

QUARTERLY NEWS LETTER

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AUCKLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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The Annual Meeting of the Auckland Botanical Society was held at the Auckland University College at 8 o'clock on Monday, April 26th.

At the election of Officers, the President and Vice-Presidents were re-elected, and we have much pleasure in welcoming to our Committee the following new members - Mrs. Collis, Dr. Godley and Dr. Sutherland.

Those two very hard worked officers, the Secretary Mrs. Hynes and the Treasurer, Mr. Butler, were also re-elected. While we very greatly appreciate their services, we would like to point out that as far as Mrs. Hynes is concerned, she has borne the burden and heat of the day for far longer than could reasonably be expected of her, and the members are again appealed to in case any of them are able to give our "willing horse" a very well earned rest next year.

At the meeting one of our Vice-Presidents, Mrs. Bertha Wilson, was elected a life member of the Society, as a mark of appreciation of the many kindnesses she has done our Society since its inception. Mrs. Wilson has just recently made a most generous donation of ten guineas to the funds of our Society, and as we are full of ambitious plans for the future, it could scarcely have come at a more opportune time. Her gift is greatly appreciated.

After the business of the evening was completed, Miss Crookes gave a very brief talk on her recent trip to the Little Barrier. The lecturer visited the Summit and collected the beautiful heath Archeria racemosa, unfortunately not then producing its lovely sprays of delicate pink bells. The akatea (Meterosideros florida) the large flowered white rata was also noted near the summit. The shore line yielded interesting plants, notably Sicyos angulata our only native member of the cucumber family, the bird

catching tree (Pisonia brunoniana) and also the whau (Entelia arborescens) now so rarely seen on the mainland. A feature of Little Barrier bush is the very large leaves of some common plants, particularly Rhabdothamnus solandri (which has leaves over two inches long) kawa kawa, (Macropiper excelsum) and karaka (Corynocarpus laevigata). Naturally the ferns were of particular interest. Pteris comans grows freely in the coastal bush, Trichomanes strictum and Blechnum nigrum were encountered near the summit, Schizaea dichotoma was collected in the kauri forest and Lindsaea viridis was encountered on a creek bank. Last but not least - and this constituted the greatest find as far as the lecturer was concerned - a most peculiar form of Asplenium flaccidum bearing bulbils.

The talk was followed by a moving film of the bird life kindly lent by Mr. Turbot of the Museum. The meeting concluded with supper.

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On Saturday, May 22nd, the Society held a very successful excursion to Titirangi. The weather was somewhat unsympathetic but our members are hardy perennials and it takes more than a little moisture to depress them. After lunch on Mr. T.A. Bishop's property, we visited a very attractive little reserve given by Mr. Bishop, in the midst of an estate he is now subdividing. In pursuance of the policy of the Society, a species list was compiled, members taking careful note of everything seen and the list being made by Miss Dingley, who, together with Miss Crookes, led the excursion. Two plants of particular interest are to be found in the vicinity. The Kaikomako (Pennantia corymbosa) famous in Maori legend because it was used in the production of fire, is rather local about Auckland, but we saw some fine specimens near the filters and were able to study both the mature and juvenile forms. In the early summer it produces an abundance of small white fragrant flowers. If members obtain a sharp pointed stick of Kaokamako and work it vigorously along a flat piece of mahoe or pate, they will obtain fire - eventually! Plants of the carmine rata (Meterosideros diffusa) are also to be found at the back of the filters.

Another treasure in our area - soon alas! to be lost to us - is the Adder's Tongue (Ophioglossum pedunculatum). A small patch of this fern grows on the property of Mr. Bishop. The Bird & Forest Protection Society however, who share with the Botanical Society a desire to preserve local plants of interest, learned