

QUARTERLY NEWS LETTER

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AUCKLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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Mr. and Mrs. Wood found their summer holidays somewhat disorganised by various types of meteorological alarms and excursions. None the less they have been able to favour us with a very pleasant and informative article on their trip - for which many thanks to both of them.

BOTANISING IN THE SOUTH

On our trip to the South Island at Christmas we experienced all types of weather including a rainfall of 13" at Arthur's Pass which caused widespread floods and damage to road and rail. The town was isolated for several days by road and rail and the gorge road has since been closed for some time. The late summer had delayed the flowering of the alpine plants and we did not see the usual display of *Senecios* and *Wahlenbergias*. To compensate for this we were able to see *Ranunculus lyallii* in bloom, for usually the flowering season has passed by Christmas and we see only the large round leaves and spent flower heads.

Frustrated in our intention to go to the West Coast, we returned to the East coast and travelled south to Roxburgh, Queenstown and Lake Wanaka. We then proceeded north to Christchurch and via the Kaikoura coast to Blenheim, Picton and Nelson. Long distances were covered on the wet days, and fine days were enjoyed at attractive places. During the whole of our travels the colours of the roadside weeds were an unfailling joy to us, and perhaps most frequently seen were the blue spikes of Viper's-bugloss, *Echium vulgare*. This plant occurred in abundance from Central Otago all up the coast to Blenheim in the North. In Queenstown and other parts of Otago masses of many-coloured Russell lupins, golden broom and pink Briar roses added lovely colour to the scene. The blue of Lake Wanaka was enhanced by the dense masses of orange and yellow *Eschscholtzias* which grew on its shores. Lunching in the Kawerau Gorge, we sat by a bank of wild flowers where single and double-flowered Feverfew, *Chrysanthemum parthenium*, were predominant. At Roxburgh by the Clutha River we saw