

TRAVEL OUTDOOR

## WILDFLOWERS OF NEW ZEALAND

P3



### HOKITIKA DROP-IN

Nick Ashley and flight mates  
check out Hokitika P2



### MAGICAL MADEIRA

Misty hillsides and exotic  
plants enchant walkers P4-5



**COVER:****Flavoursome:**

Manuka's white to pinkish flowers lend a unique flavour to honey. The English name, tea-tree, derives from the days of Captain James Cook, who stewed its leaves to make a beverage.

# NZ

## on show

**Major drawcard, right:**

The Champagne Pool at the Wai-o-Tapu geothermal area near Rotorua is named for the carbon dioxide that fizzes from its hot waters. Metalloid compounds leave a brilliant orange deposit on the rocks.

**Three specialist, below:**

Typically for an iris, the delicate white flower of New Zealand iris does everything in threes; three inner petals, three outer petals, and three stamens.



## New Zealand floral treasures and best-loved landmarks are subjects for natural-history photographer ROB SUISTED, of Wellington, in two new books.

**A**mong the bestselling subjects for New Zealand calendars are wildflowers, and 80 pages of them in a modest-size (18cm by 18cm) book are bound to attract interest, especially when the colour photos are of such high quality as those of Rob Suisted.

His *Wildflowers of New Zealand* contain some of the species that astonished 19th-century botanists who shipped specimens home to become gardeners' favourites, including some of the hebes (genus of plants, most of which are native to Aotearoa).

New Zealand's long physical isolation created a flora unlike any other with a high proportion of endemics, writes Matt Turner in the introduction.

Eighty per cent of its flowering plants, trees and ferns are not found elsewhere, some of them originating from Gondwana, the supercontinent. Newer arrivals have drifted or blown in from other Pacific lands and evolved new forms of life in New Zealand. The latter include megaherbs such as the giant Chatham Islands forget me not, and there's a tree-sized fuchsia, and a mistletoe which will only open its flowers when unlocked by a nectar-drinking bird.

Among several misclassifications by the early visiting botanists is the majestic Mount Cook lily. Scotsman David Lyall was misled by the leaves of this buttercup – the world's biggest – in 1848. Although correctly identified as a buttercup several years later, the lily label has stuck.

From lowland rainforest understoreys dripping with epiphytic orchids, and canopies blazing with colourful and fragrant blossoms to unusual alpine plants, and dampness lovers of the wetlands, specimens are placed in four zones.

Although 300 species now face extinction, the fight to save them has some momentum.

Wellington-based Suisted's



**Waikato spectacle:** Nature's clean power thunders at the Bridal Veil Falls, a 55-metre drop on the Pakoka River near Raglan.

**WILDFLOWERS OF NEW ZEALAND:** Photography by Rob Suisted, New Holland, paperback, \$19.99.

**LANDMARKS OF NEW ZEALAND:** Photography by Rob Suisted, New Holland, paperback, \$19.99.

(Material, including photographs, on this page from *Wildflowers of New Zealand* and *Landmarks of New Zealand* is published with permission).

other new release, *Landmarks of New Zealand*, has the same dimensions as *Wildflowers of New Zealand*.

It traverses the length of the country in looking at natural and man-made monuments.

From the lighthouse at Cape Reinga at the tip of the North Island to the giant links of Maui's legendary anchor chain at Lee Bay on Stewart Island there is a delightful mix, with text and informative captions again supplied by Matt Turner.

These are small-format but high-quality books which can be recommended for visitors and New Zealand residents alike whether they be hikers, ramblers or vehicle occupants. Certainly worthy Christmas gifts. **KEN FRASER**



**Endangered:** A member of the pea family, kaka beak's red flower looks rather like the bill of kaka, a native parrot. The plant is now scarce.



**Big family member:** New Zealand is home to about 100 species of hebe, varying in size from medium shrubs to small trees.