

Moturemu Island Revisited

Anthony Wright

Easter Monday (16 April) 1990 provided a calm, clear day for an unofficial mini-Bot Soc trip to Moturemu Island in the Kaipara Harbour. Ross, Jessica, Rosemary and Graham Beaver had missed the 19 August 1989 trip (reported by Ewen Cameron and Catherine Beard in ABS Journal 45(1) 1990) through being overseas at that time. As Ewen and Catherine recount I might as well have been overseas for all the botany I experienced that day!

After borrowing a makeshift connection to go between outboard and petrol tank from Frank Glavish (Bot Soc's 1989 boatman), we set off from Hoteo River Bridge in a 4 m Parkercraft. A lack of Frank's intimate knowledge of the harbour saw us walk the boat for quite some distance over shallow mudflats, but we arrived at Moturemu with the prospect of a good four hours ashore.

A circumnavigation of the shoreline followed by exploration of the summit resulted in our locating 95 of the 147 taxa recorded by Ewen and Catherine, plus an additional 16 taxa. These new records are:

Dicotyledons

Centaurium erythraea
Gnaphalium audax
Hypericum humifusum AK 198005
Lobelia anceps
Lotus angustissimus
L. pedunculatus
Muehlenbeckia complexa
Plantago lanceolata

Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum

Sagina procumbens

Spergularia media

Monocotyledons

Astelia banksii
Elymus multiflorus AK 198002
Lachnagrostis littoralis
Lolium perenne
Thelymitra sp. (not *longifolia*)

Lagenifera pumila which was queried in Ewen and Catherine's list can be confirmed, and a flowering voucher was collected (AK 198003). A flowering collection (AK 198001) has also settled the identity of the common adventive pampas grass as *Cortaderia jubata*. Ian McFadden's 1988 voucher for his record of *Histiopteris incisa* has now been incorporated into the Museum Herbarium (AK 195851). Some further voucher specimens for Ewen and Catherine's list are:

Asplenium oblongifolium AK 195843
Cyathea dealbata AK 195845
Pteris tremula AK 195844
Pyrrosia eleagnifolia AK 198007
Avicennia marina AK 198000
Carmichaelia aligera AK 195847

Olearia furfuracea AK 195846
Carex lambertiana AK 198006
Dichelachne crinita AK 195849
Rytidosperma biannulare AK 195850
Thelymitra longifolia AK 195848

As a general observation, the island was extremely dry at the time of our visit. Species such as mahoe, koromiko, *Asplenium oblongifolium* and *Phymatosorus diversifolius* showed severe wilting. In fact, the only dampish area seen was in the small gully facing south onto the small embayment in the south-west coast. An interesting succession was found here: from bare clay; through low lichen/bryophyte mats; herbfield including *Hypericum humifusum*; a 30 cm high shrubland of gorse, manuka and kanuka; to the regenerating forest margin.

Searching failed to relocate the main population of kaka beak seedlings (Site 2) recorded by Ewen and Catherine. However, a single 10 cm high kaka beak seedling survived right on the cliff-top at their Site 1.