

AUCKLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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PUKAPUKA - - - 17 July 1965 - M. Todd

After hail and rain the night before, to our delight, Saturday morning was calm and bright. An overflow of members joined the bus at 9am, and were luckily soon comfortably accommodated, and off we sped north, merrily along towards our destination. The road took the high ridge most of the way, affording us excellent panoramas of coastline and green undulating farmlands, valleys and bush-clad ranges. An hour passed and we left the main highway, traversing a winding little metal road (Cowans Bay Road) for some miles, stopping eventually right beside the fence-line of a fairly extensive and densely covered area - the native reserve of Pukapuka.

llam, and under the leadership of Mr. Warren, an hour's scramble took place in the outskirts of the bush - a preliminary investigation. Then back to the dry grasses and perfumed manuka by the roadside for lunch - everybody by now quite ready for their snack. The weather was settled, a little overcast at times, and still before us were those lovely views of land and sea. Directly ahead lay the Mahurangi harbour and peninsula, and as the sun shone upon these from afar, enhancing the colour of land and trees, I felt that distant fields really were greener. But our joy was soon to come. Lunch over we re-entered the reserve further down the road and immediately found ourselves in a world of interest. Here upon the forest floor, flowering in profusion, were lovely little dells of the orchids Pterostylis trullifolia varieties alobula and gracilis, their hooded heads standing erect from out of the green mosses at their base.

After the rain lichens and mosses had plumped up and taken one delicate hues of green. The varying colours of the forest (in its different stages of growth), though beautifully subtle were strong, clear and bright - as shown in individual specimens gathered by the end of the day. The predominating trees were kauri, tanekaha, rimu and the beech, Nothofagus truncata. The thin straight trunks of saplings grew on the outskirts with little undergrowth except orchids and a few small ferns. A bank revealed a low growth of Blechnum fraseri, the gleaming fronds covering quite an area. A deep valley lay below us with the vegetation getting heavier on the way down, but we took the

contour of the land and worked across the side of the hill. Upon passing a small stream the vegetation immediately changed, no orchids here, but pungas and beech trees, with masses of decomposing material on the ground. There it was that Mr. Lediard found most of his treasures - a collection of colourful fungi, red, yellow, black, copper, smoke and lavender, about 20 in all. Clematis was not apparent in the area, only one plant being seen. After walking and talking and stopping and looking - it really came as a surprise to come suddenly upon a barbed-wire fence. Lo and behold - there we were back to the roadside and our bus. Here we drank our last cuppa while showing and discussing our collected specimens. Packing our bags and tucking ourselves back into the bus, we were homeward bound by 3.30pm. Another very happy trip was drawing to a close, some dozed off - fresh air, mental stimulus and good company had worked wonders and left us with contented minds. Some 40 members had participated and under Mr. Warren's unobtrusive leadership had found a new field for their interest and ever widening knowledge. It was Mr. Warren's day - it was his BIRTHDAY!! Musical honours were accorded him, and again 'happy birthday' and a big thankyou for our day. M. T.

(Mr. Warren tells me that the beech appears to be regenerating, which is unusual so far north, and has he thinks, something to do with sunlight being let into cleared areas. Quintinia serrata was also recorded. Miss Crookes was kind enough to give Miss Todd the following list of ferns and orchids collected during the day. E.D.H.)

FERNS

Adiantum cunninghamii
 Asplenium falcatum
 " flaccidum
 " lucidum
 Blechnum capense
 " discolor
 " filiforme
 " fraseri
 Otenitis decomposita
 Cyathea dealbata
 " medullaris
 Dicksonia squarrosa
 Doodia media
 Gleichenia microphylla
 Grammitis billardieri
 " heterophylla
 Hymenophyllum densissimum
 " dilatatum
 " multifidum
 " rarum
 " sanguinolentum
 Lindsaea linearis
 " trichomanoides
 var lessonii

FERNS

Phymatodes diversifolium
 Pteris macilentata
 Pyrrosia serpens
 Thelypteris pennigera
 Trichomanes elongatum
 " reniforme

ORCHIDS

Pterostylis trullifolia
 var alobula
 Pt. tr. var gracilis
 Pt. montana var rubricaulis
 Acianthus fornicatus var
 sindairii
 Acianthus reniformis var
 oblongus
 Earina mucronata
 Sarcochilus adversus