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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 21. AUGUST 2005

Deadline for next issue: Monday 12 September 2005

Message from the New President

Going from strength to strength! That is what I see happening with the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. From that launch in Wellington just over two years ago, the Network has made extraordinary progress. One of the outstanding achievements has been the web page. I know from talking to people overseas that it seen as a unique web page that other countries aspire to do the same.

I have spent much of my life in Europe and have been back in New Zealand for a few years. Nature conservation has always been my passion and one of the last things I did in the U.K. was to establish a nature reserve (centred on an ancient woodland and acid grassland meadow at Chilworth Manor). Nature conservation continues to be my passion and that is why I put forward the idea for the Isaac Centre for Nature Conservation at Lincoln University. The Centre is an advocate for nature conservation, research and education. The education includes local programmes and two international Masters programmes in nature conservation and in sustainability.

Strong advocates are needed for plant conservation in New Zealand. I say this because in my experience, there are many parts of New Zealand where not only do native plants have a low profile or bad press but there continues to be unforgiveable damage and losses to our natural heritage.

Thanks to the dedication and careful planning by the Network Council, a great deal has been achieved in a short time for plant conservation in New Zealand. That is proof alone that the Network was needed. I look forward very much to working for the Network and with the Council but I do know that Mike Oates will be a hard act to follow. A network it is and clearly the success of this Network is the fact that many dedicated and knowledgeable people throughout New Zealand are working together with a common goal. Let's continue to do just that.

Ian Spellerberg

Director, Isaac Centre for Nature Conservation

Plant of the Month



Clianthus puniceus. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

Plant of the month for August is the Nationally Critical kowhai ngutu kaka or kakabeak (*Clianthus puniceus*). This is a shrub 0.8–3 m tall. Its exact habitat preferences are uncertain. The only known wild population grows in short coastal scrub on talus at the base of eroding mudstone (turbidite) cliffs. The few herbarium specimens that exist and historical writings suggest this species might have been endemic to Northland and the eastern Auckland portion of the Hauraki Gulf. The Network fact sheet may be found at the following link: http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/vascular_plants/detail.asp?PlantID=13

***‘Restoring our threatened plant life—empowering our community’*: Network Conference 2005**

Over 100 people attended the Network’s annual conference in Christchurch from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 August 2005. This was a great conference with talks on a variety of subjects such as the biology, ecology and conservation of the threatened *Olearia adenocarpa*, the future of the plant life of Canterbury, the work of the Banks Peninsula Trust and the Millennium Seed Bank at Kew (UK). A session was also devoted to hearing the views of four of Canterbury’s Loder Cup winners.

Workshops were held on a variety of subjects including the cultural use of plants and fungi, Targets 5 and 8 of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, on New Zealand fungi and on the cultivation of native plants. As always with events like this a lot of what happened was during the lunch and tea breaks when members had opportunities to discuss projects, share ideas and ‘network’.

A field trip to Motukarara Nursery and Kaitorete Spit, organised by Network members Nick Head and Anita Spencer (from the DOC), was a huge success and despite the southerly storm that passed through the night before the weather was kind.

We thank our sponsors for their support of the conference. They were: Boffa Miskell, Environment Canterbury, the Department of Conservation and the Selwyn Plantation Board. Many people assisted with this event but the conference committee were David Given, Nick Head, Bede Nottingham and Philip Grove and there efforts were much appreciated by all.



Nick Head describes the work of the Department of Conservation’s Motukarara Nursery to assist plant conservation in Canterbury. Photo: Jenny Lux.

‘Threatened Plants of New Zealand’ sponsored by MWH

MWH—an employee-owned engineering, environmental, technology and management consultancy with 700 specialists working from 19 offices around the country—announced at the annual conference that they are to sponsor the Network to produce a new book entitled “Threatened plants of New Zealand”. This book is to be published by Canterbury University Press. It will be



written by the Network and published in the next 12 months and used to promote plant conservation nationwide.

MWH’s New Zealand operation is one of the fastest growing consultancies in New Zealand and has trebled in size from the late 1990s. Operating from 19 local offices it is a leading provider of infrastructure consulting services and widely respected for its capability in roading, water, wastewater, planning, environmental and waste management. Network members may recognise MWH’s former names—Montgomery Watson, Royds Consulting and ER Garden—just some of the more recent names adopted over the company’s 100+ year history in New Zealand.



Mike Rudge (of MWH) and Ian Spellerberg (Network President) announcing the sponsorship of a new publication entitled “Threatened Plants of New Zealand”

Loder Cup winners speak of protecting plants

Four of Canterbury's past Loder Cup winners—Brian Molloy, Colin Meurk, David Given and Gerry McSweeney—gave presentations at the Network conference explaining what plant conservation



means to them. This was an inspirational session that ranged from the excellent work of the QE II Trust in protecting threatened plants, to managing a high country farm with nature conservation in mind. So often, awards such as the Loder Cup are made but the recipients are rarely asked what they think about the future, so it was wonderful to hear from this group of people about their perspectives on conservation.

Colin Meurk, Brian Molloy, David Given and Gerry McSweeney.

Inaugural Plant Conservation awards made by Network

The inaugural Network awards ceremony was held during the conference.

Council award: Environment Bay of Plenty won award for 2005 for the council making the greatest contribution to caring for plants. Environment Bay of Plenty received the recognition for restoring coastal dunes of the Bay of Plenty. "Their regional council has implemented the most important dune restoration and care programme in New Zealand" NZPCN President Ian Spellerberg said in announcing the awards. "They have successfully planted up hundreds of kilometres of dune systems. This has seen hundreds of thousands of native plants restored to coastal areas. The contribution they are making to sustainable coastal management is world class" he said.



School award: Lincoln High School won the award for the school making the greatest contribution to plant conservation by restoring a shingle pit. Sue Jarvis, teacher at Lincoln High School, received the award on behalf of the school and explained the process they had to follow in order to get the project going.



Plant Nursery Award: Oratia Plant Nursery in Auckland was named the top plant nursery. Geoff Davidson received the award for his establishing and managing Oratia Plant Nursery which grows and sells over 1000 species of native plant.



Individual Award: Peter de Lange, plant conservation scientist at the Department of Conservation in Auckland, won the award for making the greatest individual contribution to plant conservation. Peter was acknowledged for being at the forefront of threatened plant research for over 15 years.



Lifetime Achievement Award: David Given of Christchurch received a life time achievement award by the Network for his work over the past 30 years to promote and research native plants. David was the first person in New Zealand to develop threatened plant lists as a basis for prioritising effort for conservation. He has worked tirelessly to protect threatened plant life" Ian Spellerberg said at the awards ceremony.



Plant Conservation Award recipients, from top: Sara Brill receiving the Council award on behalf of Environment Bay of Plenty Dune Care Programme.

Pupils at Lincoln High School with the Schools award.

Geoff Davidson (of Oratia) receiving the Plant Nursery Award.

Peter de Lange receiving the Individual Award.

David Given receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Ewen Cameron wins Loder Cup

Ewen Cameron, botany curator of Auckland Museum, was this month awarded the Loder Cup by the Department of Conservation at a ceremony in Auckland. This was awarded for his outstanding contribution to botany and conservation. The Loder Cup was donated by English botanist Gerald Loder in 1926 to honour those who worked to 'retain, investigate and cherish New Zealand's incomparable flora. It is considered New Zealand's premier conservation award.

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):

“Meaning and design of nature for the urban built environment” conference: 24–26 August 2005

This conference is taking place at the Christchurch Art Gallery, from 24 to 26 August 2005. Earlybird registration ends on 31 July, so register now to benefit from the discounted rate. There has been a lot of interest expressed by people and numbers will be limited to 170 registrations. If you require a registration form, please contact me or download a form from the website, see <http://events.lincoln.ac.nz/urban>.

Botanical Society of Otago Evening meeting: Weeds & I; a weed-led tour of SE Australia, NW Queensland, and Southern New Zealand. Wednesday 24 August.

Start 5.20 p.m. A pictorial tour from Ian Radford. During the course of his research career, Ian has studied several weeds in depth, including *Hieracium* spp., and collected many botanical slides from far-flung places. These include the N Coast of NSW, the Northern Tablelands, Hunter Valley NW Slopes, Kosciusko National Park, Victoria and Tasmanian Alps, Townsville region and far North Queensland, and the high country of Southern New Zealand. 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 [Ian Radford](#), phone: (03) 479 9065.

Wellington Botanical Society Field trip: Ridge Track, Kaitoke Regional Park. Saturday 3 September.

See *Chionochloa conspicua*, terrestrial northern rata, beech / kamahi forest and manuka shrublands. Map S26, Carterton. Meet 9.30 a.m. at car park near Te Marua pumping station, Kaitoke Regional Park, Te Marua entrance from SH2. Leader: Leon Perrie 381 7261(w) 386 2618(h).

Auckland Botanical Society Evening Meeting: The genus *Ourisia*. Wednesday 7 September 2005 (from 7.30 p.m.).

Speaker: Dr. Heidi Meudt. *Ourisia* (Plantaginaceae; Scrophulariaceae sensu lato) is a genus comprising 28 species that are distributed in high-elevation habitats almost exclusively in the Southern Hemisphere. Recent field work and morphological and molecular studies have helped elucidate the systematics, evolution, and biogeography of the genus, as well as its placement within Scrophulariaceae s.l. Of the twenty-eight species recognised in *Ourisia*, 15 are from South America, 12 occur in New Zealand, and one is endemic to Tasmania. Talk to be held at: Unitec School of Natural Sciences, Building 023 Room 1018, Carrington Road, enter by Gate 3.

Botanical Society of Otago Field trip: Expedition to The Crater. Saturday 10 September, 2005.

Start time: 9.00 a.m. Expedition to The Crater, a bold ring of basalt in a schist landscape on the side of the Taieri Ridge. It's a steepish walk up through pasture to this 20 million year old volcanic remnant, to look for botanical relics in the ephemerally wet basin and on the craggy rim. Bring hand lens, lunch, plenty of water and all-weather gear. (Rain date Saturday 24 Sept). Meet at the Botany Dept Car Park at 9.00 to car pool. Contact [Robyn Bridges](#), phone: (03) 479 8244.

Open Day at Percy Scenic Resere, Lower Hutt. Sunday 18 September 2005.

Tours of the Alpine Collection & nursery and an opportunity to see the alpine rock garden. Tours start at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 12 noon. Phone Jill Broome ph 570 6505 for details.

Wellington Botanical Society Evening meeting: Teaching an old conservationist new tricks. Monday 19 September.

Speaker: Dr David Given, Botanical Services Curator for Christchurch City Council, and Associate Professor at the Isaac Centre for Nature Conservation at Lincoln University. This talk will look at new developments as well as some of the key issues of conservation that we are facing while taking us on a ride through some of the lesser known treasures of landscape, ecosystems and species. Dr Given is especially passionate about the role of people, and in particular the unsung heroes and heroines that make things work 'on the ground', as well as the challenge of making New Zealand's global commitments take on reality at the local level.

Waikato Botanical Society Field trip: Karangahake Gorge, Coromandel. Sunday 25 September.

A re-run due to cancellation last year. This trip will follow the Dubbo track in the Karangahake Gorge and explore old mineshaft entrances, a long rock railway tunnel and other restored mining relics. We will follow a loop track back along the Waitawheta River to the starting point, about 4 hours at an easy pace, plus botanising time. Bring torches for tunnel and mine entrances. Contact: Doug Ashby 07 862 4706 or dj.ashby@xtra.co.nz. Meet: At the L&P bottle by the Ohinemuri River at Paeroa by 9.30 a.m.

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:

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International conference on the implementation of the CBD Global Strategy for Plant Conservation: 22–25 October 2005.

To be held at the National Botanical Gardens of Ireland at Glasnevin (near Dublin, Ireland). To find out more please click the on the link: <http://www.plants2010.org>. (and follow 'registration'). Formal registration through the web should be available on Thursday 16 June.