It would be interesting to ascertain how many of the recorded sites of Baumea rubiginosa in Canterbury still contain live plants.

CONSERVATION

by J. Ballin

From my window spreads a world
far beyond imagination's reach
of Rata ridges girted sepulchre.
Lighting rose gray
beckoning space.
Unfolding spark towards zenith
breathes moist fresh air
expanding quest's horizon
charged of sanctity's psalter.
A touch, a look
gives combination ------
but is it safe?

SEED DISPERSAL OF LIPAROPHYLLUM GUNNII

M.J.A. Simpson

The dry, two-valved capsule of gentians that splits to release numerous small round seeds is familiar to most of us but the fleshy, indehiscent fruit of Liparophyllum gunnii, another member of the Gentian family, is less well known. On Mt. Rochfort in January the matted plants of Liparophyllum were studded with starry white flowers borne on short, stout peduncles. They grew on the upland pakihi, on peaty terraces enclosed by narrow granite ridges where inwashed silt and finely ground granite formed a thin upper layer. Associated species included Herpolirion novae-zelandiae, Hemiphues suffocata, Euphrasia disperma and Drosera spp.

In early April when I looked for seeds of Liparophyllum, the small terraces were awash, with surface water trapped by the impervious granite rim and the poorly draining peat below. The peduncles of Liparophyllum had elongated to as much as 15 mm and the mature fruits, now at various stages of disintegration, were well clear of the foliage so that seeds dropped into the ponded water. The yellow seeds are somewhat oval in shape, c. 1.5 mm across and a little longer, flattened and with a slightly thickened rim. In the whole fruits I looked at there were four to six seeds.

The brightly coloured seeds are large enough to be attractive to birds but it was a singularly bird-less landscape. Probably seeds are spread about chiefly by movement of water. Some herbarium specimens show the once succulent fruits dry and papery but still intact. Water may be necessary for the collapse of the outer tissue; if so this could ensure that seeds are dispersed where and when conditions are favourable for establishment.
