

## Threatened plant Garden

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Special Southland plants included *Olearia hectori* and *O. fragrantissima*. Among the threatened grasses and sedges were *Deschampsia caespitosa*, *Carex tenuiculmis* and *Chionocholea spiralis*. Rare and threatened shrubland plants included *Pittosporum obcordatum*, *Meliclytus flexuosus*, *Teucrium parvifolium* and *Helichrysum dimorphum*. Coastal plants seen were *Gunnera hamiltonii*, *Euphorbia glauca* and *Lepidium oleraceum* (Cook's scurvy grass).

Other plants seen, some from offshore islands, were *Myosotis capitata*, *Brachyglottis stewartiae*, *Pratia avencinia*, *Aciphylla dieffenbachii* (soft, not spiky), *Geranium traversii*, *Muehlenbeckia euphedroides*, *Carmichaelia astonii*, *Uncinia strictissima* (very rare), *Brachyglottis compacta* and *Pimelia crosby-smithii*, with flowers smelling like honey.

Highlight was a treat of sausage rolls from Chris and scones again from Jenny Gamble, plus a handful of seeds of *Aciphylla dieffenbachii* for each of us to try and germinate.

## Otatara Reserve

The third site visited was Otatara Scenic Reserve. Otatara is based on an ancient sand-dune system up to 6,000 years old. The reserve is in an urban setting, and consists of a coastal totara and totara-matai dominated forest, in the middle of which is a wet area largely made up of manuka. It is managed by the Invercargill City Council and has a good standard track. Parts of the reserve are heavily infested with weeds, notably Chilean flame creeper, blackberry and sycamore.

Plants noted were *Podocarpus totara*, *P. hallii* and hybrids, *Dacrydium cupressinum*, *Prumnopitys taxifolia*, *Dicksonia fibrosa*, *Myriophyllum triphyllum*, *Coprosma lucida*, *C. foetidissima*, *Pittosporum tenuifolium*, *Pseudopanax arboreus*, *Pseudopanax colensoi* and clumps of *Astelia fragrantissima*. Everyone remarked on the very large size of the leaves on all the broadleaved forest trees.

Dr Carol West, conservancy advisory scientist, Invercargill, accompanied us for the day and was a great source of information. We appreciated her being there. Quote of the day "It's hard to tell the totaras apart, but we do know that they are totary different".



## South Borland Burn Track (Jan 6)– Saskia Wood

The last afternoon excursion of the trip was kindly led by David Moss (Riverton, DoC, who reassured us by saying that he regularly took primary school children down these bluffs and he hadn't lost anyone yet!

At the top of the track from the Borland Saddle road we found a cluster of *Aporostylis* orchids flowering in a small, mossy hollow.

Soon we crossed the fault line from the Eldrig gneiss down into the forested limestone bluffs. This limestone is unusual as it consists of small rounded granite pebbles loosely cemented into the limestone, and is very crumbly.

Growing close to the limestone in this area of higher fertility was a stand of totara and also several southern rata (*Metrosideros umbellata*). The path descended through mossy mountain beech forest with attendant yellow-flowered mistletoe (*Alepis flavida*) then down along mossy silver beech river flats with the flowering, large-leaved red mistletoe (*Peraxilla colensoi*), high above in the 'possum cafes'. We noticed the meal remnants below on our path!

Ros did a great beetle impersonation in one of the slippery small streams we had to cross – she was rescued by Sir Tedword. Being the last day the Botanising had become a little sporadic, but lichening was avid to the last. Some of the party also noted mohua (yellow heads) calling in the tree-tops, and a unusually large number of slime-molds, both yellow and white, were noticed beside the lower track. Back at the Borland Nature Walk an arrow scratched in the ground alerted us to one last treat, the tall, sweetly scented flower of the unusual orchid, *Gastrodia*, that has no leaves or chlorophyll, but gains energy through a fungus that is parasitic on tree roots.

**Look forward to the following reports next issue:** Mt Burns and road to South Arm, Manapouri (30 Dec)– Beatrice Lee; Kepler Mire and Borland Bog (31 Dec) – Gael Donaghy; Blackmount/McKercher Creek(2 Jan) – Graeme Jane; Dean Burn and Big Totara (4 Jan)– Robyn Bridges; 'Pyramid' Lake (Jan 6)– Barbara Mitcalfe.

*Photo: Jill botanising the aquatic flora of Pyramid Lake !*



## Summer Field Trip Participants:

**Ted Abraham**, Palmerston N. **Margaret Aitken**, Hutt Valley; **Tony Aldridge**, Christchurch; **Beth Andrews**, Eketahuna; **Sue Bennett**, Te Anau; **Barbara Beveridge**, Wellington; **Peter Beveridge**, Wellington; **Robyn Bridges**, Dunedin; **Mary Bruce**, Dunedin; **Barbara Clark**, Porirua; **Gael Donaghy**, Tauranga; **Audrey Eagle**, Dunedin; **Pat Enright**, Ngaio; **David Glenn**, Christchurch; **Ian Goodwin**, Wellington; **Jill Goodwin**, Wellington; **Chris Horne**, Wellington; **Ros Iles**, Wellington; **Rick Jackson**, Christchurch; **Graeme Jane**, Tauranga; **Allison Knight**, Dunedin; **John Knight**, Dunedin; **Robin Knight**, USA; **Beatrice Lee**, Southland; **Rory Logan**, Dunedin; **Alan Mark**, Manapouri; **Keith Mayhill**, Tauranga; **Pauline Mayhill**, Tauranga; **Lyne McFarlane**, Invercargill; **Julie McLintock**, Nelson; **Barbara Mitcalfe**, Wellington; **Les Moran**, Nelson; **David Moss**, Riverton; **Maira Parker**, Dunedin; **Brian Rance**, Invercargill; **Chris Rance**, Invercargill; **Mary Robertson**, Palmerston N.; **Goeff Rogers**, Dunedin; **Emil Schmieg**, Eketahuna; **Tui Slade**, Invercargill; **Rosemarie Smith**, Gore; **Val Smith**, New Plymouth; **Nola Walker**, Dunedin; **Carol West**, Invercargill; **John Whitehead**, Te Anau; **Bastow Wilson**, Dunedin; **Joyce Wilson**, Wellington; **Saskia Wood**, Wellington.