Creative dissertation wins new prize

Bruce Gerdes has won the inaugural $700 prize for the most creative final-year research Dissertation. The topic of the Dissertation was "Mountain Beech Seedling Distribution in Pit and Mound Microtopography in the Craigeburn Range". Bruce, who graduated this year, received the prize just before heading to Sabah on a 12-month work contract. Congratulations Bruce!

Sarawak field tour

Hugh Bigsby has taken a group of final year students to Sarawak for a field tour in April. The tour is at the invitation of the Sarawak Timber Association, and provides an opportunity for students to visit and experience the forest industry in Asia. This type of experience will be important given New Zealand's growing dependence on Asian markets.

Diploma in Wood Processing Technology

After many years of wide consultation with industry, enrolments are now being taken for Forest Industries Training's new National Diploma in Wood Processing Technology. The programme is the first of its kind to be offered in Australasia, and initially will be geared to people already working in the wood processing industry, looking to further their qualifications. Piet Otto, who heads the new diploma team, says a lot of people in the wood processing industry have been trained to operating Level 4, but the new Level 5 Diploma will help them develop and attain supervisory and higher skills and positions. The topics covered in the two year Diploma include solid wood processing, wood panels manufacturing, pulp and paper manufacturing, wood properties affecting processing, operations management, legal and financial units, computer control, change management and optimising production. Piet Otto joined Waiariki's teaching team at TTC, south of Rotorua, from the Faculty of Forestry at the Port Elizabeth Technikon in South Africa.