



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT - NZPCN AGM 2014**

**Sarah Beadel**

14 October 2014

Nga mihi ki a koutou katoa. Welcome to the 11<sup>th</sup> AGM of the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. It has been another busy and fruitful year for the Network. It is great to see the good turnout tonight, especially from such a diverse range of backgrounds and interests. We would like to thank the Wellington City Council for sponsoring the venue tonight. Thank you all for coming and I hope you enjoy the special broadcast of 'The Mysterious Secrets of Uncle Bertie's Botanarium' later this evening.

Firstly I'd like to give heartfelt thanks to my fellow Council members who have all helped with the various events and activities the Network has been involved with over the last year, including the management and continuing development of the website, and early planning for the 2015 Network conference, which is to be held in Dunedin the last weekend of October 2015. All Council members and the three co-opted members perform valuable roles, without which the Network would not function to the standard it does. To mention a few, Jesse has really stepped up to the mark and taken over the Webmaster role. In May this year four of us had a half-day web meeting where we worked through a number of issues and subsequently there have been several improvements to the way the website operates and its functionality. In addition the logo has been updated. Rewi, as Secretary, and Nicky, as Treasurer, are invaluable. Jeremy Rolfe is contributing at Council meetings as a co-opted member representing DOC. Jeremy has been heavily involved with the Network since its inception, and it is excellent having his contribution at the Council meetings. Peter de Lange continues work on many fronts, including keeping the species names up-dated to the latest scientific publications. Melissa has done an excellent job with the awards, and Matt and Astrid with the forum, and it goes on - a huge amount of work is done behind the scenes.

Two long standing committee members are stepping down this year: Susan Wiser who has been on the committee since 2009 and has been very helpful in many capacities, particularly in working together with Landcare; and Philippa Crisp, who has been on the committee since 2004 and a very active member of Council often organising the AGM, helping to organise

several conferences and the Marae training courses, and was President for three years. Unfortunately Philippa can't be here tonight as she is overseas; however the Council presented her with a Trilepidea print at our conference last year in recognition of her long service to the Network. We will miss both Susan's and Philippa's inputs.

The Network is in a very healthy state. Membership continues to grow, with a 4% increase over the last 11 months, a total of 32 new members. Visitation to the website is large, with approximately 170,000 sessions over the last year. The average session lasts about four minutes, with an average of between 4 and 5 pages viewed in each session. Most of our web visitors are from New Zealand (c.80%), with the remainder widely spread, although the US, Australia, and the United Kingdom each contribute c.3%. There are 7,594 species listed on the website, 4,976 indigenous species (including 2,459 vascular taxa) and 2,618 exotic species. Of the indigenous vascular species there are currently photos loaded up for 2,329 species, and for c.1,659 species the fact sheets are completed, and there are brief descriptions for a further 234 species. We are exploring efficient options for populating the remaining 574 fact sheets for which there is neither a detailed nor a brief description.

We have continued with our various annual activities, such as New Zealand's Favourite Native Plant, and also our prestigious Annual Awards, which will be presented at the end of this meeting. Development of the tree and shrub Smart Phone app is continuing and it will be launched within the next few months.

Earlier this year we set up a Submissions Subcommittee. The purpose of this subcommittee is so that any person on the subcommittee can front issues that the Council wishes to address on behalf of the Council and NZPCN. Following this the Council made a submission to the Minister of Conservation on the importance of establishing a Drylands Park to protect the extremely high conservation and natural heritage values of the MacKenzie Basin.

We intend to continue to pursue effective legislation for plant protection.

The Network has a new major sponsor - Coastlands Plant Nursery Ltd. Good sponsorship is key to the ongoing development and maintenance of the website and we are very pleased to welcome Coastlands as a major sponsor.

Rewi is to represent the Network at the 10<sup>th</sup> Australasia Plant Conservation Conference in Tasmania early next month.

The New Zealand indigenous flora seed bank is progressing well. One year on from appointment of the seed bank coordinator, good progress has been made in the key areas of collector training and collecting, processing and banking seed. This year there have been four training workshops for seed collectors bringing the total number of trained collectors in NZ to 66 (this includes the 30 or so who trained last year at the conference). There have been seven collecting expeditions this year and 31 species have been seed banked, including seven nationally threatened or at risk species.

The Network funded the publication of Peter de Lange's paper on *Kunzea* so that it would be freely available to all to download. In return for this funding Peter undertook to update the attributions on the fact sheets.

The Network supported Brian Molloy's nomination for the Allan Mere Award, which was successful, and the Council also continues to provide representation on the Loder Cup Committee, which is a role that I undertake.

The Network has added \$1,700 to the Plant Conservation Endowment Fund this year, which now stands at over \$13,000. The David Given Trust has almost reached \$29,000 and the network will award a study grant from this Trust again in the next few months.

The Council met today, to discuss initiatives for the next year, and we are all looking forward to another stimulating and productive year.

Thank you for coming.

Sarah Beadel

**President**