

Meeting & Trip Reports

Brief reports, Sept – Dec 2004

Allison Knight

- 5 Oct, **Dr Dave Kelly** the 2004 Leonard Cockayne Memorial Lecture, also talked to the BSO on: -*The current state of bird-plant mutualisms in New Zealand* Plants adapted for pollination by birds, such as *Peraxilla*, *Fuchsia*, *Sophora* and *Phormium* are at risk if bird numbers decline. More importantly, 70% of the 240 woody species in New Zealand have fleshy fruits but the kereru is the last surviving bird with a beak big enough to swallow large seeds. This presents a bigger problem for dispersal and replacement.
- 18 Sept, **Dr Lisa Russell** led an interesting exploration of the sea shore at **Shag Point**, to examine seaweed growth forms and communities in the intertidal zone. Chris Hepburn has supplied some excellent photos of named seaweeds, from this trip for our website, including *Durvillaea*. There are shots of the people and scenery as well, so take a look.
- 13 Oct, BSO **3rd Annual Geoff Baylis Lecture, *A modern taxonomist in a postmodern era - Servant or Master*** Our distinguished speaker was **Henry Connor**, DSc, FRSNZ, co-author of *Flora of New Zealand Volume V, Grasses*. Dr Connor said, among other pearls, that it was easy to just describe a new species, or rename an old one and move it around, (as Michael Heads did with *Hebejeebie* BSO Newsletter 36, 2003), because this avoids fitting it into a key to all related species. He emphasised that a master taxonomist should always think of the users needs
- 11 Nov, **Beatrice Hale**, author of 'The New Zealand Pleasure Garden' talked on *Plants with a Purpose*, and broadened our horizons on the uses of plants.
- 3-4 Dec. **Postponed**. Weekend trip to see the fabulous **fossil forest at Piko Piko**, with Geologist **Dr Daphne Lee**. Hopefully this trip will be rescheduled for 2005.
- 8 Dec. **Diane Campbell-Hunt** spoke on *Developing an urban sanctuary - the Karori Experience*, and it's relevance to the proposed Orokonui Sanctuary.
- 28 Dec 04 – 6 Jan 05. **Wellington Botanical Society Summer Trip**, based at **Staveley**, Western Canterbury. Three keen BSO members joined the Wellington crowd for 8 glorious days of botanising from the kettle holes of Spider Lakes and the banks of the Rakaia River to the alpine tops of Mt Hutt, Mt Somers and Little Mt Peel. Vascular highlights included the cryptic penwiper, *Notothlaspi rosulatum* and the golden *Ranunculus haastii* in full flower on the scree slopes of Mt Hutt. Finding the genuinely rare lichen *Ramalina pollinaria* by the track to Sharplin Falls was another highlight, as it is known from only 2 other sites in New Zealand.