

Canterbury Botanical Society (NZ) Inc.

Sixty-ninth Annual Report

June 2021 – May 2022

Officers and Committee

President: Tom Ferguson

Vice-President: Jason Butt

Secretary: Fay Farrant

Treasurer: Sue Stevens

Membership co-ordinator: Gillian Giller

Committee: Melissa Hutchison (website manager), Dean Pendrigh (newsletters), Alice Shanks (programme co-ordinator), Miles Giller, Ed Wilson, Paula Greer, Paula Godfrey, and Kate Campbell (resigned mid-term).

Meetings have been held in the meeting room of the Upper Riccarton Library, 71 Main South Road, Sockburn, and (owing to Covid-19 restrictions in the latter part of 2021) in the church hall of Knox Church, 30 Bealey Avenue. The Society AGM was held in the committee meeting room of the South City Library, 66 Colombo Street.

Monthly meeting programme

- June – **AGM** with presentation by **Lis Meyer**, North Carolina State University who spoke via Zoom on *The Wetland flora of North Carolina*.
- July – **Matt McGlone** on *What's cooking with kānuka?* Matt gave an entertaining talk looking into the genetic differences in de Lange's 10 species of kānuka.
- August – **Dr Rob Allen**, retired forest scientist, on *When to plant if restoring native forest*, including the challenges that Te Pua O Whirinaki Regeneration Trust discovered in their initial attempt at converting exotic plantation land back to indigenous forest.
- September – No meeting due to Covid-19 interruptions.
- October – **Nicholas Head**, Christchurch City Council Botanist, on *Piecing together the past to reset the future: a McLeans grassland case study*.
- November – **Dr Paul Broady**, Adjunct Senior Fellow, University of Canterbury, spoke on *Microbes and climate change*, climate change representing one of the biggest challenges that society as a whole will face in the future.
- December – **Peter Heenan** on *Te Reo Māori and botanical nomenclature naming systems as complementary to naming systems for New Zealand's flora. What is in a name?* A book sale was also conducted to raise funds for the society.
- March – **India McJarow-Keller** via Zoom on her MSc thesis entitled *The penwiper, Notothlaspi species*.
- April – **Marley Ford** via Zoom on his MSc research into the mycorrhizal associates of ramarama (*Lophomyrtus bullata*).
- May – **Lisa Danseur** via Zoom on her MSc (University of Otago) on the influence of the spatial distribution of microhabitat on invertebrate community composition in a New Zealand tussock grassland.

Monthly field trips

- July – **Nurseries of Canterbury**. We were able to visit a garden centre chain, where we saw potential pest plant species as well as a range of interesting native plant cultivars. We also visited Wai-Ora, where we saw their eco-sourcing practices, and Paul Michael at Fern Factor, learning about fern propagation and restoration planting.
- August – **Charteris Bay, Whakaraupō / Lyttelton harbour**. We visited my parents' 40 ha block in Charteris Bay and studied the grey scrub. The group then parted ways, with half looking at the interesting range of exotic plants at Orton Bradley while the other half went for a bryophyte hunt on the Teddington salt flats.
- September – **Hidden Valley, Purau**. Another Whakaraupō trip was led by Alice around Hidden Valley, a jewel in the harbour of some 72 ha, recently purchased by the Hidden Valley Conservation Trust. Several new exciting species observations were made and Brian Patrick caught a Winter Copper butterfly, which he intends to make the type specimen, and Hidden Valley the type locality.
- October – **McLeans Grasslands Reserves field day**. After our monthly talk from Nicholas Head about the McLeans Island grasslands, we went on a timely trip there to see the dryland turf communities with the highlight of seeing *Pterostylis tristis* in flower. Colin Meurk also treated us to a talk on the area. A patch of *Coprosma atropurpurea* was found on the edge of the water race, and Brian Patrick showed off the Blue Boulder Copper butterfly, a species recently translocated to Burnside Primary School.
- November – **Field trip to Castle Hill village and Mt Cloudsley**. Melissa led us on an alpine adventure up into scree country as we botanised Mt Cloudsley (2107 m), emerging from mountain beech forest scattered with helmet orchids we were treated to scree plants such as *Ranunculus haastii*, *Veronica pulvinaris* and our emblematic *Notothlaspi rosulatum* (penwiper).
- Spring Camp – **Kaikoura, based at the Wai-Ora Farm, Rakautara**. Day 1 – Urupa Bush at Mangamaunu was botanised, then we headed up Blue Duck Valley Road where we botanised a farm before heading on to Blue Duck Scenic Reserve where the forked fern *Tmesipteris elongata* and orchid *Pterostylis irsoniana* were notable, as well as seeing nikau (*Rhopalostylis sapida*) and mature rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) in an old-growth podocarp forest. Day 2 – Puhi Peaks Station was a very special place. Interesting species included *Olearia hectorii* and *Carmichaelia glabrescens*. Day 3 – The Hāpuku wetland was botanised, followed by a kōwhai/broadleaf woodland on Bay Paddock Road, where we saw poroporo (*Solanum aviculare* var. *aviculare*). Our last stop was the Mt Fyffe wetland, home to a large population of *Astelia grandis*.
- December – Rained off
- January – **Christchurch Botanic Gardens**, Summer Picnic with a visit to the limestone area and newer plantings, including the highlights *Australopyrum calcis* subsp. *optatum*, *Ranunculus callianthus*, and *Gentianella calcis* subsp. *taiko*.
- February – Rained off
- March – **Recreating indigenous forest in Diamond Harbour**. Pete Ozich led the Society on a return trip from Diamond Harbour to Purau. Pete has been using novel approaches to forest restoration by targeting certain pest plants (banana

passionfruit in particular, as well as old man's beard) but leaving other (such as boneseed and broom as nurse crops to suppress grass).

- April – **Waikākāriki / Horseshoe Lake Reserve**. An interesting mixture of both native and exotic species with a disturbing find of a particularly large great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*). William Reinders, a keen batologist [one who studies brambles. Ed.] introduced us to the interesting world of blackberries. *Juncus* species identification was practised, native plant enthusiasts saw the swamp nettle (*Urtica perconfusa*) by the lake, with beautiful turfs of the native silverweed (*Argentina anserinoides*).
- April – **Nature City Challenge on iNaturalist**. A small group participated in a trip from the Sign of the Bellbird to Orongomai Reserve, with lichen being a key part of the trip. Highlights included an untracked adventure through Cass Peak Reserve and a healthy population of *Aciphylla subflabellata*.
- May – **Korowai Torlesse Tussocklands Park**. The day was started at Lake Lyndon, where we met up with a group of keen botanists from the West Coast. *Myosotis brevis* was a particularly interesting find on the lake shore. We then drove down the Lyndon Road until we were beside the ephemeral tarns. An interesting find was *Carmichaelia crassicaulis* before Jason led us to some alpine tarns. Species seen included *Oreobolus pectinatus*, *Herpolirion novae-zelandiae*, *Brachyscome sinclairii*, and *Lilaeopsis novae-zelandiae*. Of note was the damage caused by recreational vehicles and trail bikes, sad treatment of an ecologically significant site.

Submissions and correspondence

- A submission on the Proposed Waimakariri District Plan was made, based on feedback from the Committee.
- A submission was made to the Ashburton District Council on the 30 year plan of Lake Camp and Lake Clearwater in the Ashburton Lakes area.
- A submission was made on the definition of a “natural wetland” in relation to consultation by the Ministry for the Environment for proposed amendments to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 and Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020.
- The Society had expected to present a submission to the Proposed Selwyn District Plan. However, this has been delayed until August 2022.

Membership

At the end of the 2021-2022 subscription year there were 159 paid memberships (individual, family and student) and 8 life members. During the year 19 new members were welcomed to the Society. There were 12 resignations.

In March one of the Society's life members passed away. Kath Lake was in her nineties and whilst she had not attended meetings for many years, she continued to be interested in what was happening. When she was an active member, Kath's superb organisational skills were invaluable. Her enthusiasm for botany was shared with many new members. She had a special love for alpine plants. The Society is fortunate to have had Kath as a member.

Awards

Dean Pendrigh is being awarded the Senior Bledisloe for his continuing contributions as our longstanding newsletter editor.

No Junior Bledisloe is being awarded this year. However, a student grant was awarded to Georgia Steel at the University of Canterbury, who is studying the role nursery potting soils in the spread of microorganisms, specifically fungi and oomycetes. To do this Georgia will look at *Leptospermum scoparium* (mānuka) and *Kunzea ericoides* (kānuka) from nurseries and field sites across Canterbury and Otago to compare their root-associated microbial communities.

Due to the ongoing disruptions caused by Covid-19, the 2021 Westland / Canterbury Science Fair was not held.

Facebook and website

Our social media presence on Facebook is increasingly reaching people across the world, with 639 followers at last count. Technology is an important part of connecting with the botanical community across the country, with many followers from other regional botanical societies. Melissa has updated the membership page on our website:

<http://canterburybotanicalsociety.org.nz/membership>

Canterbury Botanical Society Journal

We're thrilled with how the 52nd Journal turned out, especially considering it was edited and proofread in the midst of a Covid-19 lockdown. I admire the cover of *Tupeia antarctica* on my bookshelf daily. I'd like to thank journal scientific editor John Clemens, journal technical editor Joy Talbot, and journal reviewer Bryony Macmillan for the many hours of work they put into the Journal's publication. Of note in the Journal was Brian Patrick's "Indigenous hostplants of New Zealand's endemic Lepidoptera", a culmination of Brian's life work which we were excited to publish.

Committee

The Society could not run as it does without its hard-working committee. Although our regular committee meetings rarely take less than two hours to run, Secretary Fay's organisational skills keep the agenda to the point, and her minutes help keep us focused on our mission. Treasurer Sue keeps our financial records and reports easy to follow, and keeps the Society in good financial stead. Membership Coordinator Gillian has helped keep our membership growing and tirelessly chases up annual subscriptions from the more forgetful, like me. Programme Coordinator Alice keeps finding interesting speakers and exciting places to botanise. Miles is responsible for helping the Society access some locations we would otherwise struggle to see, and he is also organising our upcoming Spring Camp near Lake Coleridge, which I'm very excited about. Melissa has been our tech savvy Webmaster maintaining our website, Facebook and our emails, keeping us from the dreaded spam. Jason has been a great Vice-President, running the December meeting when I was sick and being the resident wetland plant expert. Dean has been a patient newsletter editor and is well deserving of the Senior Bledisloe this year. Paula Greer as Past President has been a reassuring presence; her confidence is resolute. Paula Godfrey has been full of energy and bright ideas, and we look forward to her representing the Society in our Selwyn District Council submission. Ed has proved himself to be great at the use of technology such

as those pesky projector-laptop connections, and has really shone in our Covid-19 response, checking vaccine passes and organising scans. We wish Kate all the best in her new adventure in Wellington. On that note, we are looking for expressions of interest for new committee members, and look forward to growing our organisational whanau.

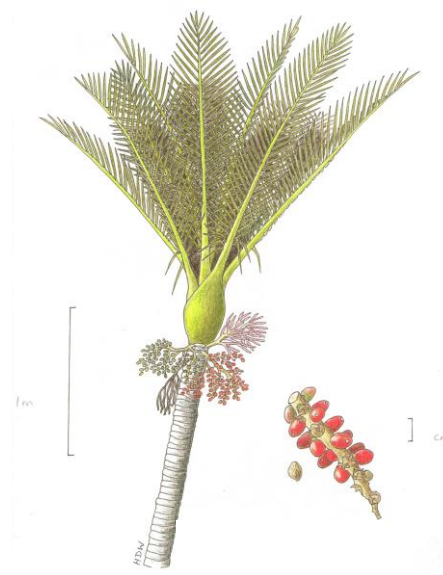
President's last word

What makes the Canterbury Botanical Society so special? Below are our objectives:

- a) To promote the study of botany with the emphasis on New Zealand flora.
- b) To promote the preservation of New Zealand plants and the natural habitat of those plants, to encourage public interest in this, and to co-operate with Public Authorities and others in the attainment of this object.
- c) To disseminate current scientific information specific to New Zealand botany.
- d) To co-operate with other organizations having similar objects to those of the Society.
- e) Generally to do all that is necessary to promote and protect the interests of the Society and to do such things as are incidental thereto, or which the Society may determine as being conducive to any of the foregoing objects.

From what I can gather, our values are scientific and conservation minded, we're knowledge based, and we're not a gardening group. I think that's important. Another strength of our Society is our belief in working together with other organisations; we believe in the benefits of collaboration. This has been an exciting year with the publication of our past journals on the NZPCN website, <https://bts.nzpcn.org.nz/search/?publisher=19766>, an invaluable resource and something I'm excited we're sharing with the world. One of the reasons I find the Canterbury Botanical Society so special is the fellowship. I'm reminded of the whakataukī or proverb "kia uru kahikatea te tū", which literally translates to "stand as a grove of kahikatea". As those familiar with the tree will know, a grove of kahikatea will support one another, becoming the tallest of our native trees, their roots intertwining. I see us as a stand of kahikatea, young and old supporting one another, together we can weather any storm. As we face Covid-19 in our communities and the sobering realities of climate change, I'm proud to stand with you and I'm proud of what we believe in. **Kia uru kahikatea te tū.**

Thank you,
Tom Ferguson
President



Rhopalostylis sapida. nikau palm.
Drawing by Hugh Wilson.