

Landscape ecology and management of urban forests in Finland

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Abstract

Urban forests are important recreational areas for Finnish people and they enhance the quality of urban living environments. Management of urban forests is challenging because management measures can be easily noticed and thus, publicly criticised. Urban residents have a strong emotional bond with the nearby nature and various opinions about how the forests should be managed. Recreational use, scenery, health of the forests, nature values and residents opinions all have to be taken into account in the management decisions.

Urban Forests – Planning and Management guide book offers information about forests situated in residential areas and their characteristics, planning and management. New research results in the areas of recreational use, biodiversity and regeneration of urban forests are presented in the book. Urban forests are defined as forests with natural understorey vegetation situated within or around built-up urban areas.

Recommendations for planning, management and use of the urban forests are given in the book. One main theme is the consolidation of multiple uses. New methods for participatory and multi-objective planning where residents' and forest users' opinions are taken into account in preparing the use and management plans for urban forests are introduced. The last part of the book envisages future challenges and presents methods for preserving and enhancing biodiversity and attractiveness of urban forests. These methods aim to more practical and socially acceptable solutions.

In addition to urban forests the guidelines given cover other recreational forests, national parks and nature attractions. Furthermore, the management guidelines can be applied to the forests situated near summer houses and to those commercial forests where biodiversity and recreational use are being highlighted in addition to timber production.

The book is aimed at foresters, environmental managers and greenery experts working with urban forests as well as at the use of organisations, students and all readers interested in the topic. The authors include researchers and experts from Finnish Forest Research Institute and several other organisations giving their insights in urban forests from their own perspectives.

References: Hamberg, L., Löfström, I., Häkkinen, I. (ed.) 2012. Taajamametsät – suunnittelu ja hoito. 156 p. Metsäkustannus Oy. Kariston kirjapaino Oy. Hämeenlinna.