



NEW ZEALAND PLANT CONSERVATION NETWORK

E-NEWSLETTER: NO 5. APRIL 2004

Please send news items or events to events@nzpcn.org.nz

Message from the President

Council has now written to Chris Carter MP, Minister of Conservation, asking for information about legal protection of New Zealand native plant life and concerns over the existing situation.

We have now received a formal response from Chris Carter MP concerning our recent letter asking for assurances that the recent application for extension of mining activities by OMYA (NZ Ltd) at Mount Burnett will not threaten the mountain's endemic plant life. The Minister has advised us that the application has been declined. The license that OMYA has to continue dolomite mining on Mount Burnett expires in 2006 so that will be when further protection for the native plants of Mount Burnett can be sought by the Network.

The Network has been successful in its bid to TFBIS for money to continue to develop and improve the website. This work will be on-going over the next 3 years so please tell us of improvements you would like to see made to the site. Several changes will be happening in the next few weeks and we will notify you when they happen.

New discovery of *Lepidium flexicaule*

Geoff Rogers (Department of Conservation botanist) recently made an exciting new discovery of the Nationally Endangered *Lepidium flexicaule* in the Stent Road turfs, near Wanganui. Geoff noted that the biogeography is not unexpected although the species is now probably extinct in Wellington (previously one record) and was last seen around Auckland in 1934. That means West Nelson and North Westland is the natural stronghold for the species with the new site being the only one in North island although the species was recently translocated by Auckland Conservancy to Rangitoto Island using material from Scotts Beach.

The fact that threatened plant populations are still there to be discovered despite previous extensive botanical survey work in the area is a valuable reminder that Network members should always keep their eyes open when in the field.

Plant of the month



This month we highlight *Tecomanthe speciosa*. This is the most searched for species on the Network's web site with more than 20 people wanting information every month. It qualifies for the 'Rarest Plant in the World' award with only one plant occurring naturally in the wild on Great (Manawa Tawhi) Island in Three Kings Islands group. It is a robust vine with tubular flowers from autumn to early winter. The status of *Tecomanthe speciosa* is **Nationally Critical**. The Network's factsheet for this species can be found at:

http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/nz_threatenedplants/detail.asp?PlantID=44

News from Raoul Island on *Hebe breviracemosa*

Hebe breviracemosa is endemic to Raoul Island in the Kermadec Island Group. The species was considered extinct until the early 1980s when a goat hunter found one plant. Goats were eradicated from Raoul in the early 1980s. This one plant remained the sole known plant for 15 years during which time an active rehabilitation programme, using a purpose built nursery, turned out hundreds of plants for return to the wild.

Several new wild sites have now been located as staff have grid searched the island (primarily for weed detection). Rats were removed from the island in 2002 (though Raoul has not been 'officially' declared rat-free as two years must pass without rat detection for this to occur). This year staff counted 187 wild *Hebe* plants—this total is made up from naturally occurring adults, seedlings, cuttings and seedlings arisen near cuttings. This last category is especially exciting as some of these cuttings have been in the wild since 1990 and no seedlings have ever come up around them. We suspect now rats may have had a role in suppressing this species and we have high hopes for its future!

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Contact us

If you have any questions about the Network you can contact Council members directly (contacts are listed in the 'Key People' section of the website - www.nzpcn.org.nz). Our postal address is P.O. Box 16-102, Wellington or email the Network at info@nzpcn.org.nz

Upcoming events

If you have important events or news that you would like publicised via this newsletter please email the Network (events@nzpcn.org.nz).

Wellington Botanical Society – Offshore Islands of New Zealand – Monday 19 April, Carol West, Conservancy Advisory Scientist for Southland Conservancy, Dept of Conservation, will talk about natural history, issues and management relating to a range of outlying, offshore and inshore islands from the subtropical to the subantarctic. The talk will be illustrated with slides. Lecture Theatre 101 in the Murphy Building, Victoria University on Kelburn Parade.

Botanical Society of Otago – Gardens without weeds - Talk tied in with the societies AGM. Wednesday 21 April, 2004, 5:20 PM. At the new Zoology Benham Building, 346 Great King Street, Dunedin (behind the Zoology car park by the Captain Cook Hotel). Use the main entrance of the Benham Building and go to the Benham Seminar Room, Rm. 215, 2nd floor. For more information contact Ian Radford, phone: (03) 479 9065. Or check out the following link: [AGM and talk: Gardens without weeds.](#)

2nd World Botanic Gardens Congress, Barcelona, Spain, 17–22 April 2004 - The congress is an essential event for all involved in plant conservation, with a comprehensive programme of lectures, symposia, roundtable discussions, workshops, debates and posters developed around the congress themes, which include biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, environmental education, botanic research and heritage. Full details of the congress programme—including information on special events, pre-and post-congress tours, excursions and social events are on the congress website:
<http://www.bcn.es/medciencies/botanicgardens2004>.

Wellington Botanical Society – Members’ evening – Monday 17 May. Please come and help make this an interesting evening. Share slides or photographs of recent trips. Bring prized plants to show. Brief botanical readings welcome. Lecture Theatre 101 in the Murphy Building, Victoria University on Kelburn Parade.

Free Ecological Restoration workshops - 18 and 20 May 2004. Landcare Research is running two workshops to present current research on ecological restoration — one in the North Island and one in the South Island. To see the line of up speakers and topics to be covered and to secure yourself a space please email Bruce Burns (burnsb@landcareresearch.co.nz). The first workshop will be held at the Sudima Hotel Grand Chancellor next to Christchurch Airport on 18 May, and the second at the Hamilton Gardens, Hamilton on the 20th May. Both workshops are free of charge. Lunch will be available both days at the cost of \$10 per head, or you can make your own arrangements. Numbers are limited to 100 on a first come first served basis.