

BATTLE OF THE GIANTS

by R.J. Underwood

Three of the tallest tree species in the world are growing in adjacent plots in the new Pemberton D.H.Q. Arboretum. They are Karri (Eucalyptus diversicolor) of Western Australia, Mountain Ash (E. regnans) of Victoria and Tasmania, and the Redwood (Sequoia sempervirens) of Northern California.

It is interesting to compare the early development of the best trees in each plot.

The arboretum is located on a re-purchased farm roughly ½ mile north of the Settlement. Karri and Karri-marri stands once occupied the site. The soil type is typical "Karri Loam".

The Karri plot, consisting of only 15 trees, was established in 1964 as a trial of the laughable "Tunisian Wildling" method. This technique, described by two visiting foresters from Tunisia, consists of stripping all the shoots and roots from a wild seedling and planting the naked stump. The Mountain Ash and Redwood were planted in 1965 using tubed stock raised in the Manjimup Nursery.

Heights of the dominants (5 tallest trees in each plot) were measured with height sticks in March 1970.

Details are:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Year of Planting</u>	<u>Stock</u>	<u>Mean Ht. of Dominants</u>
E. regnans	1965	1-0 nursery seedlings	38'0
E. diversicolor	1964	"Tunisian" Wildlings	35'0
S. sempervirens	1965	1-0 nursery seedlings	4'6

The clear early superiority of the Eucalypts is not unexpected, but the remarkable performance of the mutilated karri wildlings is pleasing to note. A belated apology to the Chief Silviculturalist of the Tunisian Forests Department is undoubtedly called for. The growth rate of the Regnans (roughly 8' in height per year) is excellent and indicates potential for this species for further trial plantings on karri sites.