

Trip to Graham's Bush

Saturday the 28th of September was one of those days when you couldn't imagine living anywhere else but Dunedin. The weather was perfect as nine of us headed along Otago Harbour to Sawyer's Bay and the start of the Graham's Bush walking track. Ralf Ohlemüller introduced us to this significant remnant of coastal Otago forest, explained his work at three quadrats in the reserve and handed us a handy exotic and native species list. We headed up the road and onto the track to the top of the hill. As we climbed the view over the harbour got better and better and the exotic weeds started to thin. By this stage most of us had declared our interest: some were hunting plants and lichens, some were pulling exotics, some discussed postgraduate life, all seemed to be having a good time.

Past the turn off to the old scout ground, and a few good memories for some of the party, and we were into the forest. Soon we were upon some of the largest Tree Fuchsias I've ever seen (I don't get out much) and we'd checked through most of the fern species on Ralf's list. Further on, mature Rimu stood back from a creek in a damp gully as the track kept climbing to higher ground. We paused in a grove of podocarps for something to eat and a glimpse of Otago harbour out through the trees. Something else had been feeding here too: scattered all about were Miro seed with a few tatters of undigested flesh.

By the time we had threaded our way past some regrowth Kanuka and into a patch of Gorse and Himalayan honeysuckle we felt we'd seen the best of it and headed back down the hill. On the way down three of us remarked that we had lived in Dunedin for so many years and not realised that this gem was just at our back door. Thanks Ralf for introducing us to Graham's Bush.

Oh yes... You'll be pleased to know there are virus-like symptoms on Mahoe and Tree Fuchsia in my freezer awaiting the end of the teaching year.

Paul Guy, Plant virologist, Department of Botany, Otago University

PS. Look forward to the species lists from Ralf's quadrats in the next issue – *ed.*

Some terricolous lichens and orchid, Graham's Bush trip

The clay bank alongside the track through Graham's Bush was rich in lichens. First noticed were several grey/black foliose species containing nitrogen-fixing cyanobacteria as their photobiont. Of these, the ragged over-wintered *Peltigera* sp. were attached to the earth with thick, felted rhizines, while the superficially similar *Nephroma* sp. had chestnut brown kidney-shaped apothecia (fruiting bodies) on the underside of their lobes, and no rhizines. Black 'jelly lichens' *Collema subconveniense* nestled in the moss, while at the base of the bank we were delighted by the exquisite flower of a tiny, insect-pollinated, spider orchid, probably *Corybas macranthus*.

Higher up the track three crustose lichen species with striking pink apothecia grew near each other. The stalked, pinky-fawn apothecia belonged to *Baeomyces heteromorphus*.

Beside it the *Dibaeis arcuata* had longer, thinner, whiter stalks, brighter pink apothecia and distinct paler patches of soredia on the thallus. Further on patches of bright green crust sported the larger, sessile, pink fruiting bodies of *Icmadophila ericitorum* - altogether a spring spectacle in miniature.

Allison Knight, Assistant, Lichens, OTA

Reviews

Books - More from John Steel next issue! Other book reviews always welcome.

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Where to buy 40,000 plants: www.plantfinder.co.nz

The Botany department has taken out an annual subscription to this and Mary Anne Miller is trialling it. One BSO intending member and keen grower of edible fruit trees has already checked it out and found it very useful..

Botanical Society of Otago: <http://www.botany.otago.ac.nz/bso> our web site, sadly, has regressed but David Orlovich is working on upgrading. Be patient - soon it will be better than ever!

News

Botany Student Symposium – BSO Prize-winner.

This year the annual Botany Colloquium became a Symposium, ably run by PhD students Jane Marshall, Matt Scott and Denise Hunter, with assistance on the day from Alison Stringer. Well done, team!

Congratulations also to the prize-winners: Chris Hepburn, won the BSO prize of \$100 for best student speaker with his talk *Chasing crayfish and bothering kelp in Otago Harbour*.

Prizes for other placings were generously donated by The University Book Shop, Knox Row House & Garden, Rialto Cinemas and Whitcoulls. Second prize went to Louise