

FURTHER NEWS FROM MT WELLINGTON

Wendy Patterson

With our appetites whetted by the very enjoyable Botanical Society trip last year, on 20 August, three of us mounted an expedition, on 14 September this year, to find Anogramma with its frond fully uncurled and to hunt for Cheilanthes.

Instant success! We entered (on foot) at the down-traffic gate. Shortly after the pohutukawas on the left, there were some likely-looking rocks just below the road - one sported Cheilanthes distans. At the top of the quarry where we found it last year, there was Anogramma leptophylla fully uncurled and looking very healthy. In the crater we found all the plants listed from the previous trip (October 1988 News-sheet) except two common ones, and no doubt they were just eluding us. The aspleniums were a little puzzling. We couldn't find Asplenium oblongifolium, but we found A. flaccidum which was not on the list.

Next, as we walked down through the up-traffic gate, the idea was born of going to the Winifred Huggins Park. A few yards down Mountain Road towards the Panmure Roundabout there was a stile over into the cow paddock. We could see a similar stile at the other side of the paddock into the Winifred Huggins Park. As we approached it we saw, on the left, a pit with rocky walls and a small cave. And what was on the rocky walls but Anogramma! a dozen plants on one rock alone. A few yards closer to Winifred Huggins Park there was another pit with not only plentiful Anogramma but also Cheilanthes. Access is just as easy from Winifred Huggins Park official entrance gate - turn left, go over the stile and the pits are quite soon on the right.

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FLORA AND VEGETATION OF MOTUMANAWA (POLLEN) ISLAND - WAITEMATA HARBOUR, AUCKLAND

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INTRODUCTION

Situated in Auckland's upper Waitemata Harbour on the eastern margin of the Whau River mouth, Motumanawa is a vegetated, off-shore shell bar, 1.5 km long x 5-110 m wide (long axis NW-SE) adjoining a relic saltmarsh surface. The island's exposed eastern side is steeply banked, less than 1 m a.s.l. and is being actively eroded. The sheltered western side is contiguous with an extensive saltmarsh of glasswort (see Appendix for scientific and common plant names) and low mangrove (manawa). Motumanawa shellbank and associated shrubland covers some 13 ha (mostly above sea level); the saltmarsh and small vegetated islets between Motumanawa and the motorway cover about 50 ha. Wood and plastic rubbish (flotsam and jetsam) is common, especially along the exposed side of the island.

Biologically the island and its associated shell bars and saltmarsh are extremely important because it is the largest remaining area of this type of vegetation in the upper Waitemata Harbour. Two native plants present, glaucous goosefoot and Ranunculus acaulis, are now rare in the upper Waitemata. The Auckland Regional Authority zoned Motumanawa and the adjacent Traherne Island (Te Kou) as nationally significant in their