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NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ZEALAND PLANT CONSERVATION NETWORK

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

Postal address: P.O. Box 16-102, Wellington, New Zealand

E-NEWSLETTER: NO 15. FEBRUARY 2005

Deadline for next issue: Friday 11 March 2005

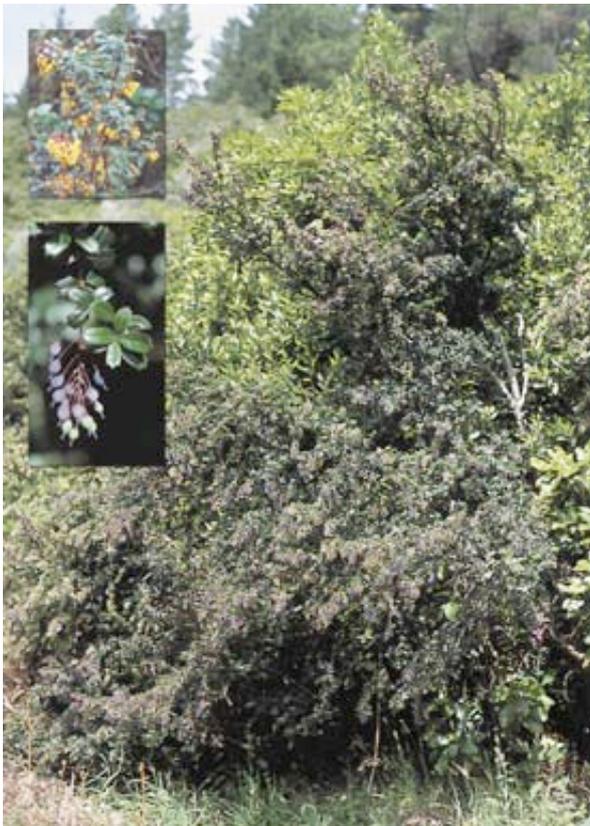
Message from the President

The Plant Conservation Network has come along way in a short time. We have tapped into a real need for an organisation that focuses on conservation of our native plants. We now have 240 members from individuals to local authorities, nurseries and Department of Conservation (DOC) conservancies. The value in a Network is in members being able to communicate and work together towards a common goal. Just as important though is for the Network to look outwards and develop partners who have a similar focus. Working together can help up all reach the same goal more quickly and efficiently.

Kathryn Whaley and myself recently met with Hugh Logan, Director General of DOC to discuss how we can work better together. The meeting was very successful and included discussion on how DOC can support our work, and develop a more formal relationship through the Research, Development and Improvement Division, how we can participate in a review of the national threatened species list and the need for legislation to protect threatened plant species.

We have identified another key partner in the Royal Society and have already been working with them on the linkage between their publications and our website. We are shortly to meet with their CEO to discuss a more formal relationship including possible membership of the society.

Plant of the Month



Plant of the month for February is the weed *Berberis darwinii* (Darwin's barberry). It is an Unwanted Organism under the Biosecurity Act 1993, which means it has been identified as 'capable of causing unwanted harm to any natural and physical resources or human health' and is banned nationally from propagation, distribution and sale. A spiny evergreen shrub up to 4 metres tall, it has dark glossy green leaves, orange-yellow flowers and dark purple to black berries with a bluish white waxy bloom. It was introduced to New Zealand in 1946 from southern Chile for use as a hedge plant. The Network fact sheet for the species, which includes control techniques, can be found at the following link:

http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/exotic_plant_life_and_weeds/detail.asp?WeedID=1123

Photos: Greater Wellington Regional council (flowers);
Jeremy Rolfe (fruit, plant)

Weed fact sheets go live on website

The Network website now has fact sheets for every naturalised vascular plant in New Zealand, most of which are identified as environmental weeds, along with others that have not yet shown themselves to be 'weedy'. These fact sheets can be found by searching in the '*Threats to native plants*' section. The Network is working to add photographs of all these weed species. If you have images that you are willing for us to use on the website please send them through to

info@nzpcn.org.nz

New Zealand adventive vascular plant list – now available

The Network has published a list of adventive vascular plants on the website. Go to '*Threats to plant life*' and download the list from the '*Weeds in NZ*' area. This list was prepared by Clayson Howell at the Department of Conservation and includes all adventive plants documented as naturalised in New Zealand up to December 2004. Please email the Network if you know of additions that should be made to this list, or use the on-line weed recording form to notify the Network of possible new adventive species.

Conference 2005

The Network has begun planning for the 2005 conference. This year it is to be held in Christchurch from Friday 12 August – Sunday 14 August. Friday and Saturday will be split between presentations from Keynote speakers, updates on the Network's initiatives, and a series of plant conservation workshops. Sunday will be a full day field trip. Registration forms and more information about the conference will be available in the March newsletter. If you are based in Canterbury and would like to help with the organisation and running of the conference please contact David Given: david.given@ccc.govt.nz

New plant records

Several members of the Network have recorded new discoveries of nationally and regionally threatened plants using the Network's on-line recording form. New populations of the following species have been found

Raukaua edgerleyi by Jeremy Rolfe

Doodia squarrosa, *Myosotis spathulata* and *Mida salicifolia* by Pat Enright

Streblus banksii and *Pittosporum cornifolium* by Jonathan Anderson



Raukaua edgerleyi.
Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.



Myosotis spathulata.
Photo: Andrea Brandon.

Adopt a Threatened Plant with the Auckland Regional Council

Steve Benham, *Botanical Records, Conservation Officer*

During a conversation with Peter de Lange in early 1997 a new project for the Auckland Regional Botanic Gardens (ARBG) team started to evolve. The concept for this project came about indirectly as a result of a flight from Auckland to Wellington during which time Peter had been in conversation with a parent and child regarding his work in the field of plant conservation. It soon became apparent that neither parent nor child was aware that plants were being threatened with extinction at a similar or faster rate than the rest of New Zealand's fragile oceanic island biota.

The question was presented that if this child was unaware of the plight our flora faces, then how many others were similarly unenlightened? Later that year, with a degree of urgency to help educate students about plant conservation, ARBG launched the Project involving local secondary school communities. The idea became known as the 'Adopt a Threatened Plant' project.

The criteria for choosing the threatened species stipulated that it should be relatively easy and quick to grow from seed and preferably have an interesting story. Cook's scurvy grass (*Lepidium oleraceum*) was the ideal candidate. Since 1994 the Gardens had become the *ex-situ* repository for this endangered species, maintaining germplasm collections of known provenance from the few remaining naturally occurring populations. However, it soon became apparent that *L. oleraceum* will hybridise with other related species, and, as space for its cultivation at the ARBG was limited, maintaining pure provenance lines was becoming an issue. Initially to overcome this problem, accessions from differing provenances were being grown far enough apart to prevent cross-pollination, and collections of wild origin seed were being documented and cold stored (germination tests on *L. oleraceum* seed collected in 1995 and stored in a sealed container in a domestic refrigerator have shown to have good viability eight years after having been collected). But another solution was needed.

With the advent of 'Adopt a Threatened Plant' the idea that different *L. oleraceum* accessions could be grown in isolation by schools at different locations seemed the ideal solution. Furthermore, *L. oleraceum* served several other educational purposes. After all, not only was there the historical linkage to its use by Captain Cook to prevent scurvy in his crew, but the plant also grows quickly and is edible. Thus, as children learned about Captain Cook's voyages, they could actually grow and taste one of the plants he used to fend off scurvy, and at the same time learn about plant cultivation and conservation.



Cook's scurvy grass (*Lepidium oleraceum*).
Photo: John Smith-Dodsworth.

To launch the Project a package was collated including the following information: a contract to be signed and returned to the Gardens, a list of benefits to the school from taking part, a form for recording data, seed, the scientific and common name and how it became known as Cook's scurvy grass, ethno botanical uses, the dilemma that faces the species and plans for its recovery, list of materials required for seed sowing, how to sow and aftercare including harvesting.

The Project is concluded by the students harvesting the seed and forwarding it to the Gardens. In return a Botanic Gardens Conservation Award is sent to the successful school and the returned seed is either stored or grown on to use for display purposes as an advocacy component in the Gardens highly acclaimed Threatened Native Plant Garden. This package was initially sent out to eleven interested schools. They join up to the Project on an annual basis. 'Adopt a Threatened Plant' is still very active with eight regional schools, mainly EnviroSchools signing up for 2004/05.

Please contact Steve Benham at steve.benham@arc.govt.nz if you would like to receive further information regarding this dynamic project.

19th New Zealand Fungal Foray at Ohakune: 3–9 April, 2005

Registration and payment of deposit deadline is 28 February 2005

The 19th New Zealand Fungal Foray, 3–9 April, will be held at the Ruapehu Ski Lodge, and Wairarapa Ski Lodge, Ohakune, central North Island, New Zealand. Ohakune is close to collecting sites with both podocarp forest and beech forest in the Tongariro National Park, as well as several smaller, less well-known reserves, some of which are known to be botanically and entomologically interesting and diverse. Nick Singers, Department of Conservation, Turangi will give an introduction to the potential collecting sites in the area.



Ileodictyon cibarium. Basket fungus
Photo: Ross Beaver.

The foray will begin Sunday evening 3 April, and end on Saturday morning 9 April. We will be based in two adjacent lodges which will allow us to spread out, and will give us a separate eating place and working room. The programme will involve daily collecting, identification, and display tables of the day's finds, followed in the evening by informal talks. One day will be set aside for a *Mycology Colloquium* where participants can present talks or posters on any aspect of mycology. Interested participants are invited to submit a title with their registration form.

Shirley Kerr will lead a workshop on wax gill fungi as part of the foray. Please indicate on the registration form whether you are interested in attending the workshop.

Accommodation and Meals:

Accommodation is at the Ruapehu Ski Lodge and the Wairarapa Ski Lodge, Ohakune. The bunkrooms contain beds and mattresses only – towels and linen (sheets, blankets, and pillow cases) are **not** supplied, so you will need to bring your own. It is also suggested that you bring your own plate, bowl, mug and eating utensils. If you wish to book alternative accommodation such as motels or bed and breakfast instead of the regular accommodation, please arrange this privately. Breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner and supper will be provided.

Transportation:

For overseas participants, please correspond with us so that we can assist with internal travel arrangements. It is about a 6 hour drive from Auckland to Ohakune. For New Zealand participants, please let us know if road transport is difficult and we will look at options of car-pooling.

Costs:

It will cost approximately NZ\$50 per person per day for those staying in the regular accommodation, as a share of actual costs which include food and accommodation. This price does not include the cost of getting to the venue, or privately organised accommodation upgrades.

Registration:

Please register for the foray by completing the registration form (attached at end of newsletter) and return it by 28 February 2005. All participants, please send the registration form to: Paula Wilkie, Landcare Research, Private Bag 92170, Auckland, New Zealand. New Zealand participants should also include a deposit of NZ\$50 (cheques payable to 'Foray Account'). To avoid currency conversion difficulties, Australian participants need not send a deposit with the registration form.

Paula Wilkie

Landcare Research

Phone: (09 574 4156)

e-mail: wilkiep@LandcareResearch.co.nz

Last reminder - Project Crimson – annual funding round

In March each year Project Crimson considers funding applications for pohutukawa and rata restoration and protection projects. Applications come from community groups, iwi, schools, environmental groups, councils, the Department of Conservation, individuals and land care groups.

The projects can be on public or private land provided applicants can demonstrate there will be a value to the broader public from their work. The focus must be on pohutukawa and rata. After applications close, Project Crimson Trustees meet to determine which applications fit the goals of the Trust, and then allocate funds and resources accordingly. Successful and unsuccessful applicants are advised by mail as soon as possible. In return for their support, the Trust asks that signage supplied by them is displayed at the project site, and that they are kept advised of planting/workshop days and general progress of the project. Interested applicants should be considering their applications NOW for the 2005 funding round.

Application forms can be obtained from our website www.projectcrimson.org.nz or by contacting the Project Crimson office on 09 414 0466 or info@projectcrimson.org.nz. APPLICATIONS CLOSE ON 1 MARCH 2005.



Pohutukawa. Photo: DOC.

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, Monday 21 February: Evening meeting – Recent research by Te Papa on New Zealand’s ferns. Speaker: Leon Perrie, Curator of Botany, Te Papa. Leon will talk about the use of DNA analyses to investigate (1) the origins of NZ ferns, (2) taxonomic relationships within *Polystichum* and *Asplenium*, and (3) the status of the cultivated hen and chickens fern.

Coastal Dune Vegetation Network Conference 2005, Whangarei. 23–25 February 2005. Hosted by Whangarei District Council. The conference will run over three full days with an optional weekend field trip beginning on Saturday 26 February. An evening community forum will be held on Tuesday 22 February at Forum Northland and all delegates are welcome to attend.

Conference highlights:

- Powhiri at Terenga Paraoa Marae
- Field trips to coastal areas north and south of Whangarei
- Conference dinner at Gybes Restaurant, Whangarei Town Basin
- Optional post-conference weekend trip to Poutu Peninsula, the Northern head of the Kaipara Harbour

Registration:

Please register for the conference before **Monday 7 February 2005**. Bookings for the optional trip to Poutu Peninsula need to be made by **Monday 13 December 2004**. Further details, contact greg.steward@forestresearch.co.nz

TRAINING COURSES IN PLANT IDENTIFICATION

Please contact Course Administrator, Marnie Kent, NIWA, PO Box 8602, Riccarton, Christchurch
Telephone: +64 3 343 7835, Fax: +64 3 348 5548, Email: training@niwa.co.nz

Identification of Wetland Sedges and Rushes, Wellington

Course code: 10N2

Trainers: Paul Champion/Paula Reeves

Duration: 2 days

Level: All levels

Date & Time: 23 & 24 February 2005.

This course is predominantly laboratory based, with a taxonomic key provided to assist with the identity of a large range of fresh specimens that are found in wetlands. It covers how to identify all genera in the Cyperaceae (sedges) and Juncaceae (rushes) and all species of the genera *Carex* and *Juncus*. A field visit to local water bodies will follow the laboratory sessions to carry out field identification.

Project Crimson – annual funding round applications close on 1 March 2005. See article above.

Botanical Society of Otago - Friday 4 March, 2005. Start of semester BBQ. Start time: 12:00 PM. A BBQ to welcome new botany/ecology students and new society members. To be held on the lawn in front of the University Union Building (enter from Cumberland Street between Union Street (West) and Albany Street) - confirmation of the venue will be made early in 2005. All BSO members welcome! Contact David Orlovich, phone: (03) 479 9060.

Wellington Botanical Society Field trip. Saturday 5 March: Southwest Kaukau. Explore the steep gullies and spurs on the flanks of Kaukau. Likely species to be found include *Dracophyllum longifolium*, *Clematis forsteri*, *Trichomanes colensoi* (unc), *Blechnum colensoi*, *Microtis oligantha*, *Pterostylis banksii* and possibly other orchids. Steep terrain – boots essential. Meet 9 a.m. top of Vasanta Avenue, Ngaio. Map R27 and street map. Co-leaders: Ian Goodwin 475 7248, Chris Horne 475 7025.

Wellington Botanical Society field trip. Saturday 12 March: Native forest in Otari-Wilton's Bush. Share your knowledge of native plants and communities with others on this trip which is BotSoc's contribution to Wellington City Council's FEELING GREAT STEPPING OUT! walk promotion this month. Botanise this wonderful remnant of Wellington's original native forest. Map R27 and pamphlet. Meet 8.45am at Mairangi terminus, opp. IZARD Park, Wilton. Finish at Otari's Banks Entrance bus stop, Wilton Road 1–2 p.m. Catch 8.20 a.m., no. 23 Mairangi bus from Courtenay Place (if wet postponed to Saturday 19 March). Co-leaders: Barry and Sue, ph 476 6536.

Bioblitz Christchurch - Friday 8 April – Christchurch. Starts at 3 p.m. and finishes 24 hours later. The site will be Hagley Park and the botanic gardens with the event base camp at the botanic gardens depot. A team from Lincoln University, Landcare Research and the City Council is working hard to finalise teams who will inventory everything that moves from bacteria and parasites to birds, bees and flowering plants. More details can be found on the Landcare Research web site at www.landcareresearch.co.nz/news/conferences/index.asp. Contact: David Given: david.given@ccc.govt.nz.

8th Australasian Bryophyte Workshop. Saturday 25 June to Thursday 30 June 2005. The 8th Australasian Bryophyte Workshop is to be held in Palma Village, North Queensland, Saturday 25 June to Thursday 30 June 2005. Expressions of interest are being sought now as numbers will be limited. Enquiries should be made to Andi Cairns, Tropical Biology, James Cook University, Townsville 4811, Australia. Email Andi.cairns@jcu.edu.au

19th New Zealand Fungal Foray

Registration Form:

Ohakune, New Zealand, Sunday 3–Saturday 9 April 2005

Name: ..

Address:

Tel:

Fax:

Email:

Number attending:

Please indicate **which** of the following statements is applicable, and complete details:

I will be attending the full Foray (3–9 April) and require regular accommodation and all meals.

I will be attending part of the Foray only and require regular accommodation and meals for the following days :

Number of nights accommodation =

I will make alternative accommodation arrangements but require meals for the following days: (Please indicate relevant days and meals required).

I have particular food requirements:.....

I would like to attend the workshop on waxgill fungi Yes/No

I would like to present a talk/slide show/poster at the *Mycology Colloquium* Yes / No

If yes, title:

Student assistance: A small number of grants towards daily costs and/or domestic transport to the foray are available for students in New Zealand. More information is available from Paula Wilkie (address below).

Please send the completed form (and New Zealand participants please send a deposit of NZ\$50: cheques payable to 'Foray Account') by 28 February 2005 to: Paula Wilkie, Landcare Research, Private Bag 92170, Auckland, New Zealand.