



TRILEPIDEA

Newsletter of the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network

No. 252

June 2025

Deadline for next issue:
Friday 18 July 2025

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 info@nzpcn.org.nz

Postal address:
73 Stratford Drive
Cable Bay 0420
NEW ZEALAND

Paranako, *Asplenium obtusatum*, shore spleenwort

 Robyn Smith (northislandrobin@gmail.com)

In January 2025, Mike and Christine Jacobson and I explored the coastline at the bottom of the northern escarpment of Whitireia Park in Porirua. We were there mainly to delimit the extent of the red-billed gull breeding colony which established on this coastline in the 2024–25 breeding season, but I was also keen to botanise the coastline.

It took three and a half hours to clamber from Kaitawa Point to Rocky Bay (Map 1), climbing boulders, wading through shallow water and exploring caves.

We came to an area where there were several *Veronica elliptica* (syn. *Hebe elliptica*) and I almost walked past another plant of *Veronica elliptica*, but something made me stop and examine it more closely. To my delight it was paranako, *Asplenium obtusatum*. Although they really don't look alike, they are both very fleshy leaved and love growing on coastal cliffs.



Asplenium obtusatum with *Pseudognaphalium lanatum* in the photo on the left.  Robyn Smith

A brief survey of the area revealed seven new plants of paranako and more *Veronica elliptica*.

These new paranako plants are around 450 metres from the only other known plants in Porirua which are on rock stacks near Rocky Bay.

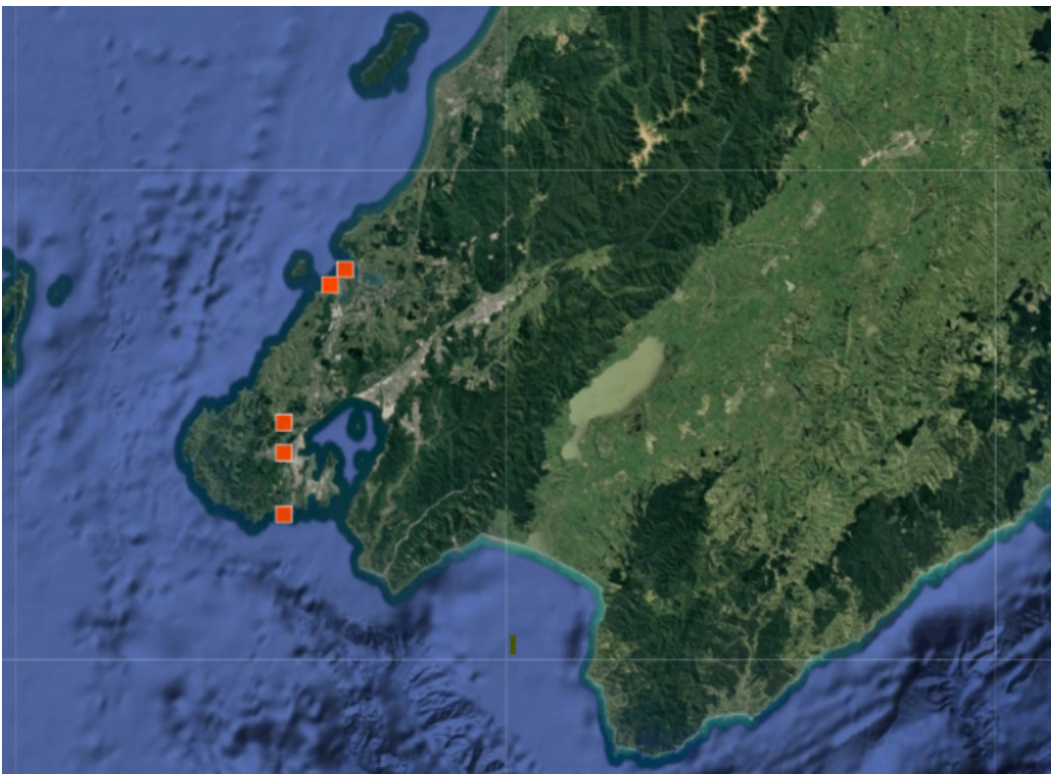
This fern's northern distribution limit is Cook Strait, but it is very uncommon in the Wellington region. It is much more common in the South Island where it grows amongst other coastal vegetation such as *Veronica elliptica* and *Austroblechnum durum*. Paranako is often associated with seabird colonies (NZPCN, 2025). Although its national conservation status is Not Threatened, its Wellington regional conservation status is Regionally Critical.

Paranako grows in the cracks of coastal rocks and must store a lot of water in its leaves to get through dry periods. However, some of the six plants which previously lived at Rocky Bay have disappeared, probably due to a very dry summer in 2023–24.

A wider survey of the coastal escarpment is needed to determine if there are any other plants of paranako or any other uncommon or threatened coastal species.



Map 1: Kaitawa Point to Rocky Bay, Whitireia Park, Porirua.



Map 2: iNaturalist records of *Asplenium obtusatum* in the Wellington region – accessed 3 April 2025.

Reference

- de Lange, P.J. (2025): *Asplenium obtusatum* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/asplenium-obtusatum/> (20 March 2025)
- Crisp, P (2020): Conservation status of indigenous vascular plant species in the Wellington region. Environmental Science Department, Greater Wellington Regional Council. <https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2020/03/Conservation-status-of-indigenous-vascular-plant-species-in-the-Wellington-region.pdf>

2025 David Given Threatened Plant Scholarship – closing 31 July

 Alex Fergus(afergus@doc.govt.nz)

The New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) administers a fund which honours the contribution of the late David Given to Aotearoa New Zealand (ANZ) plant conservation. The scholarship funds research into the biosystematics, autecology and conservation management of ANZ's indigenous threatened plants and fungi as well as research into threatened ecosystems. Applications for the current funding round are now open.

One scholarship is awarded every two years and will provide up to \$8000.00 towards the cost of a research project. The scholarship is granted for research that assists practical or technical understanding of the taxonomy, ecology or management of ANZ's threatened plant taxa (or tag-named entities) or threatened ecosystems.

Applicants must be New Zealand residents or citizens, but the work could involve overseas researchers who collaborate with the principal researcher. Threatened species or threatened ecosystems can be either nationally or regionally threatened. Plant species include vascular and non-vascular plants; fungi are also eligible.

We encourage potential applicants to focus on describing the conservation issues associated with their target taxa and describe the impact of your potential project, please include explicit examples of how you believe your research will contribute to better conservation of the threatened taxa or plant community. Potential applicants should feel very welcome to contact the DGTPS committee chair (Alex Fergus) if they have any queries about the relevance of their project or about the application process (afergus@doc.govt.nz).

The DGTPS selection committee comprises the president and at least two other members of the current NZPCN Council. The selection committee may refrain from making an award if, in their opinion, there is no application of sufficient merit.

Scholarship details and forms are available from:

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/nzpcn/awards/david-given-scholarship/>

Applicants must complete and sign the application form and submit written or electronic applications to:

NZPCN,
73 Stratford Drive,
Cable Bay 0420

or info@nzpcn.org.nz.

For email applications please include the subject "David Given Scholarship". Applicants must nominate two referees who can attest to their experience and their ability to complete the project within a two-year period. Applicants are also responsible for ensuring their referees complete the referee forms before the funding round closes. Applications for the current funding round close on Thursday 31 July 2025.

The DGTPS committee will deliberate during August and notify the applicant by Friday 29 August 2025, permitting time to undertake relevant project logistics for the 2025/2026 field season. The name of the successful applicant will be announced on the NZPCN website shortly after they have confirmed their acceptance of the scholarship.

Scholarship deliverables include brief progress updates (every six months), and a short report summarising the results upon completion of the research. Successful applicants are also expected to assist the NZPCN in preparing a short article about the research for our newsletter *Trilepidea* at the beginning of the project and upon its completion.

Wanted—Video material of karaka tree carrying fruits

 *Susanne Krauß* (susanne_krauss@gmx.net)

This might be long shot! I am Susanne, a film maker from Germany, working on a new documentary right now. We had a filming team in New Zealand at the end of February to film the kererū. As it is the only bird left being able to feed on karaka berries and therefore disperse its seeds, we wanted to film this. We did find a few karaka fruits, but unfortunately the season ended early this year and so we are missing video shots of karaka trees carrying many fruits/full of fruits.

We checked with NHNZ and the Department of Conservation, but, unfortunately, they could not help. I thought, I could give it a try and connect with you. Do you do video work and do you possibly have video material of karaka trees and karaka fruits? Or would you maybe have an idea who to contact? Is there anyone in your network who does sometimes film and is passionate about plants/trees/kererū?

If you are able to assist Susanne, please make contact with her directly at the email address above or, alternatively, let us know the details at info@nzpcn.org.nz.

Join us at the 2025 New Zealand Species Edit-a-thon at Ōtari-Wilton's Bush!

 *Sophie Sparrow, Heidi Meudt, Siobhan Leachman and Christine Richardson*

While it's no secret that a lot of our native species are facing threats, reliable information on these issues can be harder to uncover.

As the internet is increasingly taken over by sponsored posts and AI-generated content, Wikipedia remains steadfast as a source of verifiable, up-to-date information. It's one of the most visited websites in the world, maintained by around 120,000 volunteer editors across the globe, and it could use your help.

Over two Saturdays in August, we're running Wikipedia edit-a-thons to create and improve articles focused on Aotearoa New Zealand's unique native flora and fauna. All are welcome to take this opportunity to further develop the skills you learned last year while contributing to the world's most comprehensive encyclopaedia.

You know that anyone can edit Wikipedia, and you'll be guided once again by highly experienced editors along the way. We'll provide all the training and resources you need to get started, and the native vegetation of Ōtari-Wilton's Bush will provide the perfect location for collaborating with fellow nature enthusiasts to share our unique biodiversity with the world.

Bring a laptop and charging cable—all other resources, tea, coffee, and kai are provided. Bookings required, \$5 per person. You can sign up here: <https://events.humanitix.com/nz-species-editathon-wellington>

Whether you want to come along for just one day, or book in for both, we're looking forward to having you join us. Please forward to anyone else who you think might be interested!

Where: Leonard Cockayne Centre, Ōtari-Wilton Bush, Wellington.

- When: This event is held over two consecutive Saturdays, 10am – 4pm on both 2 August 2025 and 9 August 2025
- Tickets: \$5 per person per day, which includes morning, afternoon tea and lunch. Spaces are limited, so purchase your ticket now for one or both days at <https://events.humanitix.com/nz-species-editathon-wellington>
- More information at the following links:
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Meetup/Wellington/Meetup_NZ_Species_editathon_2_August_2025
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Meetup/Wellington/NZ_Species_editathon_9_August_2025
- Questions? Contact Heidi Meudt (heidim@tepapa.govt.nz) or Siobhan Leachman (siobhan.leachman@gmail.com)

Annual Iwitahi Native Orchid Reserve Working Bee

Toby Marris (tobymarris@hotmail.com)

Iwitahi Working Bee & Native Orchid Weekend

Friday, December 5th - Sunday, December 7th

At the Iwitahi Reserve off SH5 (Napier - Taupo)



Starts Friday after 4pm
Ends Sunday Lunchtimeish



Includes Meals and 2 Nights' Accommodation at Sika Lodge
(bunk room style)

Light /Moderate Track Maintenance, Weeding etc.
Orchid Identification, Photography, And Discussions On Site

SEND / -1P
THE MORE THAT COME
THE CHEAPER IT GETS

We would expect to see *Calochilus*, *Chiloglottis*, *Gastrodia*,
Thelymitra and *Pterostylis* species in flower or bud

If you are unable to attend for the full weekend but would like to join us at the reserve or prefer to organise your own accommodation, please let me know so we can keep an eye out for you

To register your interest, contact me by FB Messenger me or email - tobymarris@hotmail.com



The Working Bee is our main annual activity at the reserve, chosen for peak flowering, and is a great opportunity to see a range of terrestrial native orchids close up. At this time, we normally have a range of *Thelymitra* and *Pterostylis*, with *Adenochilus*, *Chiloglottis valida* and *C. cornuta*, *Gastrodia* and *Calochilus robertsonii* among others.

The environment is an old plantation of *Pinus nigra* undergoing succession to a mix of native species and we are endeavouring to maintain the diversity of the orchids while we work toward a sustainable and manageable tree cover.

Covered by an Environmental Protection Order, the management committee consists of representatives of The Orchid Council of New Zealand (we inherited responsibility from the Taupo Club when it ceased) and Timberlands, who are also our point of contact with the local iwi.

We stay at Sika Lodge in the main part of the Lodge—we split the bunk rooms into single sex. Cost works out to around \$120.00 per person, but if we go over a certain number it starts dropping as they apply a different rate. <https://sikalodge.co.nz/find-us.aspx>

The cost includes Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast/lunch/dinner, and breakfast/lunch Sunday. We do not provide alcohol or soft drinks, but you may bring them (about half do). Food is hearty and plentiful, and we all share washing up duties.

We also have some people join us just for a day or both days but stay elsewhere. We aim to get a solid day and a half work in at the reserve.

Friday night is introductions and catch-ups.

Saturday morning is breakfast from 6.30/7.00 to 8.00, and to reserve by 9.00, with morning tea and lunch at the reserve

Generally, the first bit of Saturday is a look around/divvy up tasks and teams, and then we do most of our picture taking on Sunday before departing, by which stage we have located everything!

Saturday night, we either have a discussion or a talk—I'm still working on this year's topic/speaker.

It's BYO tools, if you have access to weed eaters with a scrub bar (it's too tough for the filament types) that's amazing, otherwise, clippers/loppers and that sort of thing, or just gloves for weeding/pulling around colonies—we can find a role for everyone.

Sunday morning is breakfast, then clean out/pack out of the Lodge, generally done and gone by 9.00 (many hands make light work).

We will have a couple of the orchid identification books there

This is the one I tend to use as it is pack/pocket sized and is the most up to date (The NZ Native Orchid Group is not affiliated or involved at the reserve.)

<https://www.nativeorchids.co.nz/publications/publications-for-sale/>

Clothing

Please bring solid/hiking shoes or boots, warm clothing, and wet weather gear just in case—hi-vis requested but not essential—makes it easier to find people. We do not work in times of high wind, as the risk of falling debris is quite high.

Scam/Spam Email Alert!


On Monday 23 June some NZPCN members received an email purportedly from the NZPCN President, Jesse Bythell. The content of the email follows.

Greetings, Do you have a chance for a discussion? Looking forward to hearing from you.

The email address used was few.dew@icloud.com, which is not Jesse's address. An identically worded email was also received by the newsletter editor via an obsolete email address. The email address used to send that email was katharinanargar@icloud.com.

If you receive any such emails we recommend you delete them immediately. Do not attempt to respond to such emails, as who knows what you may open yourself up to if you go down that path.

Forest & Bird August Bush Ramble

 Roslyn Norrie, F & B Northland Branch committee member (roslynnorrie@gmail.com)

Forest & Bird Northland branch is planning a fun August Bush Ramble near Ōkaihau. Our ambition is to look at the plants and other life forms in what we understand to be a never-cutover bush remnant that has been under a covenant for almost a century. Since last month it has a new owner, an immigrant who is keen to understand and conserve.

We extend this invitation to any nearby NZPCN members to join us there. Please let me know if this is of interest? If it is I will provide further details

Dates and times yet to be confirmed but here is our current plan:

- 239 Horeke Road, Ōkaihau - Sunday 24 August. 11am-3pm.
(if adverse weather is forecast then postponement to 31 August)
- Parking across the road at St Patrick's Catholic Church.
- 11am arrival, commence Ramble, then 12 noon BYO lunch, 3pm departure
- Toilet available in the house – Easy walk on flattish land – Bring your own chair, lunch, etc.

For further information contact Roslyn Norrie, ph. 021 838 104, email roslynnorrie@gmail.com.

2025 John Child Bryophyte and Lichen Workshop: 30 October – 4 November

We are pleased to announce that the 2025 John Child Bryophyte and Lichen Workshop will be held in coastal North Otago from 30 October to 4 November.

This is an annual workshop which is open to anyone interested in mosses, liverworts and/or lichens, from beginners to experts. Beginners are especially encouraged. We will have daily field trips to a variety of sites, followed by opportunities to examine and identify material. Some microscopes will be available. There will be short evening talks including the Tom Moss Award for the best student presentation. If you are interested please contact Jess Paull, who is coordinating the talks: jessica.paull@postgrad.otago.ac.nz.

Accommodation

Accommodation is booked at Camp Iona, Herbert, 25 km south from Oamaru.

Details of the camp can be found at: <https://www.campiona.co.nz/> The camp is right beside a DOC reserve and there will be plenty of opportunities to look at Mosses, Liverworts and Lichens nearby.

Meals will be provided. Arrival time is after 3.00pm on 30 October. Departure is by 11.00am on 4 November.

What we need from you now

Please pass this on to your friends and colleagues. We will have plenty of room for extras,

Please email back with one of the following:

- Please take me off the email list for future circulars
- I am unlikely to attend but want to keep getting the circulars
- I hope to attend
- I am definitely planning to attend

Let us know what your main interest is, if you have field trip sites you would like to visit, or a habitat you are really keen to explore.

We're looking forward to exploring our local microflora with you.

Ngā mihi nui,

Allison Knight and Maia Mistral-Armour

UPCOMING EVENTS

If you have events or news that you would like publicised via this newsletter please email the Network (info@nzpcn.org.nz), prior to the published copy deadline, with details of meetings, field trips or other events taking place during the following month or later. The deadline for copy for the following month's *Trilepidea* is at the top of the front page of each issue.

If you intend to participate in one of the advertised botanical society meetings or field trips please check with the relevant society beforehand to confirm that the published details still stand.

Auckland Botanical Society

Meeting: Wednesday 9 July at 7.30pm. **Speaker:** Dr Edwin Rose. **Topic:** Lucy Cranwell Lecture – Reading the World.

Venue: Unitec, School of Natural Sciences, 139 Carrington Road, Mt. Albert (Gate 4, Building 115, Level 2, Room 2017). Access via carpark ramp.

Field Trip: Saturday 19 July to Awaruku Reserve, plus another Torbay site. **Leader:** Brittney Pearce.

See website <https://sites.google.com/site/aucklandbotanicalsociety/> for further details.

Waikato Botanical Society

Field Trip: Saturday 12 July to Hammond Park Gully, Hamilton. **Leader:** Clare Jackson, email clare@greenfootprint.co.nz, ph. 021 103 5755.

Meeting: Monday 21 July at 6.00pm. Members talks based on a botanical/environmental book. **Venue:** The Links Centre, corner Te Aroha Street and River Road, Hamilton East.

Rotorua Botanical Society

Field Trip: Sunday 6 July to Pokere (Tablelands QEII Covenant). **Meet:** Rotorua carpark at 7.00am or at 729 Tablelands Road, Opotiki, at 9.00am. **Grade:** Medium. **Leader:** Hori Barsdell, email horihawetib@protonmail.com, ph. 027 634 8958.

Wellington Botanical Society

Field Trip: Saturday 5 July to Porirua Scenic Reserve: Te Ara Utiwai. **Meet:** 9.30 am at the Raiha Street carpark just north-east of Camp Elsdon. **Leaders:** Leon Perrie 027 419 1378/ leon.perrie@tepapa.govt.nz; Lara Shepherd lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz.

Workbee: Saturday 12 July. at Te Mārua Bush, Upper Hutt. **Bring weeding gear:** gloves, kneeler and your favourite weeding tools. **Meet:** 9.30 am at Te Mārua Bush on Twin Lakes Road, 250 metres north of Te Mārua Store. **Leaders:** Glennis Sheppard 04 526 7450; Sue Millar 04 526 7440.

Meeting: Monday 21 July. **Speaker:** Jane Humble. **Topic:** Contemporary Botanical Illustration. **Venue:** Victoria University, Wellington, Lecture Theatre M101, ground floor Murphy Building, west side of Kelburn Parade.

Nelson Botanical Society

Field Trips/Meetings: Please refer to the website: <https://www.nelsonbotanicalsociety.org/trips-meetings>.

Canterbury Botanical Society

Field Trips/Meetings: Please refer to the website: <https://canterburybotanicalsociety.org.nz/canterbury-botanical-meetings-field-trips> for current details.

Botanical Society of Otago

Meeting: Wednesday 2 July at 5.20pm. **Speaker:** Malcolm Rutherford. **Topic:** Conservation, Curiosity, and Kids in the 1769 Seed Archive. **Venue:** Zoology Benham Building, 346 Great King Road, Dunedin. From main entrance go to Benham Seminar Room 215 on second floor.

Meeting: Wednesday 9 July at 5.20pm. **Speaker:** Nicole Heaton. **Topic:** Cyanobacteria. **Venue:** Zoology Benham Building, 346 Great King Road, Dunedin. From main entrance go to Benham Seminar Room 215 on second floor.
