



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 25, DECEMBER 2005

Deadline for next issue: Monday 16 January 2006

Message from the President

Professor Ian Spellerberg, Lincoln University

I am very conscious that throughout the Network there are many significant and valuable projects in plant conservation. However, not everyone has the opportunity to hear about these projects. Not only are they all newsworthy but there is also a lot of valuable information to exchange. As a Network we need to be doing sharing this news and this information. I urge everyone to offer short accounts about their projects to this newsletter.

I propose that every issue of the newsletter in 2006 has a section (Reports from the Regions) where people throughout the Network have an opportunity to share their experiences. So, over the Christmas period—please don't say "I am too busy" or "I'll leave it to others"—please write something about your plant conservation work and send it to the network (info@nzpcn.org.nz) to include in the newsletters. We are a Network—and this is what networking is all about!

As an incentive (as if anyone needs an incentive) I will offer a copy of 'Going Native: making use of New Zealand Native Plants' to be awarded to the person who, in the view of the Network Council Committee, sends in the most interesting contribution during the first six months of 2006.

When this Newsletter is sent out in December, I will be in Germany or Austria where I am helping to administer two International Masters Programmes in Nature Conservation and in Sustainability. At the same time I will be collaborating in some joint nature conservation research programmes. It is winter in Europe and the festive season will include many Christmas markets, short days and long dark nights. Christmas in New Zealand is in sharp contrast with long hot sunny days and picnics by rivers and on beaches. Strange that most Christmas cards used in New Zealand continue to have that holly, snow and red robin theme. It is a pity that we do not boycott such cards and have instead a culture where festive cards have a New Zealand theme with New Zealand's native plants.

I wish every one a very content and happy time.

Plant of the Month

Plant of the month for December is the Nationally Endangered *Myosotidium hortensia*. This species was voted Number 9 in the national 'Vote for your favourite plant competition for 2005' (see below). This glossy-leaved megaherb is endemic to the Chatham Islands. Occurring on the main islands and some islets, it is found on coastal cliffs, rock outcrops, sandy and rocky beaches just above the strand zone and coastal forest openings. As many gardeners will know it flowers from September to October. The Network fact sheet may be found at the following link:

http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/vascular_plants/detail.asp?PlantID=77



Myosotidium hortensia. Photo: John Sawyer.

David Roger Given FLS (1943–2005)—founder of the New Zealand native plant conservation movement dies after short illness

By Peter J. de Lange, John Sawyer and the IUCN

New Zealand and international plant conservation and the IUCN community have lost one of their champions; David Given died peacefully at 10 p.m. on 27 November 2005 surrounded by his family, after losing a two-year battle against cancer. David's passing is a huge loss to both New Zealand plant conservation and to the wider environmental community.

Dr David Given FLS (1943–2005) was well known to New Zealanders for his pioneering work in the arena of indigenous plant conservation. David served on the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Steering Committee and Chaired the Plant Conservation Committee (PCC) from 1997 to 2004. A world expert on ferns, he was also Chair of the Pteridophyte Specialist Group until devoting more time to the PCC. He contributed to other Specialist Groups including Re-introduction, Conservation Breeding and Sustainable Use, as well as making important contributions to the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and World Heritage issues. A man of strong faith, he put his religious convictions to work into improving the world around us.

David was diagnosed with a terminal condition a year and a half ago. Despite all the odds David went into remission and led last August's successful NZPCN conference in Christchurch. In addition to numerous accolades received during his career, he recently received two major national New Zealand awards—the Network's own Lifetime Achievement Award and the Te Tohu Taiao Award, the New Zealand Ecological Societies annual award for "recognition of outstanding achievement in the study and application of ecology in New Zealand". And perhaps most significantly at the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok in 2004, David was presented with the SSC Sir Peter Scott Award for Conservation Merit in recognition of his leadership of the PCC and unwavering dedication towards raising awareness of, and action for, the conservation of plant species worldwide. "David exemplified the underlying principles on which the conservation community and our Union depends" said Achim Steiner, IUCN Director General. "He contributed his technical, and practical experience to a myriad of IUCN Commissions and processes, and brought local conservation action and international policy together, thereby strengthening both".



David Given receives his Lifetime Achievement Award from the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network President Ian Spellerberg in 2005.

David also had a strong affinity for the Chatham Islands, and was actively engaged in a major Marsden Funded research programme to determine the age, origin and evolution of that islands flora. A stalwart member of the NZPCN executive, David was able to help the NZPCN through his years of national and international experience. Sadly in early November David was told his condition had returned. His death has now left us with a huge gap to fill. David was not only a mentor, guide and incredibly witty, fun person to work with but he was also a respected author of over 200 scientific papers, four books, and a plant systematist who specialised in the predominantly New Zealand asteraceous genus *Celmisia*. A genus which at the time of his death he was revising with Japanese colleagues. A small strap fern, *Grammitis givenii* was named in honour of David's work on New Zealand ferns by internationally respected pteridologist Dr Barbara Paris in 1976.

His loss is felt most deeply by the many he mentored throughout New Zealand. As Maori would say "A mighty totara has fallen in the forest of Tane". David, a committed Christian was always philosophical about his condition, and it is heartening to know that he has no doubt moved on to another world where his biggest concern will now be keeping *Trilepidea* from attacking his trees, and the huia from his vegetable patch.

David leaves his wife Karina, children Andrew, Bronwyn and Craig, and grandchildren, all of whom he was immensely proud.

New Zealand's favourite plant – Cook's scurvy grass!

NZ's top 10 plants



1.

Lepidium oleraceum nau, Cook's scurvy grass Photo: John Smith-Dodsworth.

Cook's scurvy grass is New Zealand's No.1 plant for 2005. New Zealanders have been voting for months on the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network website on what their favourite native plant is this year.



2.

Sophora chathamica
kowhai, coastal kowhai
Photo: Geoff Walls.



5.

Rhopalostylis sapida
nikau palm Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.



8.

Carmichaelia williamsii
Williams's broom, giant-flowered broom
Photo: Andrea Brandon.



3.

Xeronema callistemon
Poor Knights lily, raupo-taranga Photo: Gillian Crowcroft.



6.

Cordyline australis
cabbage tree, ti, ti kouka, palm lily Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.



9.

Myosotidium hortensia
Chatham Island forget-me-not, kopakopa, kopukapuka



4.

Metrosideros bartlettii
Bartlett's rata
Photo: Peter de Lange.



7.

Clianthus maximus
kakabeak, kowhai ngutukaka Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.



10.

Pisonia brunoniana
Parapara Photo: Bec Stanley.

The Network and the Isaac Centre for Nature Conservation in collaboration wanted to find out what people see as New Zealand's most popular plant. Interestingly, the silver fern managed just five votes despite being such a high profile species among our NZ sporting teams. The question therefore is should the All Blacks lose the silver fern from their rugby jerseys? Should our netball team become the Golden Kowhais? Hundreds of people voted for over 190 native plants out of a possible 2350 natives. The pohutukawa topped New Zealand's national list in previous years with the kowhai, cabbage tree, kauri, nikau and rimu all making the top ten. Voting has highlighted differences in people's favourites around the country.

Some comments about Cook's scurvy grass:

"Its a wonderful plant—tastes great, pretty flowers, grows in far out, wild, remote and unusual habitats—special, special, special"

"Everyone needs it nau and then"

"Way cool herb—can you smoke it as well?"

"Amazing—a versatile, threatened, endemic vegetable for which I can do my bit by growing it and eating it"

"An indigenous natural antiscorbutic how cool is that?"

"Captain Cook's botanists harvested this plant in 1769 just down the road from where I live!"

"Hey nau, hey nau, don't dream its over!"

Region favourites are as follows:

Auckland: Poor Knights lily

Wellington: cabbage tree

Taranaki: nikau

Tongariro: kowhai

Southland: kowhai

Christchurch: climbing everlasting daisy (*Helichrysum dimorphum*)

Northland: nikau

Bay of Plenty: Poor Knights lily

Otago: Southern rata

Marlborough: Shrubby tororaro

Hawke's Bay: pohutukawa

Waikato: Williams's broom

International voters have gone for Cook's scurvy grass because of the published history about the species and how it was used by Captain Cook to feed to his crew to protect them from Scurvy. After discounting overseas votes, kowhai (*Sophora chathamica*) takes out the top spot. Many voters did not realise that some of the most charismatic plants are so threatened. The Chatham island forget-me-not is nationally endangered in the wild despite being a popular choice in people's gardens. This project has helped raise the profile of New Zealand native plants.

MWH support makes practical difference

By Brian Wood, MWH NZ General Manager

This Christmas MWH is proud to support the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network in its aims to encourage threatened regional native planting initiatives within local communities. As a staff-owned engineering and environmental consultancy much of our work involves the restoration or mitigation of planting as part of infrastructure development. This means that many areas of our business can play a part in encouraging the planting of threatened species. With the support of our landscape architects, and in conjunction with our clients, we will encourage appropriate planting.

Our investment will also enable the Network to publish: *Threatened Native Plants of NZ*, a book featuring 120 endangered plants from around the country, and due to be published by Canterbury Press in June/July. We have also published a MWH 2006 calendar, for our clients, colleagues and friends, which depicts the beauty of our nationally threatened plants. We will also be regularly profiling the Network and plant communities that require conservation management for their continued survival, in our bimonthly Inside magazine, and on our website, which have extensive readership. We believe we have the potential to make a practical difference is supporting this excellent charity.

Marae-based plant training course—completion of the first phase

By Philippa Crisp, Network Council member

The Network has been making progress in developing a marae-based plant conservation training course. This project was funded by the Government's Biodiversity Condition and Advice Fund. Following on from the first hui held in Waiomio, Northland in July, a second hui was held in Wellington at the Taputeranga Marae on 18 October. This meeting was organised by Philippa Crisp, Marino Tahī and Barbara Mitcalfe. The attendees came from a range of backgrounds; iwi/hapu authorities, district councils, care-groups, government agencies and a research unit. Barbara Mitcalfe gave an inspiring presentation about plant conservation in the Wellington Region. Possible course topics discussed included plant identification, restoration techniques, taonga species, sourcing funding for restoration projects, caring for covenants and wetlands.



Barbara Mitcalfe presents plant conservation case studies to the hui at Tapu te Ranga Marae, Wellington.

Marino Tahī and Philippa Crisp attended a hīkoi on plant conservation at Rehua Marae in Christchurch in late October and made contact with iwi attending this event. The hīkoi was run by Colin Meurk and Craig Pauling of Landcare Research. The first phase of information gathering for this project has now been completed and the next step will be to develop the plant conservation course. Initial meetings are underway to develop a pilot course which will be trialled in Northland with iwi who attended the first hui. This will be held in February 2006. It is envisaged that over time a number of training modules will be developed on various topics such as plant identification, management of Nga Whenua Rahui covenants and streamside and wetland restoration. Iwi from marae around New Zealand could then choose the most relevant module or modules for their needs.

Flora of Aotearoa/New Zealand 2006 (Summer course At Waikato University (Department of Biological Sciences): Enrol now for 10–24 February 2006

**Open to students with genuine
botanical interests in the following three
categories:**

- Students completing first year biology and intending to major in plant biology
- Second and third year plant biology students
- Others with a background in horticulture or botany (will be admitted at discretion of Course Coordinator)

The course begins with a weekend field trip where a wide range of plant species and habitats will be studied. This is followed by two intensive weeks of lectures and labs at the University, after which students will be expected to complete an individual assignment. The course is internally assessed and final results will be available mid-year.

Course topics include:

- The origin of New Zealand's unique flora
- The basics of plant taxonomy
- Modern methods of plant classification and identification
- Field identification of plants
- Harakeke: tikanga and raranga

What to do now

Obtain a **FLORA ENROLMENT FORM** from the Dean's office (F1.07) or the Biology Office (E2.20). Forms must be signed and stamped by Dr. Chrissen Gemmill (R2.12) or Dr Bruce Clarkson (E2.20) before enrolment can proceed.

Enquiries to

Dr. Chrissen Gemmill, email c.gemmill@waikato.ac.nz (phone 07 838 4053) Dr. Bruce Clarkson, email b.clarkson@waikato.ac.nz (phone 07 838 4237) Or contact the Department of Biological Sciences (phone 07 838 4022), Waikato University, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton

Fungal Network of New Zealand (FUNNZ) now a reality

The Fungal Network of New Zealand is a new society that was incorporated following the 19th NZ Fungal Foray at Ohakune. For details of the Society, check out the new website www.funnz.org.nz. At this site you can find photos of all past fungal forays, details of those elected to positions on the Society, copies of the Constitution and membership form, details of activities, and links to other mycology sites. We are very grateful to Clive Shirley for creating and developing this site.

From now until 31 May 2006, all registering members will become foundation members of FUNNZ. Annual membership currently costs \$15 waged, \$10 unwaged, and will apply for the first full financial year 1 March 2006 to 28 Feb. 2007. As a member you will help shape this new society, gain the right to vote at the AGM (held during the Fungal Foray) and be kept up to date with (irregular) emails on fungal news.

Can you help provide images for the website?

We are seeking images for the following plant species to plug gaps in the Network website fact sheets for threatened plants. If you can help, please send them through to the Network (info@nzpcn.org.nz) or to John Sawyer (jsawyer@doc.govt.nz). See the website also for a list of Dicot. trees and shrubs for which photos are still required.

Calochilis herbaceus (as *C. aff. herbaceus*)

Uncinia perplexa

Wahlenbergia pygmaea subsp. *tararua*

Olearia polita

Triglochin striata

Dracophyllum longifolium var. *septentrionale*

Dracophyllum urvilleanum

Network partnership with QEII National Trust

As announced at the Network conference in Christchurch in August 2005, the Network is now working in conjunction with Queen Elizabeth II National Trust to prepare action plans for threatened plant populations that occur on privately owned covenants. The objective of this project is to provide more detailed information to landowners and to QEII Trust reps about what is required for the survival of threatened plants at these private covenants. Covenant owners have been contacted to ensure they are willing for the surveys to take place and for the action plans to be prepared. For more information about threatened plants in private covenants see *Trilepidea* 24 (November 2005).

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 Field trip: Saturday 17 December: Hutt City flowering rata walk – Crimson Trail.

See up to forty northern rata, *Metrosideros robusta*, and some southern rata, *M. umbellata*, in flower, as you walk through Lower Hutt city and suburbs!—an 11-km (4 hour) walk or shorter to suit yourself. Map supplied. Meet at 9 a.m. Hutt City i-SITE Visitor Centre, The Pavilion, 25 Laings Road, Lower Hutt. Bring lunch and a drink. Leader is Dave Holey, ph 566 3124. Dave will share his interest in *Metrosideros* on Saturday 17 December when he will lead this year's walk to visit up to forty rata. Plan to join us for this special addition to our programme, timed to coincide with the spectacle of the rata in flower!

20th New Zealand fungal foray: Westport, West Coast, South Island 7–13 May 2006

The 20th New Zealand Fungal Foray, and the inaugural meeting of the Fungal Network of New Zealand will be held at the Westport Field Station from 7–13 May 2006. The Field Station is run by the University of Canterbury. We will have access to the teaching laboratory (with lecture room) and associated accommodation for 36 people in nine bunkrooms. In addition we have booked the research laboratory with a suitable workroom and 3 additional double bedrooms. See www.ffc.canterbury.ac.nz/westport.shtml. Please complete the registration form (copies of this form are available from <http://www.funnz.org.nz>) and mail by 31 March 2006 to: Paula Wilkie, Landcare Research, Private Bag 92170, Auckland, New Zealand. For New Zealand participants please provide a deposit of NZ\$50 per person: Cheques payable to 'Fungal Network of New Zealand', or by Direct Payment of NZ\$50 to the FUNNZ account: ASB acc. no. 12-3086-0214758-00. If paying by direct transfer, please ensure that your name and "Foray2006 registration" appears on the Payee's (recipient's) statement.

8th International Mycological Congress (IMC8)

Mycological Congresses are held in different parts of the world every 4 years, but never before in the Southern Hemisphere. Next year is our opportunity for several New Zealanders to participate in IMC8 at Cairns, Queensland, on 20–25 August 2006. For details of the programme, registration, associated workshops, etc, please see their website <https://www.sapmea.asn.au/imc8>

New Zealand mycology symposium

Following soon after IMC8 there will be a 2 day conference in Auckland to take stock of our knowledge of New Zealand fungi. This is still being planned and notification of its timing, programme, and location will be advised early 2006.