



Delatite Arm Regeneration Project

Research into the Feeding Ecology of Sambar and Fallow Deer

October 2004

ISSN 1440-2262

Background

This study is being conducted through the School of Forest and Ecosystem Science at the University of Melbourne and is part of the Delatite Arm Regeneration project managed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. The study aims to determine the feeding ecology of sambar *Cervus unicolor* and fallow deer *Dama dama*. Understanding the differences between the feeding habits of the two deer, and their abilities to digest different proportions of plant material, is crucial to developing species-specific management strategies.

The study will be undertaken in north-eastern Victoria on the Blue Range Plantation and State Forest, and the Delatite Arm Plantation and adjoining State Forest. The study areas contain stands of pine forest, degraded native woodland, native forest, and, at the Delatite, regenerating native forest on the site of former pine plantations.

Deer Research Trial

Sambar and fallow deer are to be seasonally collected in the two areas. Deer will be shot and collected under permit by scientists and samples obtained from the stomach and related organs. This will enable the diet of the two species to be accurately determined, as well as allowing detailed comparative analysis of anatomy.

An initial sampling trial will be conducted during Summer between December 2004 and February 2005. During this period an attempt will be made to sample ten sambar and ten fallow deer. If successful, the same sampling regime will be continued through the following three seasons.

How You Can Help?

People who wish to assist in this project are encouraged to contact the School of Forestry and Ecosystem Science by telephoning (03) 5321 4300. Given the nature of the work, volunteers will not be able to undertake the harvesting of animals, but are encouraged to participate and assist in record keeping and labelling of samples.

Information sessions

Public meetings will be held before and after the trial to provide a forum for interested parties to learn more about the research. Further information regarding the timing of the meetings will be advertised in the *Mansfield Courier*, as well as being available from the DSE Mansfield office (03) 5733 1200.

Further information

Visit the following websites:

The School of Forest and Ecosystem Science, the University of Melbourne
www.landfood.unimelb.edu.au/depts/sfes.html

The Department of Sustainability and Environment
www.dse.vic.gov.au > then select 'Forestry'

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and the University of Melbourne and its officers do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.