

## BOOK REVIEW

LAND RESTORATION AND RECLAMATION: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE. J. A. Harris, P. Birch and J. Palmer. Addison-Wesley Longman, Harlow, 1996. ISBN 0 582 24313 0, £20.99 (paperback), xiv+230 pp.

The authors seek to provide a coherent and practical framework for the study and practice of land restoration and reclamation for senior undergraduate and post-graduate students of applied ecology, restoration ecology, landscape architecture, environmental engineering, environmental assessment and related courses. The book is also likely to interest various professionals concerned with degraded land and its rehabilitation, restoration and reclamation. The authors draw on considerable practical experience and argue for a higher profile for restoration ecology.

*Land Restoration and Reclamation* is a most welcome addition to the teaching literature. The approach is clear and the coverage is up to date and there are helpful illustrations. I am not sure that the material in Chapter 1 was really needed but, given the wide projected readership, this may be an unfair comment. It is not a particularly cheap book and deserves a much better index. A glance through its two and a half pages (serving over 200 pages

of text) shows gaps. Mulching seems absent, as is boron toxicity, also PCBs. There is a little in the text on bioremediation, but no index entry; heavy metals also have no entry (nor lead, cadmium, zinc, aluminium); trampling is discussed in the text, but is not indexed and the same is true of spoil; one of the references to landfill is a wrong page number; PFA, fly-ash and fuel-ash are not given entries. No index is perfect and there may have to be 'pruning' to keep down costs, but in this case so much is missing that people could dismiss the book as a source when there is material in it.

There is a section on nature conservation where re-vegetation is discussed, but I found no mention of the problem of commercial seed mixes which establish non-native species, thus threatening biodiversity. I was puzzled that there is virtually no mention of restoration or reclamation experience in The Netherlands, nor of the 1960s–1970s rehabilitation of the Swansea Valley.

Despite my criticisms those interested in the subject should try to get a copy on their shelves.

C. J. BARROW  
*Centre for Development Studies,  
University of Wales Swansea,  
Swansea SA2 8PP, UK*