

## Reference Project

## Conservation

### White Bryony – Rangitikei River Gorge

<b>Location</b>	Cliffs above the Rangitikei River, Kaimanawa District
<b>Date</b>	2009
<b>Client</b>	Department of Conservation

The Rangitikei River cuts a winding path through the Kaimanawa foothills for more than 30km, creating cliffs up to 200m high. Despite the near-vertical terrain, the cliffs are heavily vegetated and isolated areas host the noxious weed White Bryony. Abseil Access won the tender for the 2009 season eradication programme. Over 300 abseil drops up to 200m high were established along the northern cliffs. White Bryony is a seasonal vine that grows into the high canopy and smothers native bush. It has only been found in two locations in NZ and is at a stage where total eradication is possible. It has a large subterranean tuber that is cut and poisoned. On female plants the vines must be untangled and all the berries collected. All cuttings and berries are then disposed in sealed composting areas. Exact locations of all abseil drops and bryony found are marked on a cliff elevation to assist with yearly re-visiting of the site. The project present many difficulties, including vertical drops of 200m on dangerously loose cliffs, heavy backpacks and impenetrable bush. An extremely high level of outdoor experience and fitness is required of all team members.

