**SILVA FENNICA**

From the Editor

# What we pay attention to when we are in the forest?

Some years ago, I was hiking with the then editor of the Canadian Journal of Forest Research in an area near Koli National Park in Eastern Finland. He asked me the question in the headline. It is a very good question and can be looked at from many angles, including research and scientific publishing. I suppose people have many different perspectives on nature. Some see it in terms of their own forestry profession or the economic exploitation of their own property, and some see it purely in terms of the values of nature, especially biodiversity. For example, a forest can be perceived in terms of areas, euros, cubic meters, damages, the presence and abundance of species, or even the value of the Gini-coefficient, at least in a figurative sense. Of course, there are many other ways of looking at it.

Encouragingly, the scope of forest research has broadened considerably in recent times. Good examples are the research projects "Forest Happiness" and "Trees Near Us", by Eevastiina Tuittila, Professor of Forest Soil Science at the University of Eastern Finland, have studied, among other things, the relationships between the Finnish people and trees. For example, which tree is most attractive to people and why? Besides the title of this editorial, an interesting question could be, do you have a favorite tree?

Related to research, it would be good for the researcher to be familiar with their data from the point of view of first-hand experience. Participation in field measurements will contribute certainly to this. Research data can consist also of e.g., laboratory measurements or human behavior. In some cases, it is not possible to have a personal touch on data and its gathering, e.g., global timber market flows. Knowing your own research data is also essential for scientific publishing, not least in terms of opening research data and FAIR principles, which were discussed in the previous editorial.

Returning to the title of this editorial, it is time for a personal response to the question. When I am in the forest, I am particularly interested in mushrooms. Or, perhaps I should say the sporocarps of macrofungi. Even as a child I was interested in mushroom picking as an everyone's right. When I started studying forestry, the connection between the dried plant samples I had gone through during the winter and the natural flora of the summer was loose and contributed little to my learning. It was a different case with fungi. The mushroom course took place at the end of August. Although it was a rather poor year for mushrooms, we managed to collect a considerable number of mushroom samples during the course week. On Friday we had an exam and not more than five hours after the exam, I was already walking in the forest - in a completely different province - with my eyes on the ground, identifying mushrooms. This course provided an excellent basis for identifying and learning about fungi, a wonderful form of life. I have enjoyed the extensive identification

of fungi ever since, and the fungal knowledge of my close colleagues has further deepened my own expertise - my 'expertise', at least in my own opinion. I, for one, am very satisfied with my own level of expertise i.e., the fact that I can identify a significant proportion of forest fungi, at least at some level. Even if I am not able to make full use of these mushrooms myself, collecting them for others is rewarding and the very act of seeing and identifying them in the forest is already enjoyable. The nearest mushroom patch is about 20 meters from our home. Also, the favorite tree can be found on the mushroom trails of youth.

Looking forward to the next harvest season.

*Matti Maltamo*
Editor-in-chief