

**CHRIS ECROYD –  
LIFE MEMBER OF THE ROTORUA BOTANICAL SOCIETY**

John Hobbs

Chris Ecroyd has been elected Life Member of the Rotorua Botanical Society in 2008 for his “Contributions to the Botany of the Central North Island”.

Chris came to the Forest Research Institute (FRI) in 1974 as Curator of the FRI Herbarium. Chris has taken the herbarium from a small collection of about 9,000 specimens in the back of the old Silviculture House to a more modern, fully databased specialised collection of about 26,000 specimens in specially constructed air-conditioned rooms in the basement level of “Stage 3”. He has also built up a specialised library of botanical books on plants from around the world.

In addition to the main job of identifying and cataloguing the plant specimens from around the country (including other national herbaria), Chris carried out contract research for Department of Conservation into various aspects of the wood-rose (*Dactylanthus taylorii*), culminating in the discovery of the pollinating agent (the native short-tailed bat) and in doing so obtained some valuable film footage of the possums and rats which threatened the well-being of this endangered parasitic plant. In all Chris has written or co-authored over twenty papers or notes on various aspects of the biology of *Dactylanthus*. Other threatened species in which Chris has written papers on are *Pittosporum turneri*, *Calochilus robertsonii* and *Caleana minor*. He has also written notes on a diverse range of subjects from Cyberbotany to new plant discoveries for both the Rotorua and the New Zealand Botanical Society Newsletters.

Chris is the senior author of the Rotorua Botanical Society’s “Annotated List of Vascular Plants in the Rotorua Lakes Ecological District “ (Special Issue No. 1) and co-compiler of another major publication “The Botany of Rotorua”. He is also involved in the

compilation of the soon to be produced Special Issue No. 2 which lists the indigenous and adventive species by Ecological District for the Bay of Plenty.

Chris is a foundation member of the Rotorua Botanical Society which was formed at the inaugural meeting at his residence in February 1984. He served as Secretary for three years (1984-1986); Vice President for about 8 years and President for at least 2 years and he has served on the committee for 23 years (1984-2007) and still helps with the Newsletter as a sub-editor.

Chris has done sterling work in raising funds for the Society in managing the sales of copies of the Botany of Rotorua and in encouraging donations for other publications.

Besides his botanical interests Chris enjoys the outdoors as a keen tramper and hunter and served for many years on the committee of the Rotorua Branch of Forest and Bird.



**Figure 2: Chris Ecroyd receiving his life membership certificate from RBS President John Hobbs and outgoing Secretary Jenny Lux.**