forest Service to restrict access and the movement of loggers within certain areas. U.S. Forest Service pathologists argue that the tree, as a species, is not endangered on the grounds that it still exists in areas where infection has been present for a long time.

Whatever the outcome, the problem is of interest to Ireland and to those entrusted with the management of Lawson cypress in this country. We have already recorded a close relative of this fungus within our borders — *Phytophthora cinnamomi* — and Lawsons are highly susceptible and may be killed by this pathogen.

(Dr. M. Keane)

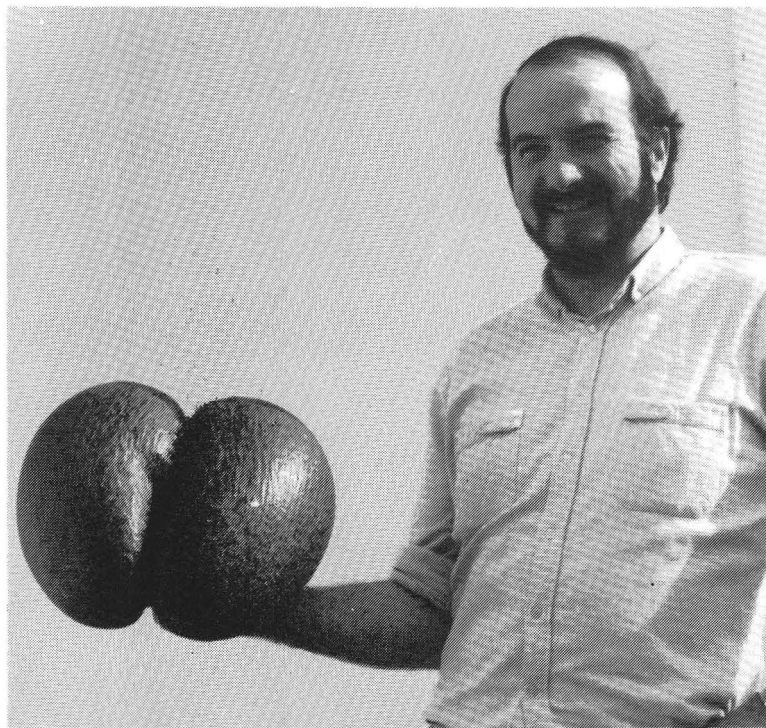
SCHOOL FOREST WEEK

The largest environmental study scheme ever undertaken in Ireland occurred during the week of the 9-13 June when 24,000 primary school children visited state forests. Under the guidance of foresters and wildlife rangers in 20 forest centres these children were given an understanding of many of the wild things, both plant and animal, that live in forests.

The School Forest Week was a joint undertaking between the Department of Education and the Forest and Wildlife Service to mark, in some special way, the EEC "Year of the Youth".

TROUSERS PLEASE, WE'RE IRISH!

In the lobby of the Ernan Park Hotel in Donegal a large nut rests on a wooden cradle in one of the window recesses. The nut is the fruit of the double coco-nut or 'Coco de Mer' (*Lodoicea seychellarum*). This coco-nut grows in the Sechelle Islands and the single-seeded fruits are the largest in the world — weighing up to 18kg each (see photo). The seeds commonly distribute themselves over large distances by floating on the sea, hence the name 'Coco de Mer'. The Seychelle islanders have long been intrigued by the shape of this fruit which they see as being that of a human buttocks!



Fruit of 'Coco de Mer' held by Wildlife Forester Mr. J. Gatins.

HARVESTING OAK BARK

Owing to our moist climate oaks are very much overrun with moss. This must be carefully removed from the bark. Some prefer to scrape the tree before peeling; others again clean the bark at the side of the ranges when the work is extensive, or performed by contract. In either system it is imperative that the moss be cleanly

taken off. Nothing reduces the price like mossy bark. It is very difficult to save bark in the plantation. If at all possible it should be drawn, every day's work as it is barked, to an airy field outside the wood where it will be exposed to sun and wind. When putting it on the stands keep the inside downwards, and on no account lay it up thick. Put it on thin, so that it will get the full benefit of the sun. To retain the proper colour is the sole art of saving bark, and this is best done when saved quickly.

The rick or stack should be convenient to the stand, so that as each portion is saved it can be added to the rick, and the drying stands, thus emptied, refilled. The rick should be six feet wide at the bottom, and nicely battered in on each side to a narrow ridge, taking care to keep the heart well filled to prevent the possibility of water lodging in the bark. This plan of a bark rick does away with the necessity for oilcloth sheets or thatch.

(D. S. Scott, Forester, Ballinacourte, Tipperary — 1879).

VISIT OF SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS SEPTEMBER '85

The Society of American Foresters visited Ireland in September 1985 as part of their European tour. The party was comprised of 38 foresters and their wives from states as widely scattered as Alaska, Texas and New York. The Society of Irish Foresters, in conjunction with the Forest and Wildlife Service organised the tour. Our visitors were shown as many aspects of Irish Forestry as could be seen during their seven day stay. Both the President of the Society, Mr. M. O'Brien, and the Convener, Mr. J. O'Driscoll, participated.

Among the areas visited were forests at Glendalough and Avondale and Lord Ardee's estate at Knockrath. The problems of afforestation and species selection on old red sandstone soils were shown at Melleray, Clogheen and Kilworth forests. No tour of Irish forestry would be complete without a visit to forests on blanket bog. Ross and Cloosh proved to be a unique experience for our visitors as many had never seen this site type. At Avondale, Mr. D'Arcy, the then Minister for State of the Department of Fisheries and Forestry, hosted a lunch for our visitors.

(J. O'Driscoll)

MONEY MATTERS!

The following are first year tuition fees of forestry degree course at three universities — 1986-1987 session. Fees in all cases are given in punts.

University of Edinburgh = £595

University College of North Wales = £633

University College Dublin = £1,276

SOCIETY OF INDIAN FORESTERS

Dr. S. N. Rai, the General Secretary of the Society of Indian Foresters, Bangalore, India, has written to the S.I.F. inviting an exchange of views between members of both societies on forests and forestry matters. The Society of Indian Foresters produce a quarterly journal (in English) 'Van Vigyan'. Annual membership is \$20. Full address of this society can be had from the editor of S.I.F.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The re-opening of Avondale Forestry School in January 1936.



Seated: T. McCarthy; H. Kelly; D. Corboy; P. Murphy.

Standing: D. McGlynn (FIC); J. Ruane; Miss Devane (Matron); H. Kearney.