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Editor

John Clemens

Contributors

Bruce Clarkson
Tony Hayter (book review)
Derrick Rooney
Alan Titchener

Mike Finlayson
Nigel Perry and John van Klink
Paul Stock

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Editorial Address

Dr John Clemens
Institute of Molecular BioSciences, Massey University, Private Bag 11222,
Palmerston North
Ph (06) 350 5515 extn 2570
Fax (06) 350 5688
J.Clemens@massey.ac.nz

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For Membership information please write to:
Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, P O Box 12, Lincoln University,
Canterbury.
Email: rnzih@xtra.co.nz
Website: <http://www.rnzih.org.nz/>

Front Cover: *Ranunculus buchananii* in the alpine zone, in full bloom in January. Image courtesy Peter Lockhart, Principal Investigator with the Allan Wilson Centre for Molecular Ecology and Evolution, and Associate Professor in the Institute of Molecular BioSciences, Massey University.

From the Editor

Our cover this issue is of an alpine buttercup, flowering unselfconsciously in its natural environment in the Remarkables. What better image to grace the cover of the Garden Journal than a natural scene when much of our gardening is inspired by what we see in nature, and is guided by the clues nature gives us about cultivating wild plants. It is also appropriate because we have Bruce Clarkson's Banks Lecture on the insights he has gained in natural and garden experiments, in his case in the shadow of Mt Taranaki. In this issue, we remember the enthusiasm with which John Anderson explored the uplands of New Zealand.

*New Zealand buttercups have become a speciality of Associate Professor Peter Lockhart, who, with the buttercups' help and the help of other diverse New Zealand genera, is unravelling the origins of the New Zealand flora. It's not all as ancient as we once thought. In the next issue, I will bring you news of the latest research, which shows that trans-Tasman and, indeed, worldwide natural exchange of plant propagules is alive and well. This natural trade contrasts with the necessarily restrictive situation with respect to the introduction of new organisms into this country. Incidentally, I am advised that plant species that are not on MAF's Plant Biosecurity Index, that nonetheless currently exist within New Zealand, can be grown legally here. I will not be using Sturt's Desert Pea (*Swainsona formosa* [formerly *Clianthus formosus*]) in my research because it is not commercially available in New Zealand, and it does not appear on the Index (which would have made importation feasible). However, does anyone already have this floral emblem of South Australia growing in their garden or in a packet of seed?*

John Clemens

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