



TRILEPIDEA

Newsletter of the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network

No. 143

October 2015

Deadline for next issue:
Monday 16 November 2015

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, p. 2



Hebe armstrongii.
Photo: Peter de Lange

Magnificent and invasive; Favourite Plant and Worst Weed 2015: Have your say!!

Matt Ward, NZPCN Council Member (mattwardward@gmail.com)

Voting for 2015 Favourite Plant and Worst Weed commenced on 29 October and will run until 30 November. A button on the Home page of the Network website, when pressed, prompts voters through easy steps to cast their vote. An option of leaving a comment is also available and highly recommended. I usually publish some of these great comments to relay the feeling of your choices.

In 2014, 30% of the vote was for Bartlett's rata—*Metrosideros bartlettii*—as the favourite plant. This “Threatened—Nationally Critical” rata is rarer than kakapō and I think it may feature highly in the list once again. Some of the comments that this special species generated included:

“Any botanist worth their salt should take a pilgrimage to Te Pahi to see this spectacular tree.”

“Rata Moehau is magnificent - it exudes mana.”

“Iconic, massive, spectacular.”

Other past winners include: a unique filmy fern, *Hymenophyllum malingii*, pohutukawa, *Metrosideros excelsa* (twice); Cook's scurvy grass, *Lepidium oleraceum*; Chatham Island Christmas tree, *Brachyglottis huntii*; willowherb, *Epilobium microphyllum*; pingao, *Ficinia spiralis*; Chatham Island forget-me-not, *Myosotidium hortensia*; giant wire rush, *Sporadanthus ferrugineus*; and kauri *Agathis australis*. Will any previous winners triumph again?

In 2014, the worst weed according to 33% of the vote was the particularly pesky pest veldt grass *Ehrharta erecta*. This highly successful (or invasive, depending on your view) grass is now found in almost the whole of New Zealand, including montane environs. Voters had some pretty revealing things to say about this species; comments included:

“Just trying to control it in your garden is enough to make me swear but look at what it is doing to our coastal areas, forests and lowlands.”

“What a pox of a plant.”

“I loathe it—once it's established, short of napalming your property you just can't keep on top of it. And when the dust has cleared it will probably be the first thing to recover...”



Metrosideros bartlettii in bloom, Te Pahi.
Photo: Peter de Lange

PLANT OF THE MONTH – *HEBE ARMSTRONGII*



Hebe armstrongii. Photo: Gillian Crowcroft.

Plant of the month for October is *Hebe armstrongii*, an endemic whipcord hebe found in Canterbury. Growing in bog pine-dominated vegetation on river terraces, tarn margins and on islands within tarns, this species seems to require permanently damp or boggy ground. It is seriously threatened through loss of habitat and is nationally endangered. Of the two known populations, one has declined despite intensive management probably because the habitat has dried out.

Hebe armstrongii can reach 1 m high and has compact branches with scale like appressed leaves. If viewed only with a passing glance, it can look remarkably like the bog pine it grows alongside, but white flowers produced from October to January distinguish it immediately. Find out more about *H. armstrongii* at the Network factsheet at:

http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.aspx?ID=64

Being a relatively new part of our vote, there have only been a few contenders for the title of worst weed, other title winners were: Douglas fir, *Pseudotsuga menziesii* and tradescantia, *Tradescantia fluminensis*. Both of these are terrible plants for our native environment and ensure a lot of time spent attempting to control or eradicate them. It's very likely these species will again feature in 2015.

Start thinking about your favourite plant, and worst weed and place your votes. It will take a mere five minutes of your time to have your say. Anyone can vote as long as they have an email address. I'm hoping an orchid will win for the first time (hint, hint); one was second last year so who knows what will happen? Time will tell!!

Council member profiles (4)

Melissa Hutchison

Kia ora koutou. I am the Awards Convenor for the NZPCN. I developed a love of native plants and wild places growing up in the rugged Waitakere Ranges of West Auckland. After completing a BSc and MSc in Ecology at Massey University, and contracts with the Department of Conservation and Landcare Research, I travelled around Europe and worked as an entomologist with a conservation trust in southern England. In 2003, I moved to Christchurch to complete a PhD at the University of Canterbury, which involved three years surveying plant communities on the West Coast. Towards the end of my PhD, I began working part-time as an ecologist for NZ Landcare Trust, and then the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust. This opened my eyes to the highly threatened ecosystems of lowland Canterbury and the important on-the-ground conservation work being carried out by NGOs to protect and restore the small fragments that remain. I now work as an ecologist for Wildland Consultants in Christchurch. I am a keen cyclist and love tramping and exploring the mountains of the South Island. I also enjoy classical and baroque music (clarinet and recorder) and learning other languages, in particular Spanish, Japanese, and Te Reo Māori, which I have been studying for the last 3 years. I am also currently the webmaster for the Canterbury Botanical Society.



New Zealand Indigenous Flora Seed Bank (NZIFSB): Collections, communications, conservation and collaboration.

Jessica Schnell (J.L.Schnell@massey.ac.nz) and Craig McGill (C.R.McGill@massey.ac.nz)

Seed Bank website launched

An ongoing project for the seed bank has been the development of a website that will provide information on the project and how people can contribute to the project. The website has now been launched and can be accessed at http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/colleges/college-of-sciences/research/agriculture-environment-research/plant-sciences/new-zealand-indigenous-flora-seed-bank/new-zealand-indigenous-flora-seed-bank_home.cfm.

Thanks to Josie Brennan from Massey University who helped with the design and construction of the website.

Please feel free to forward the link to the website to anyone who may be interested in the project. We would also welcome feedback on the website.

Collections

A collecting trip to Flagstaff Reserve, Dunedin, was organised last month. It was led by Tom Myers, Dunedin Botanic Garden, and Craig McGill. The target species was manuka and it is great to have seed of this species from the Otago region in the seed bank as the family Myrtaceae is one of the priority groups for collection.



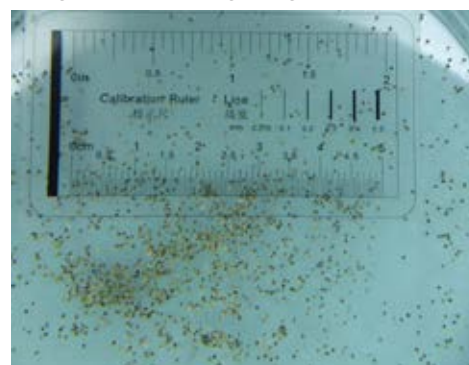
Flagstaff Reserve looking southwards from the Skyline Walkway towards Saddle Hill. Photos: Timmy Cooper.

Seed collecting team at Flagstaff Reserve (Lisa Short, Craig McGill, Lucy Parsons and Lucy Grigg).

Seed Processing Challenges

While the collecting programme for 2015 is winding down, processing of seed already collected is continuing. One of these collections, the recently rediscovered *Dysphania pusilla* has been causing the seed bank volunteers some interesting challenges. One has been to distinguish seed from vegetative material collected with the seed. The seed is around the size of a sand grain meaning magnification was required to enable the seed (including some seed missing its coat) to be separated from the debris. This is time-consuming work and testament to the skills and patience of the seed bank volunteers. The seed bank is always interested in botanical observations that will help with the collecting and banking of seed including sites of interest for seed collecting and, of course, offers of help with processing are always welcome.

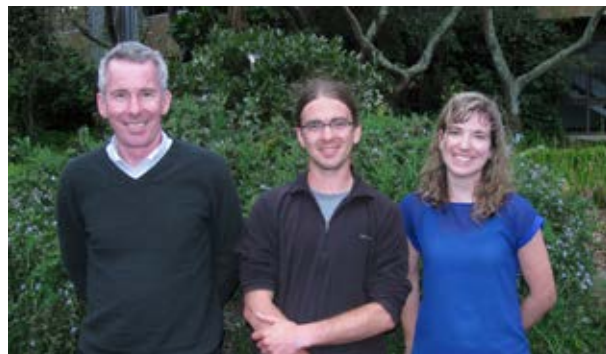
Please feel free to contact Jess with botanical observations, sites of interest for seed collecting, or if you are interested in taking part in a seed collecting workshop or becoming a volunteer at the seedbank.



Dysphania pusilla seed separated from vegetative material.

Seed Bank visitor: Sandro Pratesi from Pisa

On Tuesday 13 October, Sandro Pratesi from the Seed Bank of the Botanical Garden of Pisa took the opportunity to visit the seed bank while he is here in New Zealand. The visit began with a tour of the Dame Ella Campbell herbarium, which holds the herbarium specimens for the seed bank (the Allan Herbarium, Landcare Research, Christchurch, holds duplicate specimens). Sandro was also able to observe the use of the X-ray machine for determining seed quality and some of the seed germination assessment underway before visiting AgResearch to look at the seed drying room, cleaning facilities and seed store. The seed bank was pleased to be able to host Sandro and to learn about the methodology and practices used in the Pisa seed bank.



Craig McGill, Sandro Pratesi and Jess Schnell at Massey University Palmerston North.

Australian Network for Plant Conservation: Call for articles

We are seeking articles for the December 2015 – February 2016 issue of *Australasian Plant Conservation* (APC), the bulletin of the Australian Network for Plant Conservation (ANPC). The issue will have the theme “**Cryptogams**”.

There is increasing recognition of the role of cryptogams in ecosystems, but few conservation measures are directly focused on cryptogams. Articles that discuss the role and importance of cryptogams, or describe conservation initiatives are sought. Although fungi are no longer considered to be in the same Kingdom as the ‘true’ plants, they are still largely taught in the botany syllabus, and are regarded by the public as plants, so articles about fungi are also welcome. Lichens (lichenised fungi) play an important role in many ecosystems and are also of conservation interest. Other cryptogams include the bryophytes (mosses, liverworts and hornworts), and algae.

Articles generally should not exceed 1200 words and authors are encouraged to submit two or three high resolution images to illustrate their article.

We also welcome:

- book reviews;
- titles of interesting recent publications or resources, and where they can be found;
- conference, workshop, course and fieldwork announcements; details of relevant publications, information resources and websites.

Deadline for submissions for the December 2015 – February 2016 issue is Friday 13 November 2015. If you intend to submit an article or wish to discuss possibilities, please contact the APC Editor, Paul Adam (editor@anpc.asn.au). Please email your article to Paul, and note that guidelines for authors regarding APC style and scope are located on the ANPC website at <http://www.anbg.gov.au/anpc/apc/APCGuideContrib.pdf> (although these are currently being updated to correspond with the new APC format).

Your contributions would be very much appreciated. Please feel free to distribute this message to your relevant contacts and networks.

New Zealand plants overseas



On the banks of the River Saone, France, as part of the decorations at a summer festival site.

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):

Australian National Seed Science Forum

Australian Seed Bank Partnership: 14–16 March 2016. The Forum will be held at the Australian PlantBank hosted by the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, in collaboration with the Australian Network for Plant Conservation and the Australian Grains Genebank.

The Forum will commence with an evening event on Monday 14 March; the main science programme will be presented on 15–16 March 2016. The Forum will be a rare opportunity to bring together leading botanical and agricultural institutions, seed scientists and conservation and restoration experts to share ideas that showcase the importance of seed science to the future of plant conservation and food security in Australia.

An exciting programme of local and international experts is planned, speaking on seed conservation, storage, preservation and germination. More details on the National Seed Science Forum will be provided in the near future. Invited keynotes and a call for presentations will be announced soon.

Please share information on this Forum with your colleagues and through your networks.

Forum web pages: www.seedpartnership.org.au. Please email: info@seedpartnership.org.au to register for Forum announcements.

7th National Wetland Restoration Symposium 2016—Call for Presentations

“Wetlands for Life”: Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology from 10–12 February 2016. **Keynote speaker:** Ruud Kleinpaste, the highly engaging and entertaining “Bug Man”.

Field trips, practical training opportunities, soapbox sessions and presentations from a wide range of enthusiasts and professionals. The theme, Wetlands for Life, highlights the vital role of wetlands in providing life-supporting ecosystem services, and opportunities to engage our young people in a life-time relationship with one of our most valuable, yet depleted ecosystem types.

Session themes may include

- Maintaining essential ecosystem services
- Indigenous biodiversity of wetlands
- Engaging youth in wetland conservation and management
- Environmental education
- Citizen science projects and applications
- Communities restoring wetlands
- Advances in wetland science

The committee is now accepting abstracts from those wishing to give a presentation. 15 minute presentations are encouraged from wetland managers, students, iwi representatives, educators, NGOs, local and central government, and research agencies.

Further details will be on the Symposium website.

Registration: will open in November via www.wetlandtrust.org.nz

Thanks to our sponsors: DOC Arawai Kakariki Programme, DOC/ Fonterra Living Water programme, Wildland Consultants, Landcare Research.

Auckland Botanical Society

Meeting: Wednesday 4 November at 7.30 p.m. for a talk by Peter de Lange, DoC botanist, on his recent visit to Rangatira Island (South East Island), Chatham Islands – a nature reserve which was farmed until 1961. **Venue:** Unitec Room 115-2017.

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

Field trip: Saturday 21 November to Omaha Kahikatea Forest. **Leader:** Dave Wilson.

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

Field trip: Saturday 5 December to Wenderholm Regional Park for the Christmas Picnic/Field trip. **Leader:** Janeen Collings.

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

Kaipatiki Environment Centre

Nursery Bites: 1.00 -4.00 p.m. for seven Wednesdays from 7 October; practical nursery experience, learn to identify and grow native plants.

Tutor: Andrea Hunt, our Restoration Manager.

Waikato Botanical Society

Field trip: Saturday 14 November to Mangapu Kahikatea Remnants.

Leader: Thomas Emmitt, ph: 07 878 1055 (work) or 021 152 3030, email: temmitt@doc.govt.nz.

Field trip: Saturday 5 – Sunday 6 December to Mt Urchin and Tree Trunk Gorge, Kaimanawa Forest Park (combined with Rotorua Botanical Society).

See below for details.

Rotorua Botanical Society

Field trip: Saturday 5 – Sunday 6 December to Mt Urchin and Tree Trunk Gorge, Kaimanawa Forest Park (combined with Waikato Botanical Society). **Meet:** Saturday at 10.00 a.m. at the DOC campground located about 5 kms up Kaimanawa Road; Kaimanawa Road is about 16 kms south of Turangi. Some of us are going to be staying at the DOC campsite overnight. Sunday: same meeting point for those coming for the day. **Bring:** warm clothes, tents, sleeping bags, cooking gear, etc., if camping. **Grade:** easy.

Leader: Kerry Jones, ph: 07 855 9700 or 027 747 0733, email: km8j1s@gmail.com.

Wanganui Museum Botanical Group

Meeting: Tuesday 3 November at 7.30 p.m. for a talk by Graham and Lyn Pearson of Castlecliff Coastcare to introduce the field trip on 8 November. **Venue:** Davis Lecture Theatre.

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

Field trip: Sunday 8 November for an afternoon in Castlecliff dunes with Lyn and Graham Pearson and Castlecliff Coastcare. **Meet:** at 1.00 p.m., at Duncan Pavilion, Castlecliff Beach.

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

Meeting: Wednesday 2 December at 7.30 p.m., for the Christmas social function.

Venue: Davis Lecture Theatre's staffroom by the kitchen; details later.

Wellington Botanical Society

Field trip: Saturday 7 November to Hawkins Hill. **Meet:** at 9.00 a.m. at the Brooklyn turbine car park, up Hawkins Hill Rd, off Ashton Fitchett Drive, Brooklyn West.

Leader: Leon Perrie, email: leon.perrie@tepapa.govt.nz,
ph: 04 381 7261 (w), 027 419 1378;
deputy: Lara Shepherd, email:
lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz,
ph: 04 381 7379 (w).

Meeting: Monday 16 November at 7.30 p.m. for first a student presentation by Olivia Healey, Upper Hutt College, winner of BotSoc's NIWA Wellington Science Fair prize, on her project "How ecosystems affect native plants", followed by Paula Reeves, Ecologist, Waipa District Council, Waikato, who will talk on the botany of the Waikato.

Venue: Victoria University lecture theatre M101, ground floor Murphy Building, west side of Kelburn Parade. Enter building off Kelburn Parade about 20m below pedestrian overbridge.

Field trip: Saturday 28 to Sunday 29 November in the Featherston area. **Meet:** Saturday 9.30 a.m. at Dorset Square, Moore St, corner of SH2. **Accommodation:** Featherston Motels & Camping, 4 Fitzherbert St, Featherston, ph: 06 308 9852 (book via Google) \$12 pp/night for use of all facilities, otherwise \$8; or Race Track Ranch, SH2, Tauherenikau, \$16 pp/n (bring own sheets/pillow), ph: 06 308 9026 or 021 271 0364 (bookings must be made in advance) see www.travelbug.co.nz or email: wairarapa.racing@extra.co.nz. Pot luck dinner Saturday night.

Leader: Chris Hopkins,
ph: 04 528 5195, email
hopkinschris@extra.co.nz;
deputy: Sunita Singh,
ph: 04 387 9955, 027 405 2987,
email sunita@actrix.co.nz.

Nelson Botanical Society

Field trip: Sunday 15 November to Takaka Hill walkway. **Meet:** at the Church steps at 8.00 a.m. PLEASE register with the leader by Friday 13 November for our PLB protocols and also in case of cancellation.

Leader: Don Pittham
ph: 03 545 1985.

Canterbury Botanical Society

Meeting: Monday 2 November for a talk by Mick Bowie, titled 'Decline of vegetation and insects in Bankside' **Venue:** Upper Riccarton Library, 71 Main South Road.

Contact: Gillian Giller, email:
ggillerma1@actrix.gen.nz.

Field trip: Saturday 7 November to the wetlands and forest restoration on the Otuikaikino River.

Contact: Gillian Giller, email:
ggillerma1@actrix.gen.nz.

Field trip: Thursday evening, 12 November, to 4.00 p.m. Sunday 15 November for the Canterbury Botanical Society Spring Camp at Waiau. **Accommodation:** booked at the Lodge at the Waiau Motor camp; bunks \$27/night, single rooms \$30 to 36/night; \$30 reimbursement for car-pooling; pot-luck dinner on Friday and \$8 for a shared meal on Saturday night. **Bring:** your own breakfast, lunch, snacks, tea and coffee.

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

University of Canterbury – BIOL305-16SU1 Practical Field Botany

January 21-29: intensive, 8-day summer course designed to teach students and professionals basic skills in field botany field component with work before and after. Enrolment opens 6 October 2015.

Course coordinator and lecturer: Dr Pieter Pelsler, ph: 03 364 2987 ext 45605; email: pieter.pelsler@canterbury.ac.nz.

Otago Botanical Society

Meeting: Wednesday 4 November at 5.20 p.m. for a talk by Dr Alex Fergus titled 'Botanical adventures in the Russian Far East, from Japan to the High Arctic'. **Venue:** Zoology Benham Building, 346 Great King Street, behind the Zoology car park by the Captain Cook Hotel.

To get in: use the main entrance of the Benham Building and go to the Benham Seminar Room, Rm. 215, 2nd floor.

Field trip: Saturday 28 November to Black Rock Scientific Reserve. Meet: 9.00 a.m. at Botany Department car park.

Leader: John Barkla, ph: 03 476 3686, email: jbarkla@doc.govt.nz.
