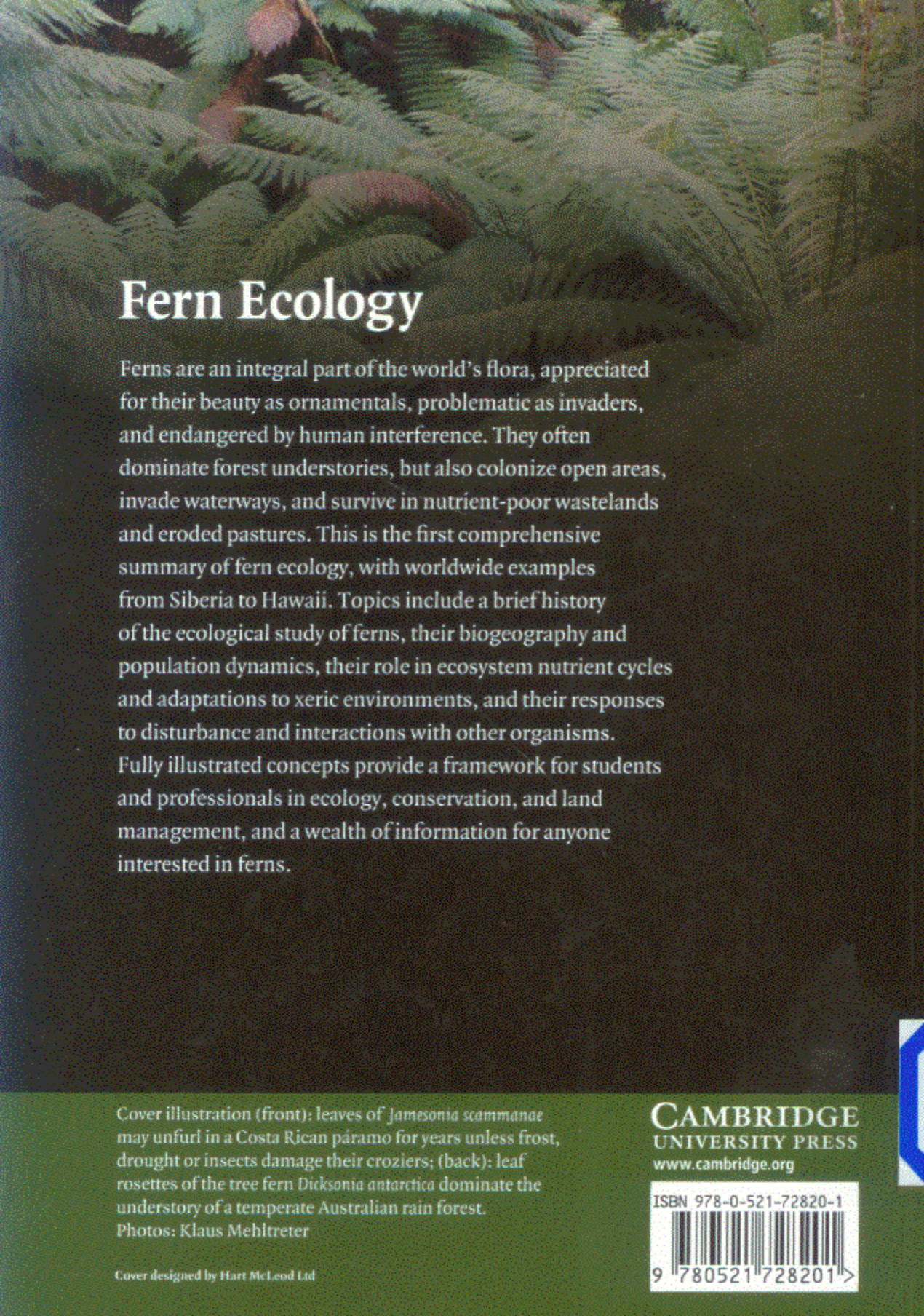


The background of the cover is a detailed illustration of various ferns. In the foreground, there are large, feathery fronds of a fern, likely a tree fern, with some fronds showing a reddish-brown hue. The background is filled with dense, layered fern foliage, creating a sense of depth and texture. The overall color palette is dominated by greens, with some earthy browns and reds interspersed.

Fern Ecology

Ferns are an integral part of the world's flora, appreciated for their beauty as ornamentals, problematic as invaders, and endangered by human interference. They often dominate forest understories, but also colonize open areas, invade waterways, and survive in nutrient-poor wastelands and eroded pastures. This is the first comprehensive summary of fern ecology, with worldwide examples from Siberia to Hawaii. Topics include a brief history of the ecological study of ferns, their biogeography and population dynamics, their role in ecosystem nutrient cycles and adaptations to xeric environments, and their responses to disturbance and interactions with other organisms. Fully illustrated concepts provide a framework for students and professionals in ecology, conservation, and land management, and a wealth of information for anyone interested in ferns.

Cover illustration (front): leaves of *Jamesonia scammanae* may unfurl in a Costa Rican páramo for years unless frost, drought or insects damage their croziers; (back): leaf rosettes of the tree fern *Dicksonia antarctica* dominate the understory of a temperate Australian rain forest. Photos: Klaus Mehlreter

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