



Waikato Botanical Society Inc.

NEWSLETTER

No. 30, November 2009

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From the President...



Welcome to the spring edition newsletter. It's that time of year we need to be prepared for all seasons on fieldtrips - you never know if it's going to be a warm and balmy evening or if there will be snow on Mt Pirongia! It has been a good flowering season and tui are being sighted in Hamilton City again. I have been lucky enough to have one take up residence in a large rewarewa tree in a neighbour's property for the last two weeks, what a beautiful sound not often heard in the city.

Unfortunately (or fortunately if you couldn't make the first date!) we have had several trip cancellations due to recent inclement weather so please check the rescheduled dates in the field trip notices on the following pages. We will also be bringing together a 2010 Field Trip & Events calendar - if you have any special places you think would make an interesting day or weekend trip away, or places which are in need of an updated vegetation survey etc. please let us know.

Another note – if you are interested in joining the WBS on the Pureora Trip, let Monica know as soon as possible so that the accommodation can be secured. In addition to the upcoming range of fieldtrips (and the Threatened Plant Garden Working Bee), we have another exciting film screening with Robin Kewell scheduled for early December. Last year's successful Eden Project film event attracted around 80 people and was a great profile raiser for the WBS.

- Happy reading and botanising!

FIELD TRIPS

In the event of bad weather, please contact the trip leader on the morning of field trips if you are unsure if they will go ahead and don't want a wasted trip to the meeting point. It is always helpful to notify the trip leader of your intention to attend a trip in case you are late to the meeting point, to arrange carpooling or for any last minute change of plan. Please be prepared on all trips with your own lunch, drink, sturdy footwear, and clothes for all seasons.

Threatened Plant Collection Working Bee

Saturday 31st October 2009

A working bee in the threatened plant garden. Please bring gloves, old clothes and boots for weeding, planting and propagating activities. You will all be aware the weeds are growing fast in this weather so please come along to help release the threatened plants and see what's flowering now!

Meet: 9.45 am at Waikato University Gate 9, Hillcrest Rd

Contact: Liz Overdyck ph 846 0965 eg3@waikato.ac.nz

Pureora Waihora Lagoon & Mt Pureora

Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 November 2009

The diversity of the park will allow us to be flexible with our timetable so there will be opportunities to visit other botanically interesting sites depending on what folks feel like. A suggestion is that we explore the lagoon on Saturday morning. The nationally endangered water brome *Amphibromus fluitans*, described as a "cryptic, somewhat elusive species" can be found here. On Sunday we'll tackle Mt Pureora. Along an altitudinal gradient, the vegetation forms a sequence from submontane to montane conifer-broadleaved forest, then to subalpine scrub and shrub-mossfield (see Leathwick et al. 1988, NZJB online). If the weather's good (and if we botanize fast enough!) we should have some great views from the summit.

Meet: at Pureora village cabins Saturday 10:30am. There will be an option to head down on Friday night to stay in the park, either at the cabins or at the nearby DoC campground (no facilities).

Contact: Monica for cabin/campground bookings and carpooling monica.peters@landcare.org.nz office: 859 3725 / 021 049 2036

INFO: Pureora cabins

Pureora Forest Park is 54 km from Te Kuiti. Cabins are off SH30 on Village Rd, 120 metres from Pureora Field Base. The nearest shop and petrol station are located 15 – 20mins away at Benneydale so make sure you have everything you need for your stay.

Facilities:

- Full kitchen with electric oven, pots, pans, crockery and cooking utensils, toaster and electric jug, fridge / freezer
- BYO towels, tea towels and bedding (pillows, sheets, blankets)
- Separate bathroom block with flush toilets and hot showers

Two person cabin: \$24.00 minimum

Larger cabin: \$48.00 minimum plus \$12.00 extra per person, per night for more than four persons.

RESCHEDULED: TE MÄRA REO Language garden & Lake Hakanoa wetland

Early 2010 - DATE TBC

Dr Richard Benton will show us around his 2ha Ngaruawahia property which has been developed into a "language garden". Over the last decade Richard and his family have planted many of the NZ native plants whose names were brought here by this country's first Polynesian settlers (<http://www.tumanako.org/>). Afterwards, we will visit a remnant wetland on the shores of Lake Hakanoa (Huntly) and continue along the boardwalk to a restored area.

RESCHEDULED: Union Hill, Waihi

Sunday November 29th, 2009

Join Ruth Ordish from Waihi for some botanical sleuthing on Union Hill, a 32ha area comprising historic mining sites, regenerating forest and man-made wetlands. The aim of the trip is to gather comprehensive information about the botany of the site in support of an Archaeological Conservation Plan. This Plan is part of a larger local initiative to develop the area into a Heritage Park, highlighting the social and ecological history and values of the area. We will be fleshing out existing species lists, searching for flora associated with early house sites and discussing what species should be present. Ruth will be providing an overview of current knowledge about the area gleaned from surveys and aerial photos. The grade is easy to medium.

*Meet: 8:30am at Landcare Research carpark, Gate 10 Silverdale Rd, Hillcrest (back in Hamilton at 5pm)
OR 9:45am at the netball courts carpark on Kenny Street, Waihi. The carpark is after Clark Street and the Bowling/croquet club*

Carpool etc. contact: Monica: monica.peters@landcare.org.nz Ph 859 3725 (wk) mob 021 049 2036

Got any suggestions for Field Trips/Events/Evening Talks in 2010? – Let the committee know for the 2010 Calendar

UPCOMING EVENTS

FILM EVENING

December 3, Room L1 University of Waikato (GATE8), 6.30pm for nibbles and 7pm screening

Journey to the Isles of Despair



artists, a nurse from Auckland whose great grandparents had settled on one of the islands briefly.

In 1996 Natural History Filmmaker Robin Kewel and his New Zealand born wife Ruth were invited to sail to one of the most remote places on the planet, the Auckland Islands 900 kilometres south of New Zealand. The "Breaksea Girl" based in New Zealand's fiordland is a 65ft steel ketch and takes scientists and a few paying passengers to some of New Zealand's conservation areas, this trip included, a tidal scientist, 2 botanists, an ornithologist, 2 Natural history

Hooker Sea lions, penguins, parakeets, albatross, bell birds, twisted wind-torn forests, weird and wonderful plants. Situated at 50 degrees south, these islands are Beyond the Roaring Forties and in the Furious Fifties...the average wind speed per day is over 35 knots, on the west coast cliffs rise sheer to a 1000ft, a land covered in snow and ice for many months but far enough from the Southern Ice cap to have a huge range of flora. Man's occupation of these islands was brief and desperate....many did not survive.... we did. (Film 25 mins)

Planet Aldabra- No Man's Land



A film commissioned by the Seychelles Islands Foundation about the largest single raised coral atoll in the world, Aldabra. North of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean, home to 10,000 giant tortoises, the flightless rail, mangrove forests, roaring tides and now a World Heritage Site. The film is scripted and narrated by award winning Natural History expert Barry Paine who describes Aldabra as "A Galapagos of the East" and is dedicated to the memory of the late Mohamed Amin (Producer) who tragically

died when a hi-jacked aircraft crashed into the Indian Ocean, not far from Aldabra, shortly after the film was completed. A haunting musical score by composer/musician Robert Brimley sets the atmosphere and mood for this first ever film about Aldabra. Winner of Silver Award at the Entibe Film Festival, Winner of the Gold award at the SUBIOS film festival. (Film 27 mins)

Waikato University Campuys map: <http://www.waikato.ac.nz/contacts/map/>

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Lake Mangahia & Waikato Wetland Plants Field Guide

Saturday 13th June 2009

A hardy group of enthusiast gathered at the Landcare Research sheltering inside from the rain. Monica took the opportunity to show a collection of images on Waikato wetlands, particularly with reference to the restoration work she is undertaking through the NZ Landcare Trust - conveniently education is part of her job description. Once the weather had cleared the group headed off to Lake Mangahia, one of the more than 30 small, shallow peat lakes scattered through the Hamilton basin. Restoration has begun, with a plan having been developed (by NIWA and Environment Waikato), and local landowners in the catchment involved. The canopy was predominantly grey willow as is the case with many of the other peat lakes. There were however some juvenile kahikatea marking this area as one which was not recently aerially sprayed for willow control.

The willow invasion combined with stock entry has resulted in little of the original understory remaining – *Carex secta/virgata* pedestals gave some indication of the original flora in the area visited. The task to clear the lake of willow and re-establish native wetland vegetation will be significant – though not impossible. One the return to Hamilton the group visited Lake Cameron / Karaeotahi where most o f the exotic tree cover has been removed. A strong local lake care group has been instrumental in carrying out the work, planting flax, manuka, cabbage trees, karamu and carices. Weeds remain a continual challenge with beggar's tick (*Bidens frondosa*) flourishing and Gypsywort (*Lycopus europaeus*) gaining a foothold. In the summer, floating mats of Ludwigia extend out along the shallow margins.

Further progress was made on the Field Guide with around 8 people each working in pairs to tackle several species within a growth form. The project is worthwhile and it is heartening to see people give up their Saturday afternoon. Completion is still some way off given that this project is being carried out in “spare time” (!), however the WBS is committed to producing a very high quality and practical guide.

Hauraki Wetland Remnant

Sunday 20th September 2009

This rescheduled visit to the Frank Speedy Memorial Reserve was on a much improved day from the last year’s stormy conditions that resulted in the trip being postponed. Not only were there improvements in the weather but the public road side rest area also had had a major spruce up along with the removal of all the rubbish that had been dumped in the reserve. The only negative aspect of this clean up was the access, as this now meant we had to jump the drain to gain entrance into the reserve. The dry winter meant the conditions under foot were less muddy than expected and movement through the reserve was easy going due the open nature of the undergrowth. There was a bit of die back of the *Ganahia xanthocarpa* but it was still a prominent feature of the SW side, where we entered.

The first challenge of the day was right on the edge of the reserve where we encountered an *Elaeocarpus hookerianus*, of a size that we hadn't expected or seen before. This was part of the canopy that was predominantly Kahikatea but Matai was also present in this remaining mature stand of trees.



Remnant kahikatea on the Hauraki plains – drained and unfenced, many stands are at risk



Healthy kahikatea remnant bordering the Kōpuatai peat dome, one of 3 Waikato Ramsar

Mahoe was the major tree in the sub canopy but it was the shrub layer of *Streblus heterophyllus*, *Melicope simplex* and *Coprosma tenuicaulis* that provided the greatest interest. It was great to discover however, a cluster of *Carmichaelia arborea* with new growth leaflets suggesting that there was no real problem with possum or hare grazing with in the reserve.

It was however, disappointing that there was very little ground cover other than scattered clumps of ferns, mainly *Asplenium oblongifolium* and we only saw one ponga during our walk but at

least

Oplismenus hirtellus imbecillus and *Microlaena stipoides* was growing through out the reserve with native *Carex* spp. holding there own against small patches of *Tradescantia fluminensis* and *Hedera helix* that was present but of no real threat at this stage. After a couple of hours at the Reserve we drove onto the Kōpu Bridge and walked the western bank of the Waihou River through the Mangrove fringe. After a half Kilometer walk down stream, it was a treat to get away from the Tall Fescue and to see *Samolus repens*, *Selliera radicans*, *Sarcocornia quinqueflora* along with *Carex dipsacea*, *Triglochin striata* and *Cotula coronopifolia* as a dense carpet under the Mangroves. A picnic lunch at Thames concluded a good day out. - Doug Ashby

NOTICES – WAIKATO REGION

Waikato University Herbarium: an update

Waikato University (WAIK) Herbarium has been in its current location in the University of Waikato (D block, 1st floor, room 14) since 2003. In 2007 Catherine Beard moved on from her position as herbarium curator at WAIK herbarium to a more prosperous life at Environment Waikato. Toni Cornes was hired as the new herbarium curator, to try and fill the gap left by Catherine's departure. With the volunteering super duo of Sven Johnson and Wyne Johns they have strived to continually improve the functionality of WAIK herbarium.

In August 2007 Jean Green along with her son Geoff donated the herbarium collection of her father-in-law Alfred W. Green. Once the first teacher at Ruakura Agricultural Collage, Alfred Green was fundamental in establishing the original gardens at the Ruakura campus and from 1901-1925 cumulated a large herbarium collection. Currently in various states of disrepair this collection is being sorted through. Along with a few unexpected specimens other quality pieces are being added to the WAIK herbarium collection. As of May 2008 WAIK herbarium became a PC1 transitional and containment facility under MaF and ERMA guidelines. This standard was brought in to regulate the movement of plant specimens overseas and has little effect on the day to day running of the herbarium. Almost all herbarium in New Zealand are now under this standard. In June this year Scion's herbarium NZFRI was kind enough to give us a copy of their database program. We are hoping to install this new system before year's end, getting rid of the archaic 1999 database program currently being run. Many thanks to the Scion team for supplying us their program.

The usual activities are still taking place at WAIK herbarium. New specimens together with old are being added to the database. Botany course students and the general public still have tours of the facility. If anyone wishes to have a tour they can contact Toni Cornes on tcornes@waikato.ac.nz or (07) 838 4372.

In the future New Zealand herbariums including WAIK herbarium are going to collate their records to form an online herbarium. This will be searchable by the general public and follow the same layout as the Australian Virtual Herbarium. Funded by the Terrestrial and Freshwater Biodiversity Information Facility this New Zealand Herbarium Network project will be a great way for herbariums to improve connections with the general public. The online herbarium should be available in December 2009 <http://www.nzherbaria.org.nz/virtherb.asp>.

Flora of Aotearoa/New Zealand - GROW YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

February 5th–19th2010 Department of Biological Sciences | Summercourse: Biol226C

Beginning with a weekend field trip in native forest you will be immersed into the world of Botany. After the field trip comes two weeks of intensive lectures, labs and two day-trips to forests in the Waikato. Finally students complete an individual assignment after the two week teaching portion is over.

Open to...

- *Students wishing to major in Plant Biology or Restoration Ecology*
- *People with a keen interest in botany (admittance at the discretion of the Course Co-ordinator)*

Topics covered in this course

- *The origin of New Zealand's unique flora*
- *Basics of plant taxonomy*
- *Modern methods of plant classification and identification*
- *Identifying plants in the field*



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

How to Enrol

Contact course co-ordinator Chrissen Gemmill (email: c.gemmill@waikato.ac.nz; phone: 07 838 4053; room number:D.1.05) to enrol
0800 WAIKATO
www.waikato.ac.nz

Enquires

Dr Chrissen Gemmill, email: c.gemmill@waikato.ac.nz (phone: 07 838 4053), Prof Bruce Clarkson, email clarkson@waikato.ac.nz (phone: 07 838 4237) or contact the Department of Biological Sciences (phone: 07 838 4022) University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton.

NOTICES – OTHER REGIONS

Scholarship

Te Papa MSc Scholarship in Molecular Systematics at Victoria University

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and Victoria University of Wellington are offering a Master of Science (MSc) scholarship in the field of molecular systematics at Victoria University.

- *The student stipend is \$10,000 over two years.*
- *Potential projects for 2010-2011 include tangle (*Gleichenia*) or spleenwort (*Asplenium*) ferns, or forget-me-nots (*Myosotis*).*
- *Applications close 1st November 2009*

For more details, contact Leon Perrie (leonp@tepapa.govt.nz) or see:

<http://www.tepapa.govt.nz/ResearchAtTePapa/Research/NaturalEnvironment/Plants/Pages/TePapaMScScholarship.aspx>

Evening talk and NZPCN AGM

What relevance does 'ecosourcing' have for plant conservation?

A debate about eco-sourcing and the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network's Annual General Meeting will take place on Thursday 12 November 2009 7.00 p.m. – 9.30 p.m.

Venue: Stardome Observatory (Sunroom), Auckland

Members of the public are welcome to attend in addition to Network members. A new national Council will be elected. Rob Fenwick (Network Patron and Founding Director of Living Earth Ltd) will present the network's annual plant conservation awards.

Guest speakers include:

- Wayne Bennett (Waikato ecosourcing coordinator and Network Award winner)
- Danielle Hancock and Chris Ferkins (Waitakere City Council)
- Leon Perrie (Plant Scientist, Te Papa Tongarewa – Museum of New Zealand)

RSVP to NZPCN: info@nzpcn.org.nz Finger food and drinks will be served following the meeting.

National Wetlands Symposium 2010, Rotorua 3-5 March 2010

“Wetland Management and Restoration (Freshwater and Estuarine)”

Wednesday, 3 March 2010 Pre-Symposium Fieldtrip “Introduction to the Bay of Plenty Wetlands”

Thursday, 4 & Friday, 5 March 2010 National Wetlands Symposium 2010

Venue: Novotel Lakeside, Rotorua, New Zealand

Speakers: International & National Wetland Experts

Online registration: www.wetlandtrust.org.nz, earlybird Registrations close Oct 31 2009

For more information please contact: National Wetlands Symposium 2010 C/- TheOrganiserPhone: +64 7 343 1732 Email: theorganiser@RotoruaNZ.com

Costs

3 March 2010 Pre-Symposium Fieldtrip \$40.00

4 and 5 March 2010 Earlybird \$295.00

Standard \$325.00

Community Group Member/Student/Private Landowner \$155.00

New botanical calendar



The Botanical Society of Otago's
2010 calendar is on sale now

\$20 ea. (or two for \$36)

(add \$2.50 for mail orders)

For electronic payment email the Botanical Society of Otago (bso@botany.otago.ac.nz)
with your name and address and payment details will be sent

All proceeds to the Botanical Society of Otago www.botany.otago.ac.nz/bso/

Botanical Society electronic newsletters

If you would like to be forwarded electronic newsletters from other regions (Nelson, Auckland, Canterbury and Wellington) please contact committee member, Catherine Beard

Alpine Flower Ecotours 2009 –10

The Alpine Flower Ecotour is a 7-day tour exploring some iconic subalpine and alpine mountain locations in the Canterbury section of the Southern Alps. We have run this programme for two seasons and it just keeps getting better and better. The combination of a small group size (maximum of 6), keen and interested participants, outstanding scenery, a knowledgeable guide and not too great a distance to travel each day helps to make this a relaxed and enjoyable experience.

Dates, Price & Bookings

- 7 – 13 December 2009, 13 – 19 January 2010
- \$1550 (\$505 single supplement). \$100 deposit no later than 1 month before tour.
- Visa & Mastercard accepted. Price includes all meals, accommodation, and transport.

Payment to: Tussock & Beech Ecotours, Staveley, RD 1, Ashburton 7771, N.Z.

Tel: (03) 303 0880 email: ecotour@nature.net.nz website: www.nature.net.nz

To wrap up, photos of dune –growing basket fungi, wetland remnants and the inner harbour coastline from the June 2009, Rotorua Botanical Society trip to Matakana Is., Tauranga Harbour.

