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Front Cover

Begonia 'Dragon Wing Red', planted in the display beds at Auckland Botanic Gardens. Photo: Jack Hobbs.

From the Editors

The Auckland Botanic Gardens continue their excellent work trialling selections of various plant groups from which to determine the best performers. To begin this issue, Emma Bodley and Jack Hobbs present their garden trials of *Begonia* cultivars.

Next, Anthony Wright draws upon excerpts from a personal memoir by Lady Mappin to help uncover a history of the gardens of Government House Auckland.

We then hear from Karin van der Walt, who shares Wellington Gardens experiences of raising and releasing *Tradescantia* beetles. *Tradescantia* is a serious environmental weed in New Zealand and to help control it Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research have imported three biocontrol beetles that are now available for raising and releasing into the environment.

Karin also provides a report of her trip to the 2017 Global Botanic Gardens Congress held in Switzerland. To help support her attendance, the RNZIH granted Karin a Peter Skellerup Plant Conservation Scholarship.

Congratulations to Helen Lowe for receiving the 2017 Ronald Flook Award. The award was granted in recognition of her huge personal efforts leading a small team of experts to ensure that heritage and notable trees remain protected on Christchurch's Replacement District Plan. Here we publish the citation prepared by Seth Thompson (President NZ Arb), and Helen Lowe's written acceptance reply.

Congratulations also to the RNZIH Education Trust for another year successfully running the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition, and to Shanna Hickling of Gisborne for becoming the overall winner for 2017. The full results of the YHOTY competition are presented here, as well as Tim Adams' winning speech.

We remember the lives of two renowned plantsmen. Lawrie Metcalf has done more than probably anyone else to encourage New Zealand gardeners to use our native plants. He is widely recognised as New Zealand's most authoritative writer on the cultivation of our native plants with more than a dozen books to his credit. Northland plantsman and owner of Russell Fransham Subtropicals was well-known for his love of horticulture, landscaping and plants. He was an authority on growing unusual and subtropical plants in New Zealand.

We conclude this issue with a book review of *Joseph Banks' Florilegium*, a selection of 147 botanical plates dating back to Cook's first voyage of discovery, with comments on each from contemporary experts.

Murray Dawson and Andrew Maloy

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