

STUDY OF DOUBLE LEADERS - P. PINASTER AT GNANGARA.

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Foresters are often involved in arguments whether or not it is wise to retain any trees with double leaders. This argument can only be resolved satisfactorily by observing what happens to double leaders which are retained in any locality. It is assumed that a conclusion reached for one locality does not necessarily apply to others.

A study was made recently after gale force winds during Easter, by taking a selection of compartments which had been thinned for some years and running random samples to ascertain:

- (1) The proportion of double leaders or multiple leaders should they occur.
- (2) The number of double leader trees which have lost one or more leaders.

Summary of Results:

Compt. No.	Thinned to stems per acre.	Date of last thinning.	Total No. of Trees.	Multiple leader trees		Occurrence at Broken Leaders.
				Above 15'	Below 15'	
71	300	1960 (1st)	146	5	1	-
74	200	1964 (2nd)	118	5	-	-
76	300-400	1960 (1st)	188	2	-	-
76A pt.	300-400	1960 (1st)	161	1	1	-
76A pt.	200	1968 (1st)	45	1	-	-
			658	14	2	Nil

Conclusion.

Despite the retention of 2.4% double leaders these stems have not suffered from the increased exposure of a thinning which had generally reduced the stocking from about 1100 to 300 per acre.

It is not suggested from this that it is desirable to retain double leaders. However, they are often the most vigorous trees and it does seem unwarranted to remove them at the 1st thinning and possibly later thinnings due to an unfounded fear that they will lose a leader.