



CDVN Newsletter No 16, December 2005

Greetings to the CDVN and friends.

I hope that you all had a happy Christmas with family and friends, and were able to enjoy some time at the beach.

After the huge efforts by coast care groups over the last few years, many dune restoration plantings are now maturing. This is a relief to those who have put in the initial hard work and provided ongoing care, and you deserve a warm glow of pride. Some groups have extended their efforts further along the beach, or moved on to associated projects, such as improving beach access, partly because they enjoy working together, and they have the organisation in place. For others the one project was all that was required. As after care, do keep a watch for seasonal storm damage or wear and tear from beach users, so that repairs and replanting can be carried out at the best time.

For areas where the dryish weather of the spring lasts into summer, keep a look out for drought symptoms on young plants that may not be rooted very deeply, and do what you can to alleviate them. In much of the north, spring rain will have given plants a good start for the summer.

The Invercargill committee have prepared an interesting programme for the 2006 CDVN Conference, at the beginning of March, and many of you will have received information packs. These gatherings are very stimulating and great fun. This will be a good opportunity for those from the north to learn about and see an extremely different coast. It is also a chance for South Islanders to attend a conference closer to home. Wherever you are travelling from, I recommend that you book as soon as possible to take advantage of any fare benefits.

We are seeking nominations for the annual CDVN Awards, so consider the coastal projects and community groups near you and send in your nomination as soon as possible. The awards provide an opportunity to celebrate the efforts and commitment of those who have worked so hard to look after our coasts. There is more on the Awards further in the newsletter.

The Coordinating Committee has investigated alternatives to the current Network structure, so that a wider range of funding options will be possible. There is more on this inside the newsletter.

Enjoy the rest of the summer, and may your dune plantings flourish.

Elizabeth Miller, CDVN Coordinator

From the CDVN Chair

Greetings everyone!

I hope your summer is going well and that you have been able to have a break over the holiday season.

There are a couple of significant items to report on.

Firstly, a reminder that the long-term government-funded research proposal, led by Landcare Research and that the CDVN was part of, was unsuccessful. This leaves us with few options if we are going to continue actively identifying and researching areas of interest to CDVN members.

At the AGM in Whangarei it was decided to investigate the option of forming a Trust or similar structure that would allow us to seek funding from other sources. This has been done and thank you to those who have made this happen, particularly Greg Jenks and Mark Dean. There will be a proposal placed on the table at the 2006 AGM for us to consider.

Secondly, the details for the conference in the deep south are now out. I would urge as many of you as possible to make the trip to this unique part of the country. It is a long way but as you all know the opportunity to see beaches and dunes in another region is always valuable and this is the best forum to discuss and network with others dealing with similar issues to those of yourself. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

On a personal note I was sad to hear that Alan Benson, the larger than life character from Medlands Beach on Great Barrier Island, passed away in December. Alan was a great supporter of the CDVN and livened up many meetings I was and had a healthy intolerance of bureaucracy and time-wasting. I also enjoyed his hospitality on the island a few times and was very impressed by his passion for his beach. He will be missed.

Thank you too, to all the people from around the country that I have spoken to during the year about CDVN, beaches and dunes. I hope you have the opportunity to spend a good amount of time on them over the summer.

Travel safely, see you during 2006.

Cheers

Harley Spence



In the South Is. pikao (pingao) has more upright growth than in the North Is. (CDVN at St Clair, Dunedin, 2003)

CDVN Conference 2006

Invercargill

“Coastal Management – the Southern Way”

1-3 March 2006

hosted by

Invercargill City Council and Environment Southland

Coastal Dune Vegetation Network conferences bring people together to learn new ways to protect and enhance our coastal dune vegetation. Conferences provided great networking opportunities and are very well attended.

This will be the **9th Annual Conference of the CDVN**. The venue will be the Victoria Rooms at the Civic Centre, Invercargill. The conference will run over three full days, and includes field trips to nearby coasts on two days.

Topics in the programme include:

- Coastal issues in the NZ environment
- Coastal planning and management
- Coastal dune management
- Threats in coastal areas
- Coastal biodiversity

The Annual General Meeting of the Network will be held on the evening prior to the start of the conference, with opportunity for discussion on future management.

Registration: Please register for the conference before **Monday 13th February 2006**.

For further details or a registration form, contact greg.steward@ensisjv.com



Members on a field trip last time the CDVN Conference was held in the South Island. This was at Tavora Reserve, where the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust has a major restoration project, for which they received a CDVN Award for Best Coastal Project 2002/03.

CDVN ANNUAL AWARDS 2005/2006

The annual CDVN Awards have drawn attention to special effort or achievement by those working to improve our coastal dunes. The awards have been sponsored by two well-known nurseries that are keen to support work on the dunes. **Naturally Native New Zealand Plants Limited** sponsors the award for the **Best Coastal Project**. **Taupo Native Plant Nursery** sponsors the **Best Coastal Community Group** award.

The 2005/2006 Awards will be presented at the CDVN Annual Conference in Invercargill, in March 2005. For each award the selected group receives plant vouchers and there is a trophy for the Best Coastal Project. Selection will be made in early February 2006 by the CDVN Coordinating Committee.

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CDVN Best Coastal Project 2005/2006

This category is particularly to recognise the hard work and enthusiasm of those involved in projects that contribute to the restoration of coastal dune vegetation.

- **Who can nominate** - typically managing agencies of coastal areas and consultants who know of or are involved with projects in their area.
- **Who can be nominated** - any organisation responsible for planning and carrying out a coastal dune vegetation project.

CDVN Best Coastal Community Group 2005/2006

This category is particularly to recognise and encourage voluntary coastal community groups that contribute to the restoration of coastal dune vegetation.

- **Who can nominate** - typically managing agencies of coastal areas and consultants who can see the high input a community group has made in their area.
- **Who can be nominated** - any voluntary, non-profit community group that provides a valuable in-kind contribution.

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How to make a nomination

Is there a group or a project near you that you think should be nominated? Here is what to do.

Send: Your name
Your organisation
Your nomination
Their location

Include a short statement about successful or enthusiastic dune restoration achieved by a community group in your area, or the project that you consider is making a difference to your coastal dunes. Describe the practical contribution the project or the group has made.

Please post, fax or email your nominations to
Greg Steward, CDVN Secretary, Ensis, Private Bag 3020, Rotorua
or email to greg.steward@ensisjv.com by **8 February 2006**.

Community-based Dune Management Guidelines produced for the Climate Change Office

The Climate Change Office has recently published a guide for local authorities on community-based dune management for the mitigation of coastal hazards and climate change effects. Coastal agencies in particular will find this guide helpful, but the information is relevant to community groups as well.

The way we have chosen to live, work and play on the coast has often brought us into conflict with coastal processes giving rise to coastal erosion, flooding and environmental degradation. In the past, the management of coastal erosion in New Zealand has been dominated nationwide by an 'engineering paradigm', which has often resulted in armouring of eroding beaches with rock and other seawall options. This fully illustrated 36 page report prepared by Jim Dahm of Eco Nomos, Greg Jenks of Environment Bay of Plenty and David Bergin of Ensis emphasises that successful dune restoration and natural management options commonly do exist, and they have the potential to play a significant role in providing more cost-effective and sustainable options for managing our coastline. To protect communities from coastal hazards including climate change effects, the specific requirements are to restore and maintain a protective dune using appropriate native plant species and to manage human pressures so that natural dune building and repair processes are maintained. The report also emphasises the advantages of adopting a community-based approach for such work. It empowers local communities to take ownership of environmental problems, strengthens the relationships between management agencies and their communities, and increases our understanding on how we are to live sustainably with natural coastal processes.

The report is available for downloading from the websites of the Climate Change Office and Environment BOP.

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Alan Benson

In mid-December, Alan Benson, a key figure in the Medlands Beach Care Group at Great Barrier Island, passed away after a period of ill-health. He will be remembered warmly by many from Conferences, where he enthusiastically sought and shared information on resolving coastal issues.

People remember Alan's passion and commitment to the CDVN right from its early days and his intellect, intuition and down-to-earth understanding of the issues of the coast and the role of the community.

He seemed to relate to all ages, and went to some trouble to involve local school children in caring for their coast. His hospitality during the trip to Great Barrier after the Auckland conference was a highlight to those able to be there.

The Network is richer for having known him, and we will miss his wisdom and good humour.

Around the coasts

Planted spinifex successfully building the foredune at Kapiti Coast

The collaborative spinifex planting trial between the local community Coast Care group, Kapiti Coast District Council and Ensis which was established at two sites along the Paraparaumu Beach in September 2004 was recently assessed by David Bergin. There has been high survival of the 1500 spinifex planted at each site with over 70% canopy cover. Most dramatic has been the formation at each site of an incipient dune where the spinifex sward has trapped sand to a depth of up to 80 cm in only 14 months. One-metre high sand fences erected when trials were planted are disappearing and spinifex runners up to 3 m long are trailing seaward. The trial is showing that where there is sufficient space between current high water mark and steep dune scarps from previous erosion events, a sward of spinifex is a practical option for local communities and councils to consider, for building up sand at the toe of foredunes with the aim of reducing the impacts of future storms.



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TSUNAMI RECOVERY

December 26 marked the anniversary of the catastrophic disaster caused by the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Over the past year the natural buffering and energy dissipation properties provided by intact coastal ecosystems such as functional sand dunes, have started to be evaluated in the light of the tragedy, with questions being raised about the appropriateness of some forms of coastal development.

This is a timely reminder to promote public awareness of the role of natural ecosystems in helping to reduce the impact of natural calamities such as tsunamis, cyclones, and storm surges. This role is an important factor that needs serious consideration in coastal management decisions.

For more information on recent studies of the importance of coastal ecosystems, see MPA (marine protected areas) News, www.depts.washington.edu/mpanews

Conference Report

- ***NZ Coastal Society Annual Conference 2005***
– ***Coastal Problems? Innovative Solutions***

The 2005 New Zealand Coastal Society Conference was held in Tutukaka, Northland, 12-15 October 2005, hosted by Northland Regional Council.

An emphasis on coastal processes was supported by the keynote speaker, Dr Robert G. Dean, Professor Emeritus from the University of Florida, who has expertise in beach systems and beach nourishment.

Many papers provided case studies of solutions to problems associated with coastal erosion. Dunes featured prominently in the programme, which included a study of management options for Cooks Beach on the Coromandel Peninsula, a report from Christchurch on the history and development proposals for the dunes at New Brighton, a report on Mangawhai Sand Spit restoration, consideration of gradual redistribution of sand after storm erosion perhaps slowly cancelling the storm effects, a paper by Jim Dahm, Greg Jenks and David Bergin on community-based restoration on dunes, and a presentation by Mark Dean on spinifex as a Bio-Engineering tool. Dune restoration sites on field trips included Matapouri Bay and Mangawhai Harbour.

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Conference Updates

- ***Coast to Coast 2006***

Preparations have begun for *Coast to Coast 2006*, Australia's biennial national coastal conference. This year's conference will be held at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre from 22 to 25 May 2006. *Coast to Coast* will focus debate across the full range of coastal and marine issues being considered at national, state, regional and local levels.

The 2006 Conference programme will feature a number of local and international speakers, several concurrent sessions, poster presentations and field trips. The Conference is expected to attract over 400 delegates from across Australia and overseas and provides an opportunity to meet and extend contacts. For more information on the conference, visit

www.iceaustralia.com/coasttocoast2006/index.html

- ***International Conference on Community-Based Management and Sustainable Development, Fiji 2006***

The University of the South Pacific is planning a conference in mid-2006 to discuss community based management, ways of integrating fisheries and biodiversity objectives, traditional knowledge and science, coastal and catchment management and sustainable development.

For more information contact Leon Zann, zann_l@usp.ac.fj

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New CDVN Bulletins

The CDVN Technical Bulletin series provides information for those interested in coastal dune management. The four titles available to date include guidelines for propagation and establishment of some of New Zealand's important native sand-binding species, and an explanation of how coastal dune systems work.

Two new CDVN Technical Bulletins are in the final stages of preparation.

They are: **“Marram grass – friend or foe”**

Marram grass has been used to stabilise coastal sand in New Zealand, and in many other countries, for over a century. Today, native sand-binding plants are often preferred for foredune revegetation. This Bulletin describes the characteristics of marram grass and includes guidelines for assessing whether or not it is an appropriate component of the vegetation cover in specific sand dune site types.

“Measuring Success – guidelines for management of revegetation programmes”

Communities and local authorities have accumulated different amounts of local experience in revegetation of coastal sand dunes. Many would welcome suggestions about the planning of planting programmes and assessing the effectiveness of each operation. This Bulletin offers suggestions from research experience on ways to make the best use of scarce resources and the voluntary time and effort on which most projects depend.

Preparation and production of these publications has been supported by a grant from the Department of Conservation Biodiversity Advice Fund. The CDVN is most grateful for this assistance.

When completed, they will be available from the CDVN Secretary or from Scion Publications, in the same way as the existing titles.

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Sand dune and beach vegetation inventory

Volume 1 (North Island) *Trevor Partridge*
Volume 2 (South Island and Stewart Island) *Peter Johnson*

Published by DSIR Land Resources, Christchurch, 1992

Courtesy of Manaaki Whenua Press, to CDVN Members.

Price: \$20.00 per volume.

For further information, contact Elizabeth Miller,
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Ensis Environment, P O Box 3020, Rotorua
elizabeth.miller@ensisiv.com

CDVN TECHNICAL BULLETINS

All four CDVN Technical Bulletins are available at a cost of \$16.65 each (GST, p&p inclusive).

Orders to:

Publications
Scion
Private Bag 3020,
Rotorua

publications@scionresearch.com

07 343 5899

From one little seed....

In the Tauranga Harbour, at the southern end of the Bridge Street marina, is a small, sheltered, sandy beach created when the marina was built.

In 2001 Mark Dean of Naturally Native New Zealand Plants Ltd noticed a single spinifex plant there, about one metre in diameter. Each year runners have grown out and the sand has built up around them. It is female and has produced seed heads, but they may not be fertile. Mark has kept checking on the plant's progress and is delighted with its continued growth. In September 2005 he found that the plant had reached **26m x 8 m** – tremendous! The sand level has been raised approximately 30 cm, and Mark estimates that in the 4-5 years since 2001 this single large plant has built up about 60 cu. m of sand – that is 5-6-truckloads.

Spinifex seed collection

For those planning to collect spinifex seed it is timely to remember the features to look for, to make sure you have viable seed.

1. Spinifex has separate male and female plants. Don't collect the pale brown wheat-like flowers. These are from male plants and only produce pollen, never any seed. The seed is produced on the female plants in the large, soft-spiny round seedheads that bowl along the beach. The head has many spikelets, each with a spine 10-15 cm long. Not all spikelets contain formed seed. Those with good seed have at the base of the spikelet a firm lump that you can feel between finger and thumb, but that is not readily visible. These are what you need.
2. Collect the big seedheads from female plants close to male plants. It appears that those close to male plants produce more seed, and that bigger seedheads have a greater proportion of sound seed, so try to avoid small seedheads when collecting.
3. Some seedheads are not worth collecting. The floral smut fungus can infect spinifex, causing a swelling 1.5-4 cm above the base of each spine on the seedhead a giving it a distinctive appearance. In diseased seedheads most seeds are destroyed, so these should not be collected.



Left: spinifex female flowerheads; Right: spinifex male flowerheads.



Community spirit

Planting day on the backdunes at Ohiwa, Bay of Plenty, in June 2005.

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The CDVN is administered by staff at **Ensis Environment**, formerly Forest Research, at Rotorua. **Ensis** is a joint venture between **Scion** (formerly Forest Research) and a department of **CSIRO**, the Australian government scientific research organisation

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The CDVN website: Simply search for 'CDVN' on the web, or go to www.ensisjv.com then search for 'CDVN' or 'dune'.

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