



# TRILEPIDEA

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ZEALAND PLANT CONSERVATION NETWORK

Please send news items or events to [events@nzpcn.org.nz](mailto:events@nzpcn.org.nz)

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

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## Message from the President

Several weeks ago a major report was issued by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment called *Living Beyond Our Means*. This report commissioned by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan was one of the most comprehensive assessments ever produced on the state of the earth and its ecosystems. Over 1360 experts worldwide were involved. The report makes fascinating and disturbing reading (see article later in this newsletter) with the stark warning that

*“Human activity is putting such strain on the natural functions of Earth that the ability of the planet’s ecosystems to sustain future generations can no longer be taken for granted”*

What happened to the report also makes fascinating and disturbing reading. The day after the report was released it featured prominently in the national media and was also headlined on Campbell Live. Suddenly the future of the world and our ability to survive was hot news. However, how long did it last? A few days at most and then it was assigned to last week’s news. Why does this happen with major issues such as this?

Whether it is the Millennium Assessment Report, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, or Kyoto we need to ensure the issues stay on the front page. We **can** all make a difference. NZPCN intends to contact key government agencies to find out what action if any the government plans to make. However, there is action we can all do at a local level.

As a first step, read the report. Send information on it to friends and family. We all have a part to play. Time is running out. We need to act now.

*Mike Oates*

## Plant of the Month



*Gunnera hamiltonii*.

Photo: Chris Rance

Plant of the month for June is the Nationally Critical *Gunnera hamiltonii*. This herb is endemic to sand dunes near Invercargill and along the western side of Stewart Island. It is found in consolidated damp sand, in dune slacks and swales. It is a creeping, stoloniferous, dioecious herb forming compact cushions. The Network fact sheet may be found at the following link:

[http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/vascular\\_plants/detail.asp?PlantID=18](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/vascular_plants/detail.asp?PlantID=18)

## **‘Restoring our threatened plant life – empowering our community’ - Network Conference 2005**

Information about the forthcoming Network conference 2005 can now be obtained from the Network website (look under Conservation Info). A registration form can be downloaded from the site although copies have already been sent to Network members. Please contact the Network ([info@nzpcn.org.nz](mailto:info@nzpcn.org.nz)) if you would like more copies of the form. Please let your friends and colleagues know about the conference and encourage them to come, learn and share ideas about the protection and restoration of our threatened plant life. Help with sponsorship and organisation of the conference would be very welcome – please contact David Given: [david.given@ccc.govt.nz](mailto:david.given@ccc.govt.nz)

## **Network Plant Conservation Awards 2005**

The New Zealand Plant Conservation Network has launched an awards scheme to acknowledge outstanding contributions to native plant conservation. A nomination form can be found on the website under Conservation info. We look forward to receiving your nominations for the various categories. Please bring this awards scheme to the attention of your colleagues and friends. The prize giving will be at the Network conference on the evening of Saturday 13 August 2005.

## **Living beyond our means**

### **Statement of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA)**

Initiated in 2001, the objective of the MEA was to assess the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being and the scientific basis for actions needed to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of those systems and their contribution to human well-being.

#### **Key messages**

- Everyone in the world depends on nature and ecosystem services to provide the conditions for a decent, healthy and secure life.
- Humans have made unprecedented changes to ecosystems in recent decades to meet growing demands for food, fresh water, fibre and energy.
- These changes have helped to improve the lives of billions, but at the same time they weakened nature's ability to deliver other key services such as purification of air and water, protection from disasters and the provision of medicines.
- Among the outstanding problems identified by this assessment are: the dire state of many of the world's fish stocks; the intense vulnerability of the 2 billion people living in dry regions to the loss of ecosystem services, including water supply; and the growing threat to ecosystems from climate change and nutrient pollution.
- Human activities have taken the planet to the edge of a massive wave of species extinctions, further threatening our own well-being.
- The loss of services derived from ecosystems is a significant barrier to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty, hunger, and disease.
- The pressures on ecosystems will increase globally in coming decades, unless human attitudes and actions change.
- Measures to conserve natural resources are more likely to succeed if local communities are given ownership of them, share the benefits and are involved in decisions.
- Even today's technology and knowledge can reduce considerably the human impact on ecosystems. They are unlikely to be deployed fully, however, until ecosystem services cease to be perceived as free and limitless, and their full value is taken into account.
- Better protection of natural assets will require co-ordinated efforts across all sections of governments, businesses, and international institutions. The productivity of ecosystems depends on policy choices on investment, trade, subsidy, taxation, and regulation, among other.

#### **What can we do about it?**

Some key steps available to reduce the degradation of ecosystem services

*Change the economic background to decision-making*

*Improve policy, planning, and management*

*Influence individual behaviour*

*Develop and use environment-friendly technology*

*Getting more from less*

*Taking nature's value into account*

*Business leadership*

*Local involvement and ownership*

*Nature at the centre*

For further information on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment check out the website

<http://www.millenniumassessment.org>

## **Marae based Plant Conservation Training Course**

NZPCN were recently granted funds from the Biodiversity Advice Fund to develop a marae-based native plant conservation course. This training course is intended to provide tools for iwi to achieve plant conservation outcomes and improve customary use of plant life. This project will assist with the implementation of Target 15 of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, which states that "The number of trained people working, with appropriate facilities in plant conservation, is increased, according to national needs".

In the initial stages of this project, feedback will be obtained from iwi as to how the course could best be developed. Preferences for course content, style and presentation will be discussed. A number of hui are to be run within New Zealand to obtain this feedback. The first of these hui is currently being organised in Northland and will take place in early July. Once the course structure has been decided, the education modules will be drafted and a pilot course developed.

## **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](mailto:events@nzpcn.org.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](mailto:Andi.cairns@jcu.edu.au)

**The Friends of the Wellington Botanic Garden, Winter Seminar Series Seminar Two 10 July 2005 9.30am - 4.30pm.** The Treehouse, Wellington Botanic Garden. Marking the Registration of the Wellington Botanic Garden by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

'Your House - Our Trees': the Importance of the Exotic Conifers in the Wellington Botanic Garden'. Winsome Shepherd and Walter Cook (Alexander Turnbull Library), 'Conifer Introductions to New Zealand in the 19th Century, and the Role Played by Wellington Botanic Garden and Early Scientific Institutions'.

Kerryn Pollock, 'The Wellington Botanic Garden and the Creation of Environmental Change in Colonial New Zealand: the Conifers'.

Keynote Speaker Dr. Jenny Aitkin (Forest Research Institute, Rotorua), 'Genetic Studies in Conifers and the Importance of the Wellington Botanic Garden: DNA Analysis and its Implications'. David Sole (Manager, Wellington Botanic Garden and Otari/Wilton Bush), 'Where to From Here? Managing the Conifers at the Wellington Botanic Garden'. Panel discussion and questions from the floor with Mike Oates (Chair), Dr. Jenny Aitkin, David Sole, Winsome Shepherd, Kerryn Pollock and Walter Cook.

Cost for the seminar: \$28 per person. \$20 for students. Includes refreshments and lunch. Registration for this seminars is essential. The last day to register is 30 May 2005. To register and/or for further information phone the Treehouse (04) 499 1400 or email [treehouse@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:treehouse@wcc.govt.nz).

**New Zealand Plant Conservation Network conference 2005: Fri 12 – Sun 14 August 2005**

- *'Restoring our threatened plant life – empowering our community'*. For more details see article above or visit the Network website [www.nzpcn.org.nz](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz) and look under Conservation Info/Events.

**National Conference of the Australian Network for Plant Conservation – Plant Conservation: the challenges of change. 26 September – 1 October 2005.** Adelaide Convention Centre, South Australia.

The Australian Network for Plant Conservation and the South Australian Department of Environment and Heritage invite you to Adelaide to exchange ideas and to participate in discussions on the challenges that currently face us all in plant conservation. Whether these challenges be of changing climates, environmental conditions, government and policy focus, or confronting scientific information, this conference will stimulate consideration and participation. The conference will appeal to all those involved in plant conservation from on-ground practitioners to researchers and policy makers. The Conference will include the following themes:

1. Extreme policy changes
2. Urban ecology
3. Revegetation & rehabilitation
4. Partnerships - partnering for plant conservation
5. Indigenous agendas and conservation

Further information will be posted on the conference website (address below) regarding the conference, associated workshops and a call for workshop topics. For further information contact: PLEVIN AND ASSOCIATES PTY LTD, PO Box 54, BURNSIDE SA 5066, Ph: +61 8 8379 8222 Fax: +61 8 8379 8177, Email: [events@plevin.com.au](mailto:events@plevin.com.au), Website: [www.plevin.com.au/ANPC2005](http://www.plevin.com.au/ANPC2005)