

The Forest Carpet

PLAUDITS FOR BILL AND NANCY MALCOLM'S recently published *The Forest Carpet* (Craig Potton Publishing) have come from no less an authority than David Galloway, co-ordinator of the Division of Lichens and Bryophytes at London's Natural History Museum. He writes that "the quality of the illustrations and book production make it something really special."

As in their earlier *New Zealand Alpine Plants Inside and Out*, the close-up photography in this new book is almost unbelievable in its detail and depth of field. Never again will readers see mosses, lichens, liverworts, hornworts, fork-ferns and lycopods as merely the little-noticed "lesser plants" of the forest world. The Malcolms' innovative cameras and provocatively entertaining text take the reader on intimate journeys to those parts of our native forests we usually just trample under foot with scarcely a second thought.

New Zealand's rainforests contain a spectacular abundance of bryophytes, forming a continuous forest carpet. Totally dependent on the forest environment, this carpet shrivels



and dies immediately the protective canopy is stripped away. The text and superb quality of the illustrations in this book will enhance our knowledge and appreciation of these sensitive plants and the role they play in the forest ecosystem. 🐌

Spore-capsules of the lantern moss Dicranoloma robustum, photographed at four times life size, from The Forest Carpet. Photo: Bill and Nancy Malcolm

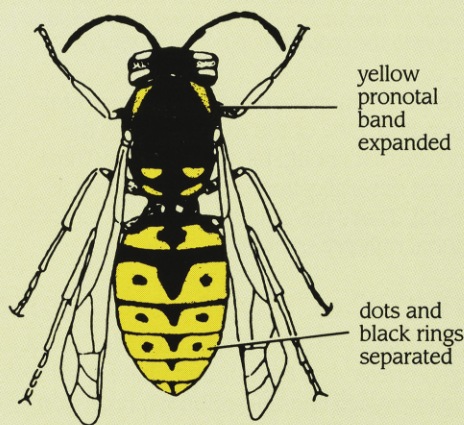
Taking the Sting Out of the Wasp Problem

ARE YOU INTERESTED in becoming a wasp collector for the DSIR? The department needs samples of wasps from as many locations in New Zealand as possible.

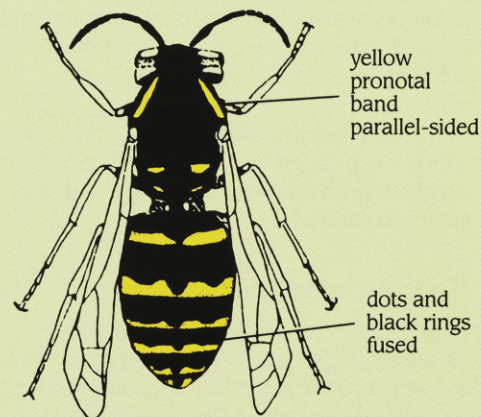
Two new species of wasps have recently become established in New Zealand. The European common wasp, *Vespula vulgaris*, is now the most abundant wasp in South Island honeydew beech forests. It outcompetes our native birds and insects for food, and is driving away trampers, picnickers and fishermen. The Asian paper wasp, *Polistes chinensis*, first reported near Auckland in 1979, has now reached the South Island. We need to know if this insect predator can survive in our forests.

In 1987, DSIR mounted a successful nationwide appeal for samples of wasps. Many Forest and Bird members were among the 3,700 wasp collectors we enlisted. The survey is being repeated this year to update knowledge of wasp species distributions. Scientists also need to find out what habitats the new species prefer, where they may outcompete the familiar German wasp, when and where each species cause the most problems. These are questions that must be answered before the DSIR can devise effective control strategies.

If you would like to assist in this research project (the NZ Lottery Grants Board and the Department of Conservation are already assisting with funding), please swat as many wasps as possible (20 would be ideal) from any one location and place them in a crush-proof container (eg. plastic film canister). You can send them by freepost (no stamp required). Please do NOT collect wasps from



GERMAN



COMMON

There are two kinds of wasps in New Zealand: the German wasp which arrived in the 1940s, and the common wasp, which arrived only recently but is already widespread. Wasps usually live in underground nests. Their numbers peak in February-April, and this is when they cause most problems. Nests normally die out in late autumn and early winter, leaving the fertile queens to hibernate until the following spring. Graphic: DoC

or very close to a nest.

If you sent us a sample in 1987, we hope you'll do so again – we do need repeat samples. We also need samples from areas that were not covered last time.

We need the following information: * your name and address (so we can reply with thanks); * location of sample (eg. distance/direction from closest town or NZMS map reference); * date when you collected the sample; * habitat (eg. native bush, pasture, city, orchard); * altitude (if possible); * any

interesting observations on wasps.

If you send us samples from more than one location, please keep them in different containers and provide separate information for each. 🐌

Send samples to: FREEPOST WASPS, DSIR, Private Bag, NELSON.

Please do not bother your local DSIR or MAF office – direct ALL enquiries to: DSIR, PRIVATE BAG, NELSON. PH: (054) 81082.

Kay Clapperton