

reserve at Medbury, North Canterbury, are also healthy. It is proposed to introduce the *Leptinella* into other suitable conservation areas in Hurunui.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Information about the history of the discovery and loss of *Leptinella filiformis* has been taken from a pamphlet issued by the Department of Conservation (July 2001).

### SURVIVAL OF A SCARCE PLANT, *LACHNAGROSTIS BILLARDIEREI*, ON OTAMAHUA/QUAIL ISLAND

COLIN BURROWS

A large grass, *Lachnagrostis billardierei* (coastal wind grass), that was once widespread on South Island coasts, but is now reduced to small, scattered populations, through habitat loss and disturbance, is very rare on Otamahua. Its habitat is on the outer margins on some cliff ledges with overhangs. It grows on mounds of mainly silty material consisting of redeposited loess and weathered particles from volcanic conglomerate. The mounds ("mini dunes") probably mainly form as the component material is carried down the cliff-faces by seeping water, which then drips from the overhang. The grass can survive a degree of burial by extending its shoots upwards as the "mini-dune" accumulates.

Although the ledges are relatively safe from disturbance now that rabbits are gone from the island, the *Lachnagrostis* remains vulnerable. Only six individual clumps are present and no young plants have been seen; accidents could deplete or eliminate them. Some attempts should be made to propagate this species vegetatively and from seeds in order to establish it on other suitable sites.