

# Summer Camp based at Charleston, Buller District, Nelson 14 – 16 February 2014

Warren Jowett

*Sedges have edges, rushes are round, grasses have joints, all the way down.*

*Freddy Fungus and Alice Alga were living together  
in syn...biosis  
and lichen it.*

*But now their marriage is on the rocks.*

## Day 1 Friday 14 February 2014

Paul Maurice

A damp start did not put our large enthusiastic group off preparing for a day's walking in beautiful terrain and seeing many plant species unfamiliar to those of us who live on the east side of the country. The weather improved as the day went on, with some sunshine in the afternoon.

Alice first took us down to Constant Bay, where we were shown the Nationally Endangered (and somewhat unspectacular) *Lepidium flexicaule*. An attractive rush caught my attention along the roadside, which was identified, with Melissa's help, as the exotic *Juncus lomatoophyllus*. The handsome native umbrella sedge, *Cyperus ustulatus*, was also growing here and the pink and white flowers of *Calystegia soldanella* were noted on the beach.

A short way north up the coastal track brought us to a rocky ridge with some species-rich patches of coastal turf. Here, Alice showed us *Gentianella scopulorum*, the Charleston gentian, a Nationally Critical northern Westland endemic. Although flowering had finished, we were able to admire a healthy population of this plant. See [www.nzpcn.org.nz](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz) for the features that distinguish it from the similar, but much commoner, *G. saxosa*. Other interesting species seen on the turf were *Leptinella dioica* ssp. *dioica*, *Selliera radicans*, *Samolus repens*, *Lobelia angulata*, and *Schoenus concinnus*.

After lunch (yes, it took us all morning to do a "15-minute walk" up the coastal track!) we drove a short distance north to Four Mile Road car park, with the aim of walking back, on the coastal side of the highway, to Constant Bay. Here, we were traversing pakihi for quite some time. This is a vegetation community unfamiliar to me and is basically a wet heath with a raised water table due to previous burning off of forest cover. Species characteristic of this community were seen, including *Leptospermum scoparium*, *Coprosma tenuicaulis*, *Epacris pauciflora* (flowering nicely), *Dianella nigra*, *Lepidosperma australe*, *Empodisma minus*, *Gahnia rigida*, *G. xanthocarpa*, and various species