

Dedicated searching of the channels eventually located a few tiny spreading plants of *Leptinella* "Clutha", previously known only from Pisa Flat in Central Otago. An earlier find of the slightly larger, denser, silkier and generally more attractive *L. serrulata* probably helped get an eye in for the smaller plant. Other plants of interest in the arid conditions were *Acaena buchananii*, with variable green or glaucous foliage and red sessile fruiting heads, small bronze mounds of *Scleranthus uniflorus*, *Pimelea pulvinaris* and three species of *Raoulia* – *R. parkii*, *R. australis* and *R. tenuicaulis*. The finding of a *Helichrysum* species not seen there before created a minor flurry of excitement and resulted in a GPS reading being taken of its location.

A little further along the road on the same property, we were shown an exclusion plot, one of ten set up ten years ago by DoC in different parts of the Mackenzie basin. Regular monitoring has seen little noticeable difference in plant recovery within the plot so far. However, Graeme did note within it, three shrub species not seen on the still grazed area outside.

The last study site was along the Bullock Wagon Trail and the hydro canal to the terraces and bed of the Tekapo River. The braided riverbed yielded mainly exotics, but amongst them were brilliant reddish-purple berries of *Coprosma atropurpurea*. The dry, stony slope above was probably disturbed by hydro works in the past, and was sparsely vegetated, but keen eyes found tough and resilient *Carmichaelia nana* and *C. vexillata*, *Muehlenbeckia ephedroides*, grey rosettes of *Convolvulus verecundus* subsp *verecundus*, woolly-looking *Pimelea sericovillosa*, muddy brownish-grey *Lepidium sisymbrioides* subsp *sisymbrioides* and more *L. "Clutha"*.

An interesting and thought-provoking day to end this year's New Year Field Trip.

More reports – look forward to reading these further summer trip reports in the next newsletter: Sealy Tarns/Mueller Hut - Rick Jackson, Temple View Walk – Neill Simpson, Ohau Skifield – Barbara Clark and Ohau Kettle Holes/Bendhu Bog Pine Reserve – Bastow Wilson.

REVIEWS

Book review – by John Steel

Williston, P. (2001) *The Botrychiaceae of Alberta.*

57 pp. Softcover. Alberta Natural Heritage Information Centre, Edmonton. \$CDN20 + \$CDN6 p&p.

This interesting little book summarises much of what is known about a fascinating plant group. *Botrychia* are eusporangiate ferns (having sporangia developed from several cells) and therefore regarded as primitive and possibly more closely related to the cycads and early gymnosperms than the leptosporangiate ferns (having sporangia developed from a single cell).

Alberta is something of a centre of *Botrychium* diversity having seventeen species, fifteen of which are regarded as rare. New Zealand has three species, only one of

which, *B. lunaria*, is shared with Canada. This is a rare species in New Zealand with only three records (Brownsey, P.J.; Smith-Dodsworth, J.C. 2000) and should not be collected if found. It also occurs in Tasmania, South America and across the Northern Hemisphere.

It is a small plant, about ten cm. tall, with a single frond dividing into two parts, the green, sterile trophophore (the 'leaf' bit) and the fertile sporophore bearing the reddish-brown sporangia.

This little book gives a good summary of the history, classification, life history and Canadian conservation efforts for this intriguing plant group. A key for the Canadian plants is included followed by silhouettes of the seventeen species described and an excellent bibliography. The book concludes with colour photographs of each species in the wild. For the curious, it will provide an interesting addition to the library regardless of its limited value to the New Zealand flora. From a practical standpoint, *B. Lunaria* has the useful facility of making one invisible – bin Laden hunters take note!

It is obtainable direct from the author, Patrick Williston, P.O. Box 4979, Smithers, BC, V0J 2N0, Canada. He will accept New Zealand cheques for \$NZ39 inc. For further information he can be contacted by e-mail at: pwilliston@bulkley.net

Reference: Brownsey, P.J.; Smith-Dodsworth, J.C. (2000). *New Zealand ferns and allied plants*, rev. ed. David Bateman, Auckland.

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Website Reviews – by Allison Knight

Database of N Z plant names: <http://nzflora.landcare.cri.nz/plantnames/>

I'm kicking myself for taking so long to discover this exceedingly useful online database of current names for wild plants in New Zealand, and very grateful to Bastow for showing me how to use it. The names are those currently in use at CHR, the newly-re-named Allan Herbarium at Lincoln, and include not only vascular plants, but mosses, liverworts and lichens as well. Last update was on 30 august 2001.

Type in a genus name and all the taxa in that genus will come up. Type in part of a name, and all the names containing that phrase will come up. Click on a specific name and the full family classification and authorship will come up. Very handy for checking species lists, articles, trip reports and newsletters, especially when you can cut and paste from article to database and back. *Newsletter contributors please take note!*