

## Book review

FLORA of NEW ZEALAND LICHENS. David J. Galloway, 1985.  
New Zealand Government Printer. 662 pages, \$39.95.

Yes, its out at last! Over ten years since preparation began, David Galloway's lichen flora is now available and promises to put much needed new life into cryptogamic botany in New Zealand.

This is the first, comprehensive, modern account of the lichen flora of any southern hemisphere country ( the Aussies are planning to follow suit ), and will be widely sought after and used by lichenologists world wide. It is an extremely valuable summary of the status quo and includes contributions from several Europeans lichen specialists, as well as David's major reviews and compilations.

David is very well aware of the rapid pace of lichen taxonomy at the moment; that already certain genera have been substantially revised and more are following, mainly in the crustose group; and that New Zealands lichens are still incompletely known taxonomically. David estimates that the 966 taxa in 210 genera described in his flora represent about 60 percent of the total lichens to be found in New Zealand. The remaining 40 percent are mostly within microlichen and crustose groups that till recently have been neglected worldwide. Users can be confident however, that virtually all the common and larger foliose and fruticose forms are in this account. The lichen

The lichen flora is the same format and size, though somewhat, fatter, as the three previous flora volumes on vascular plants. It includes a very instructive account of the history of lichenological exploration in New Zealand; annals of taxonomic research on New Zealand lichen with over 250 references; and a 28 pagekey to the genera. The bulk of the flora however, contains species descriptions and keys within each genus, together with notes on their distribution within New Zealand and abroad. As an example of how poorly known are our crustose lichens, David includes descriptions of about 154 'endemic' species, almost all crustose, that are known from their type specimens.

For most New Zealanders the success of this Flora depends on its usefulness in identifying lichens. This, for most of us, hinges on the workability of the 'Key to Genera'. At the recent lichen workshop held at Lincoln to mark the Flora's appearance, this key tested by botanists of very varied backgrounds. Virtually everyone found this key to be fairly easy to follow, at least once they had mastered the lichen terminology. There is a very useful ten page glossary at the back of the flora, but the lack of illustrations and diagrams, as with other flora volumes, is a considerable impediment. We recommend that the flora be used in conjunction with a general introductory guide such as Hale's 'How to know the Lichens' (Pictured Key Nature Series, 1979) and Martin and Child's beautifully illustrated 'New Zealand Lichens' (Reed, 1972), unfortunately out of print, for these will greatly assist with the morphological terminology and generic concepts.

Once you become familiar with their diagnostic characters, it is possible to easily identify many lichens, especially the larger ones, in the field. There will always be those taxa, however, especially the microlichens and crusts, that for identification will require laboratory techniques, such as chemical colour tests, crystal tests, fruiting body sections, and spore squashes, less familiar to vascular plant taxonomists. Don't be deterred, these are not as difficult to master as they might first appear.

David Galloway must be congratulated for this major contribution to New Zealand botany. It now falls on us to use it to full advantage.

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Aims of the Society:

' To promote interest in the study of botany especially that of New Zealand and in particular the native flora of Canterbury. '

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE CONVERSATION OF WILD PLANTS

It is hoped that all members will adhere to this simple code

- 1 Do not completely uproot whole plants, or remove large pieces of plants of uncommon species.
  - 2 If you wish to cultivate native plants, start with seeds or cuttings only.
  - 3 Do not light fires in the open.
  - 4 Do not take domestic pets.
  - 5 Do not carry firearms.
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