

Editorial

In a recent review John Lawton argued that there are few general laws in ecology. Prof Lawton identified several general patterns and noted that the laws, rules and mechanisms that underpin them are contingent on the organisms involved, and their environment. He argued that this contingency was manageable at the level of populations and over large spatial scales (i.e., larger than a single region) but that the contingency becomes overwhelmingly complicated at intermediate scales involving lots of species (i.e., the scale we are often interested in as landscape ecologists).

So, when planners ask us to make general recommendations about the structure of landscapes to benefit biodiversity we have difficulties. Take corridors for instance: the idea that linear features act as conduits for movement of organisms is appealing and for some organisms it has been shown to be the case that movements between patches of habitat in otherwise fragmented landscapes are facilitated by the presence of linear features. However, the warning implicit in John Lawton's article is that the contingency is overwhelming; we cannot generalise. Our knowledge is species-specific and evidence for corridor-use in one species does not necessarily translate to others. Therefore, planning networks of corridors in landscapes on limited evidence may be a step too far. Dan Simberloff argued that such uninhibited planning could actually facilitate the spread of undesirable organisms including pests and disease. Perversely, in such cases isolation may be beneficial: according to a recent *English Nature Magazine*, Stowe Pool in Lichfield, Staffordshire, has recently been declared a SSSI to conserve up to 4,000 native white-clawed crayfish. It is the pool's isolation from rivers and other watercourses, forming a barrier against the introduced American crayfish which carry the crayfish plague (a disease which has wiped out many other native crayfish populations), that has led to its high conservation value.

So, until we as landscape ecologists begin to get to grips with these intermediate scales, we are just going to have to get used to the idea that it is difficult to generalise. In the meantime I'll go back to looking for more of those general patterns!

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News Items

David Howard writes:

President Bunce!

Following the recent elections for a new committee for International IALE, our chairman Bob Bunce was elected unopposed to the post of President. Bob will hold the post for four years and will either be re-elected or hand over the post at the next World Congress. As President, Bob will be responsible for organising the next Congress and the current plans are that it will be in the Netherlands, probably Wageningen.

In Bob's election statement he set out his aims:

- to build on the strengths of the current organisation developed from the previous commitment of the International Committee
- to encourage further collaboration between IALE members through joint meetings of different IALE chapters
- to promote Landscape Ecology outside its current core regions and to extend the publishing base of IALE
- to especially encourage young scientists to become involved in IALE activities
- to advance the application of landscape ecological principles to major environmental problems
- to maintain IALE as the most friendly and enjoyable international science organisation in existence!

I am sure that we are all keen to congratulate Bob on his new position and to wish him every success in achieving his goals for IALE. Bob is willing to carry on as chairman of IALE(UK). Bob was unfortunately unable to attend the IALE International Congress in Darwin, Australia and I read-out a prepared statement on his behalf:



Wishing everyone an enjoyable and interesting conference – keep up the IALE spirit!

Hope to see some of you in Faro (Portugal – European Congress 2005) and at Wageningen in 2007 (next World Congress)

Bob Bunce

Along with Bob a complete new committee was elected (or re-elected):

President: *Bob Bunce*, Alterra, Wageningen, The Netherlands

Vice President: *Louis Iverson*, USDA, Delaware, USA

Vice President: *Nobukazu Nakagoshi*, Hiroshima University, Japan

Secretary-General: *Marion Potschin*, Nottingham University, England

Treasurer: *Rob Jongman*, Alterra, Wageningen, The Netherlands

Bulletin Editor: *Felix Kienast*, WSL, Birmensdorf, Switzerland

Postgraduate Section

One of the aims of IALE (UK) is to provide a forum in which researchers and practitioners in landscape ecology can discuss ideas and make contact with people who have similar interests. The aim of a post-graduate section to IALE (UK) is to provide an opportunity for us to informally discuss, question, answer and support each other during our work in the multidisciplinary aspects of landscape ecology.

As such, a meeting is planned for any postgraduate researchers interested in landscape ecology for December 3rd 2003. This one-day meeting at University College Northampton is a one-day get-together for postgraduates with an interest in landscape ecology. It will provide an opportunity to meet other postgrads and discuss issues in landscape ecology particularly related to your research. The meeting will last from 10.30 - 16.00. Places are strictly limited to so book

early. There is no cost other than providing your own transport and lunch. Accommodation can be arranged at cost if needed. For further details contact contact Dr Duncan McCollin on 01604-892063 or by email on duncan.mccollin@northampton.ac.uk

For further details of the IALE(UK) postgraduate group please contact Sarah McKenzie or Bella Davies for further details.

Sarah McKenzie S.E.McKenzie@sussex.ac.uk
Bella Davies 01206487@brookes.ac.uk

Book Review

Book reviews are invited—not only for new books. Are there books you read which you would like to recommend to others? This is the place for you.

Review: An overlooked classic in landscape ecology?

Despite the emphasis placed on the role of isolation in MacArthur and Wilson's Theory of Island Biogeography it is surprising that 20 years later very few papers had been published that were able to demonstrate an isolation effect in landscapes. Jeffries' (1989) paper was original in that it clearly demonstrated an isolation effect but also in that it was a very early example of a landscape-scale experiment. However, perhaps because of the emphasis the title gave to the 'element of chance', this paper has been overlooked in the landscape ecology literature.

The study, carried out in the mid-1980s, was an investigation of the composition of the animals in a series of ponds which formed a neat experimental system arranged along a distance gradient between Marl Loch, a large inland Scottish waterbody and two other large areas of standing water. Although the ponds had been excavated in 1963 (for reasons other than science), Jeffries cleverly exploited the 'design' to test the effects of isolation at the landscape scale. The ponds all had uniform dimensions (size, shape, depth and substrate type) and thus provided experimental controls to test for the effects of isolation.

Jeffries used multivariate statistics to separate out the community data into discrete groups of species and connectivity proved to be the major factor affecting community structure. Some of the nearer ponds were seasonally flooded, and thus had physical connections with the larger water body whilst other ponds on higher ground had distinct assemblages due to the effects of

isolation. Whilst the paper emphasised the 'element of chance' in the colonisation of the ponds, the ordination provided clear evidence that distance from Marl Loch was the overarching factor explaining the patterns of distribution in species. As in many landscape-scale studies, this result was compounded by the problems of autocorrelation since, despite their obvious similarities, there were significant differences in pH and oxygen concentrations with distance, probably explained by the propensity of near ponds to be subjected to seasonal flooding and other ponds to dry up during summer.

According to Web of Science this paper has been cited only once. Since landscape ecology is now being ever more widely applied to aquatic landscapes (e.g., see Wiens, 2002) I hope that this paper will be 'rediscovered' and take its worthy place in annals of landscape ecology literature.

Jeffries, M. (1989) Measuring Talling's 'element of chance in pond populations'. *Freshwater Biology* 21: 383-393

Wiens, J.A. (2002) Riverine landscapes: taking landscape ecology into the water. *Freshwater Biology* 47: 501-515

Duncan McCollin

Student Conference Travel Award

The IALE(UK) awards a number of travel grants to students studying landscape ecology at a UK university. The award is open to all students with an interest in landscape ecology who are attending a taught course at Masters level or who are undertaking a degree by research. In general, awards are designed to assist postgraduate students to attend the annual conference of IALE(UK) and for research postgraduates to attend other meetings, including the European and International Meetings of the IALE.

Please apply to:

Dr G.H. Griffiths
The Secretary of IALE(UK)
School of Human and Environmental Sciences
Department of Geography
The University of Reading, Whiteknights
PO Box 227 Reading RG6 6AB
email: g.h.griffiths@reading.ac.uk

The World Congress was attended by three students from the Spatial Ecology and GIS Group at Oxford Brookes University who benefited from the IALE(UK) SCTA. Here is their report....

IALE Down Under: From the Ballroom to the Billabong

The IALE World Congress 2003 began in full Aussie spirit, with beer, wine and aboriginal dancing, under a beautiful sunset, at Parliament House. The conference kicked off the next morning with a rousing opening plenary by David Bowman, followed by a colourful presentation by Gary Fry and The Tresses. After a formal poster presentation and lunch, delegates went their separate ways to find the many sessions located in diversely named rooms, from the 'Ballroom' to the 'Billabong'. After an afternoon of concentrated landscape ecology, the Aussie hospitality continued with drinks in the Botanical Gardens. By now the conference was in full flow with many ideas and empty beer glasses being exchanged.

Day two was launched with another enlightening plenary by Paul Opdam, followed by a full day of wide-ranging international presentations. In the evening, with our heads crammed full of interesting thoughts and dressed in 'Territory Rig', we made our way to the Esplanade, for an open-air conference dinner. Throughout the evening we were treated to 'The Sublime' skills of Darwin's finest singers (?!). However, this did not compare to the hidden talents of IALE, especially Richard 'Bob-the-Builder' Hobbs and Gary 'Clapton' Fry. In addition to celebrating IALE's 21st Birthday, IALE Africa was successfully launched and the international presidency handed over from Richard Hobbs to Bob Bunce.

Much to the surprise of Kevin McGarigal, a respectable number of delegates managed to attend his opening plenary the following morning. The final day continued the diverse range of topics reflecting IALE's aim of crossing frontiers. The day culminated in Richard Hobbs' closing summary, amusingly portrayed through a candid selection of photographs of the previous three days. This was appropriately backed by Men At Work's 'Land Downunder'.

The finale to the social events enabled us to meet several of Australia's infamous fauna, ranging from the crocodile, to the camel, to the kangaroo. Alas, they were between two bits of bread at the Top End barbeque. However, the opportunity was later taken to visit Kakadu National Park, where many of Australia's animals (and IALE delegates!) were seen in the wild.

We would like to thank IALE(UK) for helping us with this fantastic opportunity for each of us to present our work at this international conference.

Neil Bailey, Bella Davies and Julian Bayliss
Oxford Brookes University



Mosaics – Problems or Solutions?

A workshop to discuss the issues that arise from mosaics in landscape ecology

Grange-over-Sands, October 1st – 3rd, 2003

The Annual IALE(UK) meeting this year was designed to be a short technical meeting on a specific topic to replace the Annual meeting originally planned for December now re-scheduled for June, 2004.

The meeting was held in the grand, if slightly shabby, Castle Head Field Station near Grange. There were presentations, a small selection of posters and a series of discussion groups with follow-up presentations. The big question – ‘are all landscapes mosaics’ – dominated the discussion and, like all big questions was never fully resolved! Bob Bunce introduced the meeting, followed with a talk by Duncan McCollin on Mosaics and ecological processes and further talks by David Howard (Habitat mosaics); Peter Dennis (Causes and consequences of mosaics for animals); Paul Selman (Mosaics and society) and

Simon Smart (Landscape scale refugia). The talks provided the context for the lively and interesting group discussions that followed and concluded with a decision to publish the results from the meeting. The best was yet to come! An evening in the Pig and Whistle (and a long walk home in the dark for some of us) and an excursion the following day over Hampsfell with lunch in Cartmel to purchase stick toffee pudding or beer, depending on your preference! Congratulations to Bob Bunce and David Howard for organizing an enjoyable and productive meeting.

Geoff Griffiths



Geographical Information Systems for Landscape Studies

Saturday 15th November 2003

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) are computer-based systems for the storage, analysis and display of spatial (map) information. Such systems are useful tools for anyone studying a geographical area. In landscape studies this may involve recording the area of woodland patches, the pattern of field boundaries or the location of archaeological features. Historical maps can be overlain on modern maps and changes in boundary or land use can be studied. This one-day symposium brings together speakers who use GIS as an everyday part of their work. They will demonstrate how they use GIS to analyse information as diverse as the eroding coastline of the Sussex chalk cliffs; the Bronze Age field patterns still evident in eastern England; the distribution of threatened species across a county and the location of important archaeological sites. The emphasis will be on the practical applications of GIS as a powerful analytical tool, allowing complex questions to be asked of a range of data sets.

The costs are as follows: full rate £30.00; students £10.00. Lunch is an additional £7.50.

For further details contact CCE on 01273 678040

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IALE (UK) membership

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Diary

IALE Meetings

- 2003 Postgraduate Meeting, University College, Northampton. 3 December
contact Bella Davies or Duncan McCollin
- 2004 'Landscape ecology of trees & forests: past, present & future'.
Venue: Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester. June 21-24
- 2005 European Congress, Faro, Portugal
- 2007 World Congress, Wageningen, The Netherlands