

## Editorial

# The launch of *Agricultural and Forest Entomology*

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We are pleased to present the first issue of *Agricultural and Forest Entomology*. This journal joins the other entomological journals of the Royal Entomological Society published by Blackwell Science, namely *Ecological Entomology*, *Medical and Veterinary Entomology*, *Physiological Entomology*, *Insect Molecular Biology* and *Systematic Entomology*. We look forward to working with a large international Editorial Board and Blackwell Science to produce *Agricultural and Forest Entomology*.

Why launch a journal devoted to *Agricultural and Forest Entomology*? The problems caused by insect pests to agriculture and forestry have been with us as long as crops have been grown, but as both human populations and the consequential demand for food, timber and other products rise, the potentially damaging impact of pests has never been greater. Our ability to deal with insect pests has also increased as research on insect biology, systematics, physiology and ecology has provided a basis for managing them. The development, amongst other things, of insecticides, resistant crop varieties and biological control techniques has also led to dramatic improvements in the management of insect pests. However, insect pests are still a major obstacle to the harvesting of natural resources. This is partly due to the emergence of new pests, particularly as a result of the growth of non-native crops and the accidental introduction of non-native insects. There are many well-known cases of the latter problem, such as the gypsy moth (discussed here by **Sharov *et al.***) and the winter moth in North America. These and many other insect pests have been introduced from Europe. Less commonly, native insects become pests of non-native crop species but the result can be just as devastating, as illustrated by the damage caused by the pine beauty moth to lodgepole pine (a North American conifer) in the UK.

Although new pest problems are constantly appearing, many 'old' pests continue to damage agricultural and forest crops. Papers on two of these pests appear in this issue: spruce budworm *Choristoneura fumiferana* (**Cappuccino, Houle & Stein**) and mahogany shoot borer *Hypsipyla grandella* (**Newton**

*et al.*). Despite considerable research aimed at managing these insects, the spruce budworm is still perhaps the most destructive forest pest in North America (**Cappuccino *et al.***), and mahogany shoot borers (*Hypsipyla* spp.) are arguably the most serious pests of tropical timber tree species.

The continual threat posed by insect pests means that research on *Agricultural and Forest Entomology* has never been more important. Clearly there is a need for research on the biology of novel pests (e.g. **Sage *et al.***) and their impact (e.g. **Stadler & Michalzik**). To avoid the mistakes of the past and develop sound management of pests in the future, we need to know more about the ecology of most pest species. Research on both novel approaches to controlling pests and the possible side-effects of different methods of pest control (e.g. **Thomas & Meats**) is required. *Agricultural and Forest Entomology* will publish the best papers on these topics.

*Agricultural and Forest Entomology* will publish papers relevant to the control of insect and other arthropod pests, including papers on biology, ecology, impact and management of pests of forest, agricultural and horticultural pests. Papers on the management of insect pests will include the development and use of techniques such as plant resistance, pheromones, biological control, the economics of pest control, and the use of silvicultural and crop management techniques for managing pests. Papers on the biology and ecology of insect pests (and their natural enemies) underpinning the development of pest management will also be published in *Agricultural and Forest Entomology* (e.g. **Dickens; Smits & Larsson; Way *et al.***). Papers relating to insect pests and their management in agricultural and forest crops in all parts of the world, including the tropics, will be welcome.

We sincerely invite you to submit manuscripts to *Agricultural and Forest Entomology*. Scientific reports, short critical comments and longer reviews will all be considered (but please consult the Editors before submitting a longer review). If you have any comments, queries or suggestions please do not hesitate to contact the Editors or a member of the Editorial Board.