

Update from the Field: Old Growth Research

Professor Roman Dial, Ecologist – Alaska Pacific University (Funded by Global Forest)

Old growth temperate forests are among the most endangered ecosystems on Earth, and in many ways also among the least known. Thus at the beginning of this new millennium it seems imperative that we apply advanced technology to documenting their existence and describing what remains from the last millennium's exploitation. Old growth provided ecological theatre for the evolutionary play for all the world's forest species. Nevertheless, it is equally important that we make parallel studies of the most abundant forest type on Earth, the anthropogenically dominated and managed ones.

My small canopy lab at Alaska Pacific University, in collaboration with Bob Van Pelt and Nalini Nadkarni of Evergreen State College and Steve Sillett of Humboldt State University, has been developing access and data collection techniques to more fully sample the canopies of forests. While Van Pelt and Sillett concentrate on the individual organisms that make up the forest and the microclimate in the crowns of trees, Nadkarni is working to integrate their data with another view of the forest through the trees. My lab is looking past the trees to see the forest and how it stands. We use laser range finders and flux compasses to record digital data on canopy structure, in particular the structure of the open spaces within the canopy. We see the forest as gaps and corridors between structural elements like foliage, branches and boles. Most previous canopy research has focussed on the trees themselves or the organisms living upon the trees. My lab is curious about the spaces between the trees, the open space where wind blows, rain falls, and sunlight falls. Do these open spaces have any relation to plant physiology? Can we correlate environmental gradients with these spaces in any way? These interstices likely also affect where volant creatures fly and the nonvolant travel: can we detect movement corridors within the forest using these data on open space?

Our research agenda that Global Forest funded is now being recognized by other organizations like the National Science Foundation, the United States Government, and National Geographic Society who are now helping us move further in this direction.

Honorary Board Member Passes

Monday, 6 August 2001 saw the passing of Global Forest's Honorary Board Member Mr. Larry Adler in London, England. US-born Adler, who had been in showbiz for an astonishing 73 years, was widely acknowledged as the world's greatest harmonica player. The highly acclaimed musician lived to a late age of 87. He was a long time family friend of the Halter's. Respectful condolences are extended to Mr. Adler's family in England and in the United States.

New Board Member

Global Forest is pleased to welcome the Honorable Senator Mira Spivak to its Honorary Board of Directors. Senator Spivak was the Deputy Chair of the Senate Subcommittee on the Boreal Forest in 1999, has headed Canadian delegations at global climate change conferences, and is actively involved in many other campaigns to protect the world's natural environment.

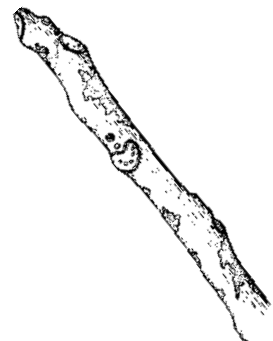
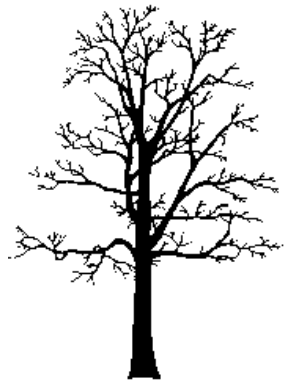
Senator Spivak was appointed to the Senate as a representative of Manitoba in 1986 and is one of only three female senators from this province. Her passion for conservation and the environment, as well as her experience with the Boreal Forest Subcommittee, make Senator Spivak an invaluable member of Global Forest's worldwide leadership team.

Thank You!

We would like to thank Oracle Canada, and Ms. Adrienne Sloss of California, for their very generous contributions to Global Forest. It is through these donations that we are able to continue our crucial work in temperate forest conservation.

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Just in Time for the Holidays

Dr. Bob Van Pelt's Forest Giants of the Pacific Coast has been printed and delivered to the GF office. It features the largest trees from Northern California to Vancouver Island, with overviews on 20 species, and profiles of 117 individual trees: 224 pages, 115 original line drawings, 115 color illustrations, and 23 color maps. It is a magnificent tree book, and a must for all who love trees. Visit the web at www.GlobalForestScience.org/books/ for more information, or phone our office to order your copy today!

Exclusive Paper Provider

Domtar Communication Papers, Montreal, has become the official paper supplier to Global Forest. As such, they become the first forestry company to support Global Forest's conservation efforts.

Domtar has created a line of tree-free papers called Domtar Weeds. This 100% Forest Free paper is acid-free and has excellent printability. All of Global Forest's brochures, business cards, letterhead and Leaflet newsletters are printed on Domtar Weeds.

Make a Difference!

Every time you shop, you make an environmental decision. Use your common sense and take a minute to consider the product's impacts before you buy it. Watch for new and improved products, packaging and systems of delivery. Consider the source of the product's raw materials - is the resource being sustainably and carefully extracted? How are animal products "harvested"? If you buy plastic, make sure it can be recycled locally and/or that it's made from recycled plastic. Check environmental claims on label or package - be sure they are verified by a respected certifying agency. Always carry your own shopping bags.



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