Addendum

Rooney, D. (2007). A new *Hebe*? *New Zealand Garden Journal 10(2):* 20–22.

Derrick Rooney's article discussed a possible new *Hebe* from the Hae Hae Te Moana River South Branch gorge area in Canterbury. On page 21, Derrick mentioned that this plant was "more-or-less intermediate between *H. traversii* and *H. rakaiensis*, possibly arising in the distant past as a result of spontaneous hybridisation between these two, and has become 'fixed'."

To this comment, we added an editors' note that if the *Hebe* from Te Moana was indeed "the result of hybridisation between *Hebe traversii* (2*n* = 40) and *H. rakaiensis* (2*n* = 80), then this entity may have an intermediate chromosome number (of 2*n* = 60)."

However, Murray Dawson recently counted its chromosomes and found the Te Moana *Hebe* to have 2*n* = 40 (Allan Herbarium voucher specimen CHR 566556).

Whilst we cannot comment on the taxonomic status of the *Hebe* from Te Moana, the new chromosome count does fit with a statement made by Mike Bayly (pers. comm. and p.22 of Derrick's article) that "The plants in question are probably covered within the circumscription of *H. traversii* in *An Illustrated Guide to New Zealand Hebes*, wherein the two southernmost distribution records for *H. traversii* are based on herbarium specimens from the headwaters of the Hae Hae Te Moana River (CHR 51466, CHR 51467)."

Our thanks to Peter Heenan for collecting the plant counted by Murray.

Derrick Rooney responds:

I'm not qualified to discuss the taxonomy or cytogenetics of the Te Moana hebe. What I can say is that when it is taken into cultivation and grown side by side with mid-Canterbury and north Canterbury forms of *Hebe traversii* it remains clearly distinguishable from them. So perhaps it is worthy of at least varietal status.

It's worth noting that the Te Moana hebe hybridises promiscuously with the larger *H. salicifolia* wherever the two grow in proximity. At some sites within the gorge and its feeder streams it is difficult to find any plants that can be placed with certainty into one species or the other. Hybrids between these two species are known elsewhere, but are presumably not common, as they are not widely reported in botanical literature. These two hebes are very different in general appearance and wherever they occur together in the Te Moana area a range of intermediate forms can be found. I collected and grew on cuttings from a few plants that appeared to have promise of horticultural merit. One of them is very interesting because in foliage and growth form it is indistinguishable from the rare *Hebe urvilleana* that is growing alongside it in my garden. As a wild plant the latter is confined to D'Urville Island and a few nearby mainland sites in the Marlborough Sounds. Of course when the two flower it becomes apparent that they are very different. Curious, though, I thought. But then, as every horticulturist knows, plants are full of surprises.