

EDITORIAL

Since its first appearance in 1943, *Irish Forestry* has endeavoured to bring to the attention of foresters in Ireland information on the latest research findings, innovations and developments in all aspects of forestry and the wood chain. Throughout this time, each editor has in turn strived to ensure the quality and academic merit of material appearing in the journal, and this attention to detail quickly elevated *Irish Forestry* to its current status as the mouthpiece for forestry research in Ireland. Readers of this issue will notice the introduction of a section containing four peer reviewed papers. As the title suggests, these papers have been reviewed for scientific content and merit by leading authorities in the relevant fields, in addition to the normal editing and proofing undertaken by the editor, supporting Editorial Committee and original author. While referees for individual papers will remain confidential, a list of acting referees will appear in the journal over coming issues, as the number of peer reviewed papers increases. On behalf the Society, the current editor wishes to thank referees, both in Ireland and abroad, for their efforts in reviewing papers contained within this issue, and for their advice and assistance in setting down criteria and conventions for the future working of the peer review system. Establishing and maintaining such a system in *Irish Forestry* will add to the task of future editors and contributors. As originally intended, this system will, however, guarantee the relevance and consistent quality of original research material appearing in the journal, and represents a major development in the history of the publication. The introduction of a peer review system can only serve to reinforce the role of *Irish Forestry* as the leading research publication on forestry in Ireland, raising it to a level comparable with leading forestry journals elsewhere around the world.

From its early days, *Irish Forestry* has also acted as a permanent record of Society events and activities, publishing symposium papers, tour reports and annual lectures. The effectiveness, however, of the journal as a medium for communicating upcoming events and day-to-day issues relevant to members is hampered by the considerable time involved in preparing each issue. Members will be aware of a general review over recent months of the Society, its events, activities and future direction. As part of this review, and in line with the rapidly changing nature of our industry and requirements of the members, the Society has identified the need to supplement the role of *Irish Forestry* with a newsletter specifically aimed at communicating more 'news and people' type items. By now, members will have received the first issue of the Society's new quarterly newsletter, *The Irish Forester*, and will be familiar with its contents. Its particular function is to communicate the work of the Council, as well as to carry news about members, Society events and activities, new publications and general items of interest. The newsletter will strongly complement the role of *Irish Forestry*, providing a flexible medium which can react to developments occurring during the preparation period of each issue of the journal. The success of *The Irish Forester* is very dependent on Society members. To this end, the Council would strongly welcome any comments and feedback regarding the newsletter's first issue, and items for inclusion in future issues.

Both developments will provide the solid basis for effective communication and the dissemination of high quality research material, underlining the Society's commitment to serving the needs of its members as Irish forestry enters the 21st century.

Submissions to *Irish Forestry* are welcome and will be considered for publication.

The attention of contributors is drawn to "Guidelines for Submissions". Submissions to be addressed to:

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