

THE NATIONAL PARK AND  
FOREST MORTALITY RESEARCH IN NEW ZEALAND

Grant Gerrish  
Botany Department  
University of Hawaii at Manoa  
P.O. Box 581  
Volcano, Hawaii 96785

In March 1982, the author attended a forest mortality conference at Tongariro National Park, New Zealand. Mortality, or dieback, of large numbers of canopy trees has occurred in forest stands throughout the country. Tongariro National Park, on the North Island, is a popular public ski area. Severe dieback in the mountain beech (Nothofagus Solandri var. cliffortioides (Hook. f.) Poole) forest surrounding park headquarters has come to the public's attention. Many park visitors ask the park staff about the standing dead trees.

In order to collect information about mountain beech dieback, Tongariro National Park organized a seminar in March of this year. Researchers from the Department of Science and Industrial Research, Botany and Ecology Divisions: NZ Forest Service, Forest Research Institute, and the universities were invited. In the two-day seminar the distribution and ecology of beech forests and past dieback research were discussed. The author presented a summary of the 'ohi'a dieback phenomenon and research in Hawaii.