Ecological Society Newsletter

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FROM THE EDITORS

We all need support in different aspects of our lives, and equally, each of us is in a position to give support to others. Committing to providing support to someone is acting as a mentor. A mentor can be a coach, motivator, teacher, role model, counsellor, and provider of moral support; a mentor is an influential individual who has advanced experience and knowledge and who is committed to providing support to another.

The term "mentor" has been traced to Homer's Odyssey. Mentor was a trusted friend of King Ulysses who nurtured, protected, and educated Ulysses' son during his 10 year absence. Mentor's instruction encompassed personal, professional, and civic development (Hardwick 2005). Mentoring takes place in all modern work and study environments. Many organisations that are committed to the growth and development of their staff already formally support and even pay for mentoring. These organisations are more likely to retain talented employees and earn their loyalty. Many people are natural mentors and their role, in many cases, is not formalised. Often it seems that there are not enough of these people around and that we need more mentoring in many areas of society. We argue here that ecology is one of those areas, and that as ecologists, we could, and should, be doing more mentoring.

There are many reasons why ecology needs more mentoring, but our main concern here is the retention of people in our field, women in particular. Global research shows that there is a problem in education systems from primary school to higher education that has been coined the "Leaky Pipeline". This term describes the progressive under-representation of women at higher academic levels. As we move from schools, to tertiary education, and beyond, women make up a decreasing proportion of the people in most areas; this Leaky Pipeline effect is especially strong in the sciences.

The table below shows data from the New Zealand university system in 2002. Although these data show only a single year and therefore do not have the power of data tracking a cohort across years (not as readily available to us), they are consistent with and serve to illustrate this consistent, global pattern. The Leaky Pipeline has been observed in large-scale, long-term Australian, UK and US studies in all science-related (and other) disciplines (Harlander 1996, Pell 1996, George 2004, Probert 2005).

cont. overleaf

INSIDE:

Do you want your Newsletter by e-mail? 3
Letter to the Editors – Should Sustainability be a filter for Ecological Significance? 3
53rd Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Ecological Society 5
Ecology stuck on the web 5
Defining Significant Natural Areas 6
Local government Ecologists Network 6
Ideas for Ecologists 7
Notable Achievements 7
Call for Nominations 8
Ex Libris 10
Ecological Miscellany 10
Hotscience 12
Upcoming Meetings 13
Meetings Diary 14
Positions Available 15
News From Council 15
Ecological Society e-mail List Server: Did you know you aren't on it any more? 18

*Students and staff by gender and level of education/ employment at New Zealand Universities in 2002 (includes both part-time and full-time people).**

Level	Women	Men
Undergraduate	15,102	8,970
Masters/Honours	2,498	1,978
Ph.D.	198	289
Lecturer	1,082	962
Senior lecturer	964	1,900
Reader/Assoc. Prof.	103	569
Professor	70	538

* Data from Ministry of Education. 2004. Education Statistics of New Zealand for 2002. The Data Management and Analysis Division.

New Zealand ecology has just as much of an educational Leaky Pipeline as any other field. We did a simple count of ecologists at New Zealand universities from departmental websites (University of Auckland, University of Waikato, Massey University, Victoria University of Wellington, University of Canterbury, Lincoln University, and University of Otago). We found that out of a total of 87 ecologists, only 19 were women (22%). Of these only 2 were at the level of Associate Professor or above compared to 21 men. This shows that there are far fewer women ecologists than men and that they are severely under-represented in higher academic positions.

This pattern is the likely result of three sets of causes: (1) women may not be attracted into becoming ecologists in the first place (although, we have the impression, but no data to show, that female enrolments are often higher in undergraduate biology than male), (2) they may have trouble remaining in the system and leave for whatever reason (e.g. choosing to make career sacrifices to have children and/or support their husband's career), and (3) it may be difficult for women to advance within this male-dominated field (i.e. the "revolving door" and "glass ceiling" effects).

We also want to make the point that this issue of retaining and advancing people in science is wider than just gender. It is equally important to consider other groups of people who are traditionally under-represented in the sciences, such as Maori and Pacific Islanders. It is also apparent that there are similar patterns in non-educational environments with fewer women in higher managerial positions.

We want to expand on one of the likely causes of the leaky pipeline identified by researchers in human psychology as being one of the most important, and one that is directly relevant to the theme of our editorial—mentoring: the "Impostor Syndrome" (Young 2004). In a nutshell, the Impostor Syndrome is described by the following quote from Young (2004): "*Despite evidence of their abilities, many bright, capable people do not experience an inner sense of competence or success, believing instead that they have somehow managed to fool others into thinking they are smarter and more competent than they "know" themselves to be. People who feel like Impostors attribute their achievements to luck, charm, computer error, and other external factors*". Women who experience these impostor feelings are less likely to apply for higher positions, or are disadvantaged in the interview process because of their own self-doubts. This results in a higher proportion of women in lower academic positions; it is almost a self-perpetuating problem as women in lower academic positions often have less research time due to high teaching loads and family commitments and therefore are unlikely to have the publication record needed to move up the ladder.

Although research shows that the impostor syndrome is important for women in terms of the Leaky Pipeline phenomenon, we also know that people who experience impostor feelings come from both genders and all walks of life. There are other groups that tend to be more prone to these sorts of feelings, such as people in situations where they are in a racial minority and students at, and above, high school level.

We would like to highlight two recent events that impact on the education Leaky Pipeline and may have contributed to impostor feelings amongst many New Zealanders: the National Certificate Education Achievement (NCEA) examinations and the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) process. The NCEA is a standards-based system rather than a grades-based system, which is designed to assess students understanding rather than merely comparing student performances on a particular day, time and examination. This system has been the subject of intense negative publicity in recent weeks and it is likely that this publicity coupled with recent results has done nothing to boost confidence and encourage students into science. For example, only 91 out of 1000 chemistry students passed the scholarship exam. This result caused Nobel laureate Professor Alan MacDiarmid to comment that students are likely to have been turned away from the sciences because it is hard for them to do well in those subjects (The Press, 13.2.05).

Looking further down the pipeline we have the PBRF example. The PBRF process was initiated last year to determine funding levels allocated to universities. The achievement of individuals was measured by "research outputs, peer esteem, and contribution to the research environment". Young staff were discouraged because they, understandably, received mostly "C" and "R" grades due to their shorter research careers.

While it is easy to blame the system, we acknowledge that standards/rating systems are important for science in New Zealand enabling us to continue to be competitive in the international environment. However, these sorts of events discourage people's involvement in science.

We believe that all of us, as individuals, hold a solution to this problem. Mentoring is a way of working around these external rating systems, which in their generality tend to ignore many of the achievements of the individual. Mentoring is one of the primary tools used against the Impostor Syndrome; as mentors, we can encourage other people to believe in themselves. People in science need skills and resilience to manage their own careers, either within or between organisations. Mentoring definitely assists this process; it supports people, helps them to remain motivated, set goals and develop their careers. When people feel discouraged or that they are not good enough, we can help and encourage each other through mentoring—especially those who are more vulnerable, such as women, racial minorities and young people. We can help each other to fight the Impostor Syndrome, believe in ourselves, and continue to succeed!!

What can I do?

Take on mentoring roles where you can. Believe in yourself that you have something of value to contribute and that others will *always* benefit from your efforts.

Mentoring strategies for ecologists

- share your enthusiasm for ecology
- make the most of opportunities to talk with other ecologists, stimulate discussion and foster a supportive environment for that
- encourage the interest of others in understanding the natural world
- encourage co-operation and openness among people in the home and workplace rather than competition and aggression
- build the confidence of others and foster their development
- encourage and appreciate the efforts of other people around you
- show a commitment to the broader community (get involved with forest & bird, BioBlitz, and similar events and activities)

Mentoring strategies specifically for academics

- be supportive and encourage good academic practice
- take opportunities to present your work in an environment where students and others feel like they can interact and contribute to the creative process
- set an example by creating a secure environment for student participation in intellectual activities
- engage students in professional activities (reviewing, mentoring other students, report writing, conferences, presentations)
- introduce students to colleagues and recommend them for professional activity after they graduate
- give credit generously to students
- don't ignore students that seem to need little mentoring—everybody can benefit from encouragement and active support
- help junior staff who are making career advancement and changes
- try to teach new skills that can help new staff

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If you have comments or questions about our editorials, we encourage you to put it in the form of a letter to the editors.

DO YOU WANT YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL?

Please tell us if you would like to receive your newsletter via e-mail rather than hardcopy (you also have the option of receiving both). E-mail the Secretariat on info@nzes.org.nz and let us know your preferred e-mail address and whether you would like an e-mail copy only or an e-mail copy and a print copy (make sure that your e-mail account can receive multiple-recipient e-mails and attachments). If you have already responded to the Secretariat, we have your info already. Thanks!

LETTER TO THE EDITORS – SHOULD SUSTAINABILITY BE A FILTER FOR ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE?

The recent paper in NZJ Ecology by David Norton and Judith Roper-Lindsay (NZ J Ecol 28(2)) has sparked heated and extremely interesting discussion amongst the ecologists in the Local Government Ecologists Network. Most members of the network have expressed considerable concern about the proposal for "sustainability" as a filter for the assessment of ecological significance under section 6(c) of the RMA.

We would like to put forward a summary of the discussion that members of our network have had on this issue. We hope that this will open up some debate in the NZES newsletter and in the NZES journal about this important issue.

Philip Grove (Environment Canterbury) posed the question and Karen Denyer from Environment Waikato started off the discussion.

Environment Waikato has had considerable experience with development of ecological criteria for the Regional Policy Statement. Some submitters wanted sustainability to be a filter, so that sites not considered viable would not be considered significant irrespective of other values. EW argued successfully against this as it would be very easy to exclude just about every natural area on this criterion. Not only this but such a filter would provide anyone who didn't want their land to be considered significant a great incentive to run stock through it—no undergrowth = no seedlings = not viable!

Roper-Lindsay and Norton (2004) state that "sustainability relates to the likely future condition of a site, including its ability to retain the ecological values that have been identified". Karen Denyer wondered what timeline the authors had in mind and how it might be applied to kahikatea forest in her Region. Kahikatea forest is rare in the Waikato region (and nationally). Most Waikato stands are drained and destined to become tawa-titoki forest in 400–600 years when existing kahikatea trees die off. Kahikatea do not regenerate under their own canopy, requiring catastrophic disturbance to regenerate as kahikatea forest. Catastrophic floods are now rare because we've straightened rivers and built stopbanks to protect life and property. If sustainability is used as filter few, if any, kahikatea stands would be classed as significant, whereas on a national and regional scale they clearly are.

Karen proposes that probably only two of the Waikato peat bogs and none of the peat lakes would pass the sustainability test, the rest being surrounded by drained and shrinking land.

Ecosystems are dynamic and ever changing systems. Many rely on disturbance regimes to "reset" the succession process, e.g. scrub communities, wetlands. Are these ecosystem types sustainable in the future? Fortunately they are not going to stay static in the long term!

Andrea Julian (Auckland City Council) poses the flipside to the argument…

"If dynamics and likely futures were to be included in the assessment of significance, then logically the probable future of young regenerating shrublands and gorse areas would also need to be considered". Often such areas are not considered significant.

The paper proposes that if a site contains a rare species it must pass the test of being able to continue to sustain that species. However, a wetland that dries out over time (often naturally) won't continue to support the bittern or banded kokopu that may currently provide its significance rating. The kokako population in the Hunua Ranges (a large significant forested area) requires intensive pest control programmes to sustain the population. There is no temporal scale proposed by the authors to assist the application of the test.

Shona Myers states that in many of our ecological districts we have so little native vegetation remaining that most areas of forest and wetland left are significant. Increasingly many landowners are valuing the small remnants that they have remaining in these landscapes and want "their piece to be special too". In the Manukau and Awhitu Ecological Districts in the Auckland Region most remnants are less than 5 ha in size. Melanie Dixon from Greater Wellington reports that in the Wairarapa Ecological District most are less than 1ha. In the North Shore of the Auckland region the urban remnants, narrow fragments of pohutukawa, urban trees provide valuable life supporting capacity roles including clean water, clean air, green corridors. These small fragments would not meet the sustainability filter and yet are all we have left in these landscapes and are significant.

The paper also proposes that only those places 'working normally' should be considered significant under Section 6 (c) of the RMA. Examples that would not meet these rules include the gorse habitat for the Mahoenui Giant Weta and Tiritiri Island Open Sanctuary. Is an area planted in tree species and artificially loaded with an assortment of rare species "working normally"? The birds on the island and a number of international experts certainly think so!

The "realistic level of management activity" phrase is also questioned. If unlimited resources are available we can exclude most pests and weeds but within current budgets that is not realistic.

Andrea Julian argues that "virtually all areas require some input and this will increasingly become the case as more weeds spread from the margins, the tracks and roads into the interiors of natural areas. The question is how much resource is available to sustain a given area, when compared to how much the area needs. Resources for biodiversity protection and management change with politics and community will. For this reason it is best to keep sustainability out of the assessment of the natural values of an area. It is something to consider during the allocation of resources, but not as the sole determinant of whether a natural area should be destroyed through the resource consent process.

Tiritiri Island is a classic example of what you can achieve with huge community support and leadership—a primarily grassed island turned into a world-class sanctuary in 20 years! Community "buy-in" is

very important when addressing biodiversity issues, including "ecological significance". Alison Newell (Far North District Council) reports "being one of the least resourced territorial authorities with 35% of the district classed as significant ecologically—community buy-in is essential. We need to ensure that whatever method chosen by TAs to address biodiversity issues (regulatory or non regulatory) is the most effective on the ground—and that requires community support and understanding".

Shona and Karen question how relevant the continuing debate over significance criteria and relative values of natural areas is. We have lost so much of NZ's biodiversity that we are now concentrating on protecting all that remains (rather than just the highly significant bits), on ecological restoration and creating linkages. The small fragments, the weedy corridors, and the areas with potential for restoration are very important parts of this jigsaw. The growth in community support for restoration from both rural and urban people is huge.

Concern is also been expressed about the proposed simplification of ecological significance criteria, (reduced to a proposed four) from the original seven PNAP criteria, many of which are already embodied in regional and district plans, already very much in practice, and already tested in Environment Court. We feel that for most parts of New Zealand its time to stop endlessly analysing the relative virtues of the scraps of biodiversity we have left and turn our attention to working with landowners to help protect them.

Karen Denyer, Shona Myers, Andrea Julian
Melanie Dixon, Philip Grove, Alison Newell
and other members of the
Local Government Ecologist Network

53RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NEW ZEALAND ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The AGM of the NZES will be held during the annual conference—the date, time and room will be advertised in the next newsletter and on the conference website once it is up and running. All members are urged to attend. The minutes of the 52nd AGM can be found in the December 2004 issue of the newsletter http://www.nzes.org.nz/newsletter/no111.html. Members are reminded that notices of significant motions that are to be put by members need to be submitted to council at least 28 days prior to the AGM, and preferably in time to be included in the newsletter that precedes the AGM (issue no. 113 due out in May, deadline 1st May). After that time, following the society rules, no new motions may be proposed, discussed, or put to vote except by consent of more than two-thirds of the members present.

ECOLOGY STUCK ON THE WEB

1. Using the web to identify plants

One of my most precious tools as a field ecologist, alongside my trusty botanical hand lens, binoculars, and camera, is the internet (or world wide web (WWW)—described as one of the few phrases quicker to pronounce than its abbreviation). Hidden on the web amongst the mountains of scams, advertisements, Windows-eating programs, and adult entertainment is a growing wealth of excellent taxonomy and natural history information. A lot of it is free, both from overseas and increasingly from Aotearoa.

Any time I'm out and about in wild places, I like to learn a few new plant species. It's part of my quest to know enough species and natural history not to be embarrassed by old-time biologists, natural history camera people, biosecurity officers, and influential undergrads. I regret not having the head for names that makes a good taxonomist, but the more species I can recognise, the more ecological patterns I can separate from the chaos, and the better an ecologist I can become. At least, that's my plan!

Late last century, if I'd been out in the bush in one of those scary areas not covered by a Hugh Wilson guide book, I would return with my plant specimens and notes and descend into the grey haze of botanical jargon that is the New Zealand Flora Series. Sometimes, I would emerge on the other side with a name. More often, because the species I collected wasn't in flower or fruit at the time, I'd end up with a short list of possible names that I then had to check with Someone Who Knows or compare with herbarium specimens.

Now, things are much easier and it's all because of the web. Nowadays, I come back with my set of digital photos of an unfamiliar plant species—and a specimen only when the record is important or the group is difficult—(By the way, it doesn't seem to be common knowledge that many digital cameras, including my little Canon Ixus, can take quite acceptable handheld macro photos through a botanical hand lens.) I then turn to the keys and descriptions in the New Zealand Floras. But now I don't need to be in the same physical location as my well-thumbed Flora set. I can view the Flora series from anywhere there is an internet-connected computer (floraseries.landcareresearch.co.nz). This is thanks to the heroic efforts of Aaron Wilton and colleagues at Landcare Research, and the Terrestrial and Freshwater Biodiversity Information System (the same government fund that paid for our society to bring you all back issues of NZJE on-line).

I can also check on the up-to-date plant names at Landcare Research's Plant Names database (nzflora.landcareresearch.co.nz), also accessible by clicking the little kowhai flower icon next to a plant name in the online Flora series). The Plant Names Database meshes in with

the CHR herbarium database to display distribution maps (for some species) and there are buttons that promise to one day link to images, descriptions, and extra information. I'm all aquiver with excitement at this prospect.

Once I've emerged from the Floras after having converted the botanical jargon into a mental image of what a listed species should look like, I go to Google Images (images.google.com) to see what it really looks like. I type in the species name surrounded by quotation marks (so I don't get matches for other species in the genus or other genera with the same species), and watch all the images of the species roll down my screen for inspection. Many of these images are sourced from reputable botanical institutions. I can usually then say "by Jove, it's definitely that one". I'm old enough to find this a marvel.

At the moment, this works extraordinarily well for naturalised plants, because our colleagues in Europe, America, and Australia are ahead of us in freely sharing their information and photos through the web. But we're getting there. I recently wanted to quickly see what *Senecio radiolatus* looked like, as a student of mine was taking a trip out to the Chatham Islands where this species grows. I typed "Senecio radiolatus" into Google Images, and was rewarded with only one image, but it was an excellent photo from the increasingly superb New Zealand Plant Conservation Network website (www.nzpcn.org.nz). Just what I needed.

Once I have my precious name, I can type it into the standard Google text search and get most of what the electronic world knows about the species. This now includes every NZES journal article, ever, that has mentioned the species anywhere in its text (www.nzes.org.nz/nzje/). If you're interested in exploring the wider evolutionary relationships of a species, a great place to start is the Tree of Life (tolweb.org/tree/phylogeny.html), a website with a swish new look and increasingly large volume of thoughtfully presented information.

By now, those old time plant taxonomists out there may have passed out with shock. Foolish young ecologist! Am I really identifying plants based on digital photos and web information? Yes, I am. But I am not one of those less-influential undergraduates who blindly trusts everything they find on the web and pastes it into a class essay without reading it. A little knowledge and caution is useful. There are groups of plants where careful inspection of specimens and expert advice are required. If you work through the appropriate section of the relevant Flora, you will see which features are important for distinguishing similar species. If these are obscure or variable, be sure to check your plants against herbarium specimens, and ask an expert, rather than embarrassing yourself in front of a more influential undergraduate.

Jon Sullivan, Lincoln University
NZES webmaster

DEFINING SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS

A new resource on the NZES website:
http://www.nzes.org.nz/e_resources/signatareas2004/

An electronic report is available on the Significant Natural Areas workshop held at the 2004 Annual Conference of the New Zealand Ecological Society, Invercargill, on 30 August 2004. The workshop report was prepared for the New Zealand Ecological Society by Judith Roper-Lindsay (Boffa Miskell Ltd, Christchurch) with material from the workshop participants.

The report includes substantial background notes and a section written by Mark Christensen (Anderson Lloyd Caudwell Solicitors) on the case law surrounding Section 6(C) of the Resource Management Act, Protection of Significant Indigenous Vegetation and Fauna. Also included are all PowerPoint slides from the workshop presentations by Geoff Walls, Erik van Eyndhoven and Colin Meurk, and full notes on the discussions held during the workshop.

This report marks the first addition to a new eResources area of the NZES website.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ECOLOGISTS NETWORK

A network of ecologists working in local government was established in 2003. Its aim is to share information and ideas and provide a support network. Its focus is on ecologists working in terrestrial and wetland ecology. Working in local government can be exciting, each day is different, and you need to be flexible, adaptable, be a good communicator, and be innovative and resourceful. You are often very much a generalist ecologist—knowing a little about many aspects of ecology, and often expected to know anything about everything! It can be very rewarding—it is very much about putting ecology into practice, achieving results on the ground, and coming up with innovative solutions to problems. But it can be frustrating. Often you may be the only ecologist working in a council—which can be isolating. Many councils around the country still do not employ ecologists, while some have whole teams. There is a need for us to share ideas and work together to develop solutions to the unique issues we are facing. Things that we as ecologists in local government do include:

- resource management (developing policies in regional and district plans, making submissions on consents, presenting expert evidence at hearings and Environment Court);
- working on the ground with landowners, iwi and community groups on ecological restoration and biodiversity protection projects and best practice for management issues (e.g. vegetation clearance).

- working on conservation projects on regional, and city and district council parks (e.g. mainland islands, species conservation projects, restoration, pest and weed control)
- developing education resources for landowners, schools and the community
- undertaking ecological surveys and monitoring
- coordinating and planning pest and weed control programmes
- providing funding and advice for biodiversity protection on private land

Questions that we often have to make decisions and judgments on include:

- the environmental effects of development
- ecological significance of natural areas
- thresholds for vegetation clearance, fragmentation
- mitigation measures—how much is enough
- restoration options—suitable plants for enhancement, methods to control plant and animal pests, getting water levels right in wetlands.

The network aims to provide a forum for ideas, promote the work that ecologists do at local government level, and to get more of a focus on research and ecology that answers the practical questions that we face in our jobs. Much of New Zealand's important biodiversity decisions are made at local government and community level.

The network meets at least annually at each NZES conference and corresponds by e-mail.

If you would like to find out more about the ecologists network contact one of the following:

Karen Denyer, Environment Waikato, karen.denyer@ew.govt.nz

Melanie Dixon, Greater Wellington, melanie.Dixon@gw.govt.nz

Shona Myers, Auckland Regional Council, shona.myers@arc.govt.nz

Andrea Julian, Auckland City Council, andrea.julian@aucklandcity.govt.nz

Shona Myers
Auckland Regional Council

IDEAS FOR ECOLOGISTS

One of the things that was mentioned to us at the 2004 NZES conference is that while the journal and conference are great forums for presenting what ecological research has been done, it can be difficult for people at the grass roots of ecology to communicate research ideas and interesting questions to people who do the research at universities and institutes. We hope to use the newsletter as a brokering tool for collaborations and project ideas between members of the society, and create a source of project ideas for ecology students.

Please contact us as newsletter@nzes.org.nz. If you have any project ideas that you would like to share, or any feedback, comments, or questions.

With that in mind… here are some project ideas and questions from Bec Stanley of DOC Auckland:

- Are honey bees hives in native forest/shrubland habitat affecting native plant or weed fecundity, native pollination density and diversity or hybridization rates?
- Are exotic snails (*Cantareus aspersus*) a conservation pest? Snails have ring-barked Euphorbia glauca we re-introduced to a former site, and have been found deep into some forested ecosystems at kakabeak sites.
- Restoration of threatened plant habitat as opposed to re-planting species back into sites where they formerly grew but which are quite different now. Is it possible?
- Researching methods for maintaining secondary habitat for rare seral species such as for kakabeak (*Clianthus puniceus*) on an offshore island dominated by exotic leguminous species such as brush wattle (*Paraserianthes lophantha*), hakea (*Hakea sericea*) and gorse.

If you are interested in any of these ideas please contact Bec Stanley: rstanley@doc.govt.nz

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

David Given awarded Sir Peter Scott Medal

As indicated by John Sawyer and Wren Green in the last newsletter (no. 111, December 2004) David Given received the Sir Peter Scott Medal at the IUCN World Congress held in Thailand in November last year.

David received this prestigious award for his services to global plant conservation with the World Conservation Union's (IUCN) Species Survival Commission.

The Sir Peter Scott Medal is the highest award from the Species Survival Commission of the IUCN, and one of the world's top awards for species conservation. Not more than 25 people have received this award worldwide, and David is the first New Zealander to receive the award.

David is currently the Christchurch City Council's botanical services curator, consultant and part-time lecturer at Lincoln University and Associate Professor of the Isaac Centre for Nature Conservation. He chairs the global plant conservation programme of the IUNC Species Survival Commission and has spent 30 years working in international plant conservation.

Congratulations David!

Te Tohu Taiao Award

In 2004, the prestigious Te Tohu Taiao award was presented to Professor Micheal Winterbourn for his outstanding contribution to freshwater ecology in New Zealand. Prof Winterbourn has mentored many of the people working in the field of freshwater

ecology and has played an important role in raising the profile of freshwater issues. He has an exhaustive list of publications which includes several books. Prof Winterbourn was unable to accept the award in person but was "honoured and stunned" to receive the award.

Best Publication by a New Researcher

Several excellent publications were put forward for this award in 2004. Three judges kindly offered their time to assess the applicants' publications and the award was presented to Rachel Standish for her publication: Standish, R.J., Williams, P.A., Robertson, A.W., Scott, N.A. and Hedderley, D.I. (2004) Invasion by a perennial herb increases decomposition rate and alters nutrient availability in warm temperate lowland forest remnants. Biological Invasions, 6, 71–81.

Congratulations Rachel and thank you to the other scientists who sent in their publications for this award.

Honorary Life Membership

Two people were nominated for honorary life membership in 2004, Les Batcheler and Professor Alan Mark. Both members have contributed in one way or another to the society over the years and have championed ecological research in their respective fields.

Best Student Presentation

Priscilla McAllum received the award for the best student publication at the annual conference in Invercargill last year. Priscilla presented an interesting paper on traditional resource management of Harakeke. Priscilla won free subscription to the Ecological Society journal for one year, $300 cash and as well as prizes donated by the sponsors. Congratulations Priscilla!

Highly Commended Student Presentation

This award was presented to Harshi Gamage from the University of Victoria for her presentation which outlined why plants change leaf morphology. Harshi won $100 cash for her efforts and prizes donated by our sponsors.

Best Student Poster

This award was also presented to Harshi Garage for her poster which provided details of her research on physiological adaptations of plants to changing light environments. Harshi won free subscription to the Ecological Society journal for one year, $200 cash and as well as prizes donated by the sponsors.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Te Tohu Taiao – Award for Ecological Excellence

It is time to start thinking about who you would like to nominate for the Te Tohu Taiao award.

Te tohu taiao – award for ecological excellence (formerly New Zealand Ecological Society Award) is made annually to recognise society members who have made an outstanding contribution to the study and application of ecological science. The award is made to the person(s) who have published the best original research into the ecology of New Zealand, and its dependences (including the Ross Dependency) or the person(s) who have made the most outstanding contribution to applied ecology, particularly conservation and management, in New Zealand and its dependencies. For more information please contact Alison Evans awards@nzes.org.nz. Nominations will be accepted until 1 July, 2005.

NZES Award for Best Publication by a New Researcher

The New Zealand Ecological Society awards an annual prize of NZ $200 for the best published paper of an ecological nature, by a new researcher. This award is targeted at people at the start of their research career. The award will be presented at the NZ Ecological Society's annual conference, and reported in the NZ Ecological Society's Newsletter.

Authors wishing to be considered for this award must meet the following criteria:

Be the first-named or sole author of the paper.

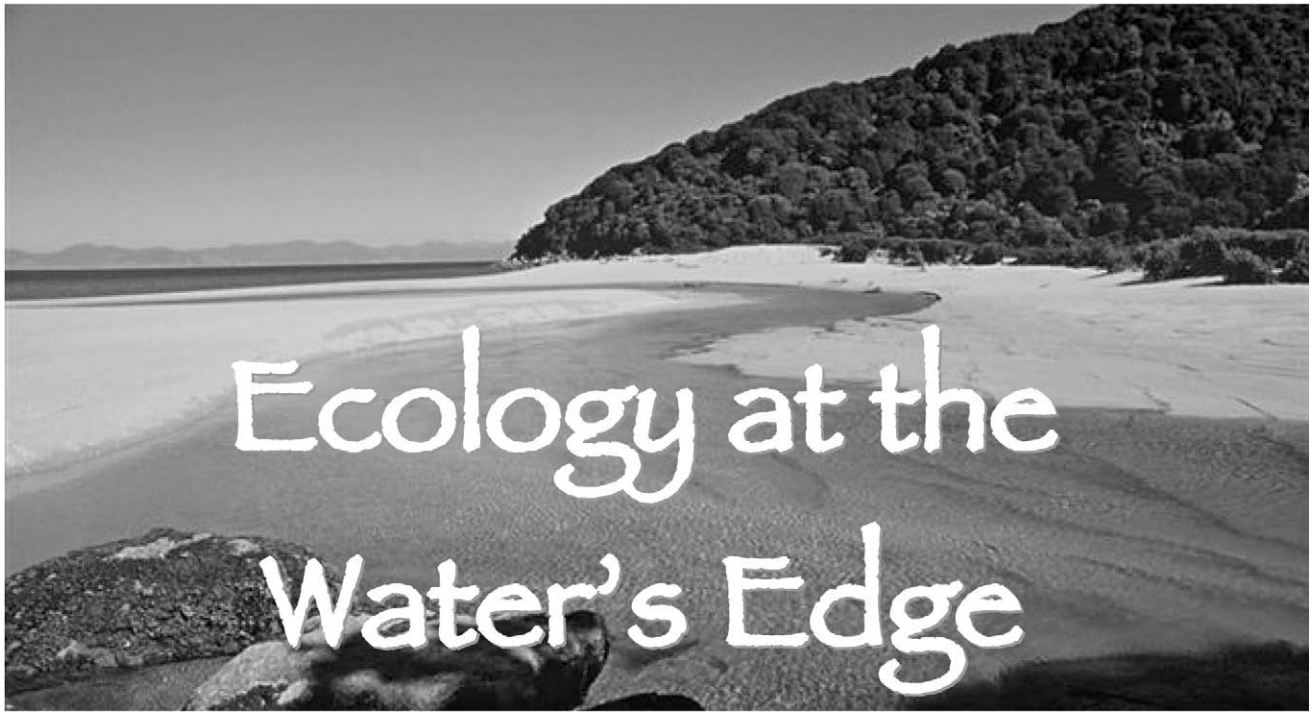
Be a current member of the NZ Ecological Society.

Either currently be a student or have graduated within the last 3 years, and be at the start of their research career.

The paper should be of an ecological nature, preferably published in an ecological journal (not restricted to publications in the NZ Journal of Ecology).

Authors wishing to be considered for this award should send 4 copies of their publication to the NZ Ecological Society Awards Convenor (awards@nzes.org.nz) no later than 1 July 2005. All publications will be reviewed by a committee nominated by the New Zealand Ecological Society Council. At the discretion of the nominated committee, no award may be made in any given year.

Details of NZES awards including past award recipients are available from the website www.nzes.org.nz/awards.html



Combined conference of the New Zealand Ecological Society and New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society

Rutherford Hotel NELSON

28 August – 1 September 2005*

*note Sunday 28 August is Student day; one 2 day field trip extends until Friday 2 September

Come to sunny Nelson for the first combined conference of the New Zealand Freshwater Sciences and Ecological societies.

The theme of the conference 'Ecology at the Water's Edge' aims to link the interests of both societies, providing a focus on topics such as wetlands and the margins of rivers and lakes. Note, however, that papers will cover a broad range of topics and include terrestrial and marine ecosystems as well as freshwater.

The theme is also relevant to the venue – Nelson, a city at the water's edge.

As well as a great variety of fieldtrips to take in the regional biodiversity, the conference offers delegates the opportunity to sample Nelsons many other attractions including its great scenery and outdoor opportunities. Not to mention vineyards, cafes and restaurants.

Registration Brochure & Forms Published End May

For further information contact:

Ali Howard at NELSON TOURISM SERVICES

Ph: 03 546 6338

e-mail: ali@nzdirect.co.nz

or

Trevor James (Organising Committee Chairman)

Ph: 03 544 8176

e-mail: Trevor.James@tdc.govt.nz

EX LIBRIS

Restoring Kapiti. Nature's Second Chance. Edited by Kerry Brown. 240 x 170 mm, paperback, 128 pp, ISBN 1 877276 66 9, about 60 colour photographs, maps. RRP $29.95

Kapiti Island is one of New Zealand's longest and most exciting conservation stories. After 100 years of hard work animal pests are eradicated, weeds controlled. The bird life is thriving and its forests are returning. In the surrounding marine reserve, established in 1992, sea life is flourishing

People who have contributed to this restoration tell the island's story in Restoring Kapiti: Nature's Second Chance, edited by Kerry Brown and published by University of Otago Press.

Kapiti Island became a nature reserve in 1897 and is an ongoing story of outstanding restoration accomplishment. By 1900, it was home to eleven pest species including kiore, pigs, goats, deer, cattle, the Norway rat, sheep and cats. Possums were released in 1893 and were only eradicated in 1987, after an intensive programme began in 1980. Kapiti was declared free of rats in 1999, and it is now the largest single area of lowland coast forest that is free from introduced animal herbivores and predators.

Projects to eradicate possums and rats, and to increase or establish populations of endangered birds, have made New Zealand internationally renowned for conservation management. Lessons learnt on Kapiti provided models to follow in other parts of the country. Kapiti is a stronghold for protected native birds: the little spotted kiwi would probably be extinct if it were not for the island. It is one of the few offshore island strongholds for kaka and, as such, is important for the continued survival of the species. Other birds finding sanctuary there include hihi, takahe, weka, kokako and North Island saddleback. Countless invertebrates, bats and lizards and native freshwater fish also inhabit the reserve.

Although Kapiti Island is perhaps best known for its wildlife, it also provides an important home for rare plants. Its forests and shrublands preserve types of vegetation once common in coastal and lowland parts of central New Zealand, but which are now fragmented and under threat from pests and weeds.

Restoring Kapiti is the first book in University of Otago Press's Conservation Guides, a new series exploring New Zealand's inspiring conservation stories. The next title in the series, Southern Seas: Marine Life at 45° South, will be released in early 2005. It looks at the Portobello Marine Laboratory, the oldest established marine research facility in Australasia.

ECOLOGICAL MISCELLANY

The Perfect Specimen

There is a great deal that can be learned about plant life in New Zealand and around the world. Collecting plant specimens can add knowledge to what we already know and aid those whose full time profession uses plants to solve the 'meaning of life'. It can be enjoyable and educational for all ages.

Although plant collecting is an enjoyable experience, caution must be placed on the decreasing amounts of biodiversity in the world. Therefore only collect the specimen if it is of the utmost importance to you. In the modern technology of today's age, taking pictures with a digital camera will provide the majority of the information that is required for identification, without taking the plant. Digital cameras have the advantage of being able to take a lot of photos of the particular plant you are interested in while leaving the plant in its natural environment.

If you find that removing the plant will be more beneficial for your studies/activities, tossing it in newspaper and then having a look at it a month or so down the track will not provide you with a satisfactory specimen. Using this method you are likely to find a shrivelled, mouldy, and broken up unidentifiable object! Not only does it look bad, you had told yourself at the time that you would label it later, but it never happened; now you can't remember anything about it! That is what not to do; here are some guidelines of how to collect a plant specimen to obtain long term benefits and enjoyment.

1. Try to collect specimens on a dry day; moisture on stored plants causes the increase of mould.
2. When finding an appropriate specimen to collect find one that will help with later identification. The sample of the specimen should include root, stem, leaves, flowers or fruit and seeds if possible.
3. The single most important thing to do when collecting specimens is to collect as much information about the plant at the time of collecting. This means at the very least write the date, location, habitat, and name of the species (if you know it). Global Positioning System (GPS) is becoming a common tool for plant studies, so information such as a grid reference or at least a detailed location description, may be invaluable. Also added can be information such as its rarity or commonness in the area and what other plants seem to be associated with it. Jot down the information as you collect the specimen, as waiting until you get home with a whole mass of specimens you are likely to get mix ups and forget important information. If you start collecting several specimens, give each specimen its' own identifiable number so that you can easily find the specimen at a later date if you start cataloguing your specimens (see example data card below)
4. If you have a digital camera, use this to take a photo of the plant in its natural environment as this could help in identification and be used for studies in the future. Even if pressed correctly some plants can lose their colour so taking photo can revive the plants 'true colours' (*See "Ecology stuck on the web" this issue, Eds*).

Name: *Senecio elgans* **Date collected**: *7/7/05*

Collected by: *S. Sam* **Specimen No**: *01*

Location (inc grid ref): *Plum tree Bay, Te Whanga Lagoon, Chatham Islands (mainland). GR 500108*

Habitat: *Sand and shell area 1–2m from waters edge*

Comments: *Was found only in a small islet of the bay to the right of the track. Found around dandelion patches and Harestail. Was common in that small islet of 70m distance, was not found elsewhere in the bay.*

Identified by: *J. Sullivan*

Example of the type of data needed when plant collecting

5. If you are collecting specimens in a new area, take the time out before you begin collecting to find the threatened species in the area so you don't inadvertently collect the last remaining species in that area! DOC will have information on threatened species in particular areas. Be aware if you are going into DOC areas, a permit must be obtained to remove plants.
6. Specimens should be put into newsprint paper or absorbent paper when collected. It should be placed onto the paper so that you can see the shape, colour and texture of the plants different structures. The specimen should be slightly bigger than an A4 sized paper (paper used at herbariums for mounting is 26 × 42 cm). If the plant is bigger, the stem can be folded over to fit onto the sheet.
7. Once collected the specimens need to be pressed. If you have only one or two specimens simply placing a heavy object on top of it can do this. If more specimens are collected, there is a layering technique that is used to ensure good drying and a nice showy specimen for the future.

First layer
A flat piece of wood, like plywood

Second layer
A piece of corrugated cardboard. This acts as a separator and allows air to flow through and moisture to diffuse out.

Third layer
A piece of paper to aid in moisture absorption.

Fourth layer
Your specimens in paper. You are able to place three or four specimens on top of each other then add corrugated cardboard and paper and then more specimens.

Continue to layer specimens, cardboard and paper then add another flat piece of wood to finish off. This whole 'package' then needs to be tied up using rope or an old belt to provide the 'pressing' effect.

This type of pressing is good for herbaceous plants, however succulents, the Arum lily family and specimens with thick stems need extra instruction and a experienced plant collector or reference books should be consulted before collecting/pressing these sort of plants.

The package now needs to be dried. In some parts of New Zealand where it is hot and dry it is OK to leave it where it is. In cooler climate areas the package can be put near a hot water cylinder or beside a fire to help drying. For wetter areas of New Zealand an experienced plant collector should be consulted for the best drying methods to use. The pressed specimens need to be checked regularly and taken out when they have dried. The more moisture that is on the specimens the more often it needs to be checked and the paper changed to avoid mouldy, degraded specimens.

Mounting specimens is also enjoyable work and a wonderful job for those cold rainy days. Mounting is for those specimens that you want to keep for a lifetime and normal paper will not keep over that time. Therefore archival (acid-free) paper is used to mount your dried specimens.

Equipment that you will need:

- Mounting archival paper and archival folders
- An appropriate sized box to keep the completed specimens
- Holdfast Plastipad Glue and/or gum tape
- Cellophane bags for loose material and seeds
- Paintbrush for glue application

This is a fragile job, as dried specimens can be brittle and break easy, so patience and tender hands is the key!

The archival paper and glue can be hard items to obtain; however, these are the suppliers that have been found in New Zealand (Addresses supplied by Cynthia Roberts):

Mounting cards, archival paper and folders:

Paper Source Ltd
P O Box 39174
TePuni Mail Centre
Auckland

Gum tape and Bags:

Shardlow M.J. & Co. Ltd
20 Jackson St
Phillipstown

The glue can be purchased at Warehouse Stationary, but be aware they may have to order it in.

From here it is just a matter of gluing the specimens onto the mounting board so that all structures are seen and it looks tidy on the page. Ensure to glue the label to the mounting board, it is normally glued to the bottom left hand corner.

Once mounted it is important to sterilize the specimens to kill any eggs or insects that may harm the specimen while it is being stored. The preferred method is putting them into the freezer for a minimum of 10 days.

The perfect specimen is hard to find but with a bit of work and perseverance you can achieve long term satisfaction!

Shona Sam
Lincoln University

Shona Sam is a BSc student at Lincoln University. She has just completed a summer studentship working with Jon Sullivan on assessing the conservation status of NZ Senecio daisies where she had the opportunity to learn about and hone her plant ecology skills. Shonas' work included collecting historic distribution and habitat data from herbarium specimens and participating in data field surveys throughout the mountains and lowlands of Canterbury.

HOTSCIENCE

The New Zealand Hot Science project, initiated in 2002, aims to compile and maintain a dynamic list and summary of every important article, book, and book chapter on New Zealand ecology published internationally since 2000.

NZ Hot Science will help members of the NZ Ecological Society keep abreast of NZ ecological research published internationally. This is not to suggest that internationally published papers are inherently better than locally published efforts—of course the New Zealand Journal of Ecology and other New Zealand based journals contain many great papers on New Zealand ecology and natural history. However, there is also a respectable number of articles that appear in offshore journals, often including some of our best ecology, and it can take a concerted effort to keep abreast of these publications. We hope NZ Hot Science will make this task much easier and more comprehensive.

The current NZ Hot Science list contains short summaries of many recent papers published internationally since 2000. A great many more papers are not yet listed. We invite all New Zealand ecologists to contribute summaries for all their ecologically based items published overseas.

Joy, M.K. & Death, R.G. (2003) Assessing biological integrity using freshwater fish and decapod habitat selection functions. Environmental Management, 32, 747–759.

To assess human impacts on aquatic systems worldwide the comparison between observed and expected biological communities has been used successfully with predictive models. We developed a methodology based on the comparison between observed and expected freshwater fish and macro-crustacean assemblages to assess the biological quality of stream sites in the Auckland region, New Zealand. Individual discriminant models based on the presence or absence of the 12 most common fish and decapod species were developed. Using the models, predictions were made using environmental measures at new sites to yield the probability of the capture of each of the 12 species and these were combined to predict the assemblage expected at sites. The expected assemblage was compared to that observed using an observed over expected ratio (O/E). The models were evaluated using a number of internal tests including jackknifing, data partitioning and the degree to which O/E values differed between reference sites and a set of sites perceived to be impaired by human impacts.

Joy, M.K. & Death, R.G. (2004) Application of the Index of Biotic Integrity Methodology to New Zealand Freshwater Fish Communities. Environmental Management, 34, 415–428.

An index of biotic integrity (IBI) was developed for freshwater fish in New Zealand streams. Data on freshwater fish occurrence for 5007 sites over the entire country were obtained from the New Zealand freshwater fish database for the period 1980–2002. Corresponding environmental descriptors for the stream catchments above or at each of these sites were obtained from a number of databases using a geographic information system. Of the 12 original North American IBI metrics, only six were adapted and applied because of differences between the fish faunas of New Zealand and the United States of America. A number of evaluation methods showed all six metrics contributed to the overall IBI scores with high levels of consistency. The IBI assessment of sites sampled at different times showed high levels of temporal concordance. Overall, the results presented demonstrate the potential for New Zealand freshwater fish to be used to assess river condition at large spatial scales in New Zealand in the absence of specifically selected reference sites.

Joy, M.K. & Death, R.G. (2004) Predictive modelling and spatial mapping of freshwater fish and decapod assemblages: an integrated GIS and neural network approach. Freshwater Biology, 49, 1036–1052.

We used stream fish and decapod spatial occurrence data extracted from the New Zealand Freshwater Fish Database combined with recent surveys and geospatial landuse data, geomorphologic, climatic, and spatial data in a geographical information system (GIS) to model fish occurrence in the Wellington Region, New Zealand. To predict the occurrence of each species at a site from a common set of predictor variables we used a multi-response, artificial neural network (ANN), to produce a single model to predict the entire fish and decapod assemblage in one procedure. The predictions from the ANN using this landscape scale data proved very accurate and four other evaluation metrics independent of species abundance or probability thresholds also confirmed the accuracy of the model. The geospatial data available for the entire regional river network were then used to create a habitat-suitability map for all 18 species over the regional river network using GIS. This prediction map has many potential uses including; monitoring and predicting temporal changes in fish communities caused by human activities and shifts in climate, identifying of areas in need of protection, biodiversity hotspots, and areas for the reintroduction of endangered or rare species.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The New Zealand Biosecurity Institute in association with The Vertebrate Pest Management Institute of New Zealand invites you to a National Education and Training Seminar 'In Your Neighbourhood'

27–29 July 2005, Christchurch

Biosecurity is a key issue facing New Zealand today, and how we manage invasive alien species is of major importance for our environment, our health and our economy. The New Zealand Biosecurity Institute, in association with The Vertebrate Pest Management Institute of New Zealand, is pleased to announce that its annual education and training seminar (NETS) will be held in Christchurch from 27–29 July 2005. The theme for this year's conference, 'In your neighbourhood', emphasises what we can all do for biosecurity in our own neighbourhood—be it urban, rural, regional, national, or the wider Pacific region.

NETS 2005 provides a unique opportunity for those involved in biosecurity to share information and form stronger partnerships so we can better meet the challenge of biosecurity issues in our region. There is also a public out-reach session at the end of the conference, which presents an opportunity for the public to learn about biosecurity from the experts, and assist in the battle against unwanted pests.

Seminars

Speakers at NETS 2005 will include biosecurity experts from around New Zealand and the world. International speakers from Australia and Polynesia will offer a different perspective on biosecurity challenges they face in their regions. Presenters come from a diverse range of backgrounds and organizations, including scientists from research institutes, the Department of Conservation, ERMA, Biosecurity New Zealand, regional councils, universities, field workers, private consultants, community groups, and the agricultural sector. Session topics include: impacts and management of pest mammals, weed management, aquatic plant and animal pests, advances in biocontrol, modeling invasive species, weeds awareness, and lifting our game.

Workshops

A number of facilitated workshops will offer conference participants the chance to interact with each other and discuss a range of current issues related to biosecurity. Topics include: the use of internal borders, pest exclusion techniques, biosecurity policy, dealing with the media, and how to utilise biosecurity databases and other information sources.

Field trips
There are a variety of field trips to suit all tastes. Options include: Riccarton Bush and Christchurch airport, Port Hills Reserves, Christchurch wetlands, and Lincoln laboratory research facilities (Biotron, Animal Facility, Herbarium).

For further information please contact:
Ali Howard
ali@nzdirect.co.nz
Phone: 03 546-6338
or:
Hugh Gourlay
gourlayh@landcareresearch.co.nz

MEETINGS DIARY

New entries are marked with an asterisk (*).

29 March – 1 April, 2005
Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand Conference: Working on the Frontier: Environmental Sustainability in Practice
Christchurch.
Contact: sally@conferenceteam.co.nz,
or judithrl@boffamiskell.co.nz,
http://www.conferenceteam.co.nz/eianz

* **30 March – 2April**
Australasian Society for the Study of Animal Behaviour Conference
Massey University, Palmerston North.
http://galliform.psy.mq.edu.au/ASSAB/events/conf05/welcome05.html

* **8–9 April 2005**
The first South Island BioBlitz
Hagley Park/Botanical Gardens, Christchurch.
Contact Kelly Walker walkerk@lincoln.ac.nz

* **18–20 April 2005**
New Zealand Entomological Society Conference
Napier.
http://www.ento.rsnz.org/conf05.htm

* **28–29 April 2005**
New Zealand Association of Impact Assessment 14th Annual Conference
Te Papa Museum of New Zealand, Wellington.
www.nzaia.org.nz

28–30 April, 2005
Looking forward to HERITAGE LANDSCAPES Conference
Dunedin.
Contact mick@design.otago.ac.nz,
http://www.nzila.co.nz/conf_coming.htm

* **2–6 May, 2005.**
13th Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference
Te Papa, Wellington.
www.nzes.org.nz/www.landcareresearch.co.nz/news/conferences/vertebratepest

* **27–29 July, 2005.**
The National Education and Training Seminar (NETS) conference of the NZ Biosecurity Institute, in association with the Vertebrate Pest Management Institute of NZ
Christchurch.
www.biosecurity.org.nz

* **23–26 August, 2005.**
4th International Marine Bio-invasions Conference
Wellington. Co-hosts are Biosecurity New Zealand (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry) and the MIT Sea Grant Program (USA). The meeting will be held in conjunction with the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society. Conference website available soon.

* **24–26 August, 2005**
Workshop in Urban Ecology
Lincoln University. Details available soon.

* **28 August – 1 September, 2005.**
New Zealand Ecological Society annual conference
Held in conjunction with the NZ Limnology Society, Nelson. Details available soon.

12–18 September, 2005
World Conference on Ecological Restoration
Zaragoza, Spain.
www.ecologicalrestoration.net

* **29 November – 2 December, 2005.**
Ecological Society of Australia annual conference
University of Queensland, St. Lucia, Brisbane.
www.ecolsoc.org.au/Conference/ESA2004/ESA2004.htm

6–10 December, 2005
Australasian Ornithological Conference, Blenheim
http://osnz.org.nz/conference.htm

11–13 December, 2005
Australasian Shorebird Conference 2005
Nelson.
http://osnz.org.nz/conference.htm

3–6 March, 2006
Second International Meeting on Physiology and Pharmacology of Temperature Regulation
Phoenix, Arizona.
Contact Karla.Scarf@chw.edu, www.FeverLab.net

* **18–21 April, 2006.**
Australasian Plant Breeding Conference (APBC)
Christchurch.
http://events.lincoln.ac.nz/apbc/

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Post-Graduate study opportunities in seabird research at Lincoln University.

Expressions of interest are invited from students interested in either of the projects described below. For both a Ph.D. candidate is preferred but applications from persons wishing to study for a masters degree may be considered.

Conservation of blue penguins in Westland

Westland populations of the blue penguin (Eudyptula minor) are apparently declining but the extent of the decline nor the factors leading to it are known. A number of possible threats are evident including coastal development, tourist and other recreational activities, dogs and feral predators. Concern has been expressed by local community groups, regional and local authorities and DoC who in collaboration with Lincoln University have formed the Westland Blue Penguin Working Group which is raising money to support this research. The aim of the research is to determine the distribution and status of blue penguins in Westland, quantify the threats faced by the birds, provide guidelines for their management and to establish monitoring schemes that allow the local residents to monitor subsequent changes in the status of selected populations. Extensive fieldwork is required and the student will be required to liaise with community groups, DoC and regional and local authorities. A suitable student could start on this project immediately.

Comparative ecology and conservation needs of two species of shag endemic to the Chatham Islands

Both species of shag endemic to the Chatham Islands, the Chatham shag (*Leucocarbo onslowi*) and the Pitt Island shag (Stictocarbo featherstoni) have apparently declined in abundance but the reasons for the recent declines are unknown. Very little is known about the ecology of either species so currently it is impossible to develop management strategies to allow the populations to recover. The aim of this project is to study the breeding biology and foraging ecology of both species, to determine the threats faced by the two populations and to develop appropriate management strategies. Funding and final approval for this project is pending but we hope that fieldwork could begin late in 2005. The student will be required to spend extended periods on the Chatham Islands.

Lincoln University offers a number of competitive scholarships and it is recommended that prospective students apply for scholarship support. Details are available on the Lincoln University website www.lincoln.ac.nz. It is possible that these projects may provide a small contribution toward living expenses.

For further information contact:

Kerry-Jayne Wilson,
Bio-Protection and Ecology Division,
P.O. Box 84, Lincoln University,
Canterbury.
E-mail: wilsok@lincoln.ac.nz

Research specialist in earth and environmental sciences

The Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago has an opening for a Research Specialist in Earth and Environmental Sciences. This individual will be required to deploy to the McMurdo Dry Valleys in Antarctica for approximately 3 months annually (October to January timeframe) to establish and maintain field systems (field deployment requires that a rigorous physical examination be passed) and collect data. The remainder of the year will involve routine lab work, data analysis, equipment development and field planning.

Bachelor's or Master's degree in Earth Science or related natural science, and experience in the use and/or development of autonomous sensor systems, particularly in aquatic environments. Specific knowledge with Campbell Scientific systems is an advantage. Previous experience in remote field work is desired. Position begins 1 August 2005.

For fullest consideration, submit resumé and names of three references by 1 April to Dr. Peter Doran, pdoran@uic.edu. University of Illinois at Chicago, Earth and Environmental Sciences, mc186, 845 W. Taylor, Chicago, IL 60607.

More information can be found on the web at: http://www.uic.edu/depts/geos/ UIC is an AA/EOE.

NEWS FROM COUNCIL

Editors note (Edited and abridged minutes)

Minutes of New Zealand Ecological Society Council meeting, 18th February 2005

Correspondence

Henry Connor has written requesting NZES support for nominating Brian Molloy as Fellow of RSNZ, John to respond to letter offering our support.

Shona discussed a letter from Ministry of Economic Development regarding new incorporated societies website and on line services for societies. The NZES is now listed as a society on the website.

Treasurer's report

Rachel reported that the change of signatories for the cheque account was underway. The audited accounts would be ready before AGM and newsletter.

Kate reported that there has been a surplus from the 2004 Invercargill conference. A discussion on the auditing of these accounts followed. Moved that the 2004 Invercargill Conference accounts be forwarded

to the Treasurer to audit: Dave (moved), Rachel (seconded), accepted.

Journal editor's report

Duane Peltzer is carrying on as Acting Scientific Editor for early 2005, passing the reigns to Peter Bellingham after the field season.

A total of 31 submitted manuscripts were received in 2004 (down from 54 in 2003). More typical of submission rates in recent years.

Currently, 21 manuscripts under review, 8 manuscripts returned for revisions, and a further 9 manuscripts rejected but open for resubmission. Current rejection rate at 30–40%. Volume 29 (1) has 14 accepted manuscripts to date and is filled.

John Parkes has proposed a special issue of the journal based on papers from the Nigel Barlow symposium in 2004. Technical editing will be contracted to Landcare, with Duane and Peter giving the final approval. This edition will be ready for publication in late 2005.

Two review manuscripts have been recently submitted to the journal and are currently being reviewed. Duane asked for councils thoughts on review papers: 1. should we be publishing more review articles, and 2. what topics?

Council supported the publication of more review articles in the journal. They are a useful way of communicating science to a wider audience. The success of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environments review reports was given as a good example. Useful topics could include the use of 1080.

Duane raised issue of cost of printing journals and possibility of combining with Entomological Society. A discussion followed including changing size of journal to A4. John will investigate options and present recommendations at the next meeting.

Webmasters report

A Memo to Council from Roger and Jon regarding electronic access to journal articles was discussed.

1. On-line 'early' publishing

Early publication of journal articles and the difficulty of overcoming final pagination were discussed. There is generally a 4–6 month delay before publication. Options discussed included:

- putting them in order as accepted
- short communications at end and running articles in sequence as they arrive
- numbering as accepted but grouping similar articles (e.g. short communications) within the index

2. Policy on posting electronic copies on authors' personal webpages?

It was recommended that a copywrite statement be drafted that allows 'reasonable' use of journal articles for personal use. Most journals allow authors to distribute articles to colleagues. Jon will draft a copywrite statement for authors.

3. Promotion of web pages in journal

Agreed that website address should be advertised in journal—on top of each page

4. License agreement for institutional subscribers

Some institutional subscribers have asked about license agreement for use and access to journal within their institutions. Jon to talk to University libraries about institutional subscriberlicense agreements

4. Online access to journal articles

Jon reported that website use is more than double that of 2004—primarily due to online access to journal.

Council discussed closing down current online access to last 3 years of papers in journal, with members having password for access. Current access would not be closed until online access to members is provided. Online membership and subscriptions was discussed.

Jon was asked if he needs some help to manage and run the webpages. Council gave Jon permission to employ student to complete PDFs and article editing for website

Jon discussed providing compatible website with Entomological Society and possibility for joint searching in future.

Conferences

1. *Joint NZ Ecol Soc/Limnological Society Conference, Nelson, 28 Aug – 1 Sept 2005, Rutherford Hotel*

Simon Moore (Department of Conservation, Nelson) is Ecological Society representative. Theme is: "Ecology at the waters edge", Ideas for conference symposia were discussed and the need for topics on terrestrial ecology as well.

2. *2006 Joint New Zealand Ecol Soc / Australian Ecol Soc Conference, Wellington, 27 Aug to 31 Aug 2006, Victoria University*

John reported on progress with organisation. Victoria University has room for 400 people. Dave suggested revisiting "Moa, mammals, climate" as a possible theme. Other possibilities: unique biodiversity, restoration

3. *2009 – Intecol (International Association for Ecology)– the 10th International Congress of Ecology*

John reported on the joint bid with Australian Ecological Society to host the International Congress of Ecology in Brisbane in 2009. John has offered NZES support for this bid and has submitted his name as NZES liaison person for the bid. He would like someone else to take on this role. Kate agreed to be NZES contact person for the Intecol bid.

Notes from Brainstorm Discussion on Education Role of NZES

NZES aims are to promote the study of ecology and the application of ecological knowledge in all its applications. A discussion was had on what form the role of the society should be in promoting ecology to the wider community, e.g. landowners, managers, schools, public.

The following is a list of the ideas suggested:

- we need to build on what Ecological Society can provide—journal and conference
- use the newsletter to be more broader reaching
- hold forums or symposia or public forums e.g. plant protection—pre conference symposium combining science and management; public session at Biosecurity conference in evening—open forum—where public are encouraged to bring in weeds they want identified or questions
- apply to DoC Biodiversity Advice Fund to run symposia such as this—seminars, workshops
- apply to DoC Biodiversity Advice Fund to produce factsheets/ occasional publications, e.g. the debate around use of 1080; eradication of kiore off islands; fragmentation; ecological corridors; mainland islands
- produce factsheets similar to Ecological Society of America—summary of best scientific knowledge
- produce factsheets of ecosystems—similar to NZ Plant Conservation network
- provide unbiased advice (cf. conservation groups)
- there is a gap in community information—need to expose people to ecology—communicate our science
- hold a session at Ecol Soc Conference about communication of science
- distil information from Ecological conferences into summary factsheets and documents

ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY E-MAIL LIST SERVER: DID YOU KNOW YOU AREN'T ON IT ANY MORE?

Well that got you reading. You may have been subscribed to the NZES listserver, but I have to do a lot of housekeeping on the list and have to remove about 2–3 addresses a month because they are generating error messages. These errors could be because people have moved and not changed their address; sometimes because they are over quota and the inbox is full (especially on hotmail-type accounts), and so forth.

So if you haven't had the odd email now and again (there is not a lot of traffic, about 1–2 messages a month perhaps) it might be worth checking if you are still on. You can do this by sending a new "subscribe" command, and if you are already on the list it will tell you so and do nothing else.

Also please note that if you send a message to the list itself for circulation, as sender you will get back in response the current list of error messages for all dead addresses I have not yet tidied up. Sorry these will come to you, but you can just delete them.

About the List Server

Now some background on the listserver (this summary below is also on the web pages)

What is a listserv?

A listserv (short for List Server) is a centralised list of e-mail addresses of subscribers. Anyone who is subscribed to the listserv will automatically receive all emails sent to the listserv, and can send emails to all subscribers via the listserv. You can subscribe and unsubscribe from a listserv at any time.

The NZ Ecological Society listserv

By subscribing to the NZ ecosoc listserv, you will receive emails about meetings, seminars, jobs, and issues in New Zealand ecology. You will also be able to post emails that will be received by most practising ecologists in New Zealand.

Subscribing to the NZ EcoSoc listserv

To subscribe to this server, e-mail a message to the automatic Mailserv processor at:

nzecosoc-request@it.canterbury.ac.nz

Include nothing in the e-mail except the following text in the body of the e-mail:

SUBSCRIBE NZECOSOC
END

To unsubscribe from the listserv, send another email to the above address, but this time use the following text:

UNSUBSCRIBE NZECOSOC

Once subscribed, you will receive instructions on how to send messages, unsubscribe etc. PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS AND FOLLOW THEM.

Sending list messages

To send a message to everybody on the list, use the address, nzecosoc@it.canterbury.ac.nz. Only people subscribed to the list are able to post messages on the list. If you are not on the list and don't want to subscribe, but want to send a message, send it to Dave Kelly (Dave.Kelly@canterbury.ac.nz) to forward on.

Messages on the list should follow these simple rules:

- NO ATTACHMENTS!!!
- Put the info in plain text in the message
- If there is bulky or graphic material some people may want, put a web address in the message that people can click on if they want, or give a contact email address where people can ask for it
- Only send stuff that is likely to be of general interest to NZ ecologists

Replying to list messages

To reply to a list email, you have two options. You can either hit reply and this will reply to everybody, or you can reply to the author only (e.g., a new e-mail with the author's personal e-mail address). If you want to reply to the person who sent it, please be careful that your reply goes to the person, and not to the list (to be bounced out to everyone!). In other words, double-check what "To:" field your reply has picked up before you press "send".

If you change your email address

If you change your email address, you have to unsubscribe from the old one, and subscribe from the new one. If you changed address but forgot to tell the server, we start getting error messages from your old address and have to unsubscribe you manually, so make my life easier and do this yourself. If your email address has problems (e.g., messages rejected because your inbox is full) for more than a few weeks we will also unsubscribe you. If you are not getting any messages and wonder if you are still on the list, just send another subscribe command. The easiest way to unsubscribe your old email address is to send a message while you are logged on as that user; if the old email address is dead you may not be able to unsubscribe it because the system sees you as someone else, if you see what I mean. In this case send the details to me and I can delete the old address.

For information on the listserver contact me, Dave Kelly (Dave.Kelly@canterbury.ac.nz).

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(Effective from 14 September 2004)

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Contributions for the newsletter – news, views, letters, cartoons, etc. – are welcomed. Please e-mail to editors (newsletter@nzes.org.nz) with document attached (Word formatted for Windows) or post. If posting, if possible, please send articles for the newsletter both on disk and in hard copy. Please do not use complex formatting; capital letters, italics, bold, and hard returns only, no spacing between paragraphs. Send disk and hard copy to:

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MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the society is open to any person interested in ecology and includes botanists, zoologists, teachers, students, soil scientists, conservation managers, amateurs and professionals.

Types of Membership and Subscription Rates (2005)

Full (receive journal and newsletter)... $75* per annum

Unwaged (with journal) ..... $45* per annum
Unwaged membership is available only on application to Council for full-time students, retired persons etc. Unwaged members may receive the journal but must specifically request it.

Joint..... $75* per annum
Joint members get one copy of the journal and newsletter to one address.

Overseas Full ..... $95* per annum

Overseas Unwaged..... $65* per annum

School ..... $12 per annum

Educational institutions may receive the newsletter at the cost of production to stay in touch with Society activities. By application to Council.

There are also Institutional Rates for libraries, government departments etc.

Overseas members may send personal cheques for their local equivalent of the NZ$ amount at current exchange rates, for most major overseas currencies.

For more details on membership please write to:

NZ Ecological Society
PO Box 25 178
Christchurch
NEW ZEALAND

or e-mail: info@nzes.org.nz

* There is a $10 rebate for members who renew before Feb 15 each year, and for new members

MOVING? *If so, please print your name and new address below, and return with the old address label to us.*
BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

Address: _____

_____ *Postcode* _____

Address effective from: _____ *(Month)* _____ *Year*