

PUBLICITY FOR ST HELENA'S ENDEMIC PLANTS

by Trevor W. Hearl

It is not only botanists who are successfully propagating the endemic flora of St Helena. Philatelists, gardeners and publishers have been doing their bit to generate interest in the rescue of a flora that was recently on the verge of extinction. This year's floral philatelic issue, meticulously designed by Mrs. Leley Ninnes, has already been featured in *South Atlantic Chronicle* ("St Helena flowers grace new stamps", Vol. XIII, No. 2, April 1989, p. 4).

But during her three-year sojourn on St Helena, where her husband was fisheries adviser, Mrs. Ninnes portrayed all St Helena's endemic flora in watercolours. These superb illustrations will be published later this year in *The Endemic Plants of St Helena*, with an authoritative account of their history and conservation by Dr Quentin Cronk.

This will be the second title in the new "South Atlantic Library" series, following Philip Gosse's *St Helena 1502-1938* published by Anthony Nelson. The likely cost will be 16.95 pounds plus postage; copies of the individual plates will be available later. Like J.C. Melliss' classic work of a century ago, this will surely become a collector's item.

Meanwhile, the actual plants of St Helena made an eye-catching display at the Royal Horticultural Society's Spring Flower Show during April in London. Mounted by Mr Brian Hyatt of the Friends of St Helena, in association with the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, it brought the Island's exciting conservation program to life for hundreds of his fellow-gardeners, with some 10 endemic species represented among the mass of plants on the stamp. Mr Hyatt's unique exhibit was awarded a silver-gilt Lindley Medal.

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