

The spectacular scree buttercup *Ranunculus haastii* from the eastern South Island has a large leaved variety, *pilifera*, which is virtually restricted to Southland's Eyre Mountains. Photo: Brent Fagan, Otago University. Inset: Another *Ranunculus* species with a flower depressed into the subsoil scree on which it is found, is still scientifically undescribed and is confined to three small valleys in the Central Eyre Mountains. Photo: Alan Mark. The special plants and animals of this mountain range and the opportunity for a large Eyre Mountain reserve are described on pages 11 & 12.



Front Cover: 1983 native forest burnoff and pukatea stump, Mamaku Plateau near Rotorua Photo: Gerry McSweeney

Vast mushroom clouds of smoke again shrouded the Bay of Plenty, Northland and East Cape this autumn as clearance, burning and replacement by pines of privately-owned native forests continued. The Government has just approved the export this year of up to 100,000 cubic metres of beech logs by Blenheim-based company Taiswiss. The Nelson chipmill half-owned by the tourism-centred Newmans group continues to devastate Nelson's beech forests, while the Awarua chipmill near Invercargill is wiping out kamahi and beech forests throughout Southland.

Government 1984 election promises of a raft of incentives and controls to protect bush on private land have not been fulfilled. These included amending the Town and Country Planning Act to oblige local authorities to protect native forest. Financial incentives were also suggested but Maori land bush protection schemes such as Nga Whenua Rahui have stalled and seem unlikely to be given high priority or adequate funds by the Conservation Department and Government.

Our Society's June 1987 fundraising appeal focuses on environmental education (see article on page 2). Unless we can increase environmental awareness now our children will inherit a tattered nature heritage.