

Looking back, it was a rare experience sampling 140 million years of New Zealand plant species, from the fossil flora of the Huriwai Formation to a contemporary broadleaf forest remnant in one day.

Loog-yee in Sandringham

R.O. Gardner

A browse in the sweets section of a local Thai foods shop the year before last yielded pandanus custard, durian lollies, and some packets of "Preserved Loog Yee -- Ingrs: Loog-yee, Sugar, Salt. Product of Thailand". The custard was green and very very sweet; the durian lollies resembled barbecued Instant Pudding and were memorable only as an insult to the King of Fruits; and the loog-yee, wrapped balls of a dark red sour-sweetish pulp with seeds, also contained a fair amount of what must have been chilli powder.

The resemblance of the loog-yee to tamarind paste was obvious but the quadrate-ovate compressed seeds were nothing like the brown boxy seeds of that member of the mimosa subfamily of legumes. But they were rather like those of *Cassia* and *Senna* species, and to my surprise they germinated very readily to produce what were very definitely legume seedlings. These however succumbed to an Auckland autumn, leaving me to face the temptation of simply consulting a Thai dictionary.

The matter rested until by chance I looked at the second volume (Caesalpinioideae) of a series on legume fruits and seeds (Gunn 1984). My seeds clearly belonged to the pantropical genus *Dialium* in the tribe Cassieae, having for example the characteristic pale brown colour, concave faces with longitudinal fracture lines, tiny pearl-like funicular remnant concealing the very small hilum, and thick gelatinous endosperm encasing pale green cordate cotyledons. *Dialium* fruits have a 2-layered mesocarp; the inner layer is pulpy and can be "chewed to relieve thirst or macerated in cold water and used as a beverage". The relevant volume of "Flora of Thailand" (Larsen et al. 1984) notes 10 species of this genus in Asia, 3 of which are native to Thailand. Each of these three species have "yee" as part or all of its common name ("loog" means a ball-like article), and each is noted as having edible fruit. Possibly though, one of the other species is in cultivation in Thailand and may be the source of our material.

A search is projected this summer for seedlings on the sludge heaps of Mangere.

References

- Gunn, C.R. 1984 "Fruits and Seeds of Genera in the Subfamily Caesalpinioideae (Fabaceae)" *U.S. Dept of Agriculture Technical Bulletin No. 1755*.
- Larsen, K., Larsen, S.S and Vidal, J.E. 1984 "Flora of Thailand" Vol. 4 Part 1. Leguminosae-Caesalpinioideae. Forest Herbarium, Royal Forest Department. Bangkok.

Field trip - Odilins Timber Track / Cowan Stream Saturday 18 September 1993

Maureen Young

As the name of the track suggests, this area of the Waitakeres has been logged and burned in the past, but nevertheless, under the kanuka canopy there were sufficient plants to keep the 24 members botanising happily for the duration of the walk. Early on in the trip our leader, Malcolm

Simpson, led us a few metres off the track to view the highlight of the day, a gully full of magnificent king ferns. It was good to see that a number of young plants are getting established - this seems to indicate that pig numbers are low in these parts.

Some plants of interest along the track were the little creeping *Pratia angulata*, with pretty purplish-red fruits, *Helichrysum aggregatum*, *Corokia buddleioides*, *Phebalium nudum*, and *Gaultheria antipoda*.

A few metres down the Cowan Stream, the site of an old kauri dam proved to be a pleasant lunch spot. Some square holes in the rocks are all that remain to show that a dam once stood there. The descent down the stream was tricky in parts, as some wet seats testified. The rupestral plants were a feature of the streamside. The mosses were green and fresh, with a variety of capsule shapes in evidence (Jessica, where were you?), and among them were many plants of *Ctenopteris heterophylla*. Also growing on the rocks were *Hymenophyllum flexuosum*, *H. sanguinolentum*, *Earina mucronata*, and *E. autumnalis*. The *Corybas* orchids were in bud. *Corybas rivularis* (formerly *C. orbiculatis*) lived up to its re-instated name by growing exclusively on the stream banks, and *C. oblongus* and *C. macranthus* were also seen. The tawny tomentum on the backs of the leaves proved that the flowering *Pittosporum* was *P. ellipticum*, and a handsome tree of *Dracophyllum sinclairii* was growing by the Pararaha Stream.

Back at the car park, the *Clematis paniculata* was flowering nicely in the tea-tree scrub.

Uncommon Plants in the Waitakere Ranges

Sandra Jones

Pennantia corymbosa (kaikomako) in the Waitakeres

There has been yet another report of kaikomako on the main ridge of the Waitakere Range, this time in the vicinity of Arataki Information Centre, so I thought that this was a good opportunity to pull together the various reports scattered through the ABS News-sheets (November 1985, February / March 1986, April 1986, November / December 1989, May 1990 and Feb / March 1991).

In 1985, at the time of the first News-sheet report, there were three Herbarium specimens in the Auckland Institute and Museum:

- (1) Cheeseman "Waitakerei River, Dec. 1871"
- (2) E H Walker "Titirangi" 13.4.1949
- (3) T C Chambers, J A Rattenbury & A Farnell 2.10.1954 "L.H. side of road below Titirangi Filter Station"

Reports since 1985, from north to south, are as follows:

- Goldie Bush reserve, inland from Muriwai - a well known colony of mature trees at the reserve entrance at the end of Horseman Road (Nov. 1989 News-sheet). There is another grove of trees on private land at the junction of Wairere, Jonkers and Horseman Roads (April 1986 News-sheet).
- Northern perimeter of Cascade Kauri Park, half a mile from Long Road Track - approx 15 mature trees, a few juveniles and lots of seedlings (Feb / March 1991 News-sheet). It was noted at the time that the trees were on private land (Wadham's farm) and were "mostly in an area being grazed by cattle." Recently (November 1993) the property was purchased by the Auckland Regional Council and has been named "Turua Kauri".
- Anderson Track (near Pukematekeo) - one mature tree (Nov. 1985 News-sheet).