

an expedition to Iceland instead, which was not nearly so botanically interesting. On their return to London Solander lived with Banks in Soho and became Keeper of Natural History at the British Museum. He was reluctant to let Linnaeus see any of his specimens, and died of a cerebral haemorrhage at the age of 49.

Since Solander brought Linnaeus' binomial system to the English speaking world, and was the first professional botanist to visit New Zealand, Ted suggested setting up a Solander Garden in Dunedin in 2007, to honour Solander and to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of Linnaeus. The other significance of the 2007 anniversary, and an appropriate time to set up the Solander Garden, is that the IK Foundation in Britain plans the publication that year of the works of the pupils, "apostles" if you like, of Linnaeus, who travelled the world in search of natural history specimens. The Otago Scandinavian Club supports this idea of a Solander Garden, as does the Botanical Society. If you would like to be involved in this historic botanical project, see page 22 for details of the meeting at Ted's place on 21 September.

Lichens on twigs workshop

Robyn Bridges

Tony Druce is reputed to have said that once you have been introduced to a plant, then 'shaking hands' with it each time you come across it is a really good way to familiarise yourself with the species. I am pleased to say, having spent several happy hours at the recent Lichens on Twigs Workshop, that I have been introduced to several cosmopolitan lichens in my garden. These unassuming members of my garden's habitat give an extra dimension to the garden. Of course being introduced is only the first step, but thanks to the workshop, I am well on my way to getting to know them better!

Like last year's lichen workshop, Lichens on Twigs, was a great success. Under the able guidance of Jennifer Bannister and Allison Knight I was taken through the many steps involved with lichen identification. Lichen keys are not for the uninitiated and I appreciated not only the facilitators' expertise, but also having on hand glossaries, websites, keys and reference books. And thanks to the Department of Botany for letting us use their excellent laboratory facilities.

BSO foray to Orokonui Reserve

Norman Mason

Dunedin really outdid itself weatherwise for the Bot. Soc. Trip to Orokonui reserve on August 9th. The group of 20 or so phytophiles could not have wished for a better day. The trip was led by local botanist Dr. Ralph Allen, who, as a member of the Dunedin Natural History Trust, is currently working to establish a mainland island reserve at Orokonui. The term mainland island derives from the habit that New Zealand's conservationists have of evacuating endangered fauna to predator-free, offshore islands. The point of mainland islands being the establishment of predator-free areas on the mainland to accommodate endangered and threatened species. The plan for Orokonui

will follow the example of Karori mainland island reserve in Wellington. Here the reserve was surrounded by a predator-proof fence (tests have shown it keeps *all* of the usual nasties out). Then all the predators within the fenced area were 1080ed or cyanided out of existence. Dr. Allen told the group that predators were completely eradicated from the Karori reserve within several years, and therefore is hopeful that predator-free status is achievable at Orokonui also. Apart from the conservation of endangered species, a major goal of the reserve is to act as an advocacy tool to raise public awareness. The hope is that once people have experienced first hand exactly what we risk losing, they will be inspired to give the conservation of the nation's biodiversity more serious consideration. As part of this advocacy role the Dunedin Natural History Trust hopes to offer a range of eco-tourism options including both independent and guided walks through the reserve, and will provide education opportunities for school and other groups.

Orokonui was chosen as the site of the mainland island reserve, in part, for the value of its vegetation. The reserve covers an area of 270 ha, encompassing a range of habitats. It contains large areas of kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides*) forest-scrub, varying in age from 70-120 years. Within the kanuka stands, typical secondary forest species such as lancewood (*Pseudopanax crassifolius*), broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*) and red mapou (*Myrsine australis*) are establishing, with the occasional occurrence of young miro (*Prumnopytis ferruginea*) and Cunningham's totara (*Podocarpus cunninghamii*) giving evidence of the potential for succession to mixed podocarp-broadleaved forest. A feature of the reserve is a gully that has apparently escaped burning. Here are found a number of large rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*, one of which received an unsolicited hug from a bearded stranger), miro, Cunningham's totara, and at least one matai (*Prumnopytis taxifolia*). Also on offer are an abundance of tree ferns, and areas of well-developed broadleaved forest containing kotukutuku (*Fuchsia excorticata*), broadleaf, and tarata (*Pittosporum eugenioides*). The reserve extends to Orokonui lagoon, containing a reasonable area of valley floor. The trust hopes that this area will be suitable for the development of alluvial forest containing kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*), totara, matai, manatu (*Plagianthus regius*) and lacebark (*Hoheria* sp.), since lowland alluvial forest is almost extinct on the east coast of the South Island.

The area to the north of Dunedin seems to have been the place to be if you were mad, as psychiatric hospitals were formerly sited near Waikouaiti, at Seacliff and at Orokonui (may explain why I like the area). The hospital at Orokonui owned a small mountain ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*, also known as regal gum to Latin lovers) plantation, which is currently inside the boundary of the reserve. There is nothing small about the gum trees themselves, since this stand contains what is thought to be New Zealand's tallest tree. At 69.1 m the regal tree was rendered somewhat less impressive than it might have been by neighbours almost its equal in height. There is apparently one doubter who wants to climb the aussie giant with a tape measure for irrefutable proof or denial of the tree's title.

Overall Orokonui reserve proved a pleasant place for a gentle stroll in the bush. I'm not alone in that opinion. The beautiful day seemed to have gone to the heads of the self-

confessed, unfit, fogies (Dr. Allen among them), since the entire group completed a circuit of the reserve. Stretching from sea-level to hill-crest, the reserve offers a range of habitats, and with its potential for succession to mature forest may develop into an important forest reserve. It also has the potential to support a wide range of bird species, and, given its proximity to other large areas of native forest, may be important in enriching the avifauna of the hills to the north of Dunedin. Orokonui and the neighbouring areas of forest would certainly suit an avian cacophony in addition to the chirpings of assorted nature-trippers.

Footnote. Our circumnavigation of the Orokonui Reserve involved a walk (some skipped) down an unformed ‘paper road’ on the western side of the reserve. The DCC Planning Department have confirmed that the public do have legal right of access down this road. However, it would be courteous to inform the landowner, Mr E Davis, before you cross his land, especially as the route is close to his house. – *Ed.*

Book review

Gum

The story of eucalypts and their champions

by Ashley Hay

Published in 2002 by Duffy & Snellgrove, NSW (275 pages)

Arlene McDowell



The subjects of the book are the trees, ubiquitous in Australia, which were collected by Daniel Solander and Joseph Banks in 1770 and given the name gum trees because they “oozed a thick, sticky resin”. Banks failed to publish the descriptions of the gum trees and it was not until 1786 that the name *Eucalyptus* was coined by the amateur French botanist Charles Louis L'Héritier. The genus name refers to the cap (calyptra) on the gum nuts that covers the flower bud. The complexity of eucalypt taxonomy is mentioned, although we are spared the details and instead readers are given many interesting facts about gum trees. One such example is that Italian monks created a eucalypt liqueur called *Eucalitino* to celebrate the draining of a marsh by a blue gum plantation (*Eucalyptus globulus*) at the monastery at Tre Fontane.

Hay describes how initially gum trees were considered ugly by the colonists, but soon their unfamiliar form became recognised as majestic and beautiful. A personal history of the eucalyptographers provides little known information including how Mueller was progressively ousted from the Botanic Gardens in Melbourne that he had helped to establish. May Gibbs personalized eucalypts through the gumnut baby cartoon characters, Snugglepot and Cuddlepie. Through her stories, Gibbs also educated