

(On 25 May 1965 Mr. Lediard was invited to Hamilton to talk on things botanical to Forest & Bird. This effort evoked a newspaper article in - I think - the Waikato Times, and the following account from Mrs. Eagle, for which I am truly thankful. E.D.H.)

The members of the Waikato Branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society were very grateful to Mr. Lediard for giving his time to come to Hamilton and address them on the subject of fungi - and the Botanical Society's trip to Mount Egmont earlier in the year. As there is no one with a knowledge of fungi amongst us, our eyes were opened to the beauty of form and colour which the group possess. As a result of Mr. Lediard's talk 5 Forest & Bird members have so far applied for membership with the Botanical Society, making a total of 10 Waikato members.

On 12 June a visit was made to an area which has been known for nearly half a century as the Mile Bush, situated on the road between Ngaruawahia and Glen Massey. Several interesting plants were noticed, one was the fern Trichomanes elongatum which was fairly plentiful growing on a dark and steep valley side. In an area mostly comprised of heketara (Olearia rani), the orchids Pterostylis trullifolia and Acianthus fornicatus var sinclairii were in flower. Pt. trullifolia was particularly abundant; in some places the rosette leaves formed a complete ground cover several feet square with the flowering plants scattered amongst them. Another abundant orchid was Bulbophyllum pygmaeum and also several plants of Sarcophilus adversus. A pigeon was seen eating the leaves of a lacebark tree, tuis were heard, and of course the fantails were with us most of the day. In the Waikato members have rarely seen the kawaka (Libocedrus plumosa), only a few odd trees are known to them but in this area we have seen 3, and several others have been reported by an adjoining farmer. Although the main Hakarimata Range is only a few miles away it is not known if any of these trees have been found there. Everyone was amazed at the abundance of fungi on this trip. Having Mr. Lediard's slides fresh in their memories increased their interest in them and indeed there was an enormous variety of size shape and colour, every hue of the rainbow being present and well as those of more sombre shade. 125 plants were listed on this trip.

MEETING - 2 June 1965

Dr. McNab spoke on the Boletes of New Zealand. These toadstool-sort-of fungi become most interesting in the hands of an expert. From what I can gather (and I am not too sure of my ground here) the Boletes bear their spores on tubes or pores and not on gills like the common mushroom. This should make them recognisable. The bulk of them are mycorrhizal and maintain a more or less symbiotic relationship with forest trees, mainly conifers, beeches (Nothofagus), birches (Betula) and the

ubiquitous trees, mamika and kanuka. Both introduced and indigenous species occur, and some it seems are edible if not exactly palatable. The skin of the cap, which may be scaly or slimy, must first be removed - but Dr. McNab is gamier than I am in this matter, and I would have to be darned hungry to take them on. The slides were particularly good. Several of Mr. Lediard's were used, and in some others Dr. McNab had photographed 2 or 3 specimens against a white background with a twig of the host plant, which proved quite effective. E.D.H.

CASCADES PARK - - - 19 June 1965 E.M. DAVIS

This trip to the Cascades was a most successful one. The day was sunny and bright in complete contrast to the weather which had preceded it. We went by way of Titirangi and the Scenic Drive to Pukematekeo, where we spent some time admiring the view, as the landscape was at its best with the last of the morning's mist disappearing. We then followed the track on foot from Pukematekeo down to Cascade Park, noticing on the way many of the plants characteristic of the higher parts of the Waitakere Ranges. Plants identified included Melicytus macrophyllus, Pseudopanax edgerleyi, Coprosma robusta and lucida (conveniently growing beside each other so that the difference between them could be well studied), Litsea calicaris, Eugenia maire, Gymnelaea (Olea) cunninghamii and montana, Quintinia serrata, Ixerba brexioides and Carpodetus serratus.

At the Cascades we joined the bus again and had our lunch, before crossing the bridge and following Kauri Track to the higher parts of the reserve. Many plants were identified on the way. Amongst them were Nertera, Myrsine salicina, Persea toru, Corokia buddleoides, Griselinia lucida, Senecio kirkii, Astelia trinervia and several ground orchids including Pterostylis trullifolia var rubella. Some very beautiful groups of tree ferns grow in the valleys below the track and magnificent stands of kauri dominate much of the bush. Our journey back to the stream gave several members of the party an opportunity to try their skill at the somewhat uncommon pastime of glissading rather than walking. Although the weather remained sunny and bright, the muddy tracks showed the effects of previous heavy rainfalls and one's foothold was precarious. However the downward slope was negotiated, not without its hazards, and not always gracefully, but at least successfully. Back to the bus for a welcome cup of tea and we were soon on our way back to the city. Our thanks are due to Miss Crookes who led the party and who pointed out much of the interesting plant growth along the way. E.M.D.