



New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists

## **President's Report 2011**

Welcome to our 33<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting as an incorporated society. This year we are meeting with the New Zealand Ecological Society in Rotorua, as they celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Meeting with the Ecological Society represents a great opportunity for the plant ecologists and environmental physiologists amongst our ranks to show-case their work. We can also enjoy a good selection of themed symposia catering for other aspects of plant biology. Nine students are receiving support from the society to attend this conference (three have received awards for international meetings). It has been 28 years since the two societies met together – in Auckland in 1983, at a meeting that coincided with the visit of the nuclear warship the USS Texas. One of our life members, Paula Jameson, has informed us that she can remember donations being collected at the conference dinner, in support of conference delegates who had been arrested and detained during protests against the ship's visit. I would like to thank the NZ Ecological Society for welcoming us as partners at this meeting, and the University of Waikato, for their generous sponsorship of the conference, which has allowed us to keep registration costs low.

### **Future Meetings**

The current plan for our 2012 meeting is to meet at COMBIO 2012 in Adelaide, 23 – 27 September, in keeping with our usual pattern of meeting every three years with the Australian societies. The Adelaide based organising committee of this meeting already has a preliminary list of plenary speakers, and will be working later this year to put together conference streams and symposia – suggestions and involvement from our membership will be welcomed. The venue for our 2013 meeting has not yet been decided, but it is worth noting that following our successful meeting during last year's Queenstown Research Week, there seems to be considerable support for making a meeting at Queenstown a regular part of our annual conference cycle.

### **Roger Slack Award**

This year's recipient of our Roger Slack Award in Plant Biology is Dr Kevin Davies, of The New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research. The award recognizes Kevin's outstanding research on the regulation of biosynthesis of anthocyanins, the pigments that provide colouration to many flowers, fruits and vegetables. Kevin's research has helped identify the transcription factors that activate or repress the anthocyanin biosynthetic genes, and has shown how these factors interact to both respond to environmental stress and produce exquisite patterns of floral pigmentation. Kevin is also a highly regarded science leader, has been the supervisor of a number of successful postgraduate students, and is a long serving member of this Society. Kevin was unable to attend this year's meeting, but will instead receive his award at the prestigious Royal Society of New Zealand's Science Honours Dinner in Wellington in November.

### **Membership and Council**

Our membership numbers are similar to last year, with a total of 159 (106 Full and Life members, 53 Student). Our current council members have indicated that they are willing to continue in their

current positions for another year, but we welcome any interest in serving on the council or assistance with other society activities. This is my third and final year as president (I made the same prediction last year!) – this year Brian Jordan of Lincoln University has indicated that he is willing to stand as President, with Rainer Hofmann, also from Lincoln, stepping into the role of Vice President.

### **Other Activities**

After last year's AGM, the Plants in Action text book was successfully loaded as a freely available virtual textbook, hosted by the University of Queensland. This fantastic resource, the result of a joint project between the Australian Society of Plant Scientists, the New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists, and the NZ Institute for Agricultural and Horticultural science, is now available at <http://plantsinaction.science.uq.edu.au/edition1/> . Chapter editors have been appointed for the second edition, which will also be made available as an online text, beginning later this year. I would like to thank Jocelyn Eason for acting as the New Zealand coordinator for this project. Jocelyn is continuing in this role and is the person to contact if you are interested in contributing.

I would like to thank the Council (Philippa Barrell, David Collings, Kevin Gould, Nick Gould, Rainer Hofmann) and Vice President (Brian Jordan) for their work during the year, and particularly Marian McKenzie and Tina Summerfield, for their contributions as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

Mike Clearwater  
President, NZSPB



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### **Treasurer's Report 2011**

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 we had 159 members on our books (99 Full Members, 53 Associate Members and 7 Life Members), a similar number to last year.

Total income was \$13,335.25, the majority resulted from conference seed money reimbursement and conference surplus. Seed money was from ComBio2009 (\$3,000) and conference surplus was from ComBio2009 (\$5,246.02) and ComBio2006 (\$1,767.79). Income from subscriptions totaled \$2,770 and interest earned was \$551.44, both values similar to last year. Total expenses were \$8,835.67, more than last year. One expense was completion of the new NZSPB website (\$2,172.66). Student subsidies and prizes were increased compared to last year to a total of \$5,050 this year. Eleven students received travel awards, this included awards for international conference attendance, and attending the 2010 NZSPB/Queenstown Molecular Biology meeting, as well as a best student presentation award. Travel awards were given to: Alvina Lai, Iggy Menzies, Peter Mabbitt, Ryan Hill, Wouter Ballizany, Afsana Islam, Sarah Pilkington, Natasha Forester, Georgina Rae, Hilary Ireland and Rowan Herridge. In addition, Sarah Pilkington was awarded \$100 for the best student poster at the NZSPB/QMB plant satellite meeting.

The overall result for this financial year was that income exceeded expenses by \$4,499.58.

Tina Summerfield

Treasurer NZSPB