



TRILEPIDEA

Newsletter of the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network

No. 160

March 2017

Deadline for next issue:
Monday 17 April 2017

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE TO THE NEWSLETTER

Contributions are welcome to the newsletter at any time. The closing date for articles for each issue is approximately the 15th of each month.

Articles may be edited and used in the newsletter and/or on the website news page.

The Network will publish almost any article about plants and plant conservation with a particular focus on the plant life of New Zealand and Oceania.

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

Postal address:

P.O. Box 16102,
Wellington 6242,
NEW ZEALAND

PLANT OF THE MONTH – *EPILOBIUM MATTHEWSII*



Epilobium matthewsii. Photo: Rowan Hindmarsh-Walls.

The plant of the month for March is *Epilobium matthewsii* or Fiordland willowherb, one of many *Epilobium* species native to New Zealand. As the common name suggests, the stronghold for *E. matthewsii* is in the depths of Fiordland where it can be found mostly in alpine and sub-alpine habitats. It is also apparently found on the Tin Range on Stewart Island. The species lives on shaded, damp rocky faces, avalanche schutes, fresh rock fall piles and in the splash zone of streams. It is often sympatric with the other *Epilobium* species, such as *E. glabellum*, *E. brunescens* and *E. gracilipes*.

The plant is sprawling to sub-erect in habit, has large lush looking leaves with very reduced marginal teeth and bears its flowers in short clusters at the ends of the flowering stems. This species is quite distinctive once seen, but has similarities in appearance to lush looking forms of *E. glabellum*. It is most easily distinguished in the field by its large bright grass green leaves with reduced marginal teeth and sprawling habit. *Epilobium glabellum* is normally more erect in habit and the leaves are normally a darker red green with obvious serrations. I think the two species do hybridise, which can make things a bit confusing.

The species is endemic to New Zealand and is currently listed as Not Threatened, because it has a restricted range but is abundant in the appropriate habitat within this area. Little is known about the species because the area it inhabits is fairly remote and inaccessible. Because of this, we know little about its population dynamics, but suspect that it is stable, since it is not prone to ungulate browse and is not currently threatened by exotic weeds. The species has probably rarely been grown but, being an *Epilobium*, it would be quite easy to cultivate if grown in a peaty gravel mix and kept in a very damp shady place.

As far as I am aware, the species is named for Henry John Matthews (1859–1905), a botanist born in Dunedin who spent a lot of time exploring the southern parts of New Zealand. You can view the NZPCN website factsheet for *Epilobium matthewsii* at: http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.aspx?ID=1853

New Zealand Indigenous Flora Seed Bank (NZIFSB)

Jessica Schnell (J.L.Schnell@massey.ac.nz) and Jeremy Rolfe (jrolfe@doc.govt.nz).

Myrtaceae collecting 2017

Plants of the Myrtaceae or myrtle family are the most important target group for the New Zealand Indigenous Flora Seed Bank because of the susceptibility to pathogens such as myrtle rust (*Puccinia psidii*), which was found in Hawai'i in 2005 where it devastated the non-native *Syzygium jambos* (Malabar plum), Australia (North Queensland and Victoria in 2010; Tasmania 2015), and New Caledonia in 2013. Another pathogen has recently been found to have a catastrophic impact on mature 'ōhi'a trees (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) in Hawai'i. The vascular wilt fungus, *Ceratocystis fimbriata*, has been a pathogen of sweet potatoes for a long time but seems to have only recently crossed over to affect 'ōhi'a trees. How and why this should have happened is not known but there could be serious consequences for New Zealand's *Metrosideros* species if the fungus were to arrive here.

Myrtaceae species that are already in the seedbank include: Bartlett's rātā / rātā moehau (*Metrosideros bartlettii*) from Northland, pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*) from Auckland, northern rātā (*Metrosideros robusta*) from Northland; white rātā (*Metrosideros perforata*) from Mānawatu; white rātā (*Metrosideros diffusa*) from Mānawatu; kānuka (*Kunzea robusta*) from Taranaki; mānuka (*Leptospermum scoparium* var. *scoparium*) from Taranaki and Dunedin; *Neomyrtus pedunculata* from Central Plateau and Taihape, and *Lophomyrtus obcordata* from Auckland and Taihape. Earlier this month, At Risk—Declining kānuka / rawiritōa (*Kunzea amathicola*) seed were collected from Porirua.



Metrosideros perforata in flower at Otari Wilton's Bush. Photo: J. Schnell.

These species need to have more seed banked to represent populations throughout their natural ranges. However, there are many Myrtaceae species that are not represented at all in the seed bank. Seed from the following species still need to be collected: kanuka species (*Kunzea ericoides*, *K. linearis*, *K. salterae*, *K. serotina*, *K. sinclairii*, *K. tenuicaulis*, *K. toelkenii*, and *K. triregensis*), kahikatoa (*Leptospermum scoparium* var. *incanum*), ramarama (*Lophomyrtus bullata*), rātā species (*Metrosideros carminea*, *M. colensoi*, *M. fulgens*, *M. kermadecensis*, *M. parkinsonii*, *M. umbellata*) and maire tawake (*Syzygium maire*). We especially want to bank seed from throughout coastal and lowland North Island and coastal North-West Nelson.

Several of these species have restricted distributions, making collection difficult but others are widespread and trained seed collectors should look for opportunities to collect them in their regions. Coordinated seed collecting of Myrtaceae is planned for the Auckland, Taranaki, and Central Plateau regions. If you are a trained seed collector and can assist by collecting Myrtaceae in your region or one of the regions mentioned here, please contact Jessica Schnell.

Taranaki seedbank workshop 26–28 April 2017

The first seedbank workshop for 2017 is on **26–28 April 2017**. The workshop will be led by the NZIFSB Project Leader, Craig McGill and NZIFSB Coordinator, Jessica Schnell. The first day of training will cover theory and will be based at the Hollard Centre, Kaponga; the second and third days will cover the practical side of collecting through expeditions in the Taranaki area. Numbers for the workshop are limited to 20 people. For further information or to register please contact Jess either by email: J.L.Schnell@massey.ac.nz or ph: 06 951 6236 by **19 April**.

Announcing
A WORLDWIDE EXHIBITION



30 March – 1 July 2018

*Auckland Botanic Gardens Visitor Centre Gallery
102 Hill road, Manurewa, Auckland 2105*

For more information email: botanicalartnz@gmail.com

New Zealand will be involved in a worldwide botanical art exhibition which will be held in 2018 at the Auckland Botanic Gardens. It's the brainchild of the American Society of Botanical Artists and, so far, 13 countries have signed up to hold their own exhibition, with at least five more considering it.

This juried exhibition, the brainchild of the American Society of Botanical Artists (ASBA), is set up to take place at the same time in participating countries coming together to celebrate the first Botanical Art Day on 18 May, 2018. It will bring together artists, institutions and the public to highlight the role contemporary botanical artists play in bringing attention to the need to safe-guard our planet's botanical diversity. This is very exciting for New Zealand as we will be the first country to see the day!

There has been a resurgence in botanical art over the last 10+ years and this juried exhibition will really help push this niche genre into the public domain and give exposure to the many very talented botanical artists we have in New Zealand. We are hoping to receive submissions of artwork ranging from true botanical illustration in pen and ink (think 'Margaret Flockton Award') to more contemporary styles (New Zealand botanical artists Sue Wickison and Denise Ramsey, both RHS Gold Medal winners).

The Botanical Art Society of New Zealand (BASNZ) and the Auckland Botanic Gardens are collaborating in this venture. Our exhibition 'Ngāi Tipu Taketake—Indigenous Flora' will take place from late March until early July, 2018 at the Auckland Botanic Gardens Visitors Centre Gallery.

These dates coincide with Matariki and we anticipate featuring plants associated with Matariki and Rongoa, allowing artists to include a wider range of indigenous plants and their uses. At the same time, the Auckland Botanic Gardens are also featuring an exhibition of early explorers and their documentation of native flora.

For more information regarding New Zealand's participation can be found at <http://www.friendsabg.co.nz/en/botanical-art.html>.

Please feel free to pass this link on to anyone else you think may be interested. If you have any questions, please get in touch with me, Lesley Alexander, ph: 09 412 2189; 021 161 7070 or: <https://www.facebook.com/lesleyalexanderart>

<https://www.etsy.com/nz/shop/NaturalArtTreasures>

Update on NZPCN snail mail address

As some members have discovered, our PO Box is no longer functional. The snail mail address is now:

NZPCN
160 Wilton Rd,
Wilton,
Wellington 6012

In other words, it is now at Otari-Wilton's Bush, which saves us a PO box fee and means it is easier for the President to pick up the mail.

The Network website has been updated with this information; please update any records you personally hold.

Request for *Epacris* images

I wonder if any Network members can help me. My name is Ron Crowden, retired botanist from the University of Tasmania, currently an honorary research associate of the Tasmanian Herbarium. I am presently engaged in producing an interactive Lucid key for the genus *Epacris*. In order to complete this, I would like to obtain photographs of the New Zealand species *E. alpina*, *E. pauciflora* and *E. pauciflora* ssp *sinclairii*.

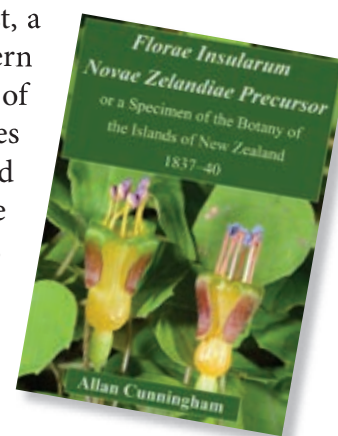
There is nothing I would like better than to come to New Zealand and photograph these plants for myself, but I am afraid that the combination of old age and almost complete immobility preclude this option. I ask, therefore, if any Network members might be able to help. Certainly, the images on your website cover much of what I need but members may have additional images that would better suit my needs.

What I usually do to illustrate each species is: 1. a habitat/habit photograph; 2. a closer view to show the distribution of flowers along a branchlet; and 3. a closer view to show flower form, leaf shape and venation, etc. If any members have such images of the species above that could be made available to me, I would be most grateful.

Any images used, of course, will be fully acknowledged regarding authorship and the donors will receive a copy of the completed key. I would be most grateful if possible helpers would contact me at: ron.crowden@bigpond.com

Now available: *Florae Insularum Novae Zelandiae Precursor* by Allan Cunningham

In 1826, Allan Cunningham became New Zealand's first resident botanist, a role that led to the creation of the *Precursor*, the forerunner of our modern Flora of New Zealand. Cunningham published 17 articles in four volumes of two journals between 1837 and 1840, providing descriptions of 639 species of vascular and non-vascular plants including several new genera and species. The articles contained many innovations for the time such as the inclusion of ecological information. Particularly novel, was Cunningham's use of Maori words in his scientific names. Despite their importance to New Zealand botany, these works are rarely seen. For the first time, they have been collated and presented in full, along with the addition of colour photos that depict many of the species described by or named to honour Allan Cunningham. Cost: \$50 incl GST and delivery. Armed with your credit card, buy your hardbound copy now from the NZPCN on-line shop at: www.nzpcn.org.nz/shop_products.aspx



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):

Auckland Botanical Society

Meeting: Wednesday 5 April at 7.30 p.m. for a talk by Holly Cox titled "Biocontrol". Venue: Unitec Room 115-2017.

Contact: Maureen Young,
email: youngmaureen@xtra.co.nz.

Field trip: Saturday 22 April to North Piha–Whites Beach. Leader: Sandra Jones.

Contact: Maureen Young,
email: youngmaureen@xtra.co.nz

Waikato Botanical Society

Field trip: Saturday 8 April to Whakamarama wetlands revisited, Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park (combined with Rotorua Botanical Society).

For details, see below.

Rotorua Botanical Society

Field trip: Sunday 2 April to Pakihi Track, Urutawa near Opotiki.
Meet: the car park Rotorua at 7.45 a.m. or Opotiki I-site/DOC office at 9.30 a.m. **Grade:** easy to moderate.

Leaders: Graeme Jane and Gael Donaghy, ph: 07 5703123,
email: gtjane@kinect.co.nz;
Mike Butcher, ph: 07 315 7160
027 455 5610;
email: mikebutchernz@xtra.co.nz.

Field trip: Saturday 8 April to Whakamarama wetlands revisited, Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park (combined with Waikato Botanical Society). **Meet:** Whakamarama Hall at 9.30 am (opposite the school). **Grade:** medium.

Leader: Kerry Jones,
ph: 07 855 9700/027 747 0733;
email: km8j1s@gmail.com.
Host: Anne Mackersey.

Whanganui Museum Botanical Group

Meeting: Tuesday 4 April at 7.30 p.m. for 'Members' Evening'. Please bring items for 'show and tell'—plant specimens, book(s), photos, etc.

Venue: Museum's Davis Lecture Theatre

Field trip: Saturday 8 April to Whitiua Scientific Reserve. Meet: at Police Station at 9.00 a.m. **Bring:** lunch, old long trousers. **Leader:** Jim Campbell.

Contact: Colin Ogle,
email: robcol.ogle@xtra.co.nz

Wellington Botanical Society

Field trip: Saturday 1 April to Kaukau and Te Wharangi ridge to the south. **Meet:** at 9.30 a.m. at 109 Rifle Range Rd (if you would like a lift from Johnsonville Station, please contact the leaders).

Co-leaders: Eleanor Burton,
email troggs@paradise.net.nz,
ph: 021 058 8324, or Jane Humble,
email jhumble16@gmail.com

Meeting: Monday 10 April at 7.30 p.m. for a talk by Beyv Abbott titled 'Thomas Kirk (1828–1898): leading botanist for 30+ years, but often overlooked today' (Note: the change of meeting day to the second Monday in April).

Venue: Victoria University Lecture Theatre M101, ground floor Murphy Building, west side of Kelburn Parade; enter building off Kelburn Parade about 20 m below pedestrian overbridge.

Nelson Botanical Society

Field trip: Sunday 23 April to Kaipupu Point Sanctuary, Marlborough Sounds (access only by boat, trip will cost \$20pp), lunch at Picton then walk the Tirohunga track to the hilltop lookout; then, if time permits Governor's Cove just off SH1. **Meet:** at the Church steps at 7.30 a.m.

Register with Elaine,
ph: 021 256 9073;
email: elaine3jems@gmail.com
in case of cancellation.

Canterbury Botanical Society

Meeting: Monday 3 April at 7.30 p.m. for a talk by Jane Gosden titled 'Macquarie Island Flora'. **Venue:** Upper Riccarton Library community meeting room, 71 Main South Road.

Contact: Alice Shanks,
ph: 03 337 1256,
email: alice@caverock.net.nz

Field trip: Saturday 8 April to Rockwood Range basalt forest.

Contact: Alice Shanks,
ph: 03 337 1256,
email: alice@caverock.net.nz

Meeting: Monday 1 May for a talk by Dr Peter Bellingham, Landcare ecologist, titled 'Disentangling effects of deer and possums from those of natural disturbance in New Zealand's forests'. **Venue:** Upper Riccarton Library community meeting room, 71 Main South Road.

Contact: Alice Shanks,
ph: 03 337 1256,
email: alice@caverock.net.nz

Otago Botanical Society

Field trip: Saturday 8 April to Mt Benger. **Meet:** at the Botany Department car park at 8.00 a.m.

Contact: David Lyttle,
ph: 03 454 5470.

Meeting: Wednesday 12 April at 5.20 pm for a talk by Elizabeth Whitcombe titled 'The Himalaya: history of a habitat'. **Venue:** Zoology Benham Building, 346 Great King Street, behind the Zoology car park by the Captain Cook Hotel. Use the main entrance of the Benham Building to get in and go to the Benham Seminar Room, Rm. 215, 2nd floor.

Contact: [Robyn Bridges](mailto:Robyn.Bridges@otago.ac.nz),
ph: 03 472 7330.
