

The Editor was unable to be present at the Society's highly successful excursion to Egmont. But from the point of view of the News Letter this was quite immaterial as Mrs. Hynes, bless her, was on hand and is thus able to provide us with an excellent record of the Society's activities during their trip. She has our hearty thanks.

---

MT. EGMONT TRIP

January, 1958.

Once again Dawson Falls proved to be a happy choice for our eight day excursion in January. This area is noted for the number of easy walking tracks through lovely shady bush, and although many plants familiar to us on the mountains of the Volcanic Plateau are absent from Mt. Egmont, nevertheless, Dawson Falls is a delightful place for botanising.

Many of the flowers were out to greet us - the large showy Ourisia macrophylla, the tiny eyebrights, (Euphrasias), Violets in abundance, Hebe laevis with its pink to pale lilac flowers, the densely woolly flower heads of the leathery but handsome leaved Senecio elaeagnifolius and higher up the lovely buttercup, Ranunculus nivicola made splashes of gold under sheltering rocks and finally, deeply rooted in the inhospitable shingle slopes where the vegetation almost reaches its limit, was Claytonia australasica with succulent strap-like leaves and starry white flowers, a wee member of the Portulacca family.

Orchid enthusiasts did not overlook Pterostylis irsoniana which was seen in several localities. This orchid was first recorded in 1947 from Mt. Egmont.

Trips were made to Manganui Gorge on the Stratford side, and to Fanthams Peak where the superb view at 6,400 ft. was sufficient reward for the struggle up the steep shingle slopes.

One day was spent on a grand tour which included morning tea at Mr. & Mrs. Vic. Davies' residence at New Plymouth, a hurried tour of the Nursery and then round the Coast road to receive a hearty welcome at the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust where an all too short time was spent on some of the lovely bush tracks. In less than one hour 37 different ferns were listed. Then with our cup of happiness already overflowing we were shown over the magnificent gardens and grounds of Mr. Russell Matthews at Mangorei. I was particularly interested in a lovely meadow grassed entirely in our native Microlaena stipoides. As the seed of this is not available commercially I knew what patient effort had gone into the gradual garnering and sowing of this seed and the elimination of the unwanted grasses. I noticed that patches of this grass in our lawns remained quite green throughout the recent drought.