

FAUNA

The vegetation on Paratahi was very dry during my visit and covered in bird droppings. White-fronted terns were nesting in reasonable numbers, though most of their young had fledged. I saw none on eggs, a few with chicks and many fledglings. Dead chicks and old eggs were frequent. There were also red-billed gulls nesting (c. 20 adults), a few with eggs or young chicks. No petrel burrows were present as the ground is too rocky. Large native littoral earwigs (*Anisobasis littorea*) were present under the ice plant mats. No lizards were seen. No rats can be present as old bird eggs and dead chicks were untouched.

COMMENTS

The adjacent mainland cliffs, although looking very suitable, do not appear to support taupata (if present it must be very infrequent). The common presence of taupata on Paratahi supports the theory by Cameron & Taylor (1991) that taupata is possibly rodent browsed. Rats probably eat its bark and fruit. This also illustrates how important these small rodent-free islands/islets are, not only for fauna but also for preserving flora. In the future it might be possible to use Paratahi taupata to restock Auckland's west coast cliffs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank Shirley Smith for watching me swim to and from the island and being ready to notify the Karekare Surf Club if I got into difficulties.

REFERENCES

- Cameron, E.K. & Taylor, G.A. 1989. Oaia Island - south Muriwai. Auckland Bot. Soc. Journal 44(1) : 11-12.
- Cameron, E.K. & Taylor, G.A. 1991. Flora and vegetation of Pudding Island - Mahurangi. Auck. Bot. Soc. Journal 46(1) : 20-23.

FIVE HUNUA WETLANDS

E.K. Cameron

During two days in August 1988 I assisted the Protected Natural Areas Programme (PNA) survey of five wetlands in the Hunua Ecological District. The 96 species encountered at these sites are appended.

THE FIVE SITES

- A. Harrison's swamp, lower Ness Valley (grid ref. 260 S11 953653, 40m asl). A large, predominantly flax (*Phormium tenax*) swamp dominated by native species. It approaches 100m across by several 100m's long. It is partly fenced and is partly continuous with native bush. There is localised stock damage. Private land.
- B. Moumoukai, Hunua Ranges (grid ref. 260 S12 017540, 140m asl). A predominantly native swamp dominated by *Blechnum minus* and sedges (*Carex* spp.). Locally, grey willow (*Salix cinerea*) up to 5m tall, blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) and Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) are common. It is over 100m long, unbrowsed with a road on 2 sides and open bush on the other two. ARC land.