

Show Business

Members will read with interest and appreciation the account (kindly provided by Mr. Warren) of the show arranged by the Taranaki Museum. We are glad our society was able to make its contribution. We congratulate the organisers of the Taranaki Show and extend our best wishes to them for the future.

Taranaki Native Flora Exhibition

On September 28 - 30 an exhibition of native flora arranged by the Taranaki Native Flora Committee was held in the Taranaki Museum at New Plymouth. The Committee had invited our Society to arrange an exhibit of plants found adjacent to the shores of the Manukau Harbour and had also invited our President, Mr. Lediard, to attend the official opening as one of the guest speakers. Both invitations were accepted and on the day prior to the exhibition, Mr. Lediard, accompanied by our Treasurer, Mr. Warren, set out for New Plymouth with our exhibit.

On arrival at the Museum, our representatives were warmly welcomed by Mr. E.C. Collins (Chairman of the Committee), Mr. A.F. Barwell (Secretary of the Committee) and Mr. Rigby Allen (Director of the Museum).

At the official opening Mr. Collins, after his opening remarks introduced the guest speakers, Mr. Lediard and Mr. Finer, the Mayor of Hawera. Mr. Lediard extended to the Committee the good wishes of the Auckland University, the Auckland Institute and Museum and our Society and then ably addressed the gathering in regard to the value of exhibitions of native flora, especially in educating young and old in correctly identifying and naming our native plants. Mr. Finer stressed the need for the preservation of our native bush addressing some of his remarks to the children in particular, and then formally declared the exhibition open.

At the opening the attendance was not large, owing to other attractions, including the usual Saturday ones. However on the Sunday the attendance was estimated at 1,000, this being greater than the attendance at the opening of the Museum about two years ago.

The exhibition was modelled upon our Cheeseman Show, there being displays of trees and shrubs, ferns and epiphytic orchids, alpine plants, coastal plants, sand dune plants, paintings, lino-cuts, pressed ferns and children's school exhibits.

The Royal Forest and Bird Society set up an attractive display of young trees in pots, filmy ferns, epiphytic orchids

on tree ferns and plants from the forest floor. The latter included the rather uncommon Libertia grandiflora.

A very good display of Mt. Egmont alpine plants was contributed by the Taranaki Alpine Club, under the able guidance of Dr.G. Mason who, we were delighted to discover, was a son and brother respectively of two of our well known North Shore members.

The exhibit of the National Parks Board was an excellent one, containing alpine plants, statistics of pests destroyed and information regarding native birds. A wooden rose (Dactylanthus taylori) about one foot in diameter was noted in this exhibit.

A display of coastal plants from Hawera contained several specimens of the Green Bay form of Blechnum capense. These were collected where the Waihi River meets the sea at Hawera. This spot is about five miles from Otakeho where the species was apparently reported some time ago by Miss Kibblewhite. The collectors were not aware of the peculiarity in their specimens until their attention was drawn to it.

Another plant of interest noted was Meterosideros colensoi var. pendens. This was discovered growing on a tree fern in the Ngaere Swamp. It is understood that it had not been reported from the Taranaki area previously. This was the first occasion on which we had had the pleasure of viewing this apparently rare variety.

The New Plymouth City Parks Department's display of ferns, epiphytic orchids etc. was a very good one and well laid out.

The children's section was not good, except in one or two cases. However it must be remembered that this was their first attempt and improvement will without doubt be shown in the future. The usual schoolboy howlers were present of course. The best was printed alongside a leaf of rangiora (Brachyglottis repanda) and read as follows: "Musk. It used to have a scent before the 1918 War and when it started it lost its scent."

Our own exhibit was of plants on and near the northern shores of the Manukau Harbour. The centrepiece was a small tree of mangrove (Avicennia resinifera) with "breathing" roots attached. The mangrove and its various parts were illustrated on a poster prepared by two of our younger members. The specimens, numbering nearly forty, were confined as far as possible to plants having a distribution which did not extend to Taranaki. Most of these were contributed by members of the Society, to whom our thanks are extended. The exhibit was much appreciated by the Taranaki Native Flora Committee, proved very interesting to the public and was very well remarked upon by the knowledgeable ones, including an old friend, Mr. V.C. Davies.

The specimen of mangemange (Lygodium articulatum) which we exhibited drew some interesting remarks from an elderly Maori lady. After reading the card before the specimen, she said after a minute or two, "Mangemange, mangemange. I remember it here a long time ago but it has all gone now." When I told her that it had not

been reported south of Kawhia, she still held to her belief that she had seen it in or near to New Plymouth. Is she correct? Perhaps some energetic botanist in the area may yet come across it.

In view of the fact that this exhibition was the first of its kind in Taranaki, the Committee and the Director of the Museum are to be congratulated on the success achieved. From the experience gained it will now be possible to build for the next exhibition and to give to the public of Taranaki a show second to none in the Dominion. The material is available. Enthusiasm and a fuller knowledge of our flora will do the rest.

Vandalism at Whangarei

In an earlier issue reference was made to damage to the flora in the Coronation Reserve, Whangarei, presumably by boys. Members will be pleased to hear that our protest did not fall on deaf ears and that two additional honorary rangers have been appointed in Whangarei. One of these is a member, Miss M. Maddren.

The editor and Katie Wood recently visited Clevedon at the request of our old friend Mr. Ross McKenzie, to judge the native section of the spring flower show. We were delighted at the quality of the exhibits.

Congratulations to Mrs. Fisher for the little flower show she organised at the Onepoto School. Mrs. Fisher has effectively stimulated the interest of the school children and was also able to show that effective exhibits of native plants can be made without raiding public reserves.

The Society contributed a display of ferns to the Annual Show of the Auckland Horticultural Society. Our thanks to members who contributed specimens and to those who set up the exhibit.