

ENDEMIC SPECIES FEATURE

PEKEPEKEKIORE Lions Mane, or Icicle Fungus *Hericiium novae-zealandiae*

Our regular endemic species writers Robert Schadewinkel and Katherine Chamberlain are both unavailable this month, so we asked regular photo contributor Rebecca Bowater to write a fungi profile. Rebecca is an authority on New Zealand fungi, as well as being a renowned photographer and author, on the subject. Rebecca writes...

My favourite fungus seen in the Brook Sanctuary. I have several favourites and have decided to tell you about the 'Lions Mane' or 'Icicle Fungus' - (this is its new latin name, it was previously known as *Hericium*), its known as Pekepekekiore in Māori.

The first time I spotted this was years ago at Pelorus Bridge Reserve, where this image received a gold medal in the photographic society of New Zealand exhibition, that is why this is one of my favourites.

One day I was in the Sanctuary and spotted this small creamy coloured fungus on a tree trunk and was so thrilled to see it but I didn't have my tripod with me, so the next day I walked towards Ferny Flats again and there it was. I spent time photographing it as it was in good condition without any blemishes. This was the only place I have seen it in the Sanctuary. I have seen it in other reserves in Nelson this year.

The spores are produced on the surface of these soft spines which hang down. I have seen them in white to cream tones and they always grow on dead wood. Their size can range from 30mm to 250mm. The one featured in the photo was only 40mm.



Photo credit: Rebecca Bowater - taken in the Sanctuary

[Click here](#) to view Rebecca's 2009 New Zealand Photographic Society gold medal photograph of an icicle fungi taken at Pelorus Bridge.

Pekepekekiore are edible, the flavour is commonly described as being similar to crab or crayfish, the fungi is often observed to turn a pinkish colour as it ages.