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NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE USE

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Scottish Woodlands Ltd Student Excellence Award Announced

The Scottish Forestry Trust is delighted to announce that the winner of the Scottish Woodlands Ltd Student Excellence Award for 2015 is Stuart Fraser, formerly of Aberdeen University and now carrying out post-doctoral research at the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI) at the University of Pretoria. His thesis "Inter and intra specific variation in susceptibility to Dothistroma needle blight within pine species used in British forestry" was successfully completed during 2015.

Commenting on his award, Stuart said, "I thank the Trust and Scottish Woodlands for this recognition and I am extremely happy to have been able to contribute to this important area of research. The results highlighted the need to exercise care in selecting pines for outplanting in UK forests, and showed that Dothistroma needle blight can cause significant damage to Scottish sources of Scots pine in high risk areas"

Prof Steve Woodward of Aberdeen University and Dr Anna Brown of Forest Research supervised Stuart's research. Commenting on the research, Prof Woodward said "I would like to thank Scottish Woodlands and The Scottish Forestry Trust for making this award to Stuart. He was an outstanding PhD student, wrote an excellent thesis and has made an important contribution to the understanding of Dothistroma in one of our most iconic commercial and native tree species".

Commenting on the latest award, Guy Watt, the former Chairman of The Scottish Forestry Trust said, "Trustees were particularly impressed by the quality of the final thesis and by the practical relevance of the findings. Stuart was the first of twelve PhD students to have received funding from the Trust's joint Bursary Award scheme. This fund, kindly supported by the Forestry Commission, shows what can be achieved when resources are pooled and are deployed to benefit the wider forestry industry."

Colin Mann, Managing Director of Scottish Woodlands Ltd and a Trustee of The Scottish Forestry Trust, said "I am delighted that Stuart is presented with this award in recognition of his hard work and dedication in seeing this important project through to its conclusion. Dothistroma continues to have an important impact on woodlands in Scotland in particular and Stuart's research helps to point out that some of the previously held views on the susceptibility of Scots pine to Dothistroma need to be re-examined".

Ends

Notes for Editors:

The Scottish Forestry Trust launched The Scottish Woodlands Student Excellence Award in 2011 in order to recognise excellence in the quality and relevance of the output from PhD Studentships funded by the Trust. The Award provides £250 per recipient as a result of funding provided by Scottish Woodlands Ltd.

The Scottish Forestry Trust is the leading UK Charitable Trust providing funds for research, education and training in support of British Forestry and Arboriculture. Established in 1983 by a gifting of share capital, the Trust is a registered charity and has a remit to provide private sector funds to support research and education throughout the British forestry industry. Since 1983, the Trust has provided over £2.3m to 160 projects ranging from supporting post graduate education through to contributing towards industry applied research and assisting policy formulation.

Scottish Woodlands Ltd is a leading Forestry Management Company with a long tradition of offering services to clients such as forest owners and investors in Scotland and the rest of the UK. Originally established in 1913 as The Cooperative Forestry Society, its roots can be traced back for a hundred years. The current company, which is substantially employee owned, has grown and developed significantly to become a major player in the British forestry and timber industry, delivering a 1 million tonnes of timber per annum into UK processors, and planting a significant proportion of private sector new woodland expansion with an annual turnover of £74 million in 2014. Web: www.scottishwoodlands.co.uk

Further information is available from SFT Director, Bob Stubbs at director@scottishforestrytrust.org.uk