

Fernglen Native Plant Gardens



Autumn Newsletter 2013

**2013 AGM 7.00PM APRIL 10TH
7.30PM AT FERNGLEN**

ALL WELCOME



- 1. News from Fernglen**
- 2. Annual Assessment of 2012 Pohutukawa Flowering Xmas**
- 3. The Kauri 2000 Trust**
- 4. Survive the “Big Dry” Summer 2013**
- 5. Book Review: ‘Plant Heritage New Zealand: Interpreting the Special Features of Native Plants’ by Tony Foster**
- 6. A tribute to John Salmon - botanist and author**
- 7. Friend’s subscription, AGM agenda.**



Fuchsia procumbens

Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth with kind permission www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora

1. Autumn at Fernglen

Despite the extremely hot summer, plants at Fernglen have survived remarkably well. This is thanks to the diligent daily watering by Malcolm and the few losses are mainly due to the older age of some of the smaller plants. On the positive side, this makes space for the creation of some new areas and some new plants.

As it is between seasons at present, there are few plants in flower to report. The *Fuchsia procumbens* is covered in large red berries and these alone are quite a spectacle. These can be seen on the left hand side of the path to the alpine house.

Work carried out in the grounds includes dead-heading, weeding, general tidying around the paths and large trees, and blood and bone in the rockery and fern areas.



There have been several groups using the Education Building for meetings and tours around Fernglen, and Malcolm has been instrumental in accommodating these.



Education centre



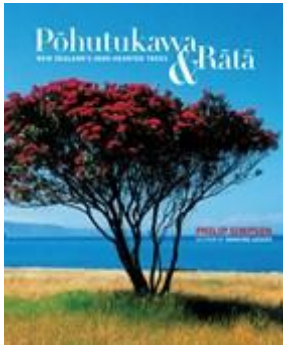
Fernglen summer concert

2. Annual Assessment of Pohutukawa Flowering ,Christmas 2012

Annually, Neville Arbury attempts to discover what factors contribute to heavy, consistent, flowering of pohutukawa in the Auckland region.

He describes the flowering in December 2012 as “patchy”. There were some stunning displays of trees covered in red flowers while nearby trees had few, or in some cases no flowers at all. The lack of pattern was frustrating for an analysis of causal factors. Nev’s ‘indicator’ pohutukawa on Tamaki Drive (as you enter Okahu Bay) was totally bereft of flowers whilst others further along Okahu Bay, toward Kelly Tarlton’s, were stunning.

Philip Simpson in his definitive book ‘Pohutukawa and Rata’, comments



that spectacular flowering of the tree is a high energy activity, something that a plant cannot sustain consistently year after year, hence the annual variance. This does not explain why so many trees have their good and bad years together, nor this year’s ‘patchy season’.

It is worth noting that public plantings are increasingly using cloned pohutukawa for streets and parks. Cloned varieties include Vibrance, Lighthouse, and Maori Princess. In particular ‘Maori Princess’ is often selected for its upright habit and this summer this variety flowered profusely.



3. The Kauri 2000 Trust (by Nev Arbury)

Formed in 1999 the aim of the Kauri 2000 Trust is to replant kauri on the beautiful Coromandel Peninsula (a task close to my heart since I grew up in the area). By the end of 2013 they will have planted 40,000 trees on 36 different sites across the Coromandel area. The success of the group can be attributed to the close cooperation between trustees, donors, schools, volunteers, and the Thames Coromandel and Hauraki District Councils.

Fortunately, kauri dieback has not reached the Coromandel Peninsula. Concerned groups are on high alert and request that all out of area trampers wash their boots and gear prior to travelling there.

Examples of the 2012 plantings are very impressive. There are over 1,000 kauri seedlings in the Matarangi Reserve, Tairua School is in the process of planting 1,000 at Sailors Grave, and the Coromandel Kauri Block has expanded with a further 600 kauri trees .

If you would like to sponsor or plant Kauri on the Coromandel the contact details are:

The secretary,
Kauri 2000 Trust
PO Box 174
Whitianga 3542

Email: info@kauri2000.co.nz

Or www.kauri2000.co.nz



4. SURVIVING THE “BIG DRY” SUMMER 2013

This remains an incredibly difficult summer in our home gardens. Hopefully, these



long dry periods will only occur infrequently. This is however, a reality check. Such summers should not dictate our plant selections. Those who collect and love plants, nurture a desire to cultivate the impossible/near impossible, the rare, the endangered, or unusual - this may lead to some of the difficulties experienced this summer. Some suggestions to lessen the impact include:

1. Initial plant selection: There are unfortunately some native plants that are difficult to grow in Auckland regardless of drought. For example, *Olearia*, *Brachyglottis*, and *Hebes*. Be realistic when choosing natives for your garden. It is useful to draw inspiration from our coastal plants. Constant battle with the elements proves these to be more drought resistant than most natives.
2. Planting time: In a ‘normal’ year the ideal planting time is from March – June. The soil is still warm allowing for strong root development before a possibly dry summer.

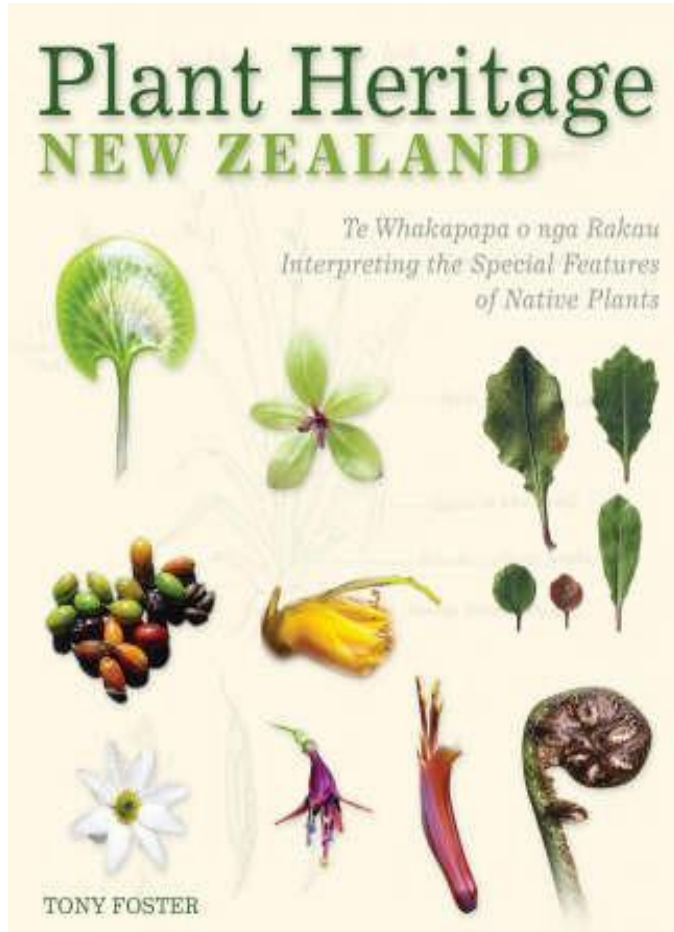


3. Compost: Planting with copious amounts of compost allows for root growth and increased water holding capacity around the new plant.

4. Mulching: One of the keys to retaining adequate soil moisture. Mulch is best applied in late October and early November when soil warmth and moisture levels are adequate. Reapply mulch regularly over summer to help to seal moisture into the soil.

5. Watering: becoming an expensive (and potentially restricted) activity thanks to Watercare and the drought. The cost of replacement plants should be considered. The solution is to water wisely, deep water at night twice a week through mulch, is the most economic use of water. Consider installing a small tank to collect rainwater from spouting as a one-off cost. There is something very satisfying about using free water you have collected yourself.

5. Book review- 'Plant Heritage New Zealand : Interpreting the special features of native plants' by Tony Foster



This superb publication focuses on the unique characteristics of New Zealand plants. Essentially what makes them so special? The origins and evolution of our plants are thoughtfully researched and explained. Social aspects of plants as an inspiration for art, songs, poems, Maori myths, stories and proverbs, are also explored.

The book is divided into two main sections:

Part One - introduces the reader to the nature of our extraordinary plants. In this section concepts are explained in relation to speciation, taxonomy, juvenility, divarication, dispersal patterns and regional endemism. The underlying themes of this section are: What makes a plant a New Zealand plant? How have plants grown and adapted in New Zealand's distinctive climate?

Part Two - the main section of the publication includes a selection of trees, shrubs, climbers, and ferns. Their classification, botanical description, traditional and modern uses cultural heritage and Maori significance.

Author Tony Foster includes numerous fascinating snippets throughout the book including many recipes for our 'edible natives'. This book is very readable, with superb photography that highlights the beauty of our native plants, while assisting with accurate identification. This is highly recommended as an outstanding addition to the ever-growing collection of publications about our native flora.

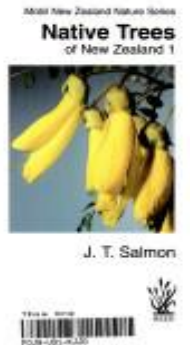
6. A Tribute to John T. Salmon 1910-1999 - botanist and author.

Born in 1910 and educated at Wellington College and Victoria University, John had a lifelong passion for New Zealand's wilderness, especially the flora. He was a passionate advocate for environmental conservation. His book 'Heritage Destroyed', published in 1960, raised public awareness of conservation issues.

As Professor of Zoology and later Dean of the Science Faculty at Victoria University, he influenced and inspired many students about the importance of conservation and ecology. His activities as writer, broadcaster, lecturer for adult education and university extension courses, ensured that his message reached a wide audience. Spearheading political activism in the conservation movement, he had wide reaching influence on issues. These included: the extensive protection of native forests, the creation of the Department of Conservation and the Ministry for the Environment, and the enactment of wide-ranging legislation for sustainable resource management.

An esteemed author, his books: 'Native New Zealand Flowering Plants' (1963) (republished in 1991), 'Field Guide to the Alpine Plants of New Zealand' (1968), and 'The Native Trees of New Zealand' (1980) which is widely regarded as a classic.

Salmon travelled extensively, especially within New Zealand but also overseas. He won the Nuffield Travelling Fellow in Natural Science (1951) and a Carnegie Travelling Fellowship (1958). Upon retirement he was made Emeritus Professor at Victoria University. In 1981 he was awarded a CBE for his services to conservation.



Friends of Fernglen

If you would like to renew “Friends of Fernglen” subscription, please either post your \$5 to Fernglen Gardens C/- 48 Kauri Road, Birkenhead.

Or alternatively, stating your name on the deposit, direct debit to:

Fernglen Native Plant Management Committee: ASB 012-3035-00499167-00

Please indicate if you would like a receipt.

If you would like your newsletter emailed rather than posted please email the secretary: jillandtim@xtra.co.nz

Treasurers Resignation

We are sad to announce that after 20 dedicated years Romily Atkinson is resigning from the committee and her treasurer role.

Thank you Romily for all of your hard work. We look forward to your ongoing commitment as a “Friend of Fernglen”.

We are looking for additional members for the committee and in particular for someone who would like to offer to undertake the role vacated by Romily. Please feel free to come to the AGM. Committee meetings are every 2 months.

Agenda: AGM 10 April 2013 7.30-9pm

- f -Apologies**
- f -Minutes of the previous AGM**
- f -Matters arising**
 - Chairperson’s Report – including Trust Deed update**
- f -Treasurer’s Report**
 - Curators Report**
 - Appointment of Committee Members**
 - Appointment of executive -Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary**
 - Other Items: Education update, visitors, communication, plantings, memorial for Muriel, fundraising targets, rainwater, publicity, website, track design and open areas for school groups, Proposal for council re Muriel’s house, fern house, water pumps and water features, plan for volunteer working bee to clean up the house yard and storage yard.**



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