

Bird diversity in Victorian hardwood plantations

Results have recently been reported of a Victorian study comparing bird diversity of native hardwood plantations, associated pastureland and nearby remnant vegetation.

The Executive Summary of the report "A comparison of the avifaunal diversity on native hardwood plantations and pastureland in north-east Victoria, 1999-2001" by Nicholas Klomp and Craig Grabham of the Johnstone Centre at Charles Sturt University (Report No 164, March 2002) is reproduced here:

This report presents the results of a two-year study comparing bird diversity of native hardwood plantations, associated pastureland and nearby remnant vegetation in north-east Victoria. The results indicate a preference by birds for remnant vegetation. A total of 70 bird species were recorded in remnant vegetation across three sites,

43 species were recorded in native hardwood plantations, 48 at edge areas and 25 within open pastureland. These results can be largely attributed to the structural complexity of the remnant vegetation, compared to the simple younger trees within plantations. Significantly, the study found that native hardwood plantations support greater species diversity than the pastureland on which they were established.

All plantation and edge areas displayed a higher level of species diversity than the associated pastureland areas. These findings have significant conservation and management implications. The study also concluded that species diversity within each plantation is influenced by the management practices applied to each plantation. The full report can be found at www.nre.vic.gov.au/forestry/private.

In-depth forest information in UN report

The Forest Resources of Europe, CIS, North America, Australia, Japan and New Zealand (or TBFRA-2000)
A United Nations Publication.

Available from:

Timber Section, UN/ECE Trade Division, Palais des Nations,

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The 440-page report presents the most recent and the best information on the forest resources of the 55 industrialised temperate/boreal countries, covering practically all aspects and functions of the forest. It presents validated national statistical data, adjusted to the TBFRA standards, graphs, tabular and textual information and analysis in the following specific areas:

- areas of forest and other wood land,
- ownership and management status,
- wood supply and carbon sequestration,
- biological diversity and environmental protection,
- forest condition and damage, and
- protective and socio-economic functions.

The main report includes statistical and descriptive information together with analyses undertaken by high level experts in each of the chapter areas of the report. More than 80 main tables with the validated national statistics on the different parameters of forest resources are included in the publication. In many cases where official TBFRA data were not available, estimates were made by the correspondents in cooperation with the secretariat involved in the production of the report.

A 14-page executive summary provides a starting point for better understanding of the report's contents. In the Introduction, it is noted that the main objective of TBFRA-2000 is to collect and make available the best possible information on the forest resources of the 55 countries it covers. It is intended to be useful, not only to governments and the international forest policy community, but also to a wide range of other groups,

including the scientific community, forest industries, NGOs, the conventions on biodiversity and climate change, forestry teachers and students, and the general public.

The size, or lack of it, of the New Zealand forest resource is thrown into sharp contrast when it is noted that the four largest forest countries - the Russian Federation, Canada, the United States and Australia - account between them for the predominant share of the TBFRA region's total forest resources. Their share of the area of forest, for example, is over 85 per cent, that of other wooded land nearly 94 per cent, and of most of the other main attributes more than three-fourths.

The reliability and comparability of data from these countries, therefore, plays an important role in the overall results of the report.

Trees, Timber and Tranquillity

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