



Volume 8, Number 1
June 2005

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Typesetting and Production

The Printery, Massey University

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ISSN 1173-7425

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Front Cover: The South African giant poker lily, *Kniphofia northiae*, growing in the Savanna bed of the Dunedin Botanic Garden. Image courtesy Dunedin Botanic Garden.

From the Editors

Peter Cave's 2004 Banks Memorial Lecture on the difficulties of importing new plant material into New Zealand which we published in our last issue has struck a chord.

This topical article has since been reproduced by *Commercial Horticulture*, the New Zealand Alpine Garden Society, and the New Zealand Iris Society.

Jim Douglas continues this theme in the current issue, and presents his perspectives as a horticultural scientist from Crop & Food Research. Jim also published an editorial in *The New Zealand Herald* (*Plant import rules blocking growth*, 18 April 2005) and gave a hard hitting lecture to the International Plant Propagators Society conference in May 2005 in the presence of the Minister of Agriculture and Biosecurity, Jim Sutton. There were also a couple of speakers from MAF and ERMA for balance, but the clear message to the Minister was that in the last seven years there has effectively been no importation of new plant species. This will eventually have a huge impact on our ability to stay ahead of the rest of the world in agriculture and horticulture.

Both Peter and Jim commented that New Zealand's commercial successes such as *Pinus radiata* and kiwifruit would be denied entry under the current draconian regulations. However, there are several sets of complex issues involved. *Pinus contorta* has become a serious weed of South Island high country, and wild kiwifruit (*Actinidia deliciosa*) is similarly becoming weedy in the North Island. These and other points were made by Ian Popay (Department of Conservation) and Peter Williams (Landcare Research) in their reply to Jim Douglas's article (*The New Zealand Herald*, 25 April 2005). Their article, *Few ways to identify plants with dark side*, provides an opposing view. Peter and William Lee (Landcare Research) have also published on issues of plant importation and weediness in the June 2001 issue of the *NZ Garden Journal*.

Also in this issue are two articles by Geoff Canham, Parks and Leisure Manager for Tauranga, and articles on the Dunedin Botanic Garden by Barbara Wheeler and Doug Thomson.

Finally, we present the first of two parts of the best book reviews of 2004. These reviews, courtesy of the magazine *Weekend Gardener*, have been selected as those of interest to horticulturists.

Murray Dawson and Andrew Maloy

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