

Colobanthus quitensis, and the monocotyledon, *Deschampsia antarctica*, comprises a relatively small number of cryptogams. This, I suspect, does not come as much of a surprise. However, I was intrigued to find a whole book devoted to its hepatic flora.

This book, by a group of eminent scholars, is an excellent and comprehensive treatise on the subject. There is only one liverwort, the bipolar, *Cephaloziella varians*, present on the Antarctic mainland, the rest occurring on islands off the Antarctic Peninsula and the South Orkney and South Sandwich Islands.

The first four chapters give comprehensive descriptions of climate, biogeography, ecology, diversity and phytogeography, as well as the history of liverwort research of the area.

The fifth and final chapter gives an excellent systematic treatment of the species recorded as being present. Of the twenty-eight species in the area, twelve are represented in New Zealand and each is fully described and illustrated.

An interesting addition to the library for anyone interested in world distributions of species, liverworts in particular.

Peat, N.; Patrick, B. 2001. *Wild rivers, discovering the natural history of the central South Island*. 142 pp. P/back. University of Otago Press, Dunedin.

This is the fourth book in the series by these authors (Peat, N.; Patrick, B. 1995, 1996, 1999) and continues the themes of the previous ones. There is always a fear with books issued in series that the formula will date and lose its ability to hold the reader's interest and I confess to harbouring these fears when I first saw this volume. My fears were soon dissipated and instead, I believe the authors have improved on the earlier ones.

The book covers the area from the Rangitata River in the north to Shag Point in the south and inland to the Southern Alps and includes the Mackenzie Country. The first six chapters describe the principal geographical features that characterise the area and highlight the rich and varied biota of each, all tied together with the braided river systems that are so important here and the best examples left in New Zealand. The final chapter covers the future of the area, the threats to it and the conservation issues to be faced.

Once again the authors successfully meld together the many complex influences of a large and varied area in a very few pages using a wealth of information from many disciplines, the whole illustrated with well-chosen and excellent photographs. Their writing style is inclusive without sacrificing quality or patronising the non-scientific reader. It's all here: Māori folklore, environmental law, history – European and Māori, climate change, botany, glaciology, geology, entomology, in fact –ologies by the bucketful. However, I could have done without yet another full page picture of the Moeraki boulders! As a university press publication, I expect much better proof-reading and I found the errors therefrom irritable.

This is my fifth purchase of this volume, the other four having ended up as presents. At \$49.95 this is good value and a worthy, even essential, addition to any bookshelf.

References:

- Peat, N.; Patrick, B. 1995. *Wild Dunedin, enjoying the natural history of New Zealand's wildlife capital*. University of Otago Press, Dunedin.
- Peat, N.; Patrick, B. 1996. *Wild Fiordland, discovering the natural history of a World Heritage area*. University of Otago Press, Dunedin.
- Peat, N.; Patrick, B. 1999. *Wild Central, discovering the natural history of Central Otago*. University of Otago Press, Dunedin.

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Website Reviews – by Tom Myers, Dunedin Botanic Garden

International plant name index: <http://nzflora.landcare.cri.nz/plantnames/>
IPNI, the International Plant Name Index gives taxa, authors and publications (very useful). "IPNI is the product of a collaboration between The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, The Harvard University Herbaria, and the Australian National Herbarium". Check out the section on how to become a "contributer". <http://www.ipni.org/>

Also see:

Australian Plant Name Index (APNI): <http://www.anbg.gov.au/cgi-bin/apni>

W3Tropicos (by Missouri Botanic Garden) - very useful, large South American and Asian content, including an ability to view on-line distribution maps for herbarium collection localities. Well worth a look, and relevant to anyone working on South American material. Has links to the Flora of China Project, & Flora of Chile, Peru and Panama. <http://mobot.mobot.org/W3T/Search/vast.html>

Edinburgh Botanic Garden and similar Botanic Gardens' on-line inventories, including CITES & WCMC conservation sites:

<http://www.rbge.org.uk/forms/multisite2.html>

Flora Europaea (PANDORA): <http://www.rbge.org.uk/forms/fe.html>

USDA plants database: <http://plants.usda.gov/>

NZ nature photos: Mike Dodd, UK, advises that the web link at:

http://www.open.ac.uk/Nature_Trail/Other_ar/OA_NZ.htm contains a few new photos from his last trip to NZ - in the links from the main page.