

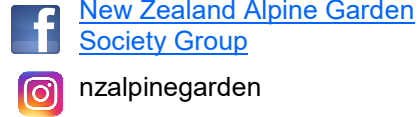


NEW ZEALAND ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY

Newsletter

April/May 2024

NZ Alpine Garden Society Inc.
PO Box 2984
Christchurch 8140
Email: info@nzags.com
Website: www.nzags.com



Calendar of Events

30th April

Closing date to receive seed
For further information please
see p6

7th July Mandeville Street
Bonsai demonstration and
plant swap
Shared lunch

1st August 8pm
AGM

September 21-22
Spring Show and Botanical
Expo- Lincoln Events Centre

11-13 October
Trillium Weekend
Geraldine

Meeting Information

The Zoom link will open at
7.30pm.

Some meetings will be
recorded so let us know if you
are interested in a particular
topic or if you missed the
meeting.

To join the Zoom Meeting
[https://us06web.zoom.us/
j/87408735664?
pwd=xpFBJbvfmbTboglkX7n
saSnxoRj3txR.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87408735664?pwd=xpFBJbvfmbTboglkX7nSaSnxoRj3txR.1)

Meeting ID: 874 0873 5664
Passcode: 105365

**This information is valid
for the whole 2024 year.**

Notice of Meetings

Meetings all at Philatelic Centre 67 Mandeville Street
Riccarton Christchurch unless otherwise stated.
The door opens at 7.30pm. Plant sales and library from
7.30pm. The meeting starts at 8pm.
Entry \$2 includes a lucky number

Guest speakers

April 4th 8pm

Paul Maurice- the Flora of Southern China

Supper

*Ruth McDonald 027 635 3571 and Lorraine Thompson
021 0273 1146*

May 2nd 8pm

Still to be arranged. Information will be emailed to members
when confirmed.

Supper

Paulette Smaill 0276753815 and Bev Bulmer 0274796500

June 6th 8pm

Still to be arranged. Information will be emailed to members
when confirmed.

Supper

Carol Halstead 0224394376 and Donna Wilcox 021565033

July 7th 11am (Sunday)

Talk on bonsai and plant swap

**Bring your own lunch- dessert supplied. More information
later**

Introducing our speakers.....

Paul Maurice-Our speaker in April is a semi-retired dermatologist
and enthusiastic member of the Canterbury and Nelson Botanical
Societies. He enjoys tramping and botanising around New Zealand
and overseas, and has a special love of alpine plants and the
scenery he encounters on his journeys. He is active on the
iNaturalist website contributing photos and observations.

President's Pen *Pauline Murphy*

As you receive this newsletter, I will be winging my way to Malaysia – a far cry botanically from alpine flora! I will unfortunately be away for the April meeting – with Paul Maurice as our speaker.

A group of members have just returned from our trip to Glenthorne Station, this borders certain areas of significant outstanding landscape including the Avoca and Wilberforce Rivers, Lake Coleridge, and the Castle Hill Scenic Reserve. The Harper and Rytton Rivers flows through the property and there are various high-country lakes within its boundaries. Expect some wild collected seed in this year's list! Which reminds me to say that all seed should be in (and beautifully cleaned, now we know how, thanks Joe) by 30th April.

We are also just coming to the end of our new initiative - bulb sales – thank you to bulb sellers and buyers alike. We have learnt a lot about how we could improve this for next year, but also welcome any suggestions.

July meeting will be on Sunday 7th, a bonsai demonstration, shared lunch and plant swap. Any helpers appreciated!

Please do put your hand up for some of the 'jobs' announced at society meetings – we are all volunteers, a very friendly bunch, getting involved is a great way to meet people and as the old adage goes "Many hands make light work"....

As we head into autumn, the show table mix is changing – colchicums, cyclamens, Leucojeum, nerines....

Happy Easter

Pauline

A reminder that newsletter will be emailed and no longer printed so if you know someone who is not receiving it please get in touch.

Council Meetings update *Jenny Ladley*

7th March

The Council is organising new and different events including a March field trip to Glenthorne Station in the Rakaia catchment area- botanising and collecting native seed. We offered a list of bulbs to members that Bill Dijk supplied us. We will evaluate this at the end to see if it is popular and how to streamline it.

The AGS Spring Show organising committee attended the meeting and we discussed how the Council can contribute to the success of the next show. The need to champion the children's categories was highlighted and ideas around raising the profile of the children's classes were discussed. A volunteer would be great to take charge of this. More about this elsewhere.

The Botanical Expo committee members also discussed their needs from the NZAGS and planning is underway for the 2024 show on the weekend of 21 and 22 of September.

We are continuing to prepare for the new membership categories for the new financial year starting 1 April.

New Members

Welcome to our new members:

Kathy Trethowan - Christchurch

Ann Cartman
Adrian Bliss
Robert Duns
Tina Bunce

Show Committee

annandjoe@xtra.co.nz
ianandadrianbliss@xtra.co.nz
robert@nzags.com
tina@nzags.com

Show and Botanical Expo update

Children's section

The Show Committee see an opportunity to grow this section over the next few years to encourage more participation from younger families.

We would like a volunteer to organise the Children's section at the show. Ideas to promote some ideas such as colouring-in pictures such as a mountain scene, mini-gardens, sand-saucers, or whatever would appeal to children.

Schools in the Selwyn district could be approached first.

If you think this is something you could do please get in touch with a member of the Show Committee (p2)

Showing Alpines

A few years ago I produced a booklet on showing alpines. It has lots of information about ways to present your plants for judging. If you would like a copy please email me I am only too happy to share it with you. (judith@nzags.com)

NZAGS plant sales

We are again having a sales table for members' plants to sell at the show. Over many years this has been very popular as often hard-to-find plants pop up.

So when you are dividing up plants or collecting seed do put them into clean pots, tend to them over winter and bring them along to the show in September.

From our members.....

So True!!

Contributed by Jennie Riach.

He was keen on the rock garden, a less happy feature, as anyone who has tried to manage one finds out. The rock garden has rather disappeared today, except in botanical gardens where they have the skills and the labour to deal with these things, but they were still in favour in the 1970's, when I tried to make one. What happens, in practice, is that, having created your small hill of large rocks and earth, you plant up with alpine treasures and then find that every possible weed has snuck in and triumphantly shot its roots under the rock, from where it is impossible to get them out.

The alpines languish: the rock garden becomes a weed garden.

Just one paragraph from
'Life in the Garden' by Penelope Lively

Council and Support Team 2024

NZAGS Council email addresses:

Pauline Murphy - pauline@nzags.com
Suzanne Pickford - suzanne@nzags.com
Hamish Brown - hamish@nzags.com
Robert Duns - robert@nzags.com
Hilary Plunket - hilary@nzags.com
Ai-Ling Chang - Ai-Ling@nzags.com
Jenny Ladley - jenny@nzags.com
Tina Bunce - tina@nzags.com
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secretary@nzags.com
president@nzags.com
editor@nzags.com - Bulletin
seeddirector@nzags.com
treasurer@nzags.com
librarian@nzags.com
showconvenor@nzags.com
judith@nzags.com - Newsletter

The next newsletter will be sent out by email on May 20th. Please have any contributions to Judith by the 10th May. Thanks. Any notices will be approved by the Council prior to publication.

February Speaker Report

Kate Pearce

THIS MISTLETOE IS NOT TO BE KISSED !

Alan Jolliffe gave us a wonderful in depth talk on New Zealand's leafy mistletoes that are part of the Loranthaceae family. The NZ botanic region has six species, *Alepis flavida*, *Lieostylus micranthus*, *Peraxilla colensoi*, *Peraxilla tetrapetala*, *Trilepidea admansii* and *Tupeia antarctica*. Mistletoes are semi-parasitic plants with green leaves or stems that photosynthesise but rely on a host tree or shrub for water and nutrients, using their specialised roots- haustoria.

Alepis flavida – Yellow Mistletoe – has leaves that have a faint red margin and red stems with orange fruit – their host is mainly the outer branches of beech trees. *Lieostylus micranthus* – Green Mistletoe – has small green and insignificant flowers, with nice orange coloured fruit and will grow on over 300



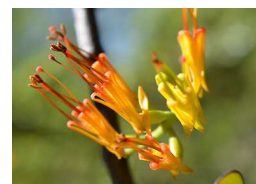
Peraxilla tetrapetala
Photo: Wikipedia

host trees and shrubs – Otago harbour being one happy habitat. *Peraxilla colensoi* – Scarlet Mistletoe - is more coastal with red tubular flowers and features on our \$2 gold coin. *Peraxilla tetrapetala* – Red Mistletoe – can be found up on the Bealey Spur. The flowers stay closed until a bird (tui & bellbirds) twist them open to cross-pollinate them. *Trilepidea adamsii*, also known as Adams Mistletoe, has sadly become extinct and was last sighted in 1954. *Tupeia antarctica*'s leaves are more green/grey in colour and has fruit berries that are either white or pink, very striking. *Tupeia* was named after a Tahitian Polynesian navigator and priest.

Our thanks to Alan and also to Matt for assisting with the technology during Alan's talk.

For further information please refer to:

<https://artandscienceofhorticulture.weebly.com/new-zealand-mistletoe.html>. The website has lots of information about NZ Mistletoe, in all its forms.



Alepis flavida flower and berries
Photos: Plant Conservation network

March Speaker Report

Kate Pearce

SEED COLLECTING TECHNIQUES Joe Cartman

Joe started his talk by introducing his "kit" of items that he uses to undertake the important business of collecting seed. First up were a series of sieves from very large down to 1mm for fine seed.

Tweezers, magnifying glass & lenses to help identify seed, cardboard box with three sides to aid the blowing of chaff from the seed. Flexible card to sieve seed onto, gloves to protect from spines that sometimes are hidden on seed heads and a kneeling pad to rub seed heads against to loosen seed. When using paper bags for storage, seal all the seams of the bag with clear tape, otherwise the seed will stick in the seams.

When collecting in the wild, Joe finds plastic Ziploc bags to be excellent to store the seed for 3-4 days. The Ziploc bags also keep fruit and berries moist in the fridge to preserve their seed quality- remember to pop a twig of the seed collected in also, to ensure easier identification later.

Soaking is required for some hard seed pods. Place them in the plastic bags to soften the pods after soaking and leave to dry for 3-4 days. Adding compost can hasten the softening process. In some cases, for instance, seed from a Kowhai is easier being collected from under the tree rather than obtaining from the pods !



Kowhai seeds

Another effective way to separate the seed from its seedhead is to put it in a jam jar, put the lid on and shake vigorously. Joe said Steve Newall found the best way to deal with sticky seed is to put the seed in flour. Also another way to collect seed, especially from *Scleranthus*, is to lick your palm and then place it on the plant, only don't lick your hand again! Fruit-covered seed (berries) – eg. *Coprosma*, cabbage tree, wineberry and sticky seed – eg. *Kohuhu*, need special treatment.

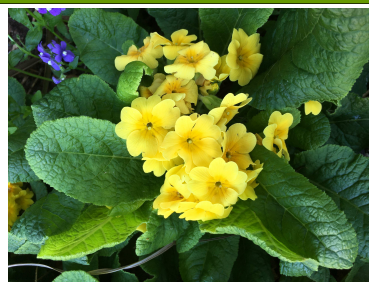
Fritillaria and Lilies have disc-like seed and one way to see if they are fertile is to hold them up to the light – usually if the seed is darker it is more likely to be viable. Joe hopes his hints and tips on seed collecting can help everyone have success in keeping our seed exchange going for many more years to come –

Thank you Joe for your time and huge knowledge and not sneezing at the wrong moment !!!



Coprosma seed

Yay! It's March, weather cooling down, time to divide the primulas! Wrong! I divided a tray full of primulas, two days later, 27 degrees! Under the shadehouse bench and covering with a tray, they seem to be none the worse for wear. I was fairly brutal in the dividing department, first washing the soil off then reducing the roots and leaves by about half, soaking them in fungicide, then cutting them with a sharp knife into plantlets with leaves and roots attached. All cut surfaces, including roots, are dusted with flowers of sulphur as a precaution against rot. I replant in free draining soil with old rotted horse manure added, and a sprinkling of Neem granules & bone flour under the roots. Neem is a soil conditioner and insecticide and the bone flour is a slow release fertilizer containing calcium and phosphorus. A drink of Seasol is the final act to settle them in. All this seems complicated, but really it's not.



I recently purchased from our local garden centre, a mini white Delphinium grandiflorum "Cheer White" which grows to 30cm has lovely white upward facing butterfly flowers and fine leaves, and is quite vigorous & easy to grow. At \$17.99 I find it a little pricey and there is a blue form as well so might have to start saving up for that as well! My white one has lots of seed heads and is reputedly easy to grow from seed.



I know I'm late in mentioning this, and it has been written about before, but our "Xmas Do" in November in Leeston was wonderful on several fronts. When we arrived at the Lakeside Soldiers Memorial Hall, we kind of groaned - another cold, musty, old country hall we thought - wrong! It's an architect designed new building with very modern features, an amazing kitchen, great hall space with a large open fire and a covered area in the middle, presumably for barbeques.

Our two talks with glorious slides by Jim Jermyn kept us enthralled. Afternoon tea and plant sales were down the road at our hosts - Mika and Hamish's amazing garden - so much to look at, so many plants beautifully grown and in flower, it was hard to take it all in.

Those who won prizes at the Expo had them presented to them by Jim, who seemed to enjoy it all. Our great dinner was at the "Crate & Barrel" local pub, only 7 years old and built along the lines of an English pub in the Cotswolds.

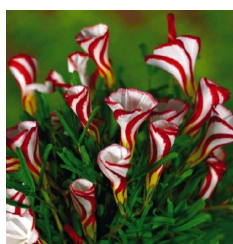


For a small country town, Leeston sure has some great things going on, and that's not mentioning their art gallery! The organisers did a great job- thank you!

I'm not mentioning the birds, as I might upset myself!
Don't forget to get your bulbs planted for spring displays!

NZAGS Bulb List 2024

The Council hope that you took advantage of the Bulb List sent out to all members in February. The list is a very interesting one with something in it that is sure to pique your interest. Hopefully it will be repeated again next year so if you didn't order anything this time then look out for it next year. Many thanks to those who have supported it this year and also to the individuals who made it possible. These initiatives are provided by members who give up their spare time to provide the service.



Oxalis versicolor



Ferraria crispa



Moraea villosa



Narcissus 'Kokopelli'

Monthly Meeting Show Bench Results

February 1 2024 Judges: Sandi Leith and Kate Pearce	
EXOTIC- OPEN UNDER 15CM	
1. <i>Frithia pulchra</i>	Gabor Csontos
2. <i>Crassula deceptor</i>	Gabor Csontos
3. <i>Allium flavum</i>	Hamish & Mika Brown
EXOTIC- OPEN OVER 15CM	
1. <i>Campanula</i> 'Maie Blyth'	Hamish & Mika Brown
2. <i>Roscoea purpurea</i>	Jennie Riach
3. <i>Micromeria</i> sp	Hamish & Mika Brown
NATIVE - OPEN	
1. <i>Celmisia verbascifolia</i>	Hamish & Mika Brown
2. <i>Celmisia hybrid</i>	Hamish & Mika Brown
3. <i>Poa</i> 'Maniototo'	Hamish & Mika Brown
CUT BLOOM -OPEN	
1. <i>Clematis albicoma hybrid</i>	Ann & Joe Cartman
2. <i>Philesia magellanica</i>	Ann & Joe Cartman
3. <i>Gentiana cashmeriana</i>	Robert Duns
3 OF 3 - OPEN	
1. Sue Petersen	
2. Wendy Wallace	
3. Jennifer Barrer	
CUT BLOOM - NOVICE	
1. <i>Hydrangea</i>	Pauline Murphy
2. <i>Carmichaelia</i> 'Lilac Bouquet'	Pauline Murphy
3 OF 3 -NOVICE	
1. Alison McCormick	
2. Pauline Murphy	
PREMIER PLANT	
<i>Campanula</i> 'Maie Blyth'	Hamish & Mika Brown
PREMIER BULB	
<i>Roscoea purpurea</i>	Jennie Riach

Mar 7 2024 Judges: Denise Meadows & Judith Stephens	
EXOTIC- OPEN UNDER 15CM	
1. <i>Adenium obesum</i>	Gabor Csontos
2. <i>Pleiospilos simulans</i>	Gabor Csontos
3. <i>Cyclamen purpurascens</i>	A & J Cartman
EXOTIC- OPEN OVER 15CM	
1. <i>Haemanthus albiflos</i>	Gabor Csontos
2. <i>Origanum</i> sp	Hamish & Mika Brown
3. <i>Monardella macrantha</i> 'Marion Sampson'	Hamish & Mika Brown
NATIVE - OPEN	
CUT BLOOM -OPEN	
1. <i>Gentiana</i> 'Alister Blee'	Robert Duns
2. <i>Colchicum bornmuelleri</i>	Nancy Ridder
3. <i>Bomarea distichifolia</i>	Joy Stack
3 OF 3 - OPEN	
1. Joy Stack	
2. Wendy Wallace	
3. Jennifer Barrer	
EXOTIC - NOVICE	
1. <i>Stenoglottis</i> 'Durban'	Matt Walters
CUT BLOOM - NOVICE	
3 OF 3 -NOVICE	
1. Maureen Day	
2. Sue Petersen	
3. Sue Petersen	
PREMIER PLANT	
<i>Adenium obesum</i>	Gabor Csontos
PREMIER BULB	
<i>Haemanthus albiflos</i>	Gabor Csontos



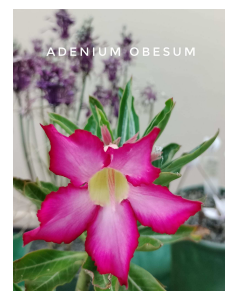
Campanula 'Maie Blyth'



Roscoea purpurea



Haemanthus albiflos



Adenium obesum

General Notices

Timetable for seed donation and distribution for 2024

These dates are approximate only.

30th April: last day for seed donations

June: post/email seed lists to NZ members

30th June: last day for seed requests

31st July: all seed should have been sent out

August: all seed orders completed

We are always looking for volunteers to learn how to prepare seed for distribution.

If you are able to help with packeting then please contact Hilary

email: seeddirector@nzags.com

SEED COLLECTION

Our seedlist is always varied and interesting thanks to dedicated gardeners collecting seed throughout the year. We would love to see more donations.

So, while you are wandering around your garden, if you spot a mature flower with seed, pop the seed into a paper bag or paper towel, label it, dry it well, clean out any dead leaves etc and send it off to:

The Seed Director PO Box 2984 Christchurch 8140

in a clearly labelled envelope with the seed name and donor. Please state WILD if the seed was collected other than a garden. Fine seeds should be wrapped in tissue paper inside its packet.

Please make sure the envelope is sealed so seed doesn't get mixed up but you don't have to make it like Fort Knox. In the past some seed has arrived totally sealed in Sellotape and it is so hard to open. It can be a mission to undo it without losing seed all over the floor!

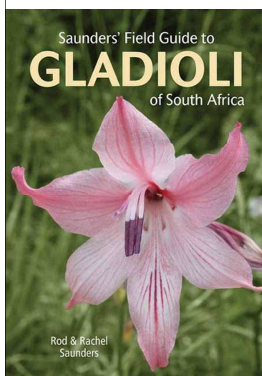
We also ask that you use paper envelopes- plastic bags can sweat and the seed goes mouldy.

BEFORE POSTING PLEASE FILL IN THE DONOR FORM-it saves Hilary a big job.

Alphabetical order is ideal. If you can't find your form then list your donations on a piece of paper and include it in your envelope.

We are looking forward to another successful seed sharing year in 2024. We do ask you to fill in the form that lists your donations. It has a couple of purposes. One is to allow our team to offer incentives to our donors- extra seed and preferential choice if seed is scarce. The second is to allow us to check with you if there is doubt over names of seed.

CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE SENT BY 30th April 2024



One of our Council members, Gabor Csontos, highly recommends a book for Gladiolus lovers.

A comprehensive guide to the 166 known species found in South Africa. It is a paperback with more than 1100 full colour photographs.

There is a side-story to this book. Rod and Rachel, botanists and seed-collectors conducted a mission to find and document all gladioli species in South Africa. They had found all but one species and were tragically killed by kidnappers in KwaZulu-Natal. Friends and colleagues completed the project and so this book was published.

Each species is presented with photographs, botanical descriptions and distribution maps.

Published in 2021 it is available from websites such as Fishpond, The Nile NZ and Blackwells for widely varying prices.

Members may recognise the house and garden on the cover of the March 2024 issue of Gardens Illustrated.

Jo Wakelin has a dry garden on the western side of Lake Dunstan in Central Otago. She has planted it deliberately to withstand drought and increasingly drier seasons.



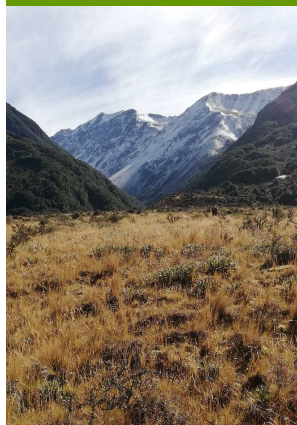
Passionvine hoppers

I had read about them in the Gardener magazine and elsewhere but didn't really appreciate how much of a nuisance they are until I was picking raspberries a couple of weeks ago and got covered in the adults as they darted around the canes. I had never seen them before in Christchurch and in just a few days they appeared in hordes. The adult seems to stick to windows and glasses in particular.

I guess we will have to learn to live with more of these imported pests in the future. Does anyone have any suggestions of how to deal with this pest from Australia?



Glenthorne Station Field Trip March 16 2024 A personal recount by Chris Carlile-Smith



that has been retired from grazing for two years

Friday's weather had turned nasty with rain and very cold weather coming in before nightfall. My very kind tramping husband and daughter decided to help choose my clothing for the Alpine Garden Society field-trip into the high country the next morning.

After declining the daughter's tramping boots (too small) and returning the husband's merino top (too big), I ventured from the house on a very cold Saturday morning, dressed in layers as instructed. Twenty keen members met at the Yaldhurst Pub to carpool up to Glenthorne Station, heading towards Lake Coleridge and even further north-west up the Wilberforce catchment area.

I have never been into the mountains, and it was the most magnificent day. The weather was perfect – warm, blue sky and a gentle breeze.

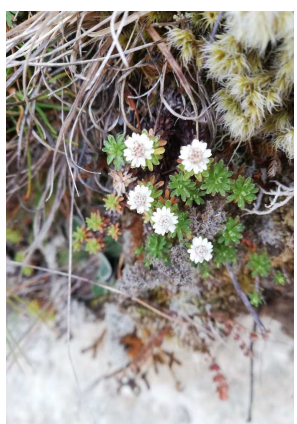
The scenery was nothing I have ever seen before. There are no words to describe it and the photos don't do it justice. You need to go there yourself to fully appreciate it.

I was amazed at the number of different plants growing within a small space and there were many knowledgeable people on hand to identify plants and share other interesting facts – who knew that the stark white berries growing on the bank were juicy and tasted of peppermint!

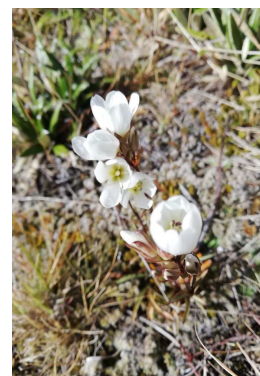
This was the first time I have seen *Gentianella* growing in their natural environment, and I took many photos of them. Unfortunately, there was no seed to collect but plenty of flowers to enjoy. Hopefully there may be seed available in the coming Seed List.

A big thanks to everyone who was involved in arranging this day – starting with the owners of the property for allowing us on to their land. Thank you for all the planning, the offer of 4WD vehicles and the fun day out that I am sure everyone enjoyed.

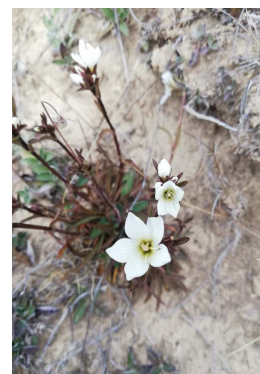
I will sleep well tonight!



Possibly *Raoulia glabra*. Growing underneath an overhanging bank.



Gentianella sp



Gentianella calcis?

I am looking forward to the next field trip. Thanks again.

Joe Cartman is writing a more detailed report on a couple of interesting plants found up there for the next newsletter.

Glenthorne Station Field Trip cont'd



Twenty members of the NZAGS enjoyed a beautiful day on Glenthorne Station. We were lucky that Kathy and John Chamberlain's grandson, Jack, works on the farm and enabled access for us to onto open tussock paddocks that had been retired from grazing. Rabbits and hares were still able to browse.

After lunch we went up a valley to a tarn, Mystery Lake, most walking and botanising on the way. Clematis, *Celmisia*, *Acaena*, tussock, Matagouri and well-grazed *Carmichaelia* were spotted.

Favourite plants

If I have a spare space I might ask you for your favourite six plants. Pauline, our President, is the first.

Here is her selection. Its always difficult to choose just six but she has done it.

Some of my favourite things -

Sorbus porrigentiformis (syn *Aria porrigentiformis*) - beautiful small tree, with silver backed leaves and in autumn clusters of bright red berries. Not only a lovely small tree, but special as I got it from Denis Hughes.

Hakonechloa macra - cascading, clumping, variegated grass, perfect for path edges - not only a great garden addition but a reminder of the gifter - Gordon Collier.

Stipa gigantea (syn *Celtica gigantea*) - evergreen grass with graceful tall seed heads - I've had *Stipa* in every garden from Hamilton, Winton, Cromwell and now Christchurch - always reliable.

Matthiola incana - gorgeous gray foliage and vibrant scented purple flowers on this biennial perennial stock. This plant has grown from seed I collected on Pitt Island - a truly old garden stalwart.

Daphne retusa - evergreen, shiny leaves, with gorgeous scented white - pink tinted flowers.....a good reliable daphne for me to grow.

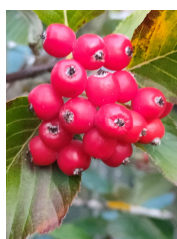
Hosta 'Empress Wu' - certainly not an alpine plant - but gorgeous large emerald-green leaves!

Gladiolus tristis - a well-known pale yellow delicate gladiolus - dies out for me in the garden, but thrives in a pot, which I can move to centre stage when it's in full flower.

Pittosporum patulum - NZ native, with restricted distribution from Nelson to Wanaka - slender trunk, with narrow toothed juvenile leaves, and red clusters of flowers. A nationally endangered NZ native, deserving of greater garden planting.

Hydrangea aspera - unusual hydrangea from the Himalayas, deciduous, with large flat heads of flowers fringed by pale pink sterile florets - I love the downy reddish undersides of the leaves.

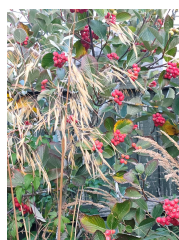
And then there are the *Miscanthus*, newly planted *Narcissus bulbocodium*, *Artemisia* for their silver foliage, *Geraniums* of all shadessuch a difficult choice for someone like me with a passion for plants - some would say an obsession!



Sorbus porrigentiformis



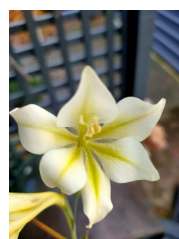
Hakonechloa macra



Stipa gigantea



Matthiola incana



Gladiolus tristis



Hosta 'Empress Wu'