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**Front Cover**

*Canna* 'Gabriel', an outstanding selection raised by  
Jack Hobbs at Auckland Botanic Gardens.  
Photo: Jack Hobbs.

## From the Editors

The first article in this issue outlines a breeding and evaluation programme initiated by Jack Hobbs at the Auckland Botanic Gardens in the 1980s, and the selection work and evaluations that were completed more than 30 years later. As a result, several outstanding selections of canna lily have been named and made available to the market.

Remaining on the topic of plant breeding, David Grey reveals three new avocado cultivars that he has selected for more than 20 years at his family orchard near Gisborne. These selections have attracted media attention, and it's great to see long-term innovation and the breeding of new plant selections in New Zealand.

The following two articles have conservation themes.

Andrew Maloy is a relieving ranger at Rotoroa Island (in the Hauraki Gulf, Auckland) and draws upon his experiences to outline the restoration work that has taken place there over the last 13 years. He then takes a closer look at two native willowherbs that have been found growing on the island. This raises an interesting human context – willowherbs (*Epilobium*) are weedy-strategy plants preferring disturbed habitats and producing abundant, wind dispersed seed. However, the hairy willow herb (*E. hirtigerum*) discussed by Andrew has high conservation values in New Zealand, despite also being indigenous to Australia, Indonesia, and South America. Because it arrived naturally in New Zealand before humans, we strive to conserve it, but declare plants that have recently arrived as weeds. Derrick Rooney provides further food-for-thought in his article on conservation strategies, by pondering the long-term value of trying to save species in decline.

Inspired by seeing a climbing rātā in full flower, Elizabeth Miller writes about this threatened endemic species.

Alan Jolliffe takes us to the alpine zone of the Southern Alps, to visit three button daisies (*Leptinella*) that he has encountered there.

The remaining two articles cover historically significant botanical artists of New Zealand plants; Lynette Townsend shows us the watercolours of New Zealander Sarah Featon and Ross Ferguson explains the paper mosaics of Englishwoman Mary Delany.

It has been several years since we have published book reviews here, so Murray Dawson brings us up-to-date by reviewing four books on a range of subjects.

**Murray Dawson and Andrew Maloy**

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