

grow in open sites and are today mainly restricted to remote sites where weed competition is reduced.

¹ J. Buchanan collected on Kawau Island in December 1875 (P.J. Brownsey pers. comm. from a comment in the WELT files by Fiona Pitt).

² The seeds become very sticky (P.J. de Lange pers. comm.).

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Patrick Brownsey of WELT and Kerry Ford of CHR for checking paspalum herbarium specimens held in their institutions, Peter de Lange for comment and Rhys Gardner for assisting with possible collecting dates of undated herbarium specimens.

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ABS Trip to Omeru Reserve & Makarau Valley February 1998

Fran Hintz

This trip was led by Maureen Young, with help from Arthur and Val Dunn. Although it was obvious that the drought was breaking, botanists are tough. And we are optimists. About twenty of us drove through rain and mist to meet at the Omeru Reserve, north of Kaukapakapa. We prepared ourselves for a wet trip and followed Maureen through the picnic area, across the bridge (one at a time), and up to the Waitangi Falls. The small patch of bush features mature kauri, kahikatea, and matai, as well as patches of kowhai, and a variety of vines, *Clematis*, *Parsonsia*, *Passiflora*, and one patch of carmine rata. In spite of recent cattle damage, there is plenty of understory and we were able to find many small gems.

The rain disappeared, we found we had good appetites, so the picnic area became our lunch venue. After checking the remains of the kumara pits, we drove in convoy to Haruru Rd at the top end of the Makarau valley to visit a piece of covenanted bush on private property. I noticed with satisfaction that many of the farms we passed still had areas of bush on them, especially the steeper hills. One patch, visible from our carpark, had mature pohutukawa at the crest of the hill, which appear to have grown naturally.

Our second expedition yielded a profusion of small-leaved shrubs and a very rich understory-groundcover. A very good opportunity to see the difference between *Penantia corymbosa*, *Streblus heterophyllus*, *Melicope simplex*, *Coprosma* sp. We were also glad to see the large gymnosperms which had been spared milling in spite of their large size. There is a small stream flowing through this small bush and many damp areas, so ferns grow in profusion. We saw many *Dicksonia fibrosa*, possibly the most northern examples of this species. Unfortunately, because of the small size of this bush, there were exotic species present as well, throughout the area.

Our optimism had been justified, the rain had disappeared (only to recycle as a thunderstorm later in the evening) and we had all enjoyed exercising our eye and brains, not to mention our legs, so we left for home, well satisfied. Thanks to all concerned.
