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**Pacific Southwest Research Station, Albany, CA 94710**

## Forestry Research Spotlights Bracken Fern

During a 6-week period starting in April, plant enthusiasts descend on the Arrowhead Ranger District of the San Bernardino National Forest in southern California. And the reason for their visit is to harvest bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) that grows in abundance on parts of the District. Pickers travel, some of them great distances, to gather this fern in the wild. Under a special forest products permit program administered by the District, many Asian-Americans pick young bracken fern fiddleheads as a delicacy for use in holiday and everyday meals. But bracken fern has many other uses, such as basket making material, dyes, astringent, potash for glass making, soap, animal bedding, mulch, thatch, and medicine.

In 1996, PSW began a study to identify background and behavioral characteristics of fern gatherers on the San Bernardino National Forest, identify reasons why they collect ferns, and offer recommendations for protecting the quality and diversity of the resource and activity.

Findings from this research are described in an article in the April 1999 issue of *Forestry Research West*—the quarterly journal published by the three western FS Research Stations: Pacific Northwest, Pacific Southwest, and Rocky Mountain. The article “Bracken Fern Harvesting” is by Deborah Chavez, social scientist, Riverside, and Connie Gill, public affairs specialist, Redding. The Arrowhead Ranger District asked Deborah to do the study, and she was assisted by Dale Blahna and Jan Anderson of Utah State University.

Copies of *Forestry Research West* are available from Research Information Services, Albany (510-559-6324).

## Meetings/Conferences/Seminars

\*20th Forest Vegetation Management Conference, Jan. 19-20, Redding: Bob Powers, Team Leader—Soil Productivity Research, Redding, presented a paper on “Diagnosing and Correcting Soil Compaction in Established Stands,” and Phil McDonald, Vegetation Growth Team, Redding, presented a paper on “Outlook for Genetically Enhanced Ponderosa Pine Seedlings in Vegetation Management.”

\*Forest Service Region 5 North Zone Culturist Workshop, Feb. 2-4, Reno: Bob Powers, Team-Leader—Forest Soils Productivity Research, Redding, and Nancy Rappaport of the Team, spoke on “Soil, the First Frontier,” and their slide presentation was followed by two “hands-on” demonstrations led by Carline Rudolph and Terrie Alves of PSW, and by Dessa Welty of the FS Nursery, Placerville.

## Cables Named Alaskan Regional Forester

Rick D. Cables has been named Regional Forester of the Alaska Region (Region 10), at Anchorage. He is currently Forest Supervisor of the Pike National Forest, San Isabel National Grassland, and Comanche National Grassland in Colorado, and the Cimarron National Grassland in Kansas. He succeeds Phil Janek, who last year became Deputy Chief—State and Private Forestry, in the FS Washington Office and is now the agency’s Chief Operating Officer. Jim Kaplan, R-2 Deputy Regional Forester —Resources, has been Acting Regional Forester for the past year.

Before taking his present job, Rick served as the White Mountain National Forest Supervisor in New Hampshire and Maine. Native of Colorado, he earned a forestry degree at Northern Arizona University, and is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College, in Carlisle, Pa.

## Vignette for Women’s History Month

In preparing for a watershed study, Sue Hilton ran across a vignette that contributes to National Women’s History Month, which was celebrated last month. Sue, a hydrologic technician, and Tom Lisle, a hydrologist, are planning studies this summer at Bull Creek, in Humboldt Redwood State Park, in northern California. And so she has begun reading about the history of the Creek.

It seems that in 1924, the Pacific Lumber Company had built a railroad extending as far as Dyerville Flat, and was preparing to build a spur toward the lower Bull Creek basin, for the purpose of logging it. By local accounts, a Laura Perrott Mann, wife of a Eureka, Calif., attorney, heard about the Company’s plans. Determined to halt the logging operations personally, she stood on the site of the tree-felling while her husband obtained a court injunction to stop the cutting.

Both Sue and Tom are with the Station’s Hillslope Processes/Fishery Research Unit, at the Redwood Sciences Laboratory, at Arcata. They are studying stream geomorphology, and one question that they are seeking to answer is: What happens to the shape and structure of a watershed as a result of sedimentation? One approach they use is to do field studies of channels that have a significant load of sediment. They survey the channels, sample the bed material, and collect data on sediment transport and channel response.

The lower part of Bull Creek has been a State Park since the 1920’s, but the upper part of the watershed was in private ownership, and was heavily logged until the early 1950’s. A

*Meetings, continued*

\*Eighth Annual Pacific Entomology Conference, Feb. 22-23, Honolulu: Mike Haverty, Project Leader—Insect Chemical Ecology Research, Albany, presented a paper on “Cuticular Hydrocarbons of the Termites of Hawaii” (co authors include Lori Nelson, of the Research Unit).

## Personnally Speaking

*Extra-Effort Award*

\*Garland Mason, Assistant Station Director—Research, Northern California: “for coordinating science integration work for the Sierra Nevada Framework Project.”

\*Roxanne Orly, grants and agreements specialist, Albany: “for ceaseless efforts, efficiency, and unfailing help in processing grants and agreements and in negotiating those agreements.”

*Extra-Effort Spot Award*

Following Albany employees “for extra efforts in helping design a new floor plan, and in the a physical move of computer equipment from the second floor to the first floor. West Annex Building.”

\*James Baldwin, Group Leader—Statistics

\*Diane Delany, biological laboratory technician

\*Paul Hodgskiss, biological laboratory technician

\*Imogene Holmes, support services supervisor

*Vignette, continued*

major storm in 1955 caused heavy erosion in the upper watershed and gravel deposition and channel changes in the lower watershed, thereby damaging redwood stands in the Park. The catastrophic flood of 1964 caused considerable amount of erosion and soil deposition.

Owing to the many changes in the shape of the channel over time, say Sue and Tom, Bull Creek provides PSW scientists with a unique opportunity to do watershed studies there. And earlier research by the State Park staff at Bull Creek contributes to making it a particularly good study site for us, they add.

## Job Vacancy

Secretary, GS-0318-6, Honolulu

## Closes

5-11-99

**For Your Information** is published every other week at Albany. Vince Dong (510-559-6324; [vdong/psw@fs.fed.us](mailto:vdong/psw@fs.fed.us)) editor. Field correspondents: Brian Boroski (Fresno), Yvonne Cordeiro (Hawaii), Phil McDonald (Redding), Chris Nelson (Placerville), Lola Thomas (Riverside), Bob Ziemer (Arcata).

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