



Rock wren have been discovered in at least four sites on the Eyre and Cainard Crown lands. This is the first record of this high alpine species on a mountain range east of the Southern Alps. Photo: C.R. Veitch N.Z. Wildlife Service



New Zealand's first recorded pink mountain daisy *Celmisia thomsonii* only occurs on shady bluffs along a 2 kilometre section of the Central Eyre Mountains.

Photo: Gerry McSweeney

Glaciers long since melted have left their mark on the landscape, gouging out cirques (both with and without lakes), hanging basins, moraines, arêtes and other impressive glacial landforms. Climatically, too, it is an area of transition, from the extreme wet of Fiordland to the equally extreme dry of Central Otago.

The dramatic drop in rainfall from west to east is reflected in the vegetation of Eyre Creek. In the western headwaters, red, silver and mountain beech trees jostle for dominance. Shrublands contain wet-loving celery pine, tree daisy, dracophyllum and flax. Down valley, there is a dramatic transition to the relatively drought tolerant mountain beech and thorny thickets of matagouri and *Corokia*.

By dint of good management the past ravages of unfettered pastoralism have now been halted. It is nearly 30 years since the Crown decided to take over the Eyre-Cainard blocks which had been abandoned by