



TRILEPIDEA

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 52. MARCH 2008

Deadline for next issue: Monday 14 April 2008

Message from the President

On 6 March in Wellington we had a meeting of the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network Council. It occurred to me afterwards that, following each Council Meeting, I should write about a few of the main items on the Agenda. The Council works for the entire membership of the Network and therefore it is appropriate that there be as much communication as possible.

The following is a brief commentary on the main topics that were covered during a meeting that lasted from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.:

- **The Loder Cup:** The Council is continuing to request that the Network has a representative on the Loder Cup Committee.
- **Membership:** Eric Scott presented his report in which he noted that current membership is at 397 comprising 522 names on the database with two new members per week. We discussed ways of increasing corporate membership, particularly from local and regional government councils.
- **Newsletter articles:** There is a continuing problem of being able to solicit articles for the Newsletter.
- **The 2008 Conference:** Much of the meeting was devoted to the Conference; the programme details, administration and costs.
- **Membership of the IUCN:** It was agreed that, provided that the cost is acceptable, the Network apply for NGO membership of the IUCN.
- **The Network Website:** John Sawyer presented a report about the continuing success of the Website. We talked about how to find photographs for some plant fact sheets.
- **Sponsorship:** A lot of time was devoted to this topic. We do have in place a discussion about ongoing sponsorship from a new sponsor. Details will follow soon.
- **Dates and style of Council meetings:** It was agreed that we should continue to have two face-to-face meetings each year but keep open the option of having teleconferences when necessary. Council members also rely on email for a lot of Council business.
- **David Given Scholarship:** We discussed the possibility of launching this scholarship at the Conference.
- **Department of Conservation review and impending cuts:** The Council is concerned about this and would wish to be reassured that any reduction in budget or resources would not jeopardise plant conservation capacity.

*Ian Spellerberg
Lincoln University*

Plant of the Month

Plant of the Month for March is the Range Restricted *Hebe calcicola* (marble hebe). This endemic shrub grows to approximately 1.4 m tall and is confined to the North-West Nelson area of the South Island (Peel, Lockett, Douglas, and Arthur Ranges). It is confined to calcareous substrate—mainly limestone and marble outcrops, talus and bluffs—where it grows in low scrub of which it is often the dominant species. It is listed as Naturally Uncommon - Range-Restricted due to its sparse distribution. All known populations are within a National Park and believed to be secure. The Network fact sheet for *Hebe calcicola* may be found at: www.nzpcn.org.nz/vascular_plants/detail.asp?plantid=531.



Hebe calcicola. Photo: Mike Bayly.

A new buttercup name for a Fiordland lake endemic

Ranunculus recens var. *lacustris* was one of the last plants described by the extraordinary, Dunedin-based, amateur botanist George Simpson (1880–1952). The diminutive buttercup was described mostly from specimens gathered from the “Beehive” on the shores of Lake Manapouri by Simpson in 1952. Simpson allied it to the predominantly coastal *R. recens*, to which it has only a superficial resemblance. Subsequent treatments of New Zealand buttercups have commented on the distinctiveness of this lake dwelling variety, in particular its smaller overall size and distinctive chromosome number ($2n = 32$, $32 +$ fragments cf. $2n = 48$ in *R. recens*).

In the March 2008 issue of the *New Zealand journal of botany* 46: 1–11, Threatened Plant Scientist with the Department of Conservation, Dr Peter de Lange, and University of Auckland Cytologist/Plant Systematist, Dr Brian Murray, revisited the status of *R. recens* var. *lacustris*. Based on its distinct morphology, smaller overall size and unusual—with respect to other New Zealand buttercups—chromosome number, the authors conclude that var. *lacustris* merits elevation to species rank. Because the epithet “*lacustris*” is already preoccupied at species rank by another overseas buttercup a new name “*ranceorum*” has been bestowed on this Fiordland endemic. In the authors’ own words the name, meaning “of the Rances” “recognises the significant contribution that both Brian and Chris Rance, residents of Invercargill, Southland... have made toward [furthering] our knowledge and conservation of the indigenous vascular flora of the southern South Island”.

Ranunculus ranceorum, the authors suggest, is perhaps more closely related to *R. maculatus* than it is to *R. recens*—a hypothesis certainly worth further testing. Their paper reviews aspects of the species’ ecology and conservation, with the conclusion that provided the current management of the water levels of lakes Te Anau and Manapouri is maintained *R. ranceorum* is best regarded as a “Naturally Uncommon” endemic using the second iteration of the *New Zealand Threat Classification System* (Townsend *et al.* 2008). At present, *Ranunculus ranceorum* appears to be the only vascular plant endemic to the lower lying eastern Fiordland lakes, the only other contender, *Cardamine lacustris*, is now known from several higher altitude Fiordland tarns.



Ranunculus ranceorum. Photo: Jesse Bythell.

Regarding *R. recens*, the authors noted that despite the tremendous variation in leaf colour and hair disposition there is much overlap in the characters within and between populations, and that most field characters proved unstable over time in cultivation. Further, they could find no chromosomal variation in plants sampled from throughout the range of the species. Nevertheless, they noted that plants from the Moawhango, Central North Island, with chocolate brown pigmented leaves retained this attribute in cultivation over several generations, and that a study of the genetic basis for leaf colour variation may be worthwhile. However, they argued that such differences alone “do not justify further taxonomic segregation”. Leaf colour variation is not that unusual in the New Zealand flora, and is already a well known feature of some species, such as *Geranium brevicaule*.

References

de Lange, P.J.; Murray, B.G. 2008: *Ranunculus raneeorum*, a new name and rank for *Ranunculus recens* var. *lacustris* G.Simpson, an elusive, rarely seen buttercup of the Fiordland lakes, South Island, New Zealand. *New Zealand journal of botany* 46: 1–11.

Townsend, A.J.; de Lange, P.J.; Norton, D.A.; Molloy, J.; Miskelly, C.; Duffy, C. 2008: *The New Zealand Threat Classification System manual*. Wellington, Department of Conservation. 30p.

The Pukurau and the naming of Waipukurau

Trudy Kirk, CHB Promotions Inc., Waipukurau (trudy.chbpromo@centralhawkesbay.co.nz)



Ileodictyon cibarium. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

The Central Hawke’s Bay township of Waipukurau is an abbreviation of Te-Wai-pukurau-a-Te-Rua-kuwha or The Water Mushrooms of Te Ruakuwha. These mushrooms (*Ileodictyon cibarium*) are described as being a distinctive evil-smelling native fungus and were common in forests and water margins. The Pukurau are commonly known today as basket fungus. They grew beside a spring on top of Pukekaihou (now known locally as Hunter Park) underneath where the town’s reservoir is now sited. These fungi were considered a delicacy by Maori. They were picked and taken to a pool of water, fed by the Tuki Tuki

River, near where the Waipukurau traffic bridge is now located. Here they were soaked to soften/treat the flesh. This pool historically belonged to Te Ruakuwha and was mapped at the time of the Waipukurau purchase. It filled with silt in a major flood in the mid 1860s.

High resolution images added to the website

The Network has begun adding high resolution images to its website to help members with identification. These images are available only to Network members and are found on the left hand side of the plant fact sheets below the smaller free images. Over the next few months the Network will add a selection of images of each species for members to choose from. The images are free to be used in presentations, reports and signs provided acknowledgement of the photographer and Network is given. Copyright is still held by the photographer and the Network so please ask if you want to use the images in a publication. Very high resolution versions of all the images are held by the Network in its image library.

Frequently asked questions

The Network receives many queries each week from Network members and the public. Some of the more commonly asked questions have now been answered in a new area of the Network website devoted to Frequently Asked Questions. These can be found under Conservation Info. The questions are in five categories: The Network; The Network website; New Zealand plants; The law; and Your discoveries, your garden and your bush. To suggest additional Frequently Asked Questions and provide answers please email us at: info@nzpcn.org.nz.

NZPCN Conference 8–9 August 2008 – call for papers

The number of presentation slots is limited so at this stage we are seeking only titles of presentation titles – please submit these by 30 May 2008. A decision on the papers to be presented at the conference will be made in early June and for those that are accepted an abstract will be required by 11 July 2008. Presentations will be 15-20 minutes long. Conference sessions are: genetics and conservation; plant breeding systems; threatened ecosystems; restoration of rare species; and plant conservation success stories. Please send your paper title to the organisers of the scientific part of the conference: David Norton (david.norton@canterbury.ac.nz) or Peter Heenan (heenap@landcareresearch.co.nz).

Australian Network for Plant Conservation

Our sister organisation is holding its annual conference in Mulgoa, near Penrith, west Sydney in April. The organisers would love to see a significant number of New Zealanders at the conference. Contributions by way of papers or posters are very welcome. The theme of this the 7th annual conference is: “*Our declining flora – tackling the threats*”. Plan to be there; the earlier you make your flight bookings, the cheaper they are likely to be. For more information and registration see: www.anpc.asn.au/conferences.

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):

New Zealand Plant Conservation Network 2008 Conference

The Network conference will be held 8–9 August with field trip options on Sunday 10 August. Registration forms will be available on the website soon. Since accommodation at the venue is limited, it will be important to get your registration form in early. Also there will only be a limited number of reduced registration fees for students. Please see the attached flyer for further details about the conference.

Auckland Botanical Society

Meeting: Wednesday 2 April in the Unitec School of Natural Sciences, a talk titled “Highlights from summer camps at Kaikoura and Okataina” by Ewen Cameron and Alison Wesley. **Contact:** Maureen Young (email: youngmaureen@xtra.co.nz).

Field trip: Saturday 19 April a trip to Anawhata to investigate coastal vegetation and west coast seaweeds. **Contact:** Maureen Young (email: youngmaureen@xtra.co.nz).

Waikato Botanical Society

Field trip: Sunday 23 March to Lake Ngaroto Wetland for a vegetation survey. **Meet:** at Ngaroto Boating Club, end of Bank Road (off Paterangi Road) at 9.00 a.m. The Club facilities will be available for hot water and shelter if needed. **Contact:** Tony Roxburgh, ph: 07 8720030 ext. 7590 or email: tony.roxburgh@waipadc.govt.nz.

Meeting: Wednesday 2 April in the University of Waikato, Room S 1.01, S Block, Gate 8 Hillcrest Rd the AGM and then a talk titled ‘Flora in a Frozen Land’ by Catherine Beard. **Contact:** Liz Grove ph 846 0965 (hm) eg3@waikato.ac.nz

Rotorua Botanical Society

Meeting: Monday 17 March in the Rotorua Women’s Club, Hinemaru St., near Princes Gate Hotel at 7.30 p.m. a talk titled “Pollen can tell a story” by Dr. Yanbin Deng (Environment Waikato).

Wellington Botanical Society

Meeting: Monday 17 March at 7.30 p.m., in Theatre 101-Murphy Building, Kelburn Parade a Members' Evening. Bring your slides, photographs, paintings, drawings, your favourite botanical readings and plant specimens

Field trip: Friday 21 March – Monday 24 March, Easter field trip to the Western Ruahine Range.
Accommodation: Sixtus Lodge, east of Apiti, via Table Flat Rd, and Limestone Rd; \$10 pp/night; bring own pillows and bedding. Pot luck dinners please confer with Chris; bring own breakfast and lunch. **Co-leaders:** Chris Horne, ph: (04) 475 7025; Barbara Mitcalfe, ph: (04) 475 7149.

Field trip: Saturday 5 April to the Eastern Hutt catchment. Botanise the track to Phillips Stream.
Meet: 9 a.m. at Kaitoke Regional Park ranger station, Waterworks Rd, off SH2 at Kaitoke.
Transport: catch 7.35 am train from Wellington to Upper Hutt - ask leader to meet you. **Leader:** Owen Spearpoint, GWRC, phone: 562 8780 (wk), 562 8780 (hm). Booking essential, numbers strictly limited.

Meeting: Monday 21 April: at 7.30 p.m., in Theatre 101, Murphy Building, Kelburn Parade a talk titled 'Plants of south-western Australia' by Leon Perrie, Curator of Botany, Te Papa.

Canterbury Botanical Society

Meeting: Friday 4 April at 7.30 p.m., Room A5 University of Canterbury yet to be confirmed.

Field trip: Saturday 5 April a visit to Boggy Reserve, Lake Ellesmere, to look for bladderwort and compile a species list for the reserve.

Winter Camp: Tuesday 26 August – Monday 2 September 2008, to Broadbeach, Gold Coast, Australia. For further information contact: Margaret Geerkens (ph 03 352-7922, email: bert.marg@xtra.co.nz) or Russell Moffitt (ph: 03384-1979).

Botanical Society of Otago

Meeting: Wednesday 19 March, at 5.20 p.m. a talk titled 'Chatham Island places & plants' by Dr Peter Johnson. At the 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. Please be prompt as we have to hold the door open.
Contact: [Robyn Bridges](#), phone: (03) 479 8372.

Field trip: Saturday 29 March, 2008 to Mt Watkin starting at 8.30 a.m. Alternative date in case of rain, Sunday 30 March. Participants should be reasonably fit as a degree of walking will be required to visit the most interesting sites. Leader: Kelvin Lloyd ph 473 9566 (hm) or 477 2096 (wk).
Contact: [Kelvin Lloyd](#).

Meeting: Wednesday 16 April, 2008 at 5.20 p.m. a photographic competition titled 'An evening of botanical photography' and the AGM. Entries close 31 March, 5 p.m. See BSO website or notice board for entry forms. At the 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. Please be prompt as we have to hold the door open. **Contact:** [Robyn Bridges](#), ph: (03) 479 8372.

Field trip: Saturday 19th April, 2008 to Kurinui, North Otago, starting at 9.00 a.m.
Contact: [Scott Dunavan](#), ph: 027 290 3643.



Celebrating our native plant life

New Zealand Plant Conservation Network Conference 2008

Friday 8 – Sunday 10 August 2008:

Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand

The **New Zealand Plant Conservation Network** invites you to attend its 5th conference and Annual General Meeting for 2008. This pivotal event has been organised in conjunction with Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Enviroschools, Wellington City Council and the Department of Conservation. It will bring together people from all over New Zealand to celebrate our native flora. It will focus on what is being done in science and practice and what still needs to be done to protect our unique plant life.

Highlights of the event will include:

- The Tane Ngahere Lecture by Brian Molloy entitled **Reflections on 50 years of NZ botany and plant conservation** (Friday 8 August)
- Symposia on the **Science of plant conservation** (Friday 8 August) and **Plant conservation in practice** (Saturday 9 August) with keynote addresses by Gary Houlston (**Genetics and conservation**), Susan Wiser (**Threatened ecosystems**), David Norton (**Restoration of rare species**) and Peter de Lange (**Plant conservation in practice**)
- A concurrent **Enviroschools Plant Conservation Forum** for children from the regions Enviroschools including presentations about their conservation projects (Friday 8 August)
- Workshops to plan the **Plant Conservation Strategy** for the next 5 years (Saturday 9 August)
- Conference dinner on Wellington's waterfront (Saturday 9 August)
- **Field trips** to Matiu/Somes Islands, the Eastbourne Hills, Karori Sanctuary and Otari Wilton Bush (on Sunday 10 August). **Tours** of the Te Papa herbarium and Bush City

If you would like to present a paper at the conference, titles only are required at this stage and may be submitted to:

David Norton (david.norton@canterbury.ac.nz) or
Peter Heenan (heenanp@landcareresearch.co.nz) by 30 May 2008.
Abstracts for accepted papers will be required by 11 July 2008.

Schools wishing to attend the Enviroschools Native Plant Forum should contact Karyn Burgess (enviroschools@gw.govt.nz)



For more information about the conference see forthcoming postings on the Network website (www.nzpcn.org.nz) or email the Network (info@nzpcn.org.nz) with Conference in the subject line, to be placed on the conference mailing list. The registration form will be available soon.



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Enviroschools

Absolutely
POSITIVELY
ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL **Wellington**