

FLAX SWAMP ON ORUANUI ROAD

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On 3 May 1998, a group from the Rotorua Botanical Society visited a privately owned wetland in Oruanui Rd, near Taupo (NZMS 260 U17 735845). The owner, Tim Coulter, had been in contact with the Society and we had been asked to produce a species list for the wetland to assist their case for protecting the area. The 16.6 ha wetland is a virtually unmodified flax/*Carex secta* swamp filling a long, narrow valley floor. It is bordered by pasture on two sides with the southern side being fenced. Oruanui Road forms the eastern boundary and a small dam across the valley marks the western boundary.

The vegetation consists predominantly of *Phormium tenax* and *Carex secta* with a variety of rushes (*Juncus* species). Exotic species were in very low density with only occasional *Salix cinerea* (grey willow) and *Pinus radiata*. The swamp also supports a wide range of bird species.

This wetland is in the Atiamuri Ecological District and is listed as a Recommended Area for Protection (RAP) in the draft Atiamuri Ecological District Protected Natural Areas report undertaken by the late Barry Spring-Rice in 1995 for the Department of Conservation. Barry says in the report that “no other area like it has been seen in the district.” This supports the general view of those visiting the wetland that it is a significant piece of vegetation with a very high conservation value.

CHECKLIST OF THE FLORA

<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> *	creeping bent
<i>Azolla filiculoides</i>	azolla
<i>Baumea rubiginosa</i>	
<i>Baumea tenax</i>	sedge tussock
<i>Blechnum novae-zelandiae</i>	kiokio
<i>Blechnum penna-marina</i>	little hard fern
<i>Callitriche stagnalis</i> *	starwort
<i>Carex maorica</i>	cyperus sedge
<i>Carex ovalis</i>	
<i>Carex secta</i>	niggerhead
<i>Coprosma robusta</i>	karamu
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i> *	broom
<i>Dicksonia squarrosa</i>	wheki
<i>Eleocharis acuta</i>	sharp spike-sedge
<i>Eleocharis gracilis</i>	slender spike-sedge
<i>Epilobium chioanthum</i>	marsh willow-herb
<i>Epilobium ciliatum</i> *	willow herb
<i>Erica lusitanica</i> *	spanish heath
<i>Galium trilobum</i>	marsh bedstraw
<i>Gnaphalium limosum</i>	creeping cudweed
<i>Hebe stricta</i>	koromiko
<i>Hierochloe redolens</i>	holy grass
<i>Histiopteris incisa</i>	water fern
<i>Hydrocotyle microphylla</i>	hydrocotyle
<i>Hydrocotyle novae-zealandiae</i>	hydrocotyle
<i>Juncus articulatus</i> *	jointed rush

<i>Juncus effusus</i> *	leafless rush
<i>Juncus planifolius</i>	flat-leaved rush
<i>Lemna minor</i>	duck weed
<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i>	manuka
<i>Lotus pedunculatus</i> *	lotus
<i>Ludwigia palustris</i> *	water purslane
<i>Montia fontana</i>	blinks
<i>Paesia scaberula</i>	scented fern
<i>Persicaria decipiens</i>	swamp willow weed
<i>Phormium tenax</i>	harakeke, flax
<i>Pinus radiata</i> *	radiata pine
<i>Polygonum hydropiper</i> ?	water pepper
<i>Pratia angulata</i>	pratia
<i>Ranunculus acris</i> *	giant buttercup
<i>Ranunculus amphitrichus</i>	buttercup
<i>Salix cinerea</i> *	grey willow
<i>Sphagnum</i> species	sphagnum moss

* Introduced species