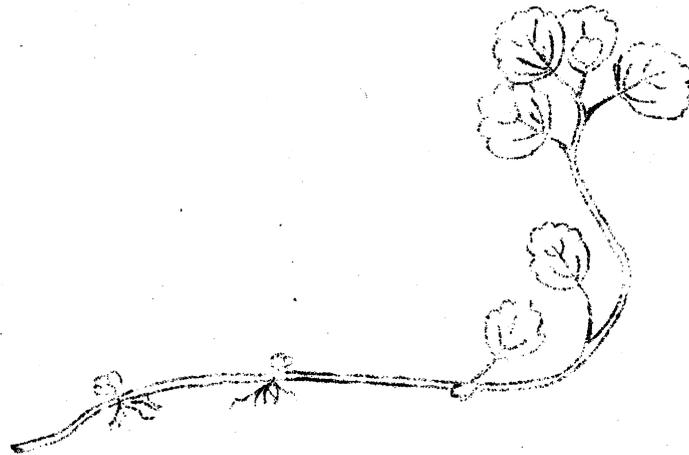


prefers a very moist and shady situation but not too high an altitude for it stops abruptly on the Maunga pohatu Track at about 2,500 ft. Regarding its distribution Cheeseman's Manual says, 'Dark, shaded woods from Hokianga Harbour and Bay of Islands to Foveaux Strait but often local.' The Auckland Museum herbarium has specimens from two localities only: Paparata Valley and Ruatahuna. It would be interesting to hear of other localities where this plant has been found.



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#### BETHELL'S SWAMP.

We had a beautiful sunshiny day for our trip to Bethells. As we were concerned with the swamp vegetation at the mouth of the Waitakere River, we made our picnic ground by the cart-shed and then made our way back along the river to the swamp. At the erstwhile swing bridge (which is now marked only by the posts) we found much of interest within a very small area. First reaching below the surface we soon retrieved the bladderwort (Utricularia novae-zealandiae) easily recognisable by the little transparent bladders about the size of a small pea growing down the stem. Some of them were dark showing this insectivorous plant was busy at its insect-devouring work. Floating on the surface were seen the little oblong leaves of the manihi (Potamogeton cheesemani). It was flowering and its small stiff spikes were in quantity. The little flowers are insignificant but interesting under the lens in that their stamens produce small petal-like outgrowths. Also present was the dock-leaved Potamogeton (P. polygonifolia). The much larger leaves of the oval-leaved \*Ottelia (O. ovalifolia) were noted and one or two of its charming white flowers were seen just opening. Also seen but not flowering was the yellow flowered \*Primrose Willow (Jussiaea diffusa) whose rather fleshy stems creep or float according to circumstances. There was also an abundance of the water milfoil (Myriophyllum elatinoides) with its thread-like leaves below the surface and its broader ones above, and minute flowers along its stem. Also in flower was the little water buttercup (Ranunculus rivularis).

Turning to the banks we noted the niggerhead (Carex secta) in full flower. The tall Cladium articulatum with its great brown trusses of flowers was abundant. This large twig rush grows in colonies throughout the swamp forming those large brownish masses so noticeable from the road. It is readily recognised by its jointed stems. Another large reed also with a jointed stem is the great club rush (Elaeocharis spacelata). The divisions running across the stem are very noticeable from the outside giving an almost bamboo-like appearance. The flowers of Elaeocharis are borne in a little club-shaped mass at the end of the stem. Quite close we also found the very small club rush (E. neo-zealandica) which is only a few inches high, and again in the vicinity a medium sized club rush (E. acuta) recognised by the small erect point on the sheath clasping the stem.

We also noted the tall pao-pao or Lake-Sedge (Scirpus lacustris var. fluvatilis) with its grassy leaves. This sedge dies back in Autumn so it's no use seeking it in winter. On our way back to the cart shed we noted on a little island in the river among the oi oi (Leptocarpus simplex) the sand Gunnera (Gunnera arenaria) just beginning to set fruits - eventually like little crimson rather cone-shaped raspberries.

After lunch we made our way to the beach passing on the sand flats colonies of Crantzia lineata. This tiny member of the parsley family is readily recognised by the tapemeasure-like markings on its narrow little leaves (in some situations the leaves may reach four inches). Here it formed a compact turf on the sand by the river. Also in the turf was the little native arrow-grass (Triglochin striata) and a rare milfoil Myriophyllum Votchii, bearing minute white flowers.

Finally we arrived on a cliff at Lusk's to find Mrs. Prickett established watching the shags at their nesting on the cliffs opposite. We gathered the little yellow flowered daisy (Senecio lautus) and also the native mesembryanthemum (Mesenbryanthemum australe) with pure white flowers (sometimes the flowers are pink). Mrs. Prickett told us both these plants are used by the shags for nest building. Also in the immediate vicinity was the beautiful native Angelica and bearing its multitudes of tiny white flowers the koheriki (Angelica rosaefolia). The half climbing habits of this plant are most unusual in the Parsley family to which it belongs. The little sea-spurrey (Spergularia media), gay with little starry pink flowers was also noted.

Altogether we had a delightful trip, and the area contains so much in a small space that it is impossible to list everything. It is hoped someday to publish a small separate bulletin on this fascinating and varied region. The excursion was lead by Miss Crookes and Miss Dingley.

\*(Names as in Cheeseman).

The following letter speaks for itself. It is indeed gratifying to know the News Letter has been of interest so far afield. We hope some of our members will take advantage of Mr. Taylor's offer of correspondence. He is obviously involved in an arduous and important task. We take this opportunity of offering him sympathy and appreciation. But I am afraid that in spite of his pressing duties, I see him being involved before long in an article for the News Letter.

351 Draper St.,  
Cairns,  
North Queensland,  
AUSTRALIA.

28th September, 1955.

Dear Mrs. Hynes,

Recently I came across a copy of your very interesting and informative little newsletter. I enjoyed the reading of it and on thinking about it all later the idea came to me that I would like very much to correspond with any of your members who would like to exchange views and specimens and talk about general botanical matters.

Up here in the North we are terribly isolated - like some plants we grow 'in silvis humidis'. If any of your members would care to write I shall do everything here to make their replies interesting and perhaps someday in years to come I may be in New Zealand and talk to you in person.

There is so much work to be done here. Dr. Flecker has made me Assistant Botanist to the North Queensland Herbarium and we are undertaking the cataloguing and description of the North Queensland Flora. This is rather a frightening task, yet it is so important that we feel it should be got under way as quickly as possible. The cataloguing of 15,000 specimens is certainly an arduous task.

Hoping to hear from some of your members,

Yours sincerely,

George Taylor,  
Assistant Botanist,  
North Queensland Herbarium.