



# ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE

## Newsletter

2025 No. 3, December  
ISSN 1174-6947 (Print)  
ISSN 1179-7444 (Online)

## Presidential Ponderings

### Second Vice Patron for the RNZIH

Our constitution has provision for a Patron (the Governor General) and two Vice Patrons. Beverley McConnell MNZM, QSM, AHRH of Ayrlires Garden and Wetlands is our long-standing Vice Patron.

It is my pleasure to announce our second Vice Patron: John Paynter NDH(Hons), ONZM, AHRH of Hawke's Bay. John is an orchardist, heading up one of the largest private orchards of more than 700 hectares in New Zealand.

Later in this newsletter is a story about John and his family connections with horticulture, dating from 1862.

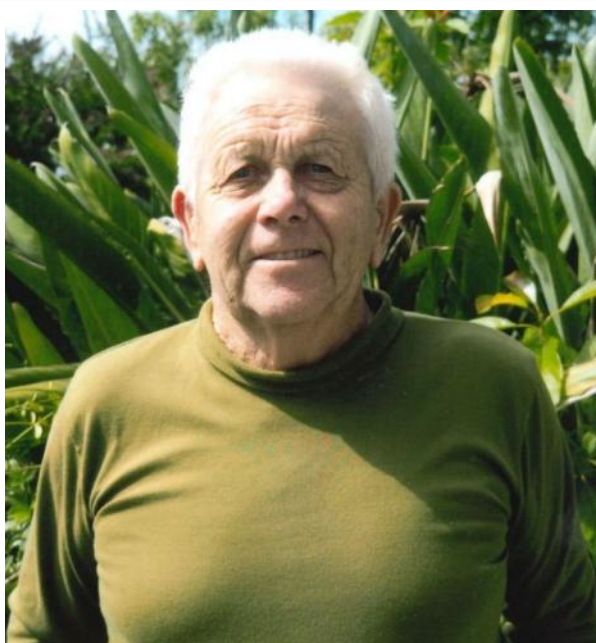
### New constitution

The RNZIH National Executive has approved a new constitution based on recent law changes. Every Incorporated Society in New Zealand is required to update their constitution to include new government provisions. We have done this. Also, we have kept all the specific RNZIH provisions to allow the RNZIH to function as intended.

We are calling a **Special General Meeting on 10th February 2026** to consider/approve the proposed constitution (see details later in this newsletter). It will be online so people from all over NZ can participate. We need a good quorum so please join us for this short meeting.

### Donation in memory of Graeme Mander FRIH

In our June 2025 journal, Debbie Bird recorded the passing of her father, Graeme Mander FRIH on 31st Dec 2024. Graeme was keenly interested in all aspects of horticulture. He was educated at Lincoln University, then worked at



Graeme Douglas Mander FRIH (1942–2024).  
Photo: the Mander family.

Duncan and Davies before setting up his own nursery in Bethlehem near Tauranga.

Graeme had a very long and deep involvement with the RNZIH. He joined in 1961 and served on the first RNZIH National Executive when it moved from Dominion Council representatives from Jan 1976 until stepping down in Dec 2004, and he was also on branch committees in New Plymouth, Waikato, Auckland, and Bay of Plenty. Graeme was elected a Fellow in 1980.

The Mander family have generously donated \$20,000 to the RNZIH, which was divided into our two scholarship funds – the Memorial Prize Scholarship and the Peter Skellerup Plant Conservation Scholarship.

Many thanks to the Mander family – this is the first capital injection into the scholarship funds

for nearly 10 years. Their kind donation enables the RNZIH to remember Graeme through our scholarships and to support future horticulturists who become recipients.

### Horticultural training and education

We have been advised that there are only two polytechnics now offering horticultural education in New Zealand. This is mainly limited to basic education at Level 3, with a little at Level 4. In other words, no advanced education is currently available for horticulture.

Recently BGANZ (Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand) New Zealand circulated a survey to the amenity horticulture sector in order to receive feedback on education and training. The results should prove insightful.

In my view, advanced horticulture should go through to Level 5, and if necessary, beyond. The old National Diploma in Horticulture peaked at Level 5 and with the completion of a thesis extended to Level 6. Level 5 is the equivalent of a first year of a degree at university.

Further advanced learning should be carried on by either self-directed study and professional development or by graduate and/or post graduate studies followed by professional development.

Please let us know your ideas on how the RNZIH could better support horticultural education and development.

Remember that all education, training, and professional development is about our current and future horticultural directions. Sometimes we have to think about those jobs that have not been invented yet and the new technology that goes hand-in-hand with them.

### RNZIH website

Continued modernising of our website is making it an attractive and useful source of information for NZ and overseas horticulturists, researchers, historians, and botanists. It is a fantastic resource. Please use it – I do.

<b>RNZIH National Office</b>	Murray Dawson, RNZIH, c/o Landcare Research, PO Box 69140, Lincoln Email: office@rnzih.org.nz Website: www.rnzih.org.nz Facebook: www.facebook.com/RNZIH YouTube: www.youtube.com/@RNZIH-NZ
<b>Patron</b>	Governor General of New Zealand The Rt Hon Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO
<b>Vice Patron</b>	Beverley McConnell, MNZM, QSM, AHRIH
<b>Vice Patron</b>	John Paynter, NDH (Hons), ONZM, AHRIH

<b>National Executive</b>	
Alan Jolliffe AHRIH (RNZIH President)	7 Greenbank Place, Waitikiri, Parklands, Christchurch 8083 Mobile: 027 204 5679 Email: jolliffea@rnzih.org.nz
Dr Keith Hammett QSM, AHRIH (Immediate Past President)	488C Don Buck Road, Massey, Auckland 0614 Phone: (09) 833 9453 Email: hammettk@rnzih.org.nz
Murray Dawson MNZM, AHRIH (RNZIH Webmaster; Journal Editor)	Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, PO Box 69040, Lincoln 7640, Canterbury Phone: (03) 321 9645 Email: dawsonm@rnzih.org.nz
Dylan Norfield (BGANZ representative)	Dunedin Botanic Garden PO Box 5045, Moray Place, Dunedin 9058 Phone: 027 247 6795 Email: dylan.norfield@dcc.govt.nz
Chris Webb FRIH (RNZIH Treasurer)	'Woodbridge', 8630 Paeroa Kopu Road, RD 4, Paeroa 3674 Mobile: 021 0234 3936 Email: webbc@rnzih.org.nz
Barbara Wheeler FRIH	Auckland Botanic Gardens, 102 Hill Road, Manurewa 2105, Auckland Phone: (09) 267 1457 Email: wheelerb@rnzih.org.nz
Geoffrey Marshall FRIH	29C Kingsview Road, Mt Eden, Auckland 1024 Mobile: 027 4826 880 Email: gimnzy@gmail.com

<b>Associated Trusts</b>	
Shaun Trevan (RNZIH Education Trust Chairperson)	Email: chair@younghort.co.nz Website: www.younghort.co.nz
Victoria Read (Trust Manager, New Zealand Gardens Trust)	Mobile: 027 694 8778 (027 NZGTrst) Email: info@gardens.org.nz Website: www.gardens.org.nz
Brad Cadwallader FRIH (New Zealand Notable Trees Trust)	33 Cropp Place, Richmond, Nelson 7020 Email: nzntt@cropp-place.nz Website: www.notabletrees.org.nz

### **Climate change, nature, and urban growth**

I often think about the future. There is an old saying “without your health there is no future”.

However, in today’s world it may be better to change this to “without nature there is no future”.

I note the NZ Department of Conservation are more often using the term ‘nature’ in recent promotional pieces. I recall talking to people in the early 2000s, including DOC, about using the term ‘nature’ as it is more understood as a concept than technical terms that can be used.

Weather patterns, climate change, finite resources, food production techniques, human behaviour, water quality, urban sprawl and intensification, transport, new retail systems and other changes are all intertwined.

We should all step back and undertake a wider view of what is causing a decline in nature and the world we live in. Although we can’t change/fix everything as individuals, we can make improvements through our work as horticulturists. And we need to change.

Interestingly, one of our main external drivers of change will be from this nation’s customers. Other countries will, and will continue to, demand products that are ‘nature friendly’. These customers include tourists to NZ, food buyers, product purchasers, etc.

Other drivers will come from a shortage of finite resources in NZ, economic conditions, international competition, import costs etc. It’s not just about fuel, power, plastics, and other consumables. It’s also about how we do things – production techniques, all aspects of planning and design, engineering, nature conservation, energy sources and more.

Horticulturists will be called upon to take part in the future of our country. Right now, we can see a lead role in urban open space landscapes, tiny areas of home gardens, better local open spaces, managing community gardens and more informed tree planting.

Nature should be all around us and not confined to certain areas. Gardens, parks, open spaces, linking strips, waterways, private spaces all contribute their bit to bring nature close to us all.

Some questions are:

- What are you contributing to for keeping nature alive for the future?
- How are you reducing environmental effects?
- Can you connect with others to make a greater and faster impact?
- What else can you do?

The future can be influenced and managed by horticulturists who are able to bring many aspects together to make that difference.

The future is in all our hands.

**Alan Jolliffe**  
**President, RNZIH**

---

## **New Vice Patron**



**Introducing John Paynter, NDH (Hons), ONZM, AHRIH**

Maxwell John Paynter, known as John, is a fourth-generation grower who planted his first fruit tree in his family orchard in 1950. This commenced a lifetime career of growing that would see him receive accolades and recognition for his innovation and contribution to the horticultural industry.

John is an outstanding horticulturist, leader, visionary, innovator, and business executive who has led the family business for many decades and developed it into one of the largest orchards in New Zealand.

John became the first grower in New Zealand to receive the Pipfruit New Zealand Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Pipfruit Industry in 2016 at the Horticultural Conference and Awards held in Nelson where the family planted its first orchard.

In 1862 the Paynter family established their first apple and stone fruit trees near Stoke, Nelson. This was the beginning of a legacy that transcends generations, influences an industry, and has become a household name for New Zealand families today.

In the early 1900s, the Paynter family moved to sunny Hawke's Bay and settled in Havelock North. Five generations later, Yummy Fruit, as it is now known, has grown to a nationwide brand of quality apples and revolutionary varieties of stone fruit.

John established Yummy Nectarines with his partner Peter Andersen in 1974. This followed bold plantings of new US yellow-fleshed nectarine varieties. At that time, branded fruit was almost unheard of, so the strategy focused on going beyond the traditional trade and connecting directly with consumers. In 1975 Yummy was the first company in the world to individually label fruit.

John started corporate growing in New Zealand, establishing orchards for Brierley Investments Ltd. He developed more than 500 hectares for Brierley's over a twenty-year period. These orchards now form part of the Mr Apple operation.

As an innovator John introduced the first wind machines for frost protection to NZ in 1978. Experts didn't believe there was a sufficient inversion layer for them to work in NZ, but he spent many hours up tall ladders at 3 am measuring temperatures and took a punt on their introduction.

That year he also established Johnny Appleseed Fruit Packers Ltd, which was a large-scale packhouse built to handle the Brierley fruit.

In the mid-1990s a revolution occurred in apple growing by introducing Integrated Fruit Production (IFP) system to the orchards, offering a safer way to keep orchards pest and predator free and signalling their commitment to eco-friendly practices.

Upon the deregulation of the domestic apple market in 1994, John launched Yummy Apples onto the NZ market. Yummy quickly became the dominant brand domestically and remains so today. In 2001 upon deregulation of the export market for apples, Yummy began exporting but this remains only about 25% of the business.

The 'School Sticker Promotion' was launched in 1998. Since then, Kiwi school kids have been collecting Yummy stickers and bags, earning them free sports gear for their schools each year.

Yummy fruit is all grown in their own apple and stone fruit orchards spanning 700 hectares. With more than 100 full-time staff, and up to 300 seasonal workers, fresh fruit is packed 364 days of the year in an on-site packhouse. It's then delivered in dedicated temperature-controlled trucks ensuring it arrives fresh.

John has served on many boards including the NZ Apple and Pear Marketing Board (1976–1985 and 1989–1998), the Fruit Industry Plant Improvement Association (FIPIA) (1980–1992) which he founded, the HortResearch board (1992–1995), the Kiwifruit Marketing Authority (1988), the Kiwifruit Marketing Board (1989) and was founder chairman of Zespri International (1996–1997).



He was also involved with 1980s state sector reforms joining the NZ Post Establishment Board in 1986, and then to the board of NZ Post proper 1987–1998. Similarly, he was appointed to the Port of Napier Establishment Board in 1988, then to the Port of Napier Board 1989–2000.

The National Executive is pleased to have John Paynter as our second Vice Patron of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture. The constitution allows for two Vice Patrons. The other Vice Patron is Beverley McConnell MNZM, QSM, AHRIH of Ayrlires Garden and Wetlands, Auckland. Our Patron is Governor General of New Zealand, The Rt Hon Dame Cindy Kiro GNZM, QSO.

For more about John Paynter, see his Associate of Honour citation at [www.rnzihi.org.nz/RNZIH\\_Journal/Page\\_23\\_from\\_2017\\_Vol20\\_No1.pdf](http://www.rnzihi.org.nz/RNZIH_Journal/Page_23_from_2017_Vol20_No1.pdf)

**Alan Jolliffe and Paul Paynter**

## New RNZIH postal address



Lincoln University have closed all their Post Office Boxes, so our long-standing address (RNZIH, PO Box 85012, Lincoln University) is no longer valid – mail sent there will be lost or returned to sender.

Please instead use our editorial address:

Murray Dawson, RNZIH, c/o Landcare Research, PO Box 69140, Lincoln.

## Special General Meeting: RNZIH Constitution

The RNZIH are calling a Special General Meeting for members to consider approval of our updated constitution. This will be via videoconferencing.

Please mark the date in your diaries and try to attend.

**Date:** 10th February 2026

**Time:** 7.20 pm

**Duration:** 40 mins

We will send you a Zoom Videoconferencing link and a download link to the revised constitution through email.

## Online talk: Botanical Adventures

After the Special General Meeting, Dylan Norfield will speak about his botanical adventures as a horticulturist, first in the UK and then in Otago.

**Date:** 10th February 2026

**Time:** 8.10 pm

**Duration:** 40 mins

**Zoom videoconference link:** <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78391036045?pwd=UPDXRyOtcnvXnYrf4cJKN1LSXlItlu.1>

**Meeting ID:** 783 9103 6045

**Passcode:** G5fZGd



Dylan Norfield of Dunedin.

Dylan began his horticultural career at Bristol Botanic Garden before joining the family business, Norfield's Nursery, in 1996. There he earned more than 30 RHS Gold medals – and five from Chelsea – while developing a new nursery site and a 40-acre arboretum seed orchard in Llangwm.

A holiday to New Zealand in 2006 prompted a move to Dunedin, where he worked in the nursery sector and then at Dunedin Botanic Garden, first in the Rose and Herbaceous Collection and later curating the Geographic and Arboretum collections. Since 2019 he has served as Collections Supervisor, overseeing staff, operations, and more than 2,000 plant species.

On top of all this, Dylan is developing two of his own private gardens into botanical treasure-houses.

Dylan remains dedicated to sharing horticultural knowledge and safeguarding rare and endangered exotic plants in New Zealand.

Please join us on what will be a fascinating and richly illustrated talk – all are welcome!

---

## 2026 IPPS Conference, Banks Lecture, and Award Presentations



For the first time in seven years, the RNZIH are rejoining the IPPS-NZ (International Plant Propagators' Society New Zealand) for their conference.

This is being held from 30th April to 3rd May at the Distinction Hotel, Dunedin, with local field trips planned. Registrations will open around February 2026 and RNZIH members are welcome to register for the whole conference.

The RNZIH events are being held on the last day of the conference.

### The 2026 RNZIH award presentations

The award presentations will be held prior to the Banks Lecture, at the same venue and date (Exchange Room, Distinction Dunedin Hotel, 3rd May 2026), from 1.00–1.45 pm.

### 2026 Banks Memorial Lecture (a free public lecture)

**'Tiny but mighty: new insights and knowledge gaps about the pollination of native plants', by Prof Janice Lord**



**Venue:** Exchange Room, Distinction Dunedin Hotel, 6 Liverpool Street, Central Dunedin

**Date:** Sunday 3rd May 2026

**Time:** 1.45–3.00 pm

### Biography

Professor Janice Lord is a distinguished academic and plant evolutionary biologist at the University of Otago, where she is a full professor in the Department of Botany.

She earned her PhD from the University of Canterbury in 1992 with a thesis titled 'The evolutionary ecology of *Festuca novae-zelandiae* in Mid-Canterbury, New Zealand', then obtained a Royal Society of New Zealand post-doctoral fellowship to explore differences in flower and fruit morphology between related New Zealand and Australian plants. She moved to Otago in 1996.

Her research is centered on the evolution, ecology, and conservation of New Zealand's unique flora, and on how functional native ecosystems can provide nature-based solutions that benefit people and the environment.

Her research contributes to species conservation, ecosystem services, and climate change mitigation:

**Plant Evolutionary Ecology:** Focuses on the reproduction and pollination biology of plants, particularly in alpine and subantarctic environments. She delivered her 2015 Leonard Cockayne Lectures on pollination of subantarctic plants.

**Ecological Restoration and Reforestation:** She was a Principal Investigator for the 1 Billion Trees project (Ngā Kākano Whakahau: The Seeds Project), which tested the feasibility of establishing native forests directly from seeds and mycorrhizal inoculum.

**Culturally Important Plants:** She has researched the traditional use of plants by Māori, exploring the intersection of mātauranga (Māori knowledge) and botanical science.

**Climate Change:** Her work includes examining the biodiversity and carbon sequestration value of native forests and wetlands on agricultural land.

At the University of Otago, Professor Lord's responsibilities include:

- Full Professor in the Department of Botany
- Curator of the Otago Regional Herbarium
- Chair of the Division of Science Sustainability Framework
- Co-Director of He Kaupapa Hononga: Otago's Climate Change Research Network.

### Abstract

Relatively small white, cream, or yellow flowers are a conspicuous feature of the New Zealand flora. Samuel Butler, in 1863, famously described the flora of Canterbury as “very disappointing” with “one very stupid white gentian” but mostly “few and ugly” flowers.

This dismissive attitude towards native flowers has sadly persisted for 150+ years. However, the recent publication of works such as

*He Puāwai* by Phil Garnock-Jones show a different side of our flora. This talk reviews knowledge collected over 30 years of pollination biology and plant breeding system research in New Zealand, in relation to some of the species illustrated in *He Puāwai*, and highlights novel and surprising findings for other species. The modest size and limited colour range of native flowers is often attributed to the lack of long-tongue social bees that elsewhere use colours to make flower-reward associations. It has also been suggested that important groups of native pollinators such as solitary bees and flies are insensitive to colour, or even that nocturnal pollinators or self-pollination systems are more important here than in other temperate floras. To complicate matters, the New Zealand flora has a high incidence of species with at least some floral gender specialisation, and also many native plants exhibit mast seeding reproductive strategies.

We now know that the isolation and unpredictability of the New Zealand environment, as well as the unusual composition of the pollinating fauna, has resulted in pollination strategies that set New Zealand apart from other temperate landmasses. However, it is short-sighted to characterise New Zealand flowers as “small, white and boring”. From subantarctic megaherbs to mast seeding speargrass on mountain tops, from deceptively pollinated orchids to the latest research on moths, it is clear that native plants have evolved some very specific associations with their pollinators. However, it is also clear that we have a long way to go to fully understand the pollination biology of New Zealand plants.

---

## 2026 NZ Gardens Trust Conference

**Location:** Timaru

**Dates:** 9–12 April 2026



Experience the distinctive landscapes of Timaru and Ōamaru, where old trees, historic



properties, and character-filled gardens reveal the depth of the region's horticultural story. Over four days, we'll explore private gardens, public spaces, and heritage landscapes – some lovingly preserved, others thoughtfully carried forward into a new era. Spend time with fellow gardeners and Friends of the Trust, appreciating how these landscapes preserve their heritage while evolving toward the gardens of tomorrow.

Visit [www.gardens.org.nz/upcoming-events/nzgt-conference](http://www.gardens.org.nz/upcoming-events/nzgt-conference) for further details. Tickets on sale from November 2025.

---

## Congratulations

### 2025 RNZIH award presentation: Alan Watson

Most of the 2025 RNZIH awardees attended the evening ceremony on the 4th of April at the ANZ Centre in Auckland – as featured in our June Newsletter. As in previous years, a few were unable to attend and presentations at other venues were arranged.

On the evening of 1st July 2025, during a Canterbury Horticultural Society (CHS) meeting, RNZIH President Alan Jolliffe presented Alan



Alan Watson, holding his Fellowship certificate, alongside RNZIH President Alan Jolliffe.

Watson of Ashburton with his Fellowship award. Six relatives attended to support Alan Watson, including his sister and extended relatives from Australia, and a nephew from Westland. Alan was very pleased and humbled to receive the award. In addition to CHS members, Dave Adams (2025 Plant Raiser), Murray Dawson AHRIH (representing the RNZIH executive), and Ian Soper FRIH (Parks Manager, Ashburton) were in attendance to help celebrate Alan's achievement.

Such occasions really show the worthiness of the RNZIH awards system and the pride and recognition they bring people. *The Ashburton Courier* (17th July) and *Star News* (22nd July) ran feature articles and photos of Alan, the garden he created in Allenton, and the Fellowship he received from the RNZIH.

### Kate Moss-Mason: RNZIH Memorial Prize Scholarship awardee



Kate Moss-Mason, at the Royal Botanic Garden Victoria – Melbourne.

Dunedin Botanic Garden's Plant Propagation Apprentice, Kate Moss-Mason, was awarded an RNZIH Memorial Prize Scholarship to attend the 10th Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) Congress, held in Canberra, Australia, from 2–5 November 2025.

The Congress theme, "*Advancing our reach – Innovation and leadership in botanic gardens*" brought together more than 200 delegates to explore new ideas in horticultural curation, conservation, education, and organisational sustainability.



Kate, who began her three-year nursery production apprenticeship in March 2025, is supervised by Propagation Services Officer Alice Lloyd-Fitt at Dunedin Botanic Garden. Kate's current work includes propagation of rare native plants for the *Species on the Brink* conservation programme, involving threatened species such as *Craspedia argentea* and *Lepidium banksii*.

Attending the Congress supported Kate's goal of becoming a specialist in conservation horticulture. The Congress sessions on plant conservation, horticultural education, and sustainable management, aligned closely with her work at the Garden.

Kate has written a report on her travels and experiences later in this Newsletter.

#### **Jake Linklater: 2025 Young Horticulturist of the Year**



Congratulations to Jake Linklater, nursery manager at Nova Natives (in Templeton near Christchurch), who was crowned the Young Horticulturist of the Year 2025 at the grand final in Karaka, on the evening of 6th November.

Jake impressed judges across two days of tough challenges, standing out for his skills, leadership, and passion for the nursery industry. He also took home:

- Bayer Best Practice Award
- Horticulture Charitable Trust Sustainability Award
- Woolworths Best in Sector Award (first equal with Nina Downer).

This marks the second year in a row that a Young Plant Producer of the Year has gone on to win the supreme title, following Anna England's 2024 victory.



Jake Linklater: 2025 Young Horticulturist of the Year.  
Photo: NZPPI.

Jake impressed audiences when he spoke about his love for the plant production sector, saying: "We as plant producers are the very fabric of horticulture ... every orchard, every restoration project, every green landscape starts with the plant producer."

Congratulations to the other contestants for their achievements, perseverance, and commitment:

#### **Nina Downer – Young Viticulturist**

- Second place, Young Horticulturist
- Woolworths Innovation Project – First place
- Woolworths Best in Sector Award – First equal
- T&G Fresh Practical Components Award

#### **River Foster – Young Amenity**

- Third place, Young Amenity
- Craigmore Sustainable Best Presentation Award

#### **Grace Fulford – Young Grower**

- Woolworths Innovation Project – Second place

#### **Jordan Sutherland – New Arborist**

- Woolworths Innovation Project – Third place

#### **Jade Bedel – Young Florist/Flower Grower**

- Fruitful Supplies Leadership Award



2025 Young Horticulturist finalists holding their award certificates. From left to right: Jade Bedel (Young Florist/Flower Grower), Nina Downer (Young Viticulturist), Jake Linklater (2025 Young Horticulturist of the Year and Young Plant Producer), River Foster (Young Amenity), Jordan Sutherland (New Arborist), Grace Fulford (Young Grower). Photo: RNZIH Education Trust.

Together, these finalists represent the passion, skill, and innovation driving the growth of New Zealand's \$8.5 billion horticulture industry.

Now in its 20th year, the Young Horticulturist of the Year Competition continues to shine a light on the incredible young talent shaping Aotearoa's horticultural future.

Congratulations again from the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture – all contestants receive three years free membership of the RNZIH.

#### **Shannel Courtney: 2025 Allan Mere and King's Service Medal Awardee**

Congratulations to Shannel Courtney for receiving the 2025 Allan Mere Award. The Allan Mere is awarded by the New Zealand Botanical Society (NZBS) to a person or persons who have made outstanding contributions to botany in New Zealand, either in a professional or amateur capacity.

Shannel also received the King's Service Medal in the 2025 New Year Honours for his four-decade contribution to the conservation of New Zealand's indigenous plants – and to choral music.

Shannel has had a distinguished career as a plant ecologist at the Department of Conservation, serving there for some 37 years, and continuing as a contractor. His work has spanned New Zealand from Canterbury's braided rivers to the East Cape, with particular focus more recently on threatened plants in the Nelson-Marlborough region. Shannel is recognised for his plant taxonomy, ecology, and conservation status assessments, including decades serving on the national vascular plant conservation status panel.

Shannel has received previous accolades. In 2024 he received a Lifetime Achievement Award by the NZ Plant Conservation Network, and in 2008 he won the Loder Cup for his contributions to native plant conservation.



Shannel Courtney (left) receiving the Allan Mere from NZBS President Anthony Wright (right).

**Dr Kelvin Lloyd: Forest & Bird's Old Blue Awardee and recipient of the 2025 Loder Cup**

Ecologist, botanist, and science communicator Dr Kelvin Lloyd of Dunedin has been honoured with two of Aotearoa New Zealand's most significant conservation awards this year: Forest & Bird's Old Blue Award and the prestigious Loder Cup.

These awards jointly recognise his professional expertise and extensive volunteer contributions over decades to protecting New Zealand's natural heritage, from wetlands to alpine habitats.

Forest & Bird nominated Dr Lloyd for his tireless dedication to safeguarding New Zealand's unique native flora, which has made a lasting impact. A long-time member and former chair of Forest & Bird's Dunedin branch, Dr Lloyd has provided expert ecological evidence in key conservation cases, including the successful opposition to the Te Kuha mine and the Ruataniwha Dam land-swap. His colleagues praise his deep knowledge of New Zealand's flora and his ability to communicate complex science clearly.

The Loder Cup, one of New Zealand's highest honours for conservation, was presented to Dr Lloyd by Penny Nelson, Director-General of the Department of Conservation.

His career includes co-founding the Orokonui Ecosanctuary, where he has served as a long-standing trustee, and his work as a leading ecologist at Wildlands, where he has championed biodiversity and influenced



Dr Kelvin Lloyd of Dunedin, recipient of Forest & Bird's Old Blue Award and the Loder Cup. Photo: [www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2025-media-releases/conservation-award-honours-a-defender-of-new-zealands-unique-landscapes/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2025-media-releases/conservation-award-honours-a-defender-of-new-zealands-unique-landscapes/).

landmark decisions. He has advised on major national projects, such as prioritising wilding conifer control sites and helping secure significant funding for wilding pine management.

Underpinning his life and work is a practical conservation ethic. Dr Lloyd balances his professional consulting with life as a sheep and beef farmer near Waitati, where he and his wife manage a property that includes productive pasture and regenerating native bush. An example of his hands-on approach is the restoration of a nearby wetland, which he fenced and planted with harakeke.

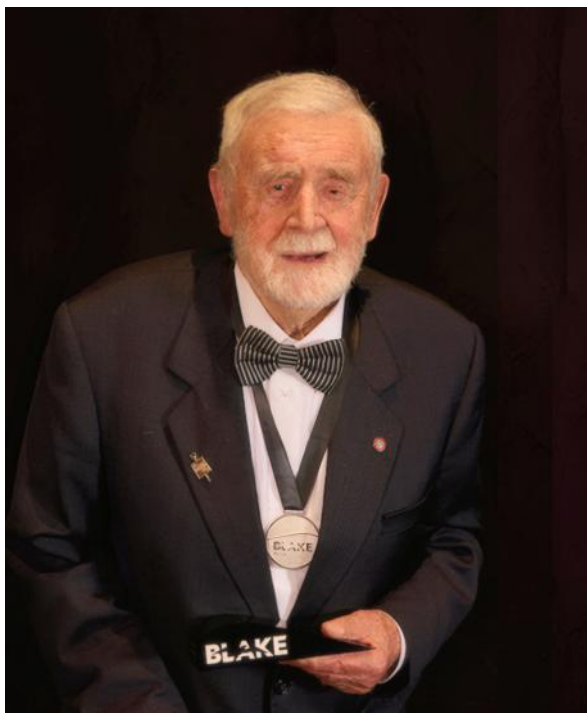
Sadly, Kelvin Lloyd passed away on Friday 12th December. He was able to receive his award on the 20th November.

**Prof Sir Alan Mark: 2025 BLAKE Medallist**

Congratulations to Emeritus Professor Sir Alan Mark who has been awarded the 2025 BLAKE Medal for his outstanding contribution as a leading plant ecologist, lifelong environmentalist, and champion of science-based conservation that's helped to protect and conserve some of Aotearoa New Zealand's most significant landscapes.

Sir Alan Mark is a leader in conservation in New Zealand, with a particular focus on our alpine environments and indigenous tussock grasslands. As a founding member and





Emeritus Professor Sir Alan Mark with the 2025 BLAKE Medal. Photo: Sciences at University of Otago Facebook page.

chairperson of the Guardians of Lakes Manapouri and Te Anau in 1973, Sir Alan's leadership was a strong force in the appropriate regulation of lake levels. He has also been involved in protecting areas like the Denniston Plateau and South Island high country sites.

Sir Alan's expertise in botany and plant ecology meant that he could bring a rigorous scientific eye to decision making, and this led him to many other leadership positions, including as president of Forest & Bird, being on the Scientific Advisory Committee, the Mt Aspiring National Park Board, a member of the Fiordland National Park Board, the Otago Catchment Board, and as a research advisor for the Miss E.L. Hellaby Indigenous Grasslands Research Trust. Sir Alan has been a strong advocate for the protection of New Zealand's indigenous tussock grassland.

Sir Alan Mark has often linked scientific research with conservation efforts and was knighted in 2009 for services to conservation. Congratulations also to eight BLAKE Leader awardees across seven categories of environmental leadership.

See [www.blakenz.org/2025/11/14/blakeawards2025/](http://www.blakenz.org/2025/11/14/blakeawards2025/) for further details. These awards are named for Sir Peter Blake, the renowned New Zealand yachtsman.

### **Prof Margaret Stanley: 2025 Callaghan Medal Awardee**

Professor Margaret Stanley of Waipapa Taumata Rau – the University of Auckland has won the Callaghan Medal for her outstanding contribution to science communication and raising public awareness of the value of science.

Margaret is a respected ecologist who has focused on sharing her passion that science and research can deliver benefits in the real world – beyond academic citations. She has published many articles and opinion pieces to contribute to informed public debate on conservation science.

Margaret has become a 'go-to' presenter on conservation issues. She has been invited to speak at many high profile and community events and to diverse audiences in all kinds of formats, including radio, TV, and online discussions. She regularly engages with communities to simplify technical advice and empower people to make evidence-based decisions. She has run science communication workshops in New Zealand and internationally and helps early-career researchers develop skills and confidence.

"We all do better when we're connected to our local environment – and we have a lot to protect in Aotearoa. Most of our species are found nowhere else in the world – it makes us unique," Margaret says.

She was the 2025 Banks Memorial Lecturer and the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture joins others in congratulating Margaret for her latest accolade.

For further details, see [www.royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/medals-and-awards/research-honours/2025-rha/2025-callaghan-medal/](http://www.royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/medals-and-awards/research-honours/2025-rha/2025-callaghan-medal/)





Professor Margaret Stanley holding the prestigious Callaghan Medal. Photo: Royal Society Te Apārangi.

### Tree of the Year 2025: The Chook Tree Wins!



Amid the rolling green hills of North Otago stands a tree with a story – and a shape – as unique as its name. The distinctive ‘Chook Tree’ of Waianakarua has been crowned the winner of Tree of the Year New Zealand 2025.

This quirky, chicken-shaped macrocarpa (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*) has captured the imagination of locals and travellers alike for nearly 50 years. Its distinctive silhouette wasn’t initially crafted by design, but by chance. After a storm in 1978, local poultry farmers Norman and Evelyn Clarke saw potential in what remained. With careful pruning and a sense of humour, they helped nature complete her masterpiece: a towering hen keeping watch over the countryside.

Today, the ‘Chook Tree’ stands not just as a whimsical landmark, but as a symbol of creativity and community pride.



The ‘Chook Tree’, winner of the Tree of the Year New Zealand 2025.

Proof, perhaps, that a great story and a unique shape can go a long way.

Congratulations to the ‘Chook Tree’ and its creators – and thank you to everyone who voted, the competition sponsor Delta Utility Services, and partner NZ Arboricultural Association for supporting this celebration of New Zealand’s most remarkable trees.

The Tree of the Year competition has been running since 2022 and highlights New Zealand’s most interesting trees and their stories. This annual competition is organised by the NZ Notable Trees Trust. Learn more at [www.treeoftheyear.co.nz](http://www.treeoftheyear.co.nz)

View the Chook Tree on the New Zealand Tree Register (No. OR/0578: [www.treeregister.nz/tree/view/578](http://www.treeregister.nz/tree/view/578)).

### New Zealand Rose of the Year 2025: ‘Centurion’

The rose ‘Centurion’ was voted as the New Zealand Rose of the Year 2025 at the Pacific Rose Bowl Festival in Hamilton at Hamilton Gardens on the 16th November.

This rose was named by rose breeder Rob Somerfield of Glenavon Roses for Hayden Foulds’ late grandfather George Foulds 100th birthday in November 2019.

It also won the Sam McGredy Perpetual Challenge Award for the Best New Zealand

raised rose. Congratulations to Rob for his success this year and also to the other winners from this year's Rose of the Year trials.



*Rosa 'Centurion'*, winner of the New Zealand Rose of the Year 2025. Photo: Rob Somerfield.

## Poisonous plants of gardens



Murray presenting his talk to the Springston Garden Club at the Events Centre, Lincoln. Photo: Alan Jolliffe.

As part of our community outreach, Murray Dawson presented talks on poisonous plants to two Canterbury gardening groups.

The first was to the Springston Garden Club (7th Aug 2025) which was recorded and uploaded to the RNZIH YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/@RNZIH-NZ](http://www.youtube.com/@RNZIH-NZ)). A month later, Murray spoke to the Broadfield Garden Club (9th Sept 2025).

In his presentations, Murray profiled the top 15 poisonous plants in New Zealand according to the National Poisons Centre and also spoke on poisonous fungi. At the end of each talk, the book *Plants that Poison: a New Zealand Guide* were given away to attendees courtesy of the Allan Herbarium. Both talks were well received, and an article based on them will be published in the RNZIH journal.

---

## RNZIH Memorial Prize Scholarship: Trip report

Thank you to the RNZIH for supporting my attendance of the 10th Botanic Gardens Australia New Zealand (BGANZ) Congress in Canberra, ACT, Australia, from the 2–5th of November, 2025. The theme of this Congress was '*Advancing our reach – innovation and leadership in botanic gardens*'. It was hosted jointly between Old Parliament House, Canberra, and Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG). Some background is that the ANBG was established in 1970, with a focus on growing Australian flora. They currently have 1/5 of all of the native flora of Australia and more Australian native plants growing together than anywhere else in the world.

On the 2nd of November, I went on my first tour of the ANBG at 3 pm, led by volunteer Beth. I saw the banksia grove, the specimen eucalypt lawn, the Sydney Gully, and lots of Australian wildlife, including crimson rosellas and water dragons. A highlight of this day was a buggy trip to the Red Centre Garden, that seeks to represent the flora of and around Alice Springs, led by Education Ranger, Ying Luo. Following this, we were also welcomed to an arborists' BBQ as well as the broader Congress Welcome Reception, from 4:30 pm.

The 3rd of November was the first full day of the Congress. This consisted of Congress attendees branching off into groups to participate in a range of field trips. I chose to go on the Horticulture Focus Field Trip. At 9 am, we departed in a tour bus, with our experienced driver, Steve, for a seamless tour





A range of *Eucalyptus* at the ANBG, on Sunday the 2nd of November, 2025.

through the ANBG, hosted by a succession of staff members. One aspect that is impressive about the ANBG is that they grow a wide variety of plants in a very harsh climate, from -7°C in winter, to 40°C in summer. All before morning tea, we got to see the nursery, the conservation garden, a tropical glasshouse, the Red Centre Garden, the eucalypt lawn, and the forest. Steve then took us to the National Arboretum, which included spending some time in the impressive National Bonsai and Penjing Collection. In the early afternoon, we were taken to the National Gallery, as well as the National Museum of Australia. A highlight of this afternoon was the very grand *Araucaria bidwillii* (bunya pine) life-sized casts at the entrance of the Museum. The field trip concluded at 4:30 pm. Later that evening, I attended a Twilight Tour of the ANBG – it was amazing to see the Gardens at a different time and all of the creatures, including the native brushtail possum and bats, that were not previously visible during the daylight hours.

Throughout my time at the ANBG, I enjoyed seeing a range of genera that I am familiar with in New Zealand, such as *Pimelea*, *Nothofagus*



*Grevillea juncifolia* (honeysuckle spider flower) of the Red Centre Garden on Sunday the 2nd of November, 2025.

and a *Pomaderris*, similar to New Zealand *Pomaderris kumeraho*. Further, as Myrtaceae is one of my favourite plant families, it was fascinating to see a variety of *Leptospermum*, *Melaleuca*, and *Eucalyptus* species. I loved the *Grevillea juncifolia* (honeysuckle spider flower) of the Red Centre Garden, as well as the bottle trees, *Brachychiton* spp. around the garden.

The 4th and 5th of November saw the first and second days of Congress sessions, including the Congress Dinner and Awards Ceremony on the Tuesday. Highlights from these sessions for me were recognising the importance of tools such as iNaturalist in botanic gardens, a talk by Patricia Kaye from the Eurobodalla Botanic Garden, learning about conservation of the ACT's rarest plant, *Muehlenbeckia tuggeranong* from Peter Bredell, the Production Supervisor at the ANBG, as well as a corpse plant session, '*Amorphophallus titanum* – Australia & New Zealand Metacollection Workshop', led by John Siemon, the Director of Horticulture and Living Collections at the Botanic Gardens of Sydney.



*Callistemon* sp. at the ANBG, on Sunday the 2nd of November, 2025.

On the morning of the 6th of November, I was lucky enough to be able to go on an additional tour of the nursery of the ANBG, hosted by Peter Bredell and Carol Dale; Carol is the Nursery Manager at the ANBG.

While I was in Australia, I went to a few other cities to visit some friends. Among other activities, this included trips to four other botanic gardens, including the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria – Melbourne (RBGV), Brisbane Botanic Gardens Mt Coot-tha, as well as the Brisbane City Botanic Gardens. As I visited Melbourne after the Congress, I bumped into Daniel Monge who was a fellow Congress attendee, who works as a curator of the dryland garden at the RBGV Melbourne. Daniel linked me up to Kaylah Mackley, who works in the nursery at the RBGV, who also attended the Congress. I was very lucky that Kaylah gave me a nursery tour in the morning of the 7th of November. Daniel and Kaylah also invited me on a staff tour of the Grey Garden later in the afternoon that day.

Overall, I had the most amazing time attending 10th BGANZ Congress. It exposed me to the



Kate and a *Brachychiton rupestris* (narrow-leaved bottle tree / Queensland bottle tree) at the ANBG, on Sunday the 2nd of November, 2025. Photo taken by educator ranger, Ying Luo.

incredible work going on in botanic gardens, not just in Australasia, but all over the world. Many of the difficulties that we face in botanic gardens are challenges that we face together, such as the public recognising the overarching value of botanic gardens as a tool for plant conservation, as well as the difficulties we face attracting young people into horticulture. It was invaluable to meet so many Kiwis and Aussies, from across both countries, as well as many other nursery people, from differing backgrounds and ages.

Through the kindness and hospitality of the people I met throughout my time in Australia, who made it the fun, educational and memorable experience that it was, including, but not limited to: Ying Luo, Elizabeth Izatt, Carol Dale and Peter Bredell at the ANBG; Daniel Monge and Kaylah Mackley at the RBGV, and the Kiwis who I shared my accommodation with.

Everyone I talked to at the Congress was so friendly and eager to share knowledge. Many thanks again for the support of the RNZIH for

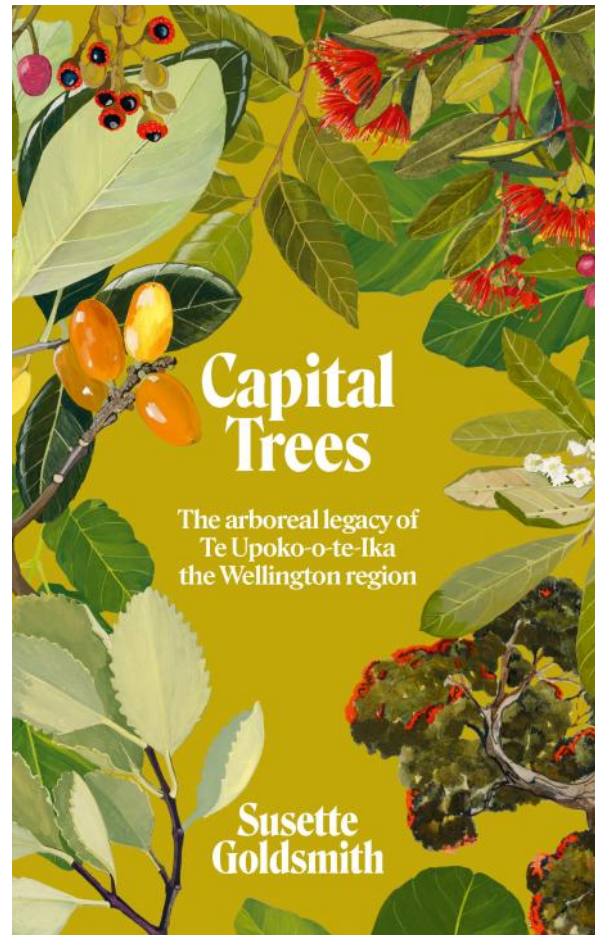




The nursery at the Australian National Botanic Garden, on Thursday the 6th of November.

covering my flights to and from Canberra. I am so grateful to have had this opportunity and encourage other apprentices to apply for opportunities like this! I would also like to thank the support and encouragement of my boss, Alice Lloyd-Fitt, who is the Propagation Services Officer at the Dunedin Botanic Garden, who first suggested I should see if it would be possible to attend this Congress.

**Kate Moss-Mason**



explored through facts, anecdotes, and field notes.

## New books

**Capital Trees: The Arboreal Legacy of Te Upoko-o-te-lka the Wellington Region**  
By Susette Goldsmith  
Te Papa Press, \$40

### Media preview text:

From the fossil forest of Titahi Bay and the ageing oak on Plimmer Steps, to the karaka grove on Wellington's waterfront and a threatened stand of lowland beech in the Hutt Valley, *Capital Trees* journeys across the region to trace the living legacies of the city's rich tree heritage and the many people who have shaped, protected, and challenged it.

These legacies include arguments around heritage tree listing, the native versus exotics debate, biodiversity, attitudes towards heritage authenticity, trees as monuments and more,

Susette Goldsmith's field trips across the region add a personal, essayistic touch to the book. She explains, "It was important to me to be able to describe these actual experiences for readers unable to 'be there'... Aotearoa is home to trees with lineages that stretch as far back as 190 million years or more, to the continent of Gondwanaland. Like all parts of Aotearoa, therefore, Wellington is a place of deep history and rich biodiversity."

Susette hopes that readers take away two things from the book. Firstly, "I have suggested that we extend our definition of tree heritage beyond official lists and, in the face of potential tree destruction, consider shifting the onus of proof of heritage value from inclusion to exclusion. Let's be bold and make all Wellington a site of tree heritage." Secondly, she does not want us to think of tree heritage as history, but rather, "what we select from our history to respect and celebrate."

Examples of this include the ancient Titahi Bay subfossil forest: “These stumps are radiocarbon-dated as more than 35,000 years old. These are trees that make you ponder upon your own mortality and comparative insignificance. These are trees that make you think.” And the grove of karaka on the Wellington waterfront planted in 1999: “These trees tell the story of Te Aro Pā which was occupied until the late nineteenth century. Books about trees are often read by people who are well informed and already appreciate them. I hope that all readers, however, will find some parts of the book lead them to greater understanding of our capital’s trees, and a richer appreciation of Aotearoa’s tree heritage in general.”

Illustrated with contemporary photography and specimen illustrations of the species and individual trees covered, this book is a must for all who live in the Wellington region.

### **He Puāwai: A Natural History of New Zealand Flowers**

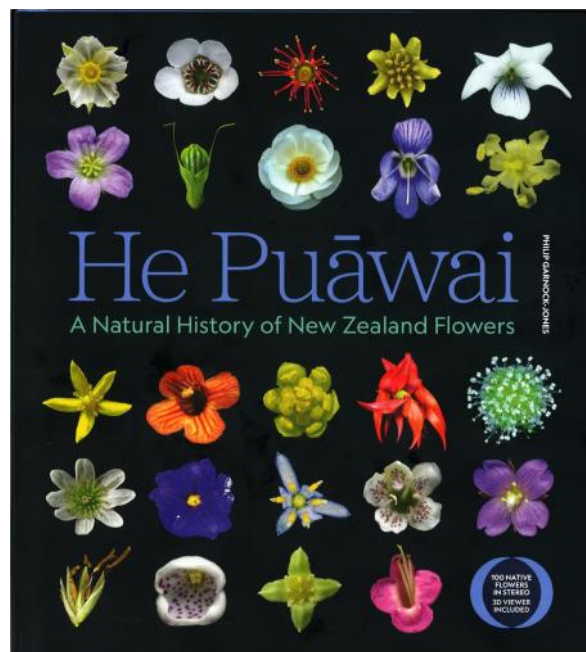
**By Prof Philip Garnock-Jones**  
**Auckland University Press, \$79.99**

#### **Testimonials from the dust jacket of the book:**

“Remember when you were small, and the minute details of everything – shapes, colours patterns – were so absorbing. I suspect Phil Garnock-Jones never lost that wonder at all, and here he shares it generously. It’s impossible to pore through the pages of *He Puāwai* without feeling amazement rekindled — and realising there are infinitely more ways than you imagined to greet, observe and learn from these tiny taonga, the flowers of Aotearoa.”

**—Johanna Knox (Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga),  
 author of *The Forager’s Treasury***

“This book, like no other, opens a microscopic window to appreciate native plants. The luscious detail, both in the crisp stereo imagery and in the carefully descriptive text, captures and holds the attention of anyone who has enjoyed the attraction provided by flowers. I predict this book will inspire another generation of botanists and nature lovers in



Aotearoa. Not many books deserve their place as a textbook (which deepens our understanding of native plants) and equally as a (stunningly captivating) coffee table book.”

**—Tim Park, Manager, Ōtari Wilton’s Bush**

“Who would have thought that a book about flowers (almost universally loved simply for their beauty) could both celebrate their aesthetic appeal and at the same time relate so well the mind-boggling stories of their biological function and evolution? Phil Garnock-Jones achieves this with excellent photography, including liberal use of stereo pairs, and with text that informs, never talks down to a general audience, but somehow remains scientifically precise and broadly entertaining. I love this book.”

**—Hugh Wilson, botanist, author and kaitiaki,  
 Hinewai Reserve, Banks Peninsula**

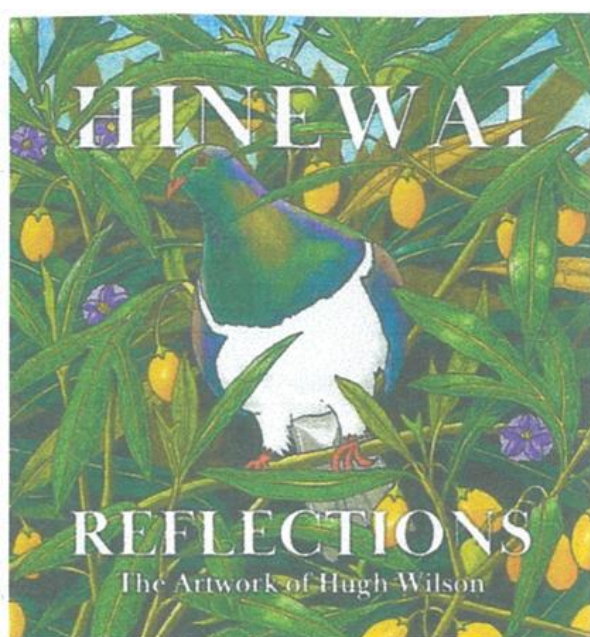
“*He Puāwai* is an outstanding new release that tells compelling stories about our unique native flora. Phil Garnock-Jones is one of the most knowledgeable and respected experts in his field, so unsurprisingly the book is authoritative with detailed plant descriptions that are informative yet easily read and understood, the text is perfectly complemented by outstanding photography that illustrates the exquisite beauty so often overlooked in our native plants. The images really come to life when viewed in 3D with the viewers provided, the

first time I have encountered this innovation. I regard this as the best and most inspiring book of its type to hit our shelves in many years and recommend it as a 'must read' for all who love our native flora."

—Jack Hobbs, manager,  
Auckland Botanic Gardens

### **Hinewai Reflections: The artwork of Hugh Wilson**

This book of some 170 artworks from the collection of Hugh Wilson is due out in the first part of 2026.



The cost will be \$80.00 (post free within New Zealand). Early ordering will assist in the printing costs.

#### **Narrative:**

Over the years it has often been suggested that we should publish a collection of Hugh Wilson's art. However, while Hugh is willing to talk endlessly about Hinewai and has published extensively in botanical journals and books, he has been reluctant to produce anything of a personal nature. Some years ago, when an event in his honour was suggested, Hugh responded, "I am a delicate flower used to blooming in quiet places and have already had sufficient attention shone on me. Another event could cause severe wilting".

We were delighted, then, when Hugh's long-time friends, Peter Gough and Andy Buchanan, finally convinced Hugh of the value of a high-quality book of his artwork. They argued that this would give a permanent format to the work, that it would provide a collection that many of his friends – and particularly Hinewai supporters – would value, and that it could be a source of income for Hinewai.

Quentin Wilson Publishing has undertaken the publishing of the book, with Hugh and Quentin Wilson (no relative) together selecting over 170, mostly coloured, drawings of birds and plantlife to be found on Hinewai and beyond. Tying in nicely with the many familial and family-like connections that make up the Hinewai Reserve network, the book is being edited by Hugh's niece, professional writer and editor Sarah Quigley, and project managed by Quentin's daughter Antoinette, who by coincidence was also producer of the film *Fools and Dreamers*, which shared the Hinewai story with the world.

Employing his inimitable way with words, Hugh has produced extended captions to accompany the artworks – each of them a delightful combination of informative and anecdotal, offering botanical and historical insights and Hugh's charming and often quirky take on all things flora and fauna.

---

## **New members**

A warm welcome to our new members:

Yvonne Best	Northland
Elisa Wood	Auckland
Rachel Robinson	Auckland
Roger Milne	Auckland
Bernize Butters	Ashburton
Simon Montgomery	Ashburton
Michael Power	Ashburton
Letitia Smart	Ashburton
Leshia-May Thomas	Ashburton
Canterbury Horticulture Society	(rejoined)



Apprentices:

Eilish Pierce  
Kellie Corbett  
Thomas Robertson

Ashburton  
Ashburton  
Ashburton

Young Horticulturist of the Year Contestants:

Jade Bedel  
Grace Fulford  
River Foster  
Jake Linklater  
Jordan Sutherland  
Nina Downer

Auckland  
Hastings  
Wellington  
Christchurch  
Christchurch  
Bannockburn



ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE

