

JOHN LAWRENCE NICHOLLS MNZM

2nd December 1920 – 19th August 2010

John Nicholls, one of the founding members of the Rotorua Botanical Society passed away on the 19th August 2010. John was very active in the early years of the Botanical Society in the 1980s, imparting to members his vast knowledge of forest ecosystems in the Central North Island. As well as botanical society trips many current members have also worked with John at one time or another. He was a great workmate and generously imparted his encyclopaedic knowledge of New Zealand's forests to another generation of ecologists who were privileged to work with him.

John was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) in 2004 for services to ecology and forest research. John's contributions were also recognised with life membership of the New Zealand Ecological Society, and life membership of the Rotorua Botanical Society.

His achievements are well summed up by Tony Beveridge in the book "*Characters of FRP*" - "John's work on identifying a nationwide system of ecological areas must be numbered as one of the genuinely heroic, but unsung, research efforts of the 1970s and '80s. Not only did he play a major role in developing the philosophy for representative natural areas in New Zealand, but he, almost single-handedly, identified, mapped, described, and defended before a high-powered multi-disciplinary committee, close to 150 ecological areas totalling over 300,000 ha. The memorial to his efforts lies not in papers in science journals, but in enduring native forest landscapes." Tony goes on to say that "it is unlikely that John's encyclopaedic knowledge of New Zealand native forest composition and species distribution on a national scale will ever again be known to a single person."

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