

MATATA SCENIC RESERVE FIELD TRIP

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A Rotorua Botanical Society field trip to Matata Scenic Reserve was held on 12 March 2000 as part of the inaugural Bay of Plenty Ecofest Festival of the Environment. A good sized group of enthusiasts attended the trip on a sunny Sunday. We followed the main track in the reserve starting at the end of Muir Street, Matata, walking initially through pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*)-kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides*) forest. Further up, the track follows a ridge where the vegetation comprises secondary species including rewarewa (*Knightia excelsa*), kanuka, mangeao (*Litsea calicaris*), and karamu (*Coprosma lucida*).

Good views of the Rurima Island group and Moutohora Island were obtained every now and then on the way up to the ridge, and we also caught glimpses of the coastal hard beech-pohutukawa forest that is one of the special features of the reserve. This forest type is only known from the Bay of Plenty coast, and Matata Scenic Reserve contains the largest remaining example of this type.

Numerous *Pimelea tomentosa* were also noted along the ridge. *P. tomentosa* is an endemic shrub daphne species, and the Matata Scenic Reserve contains one of the best populations of this nationally uncommon species in the Bay of Plenty.

Also noted beneath secondary shrubland on the ridge were *Dracophyllum strictum*, *Gaultheria oppositifolia*, *Carmichaelia australis*, *Schoenus tendo*, *Lepidosperma australe*, and *Wahlenbergia violacea*. This last species was an addition to the species list prepared in 1991 (Beadel 1991).

We stopped for lunch at a vantage point with excellent views of the reserve. Continuing down the track and back to the vehicles we descended into pohutukawa-kanuka forest, passing one massive puriri (*Vitex lucens*). A juvenile white maire (*Nestegis lanceolata*)

provided much debate and several epiphyte orchids were observed, including *Drymoanthus adversus*, and *Bulbophyllum pygmaeum*.

More detail of the vegetation and the flora of the reserve and a species list will be presented in a separate newsletter article.

REFERENCES

Beadel, S.M. 1991: Vegetation and flora of Matata Scenic Reserve. Department of Conservation, Rotorua. 25 pp.