



AIAS December 2011

Ecological Society of Australia Hobart

In lieu of running an AIAS meeting in Tasmania this summer, the AIAS proposed an alpine symposium for the Ecological Society of Australia meeting in Hobart. The ESA symposium “Changing ecology at the top - Australian alpine biodiversity” did contain a few ring ins. However, it covered quite a few topics and it was good to hear papers presented on reptiles and amphibians – two groups normally missing from our AIAS meetings. The symposium covered two sessions chaired by Catherine Pickering and Ken Green and attracted a good attendance to all the talks. The talks covering alpine, subalpine and subantarctic topics and speakers were in order of presentation:

Is treeline advance keeping in step with global warming? One step forward two steps back Ken Green

Testing a functional traits approach for understanding and predicting alpine ecosystem function Susanna Venn

Rare species drive high local trait diversity in an uncommon alpine ecosystem Sarah Richardson

Understanding the role of historical management on Tasmania’s montane *Poa* grasslands Denna Kingdom

30 years of vegetation dynamics in response to rabbit grazing on subantarctic Macquarie Island Jennie Whinam

Differentiating effects of grazing and climate change on Macquarie Island Jenny Scott

Can behaviour buffer climate change in a cool temperate reptile? Mandy Caldwell Responses of alpine lizard assemblages to human- induced habitat modification Chloe Sato

Critical habitat of the endangered amphibian *Philoria frosti* and its recent decline from sub-alpine habitats John Davies

Microclimate of alpine boulder fields: implications for the conservation of the mountain pygmy-possum (*Burramys parvus*) Haijing Shi

ESA Field Trip

The 'wild & wet' alpine field trip turned out to be a glorious sunny day at Hartz Mountains (see photo). The waratahs and bauera were a blaze of colour; some of the cushion plants had started to flower; there were meadows of Droseras; Steve Leonard failed to catch a trout, but did see a sea eagle; Ken Green and his adventurous group didn't make the summit of Mt Snowy; but all made it to the summit of Hartz Peak to see the impressive peaks of the south-west wilderness. Participants were given informative (slightly coloured by cynicism) descriptions by Jamie Kirkpatrick of the landscape en route to the alpine zone (starting with residential developments at Tolmans Hill), with descriptions of the interesting animals (particularly the charismatic ants) given by Peter McQuillan. Credit for keeping the fieldtrip to time, not losing any of the participants and for the photo of a slightly disreputable group of alpine ecologists should (she says with some bias) go to Jennie Whinam.

New special issue of the Plant Ecology & Diversity: '

Climate change and extreme events- the impacts on ecosystem structure and function

The Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment (GMBA) would like to invite you to contribute to the above special issue, which will be built around papers that were presented at the session of the same name in Ávila during the EEF - AEET Congress in September 2011.

The Special Issue will be published as a stand-alone issue of Plant Ecology & Diversity (2010 Impact factor: 2.05; <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/tped>. Instructions for authors are available at: <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/journal.asp?issn=1755-0874&linktype=44>.

The contributed articles will be collected using the online submission and peer-review system <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/tped> of the journal. A special issue marked 'Alpine Ecosystems - climate change & extreme events SI' has been set up - please use this option at submission.

The deadline for receipt of manuscripts will be 31 March 2012.