

Brian Patrick and Brian Lyford, in a recent study of moths and butterflies, have found at least two endemic species in a recorded list of 320 native moths (paper in press, *NZ Entomologist*). The rarer species live in the high-alpine zone.

A full study of the natural and conservation values of the Remarkables Ecological District, in the context of the Protected Natural Areas Programme, has yet to be made, but there is no doubting, on the strength of studies done to date, that the Remarkables is brimming with interest.

Alan Mark, in a recent proposal for a

146,000 hectare Central Otago Conservation Park based on results of recent PNA surveys of the adjacent Old Man, Nokomai and Umbrella Ecological Districts, has recommended the inclusion of 87,000 hectares from the Remarkables District.

On the recreation side, the Remarkables have long been a destination for trampers and climbers. Before the skifield road provided motor access to the Rastus Burn, Lake Alta, with its adjacent rock bivvy, was a popular stopping place for climbers *en route* to Double Cone.

Nowadays, for summer visitors who come

by car, Lake Alta is a gentle stroll from the skifield car park by way of a newly-formed trail.

And the keener foot recreationists now aim for remoter parts of the area, including the upper reaches of Wye Valley. To the south lie other destinations, Ben Nevis (2,240 metres), Lake Hope and Staircase Creek.

DoC Summer holiday programmes regularly include trips to Lake Alta and a tramp into the Wye Valley via a new track through the beech forest.

Winter heliskiing ventures into the Remarkables have been available since the 1970s.



Left: *Senecio lyallii* in the Rastus Burn. Photo: Neill Simpson Top: The male Hepialid moth, *Aoraia senex*, frequents high alpine snowbanks where it emerges and flies by day in February. This specimen is on *Raoulia youngii*. The large-bodied female is flightless. Photo: Brian Patrick Bottom: Seen here in the act of mating, the colourful male tiger moth *Metacrias huttoni* has located the nest of the fluffy flightless female. The larvae are the commonly encountered woolly-bear caterpillars. This species flies in November-December, between 800 and 1,500 metres. Photo: Brian Patrick