

NEW PLANT RECORDS

I am pleased to report a new record for that most recent and interesting addition to our orchid flora, namely Yoonia australis.

The week previous I had the pleasure of being shown Yoonia in its natural setting by its original discoverers (the Beevers) at Glorit. It takes a close search to find among the taraire (Beilschmiedia taraire) litter, which has been hitherto regarded as a barren habitat, and it is not surprising that it has been overlooked. It was first found by the Waipoua River in January 1955, and the single dried specimen could only be designated the "Waipoua Orchid", until the Glorit discovery of 1962 provided fresh material, and Mr. Hatch described it in 1963 (Trans. R.S. N.Z. Vol. 2, No. 14), its nearest relatives being in Japan and Formosa.

You will no doubt be somewhat surprised therefore to hear that Yoonia australis is to be found almost on the doorstep. Having determined to search other taraire stands, what better place to start near at home than Kirk's Bush - and there sure enough I was lucky to find it, though only in one spot and three specimens only, and the danger of it being disturbed will I think be small. The task was made easier by knowing where and what to look for, thanks to the Beevers. This extends its range another 50 miles to the south, and I trust that a close search of other taraire stands will provide further records. Perhaps the recess at this time of the year in Society activities around Auckland has in part contributed to lack of records, when its flowering stems make it detectable. Mr. Beaver hopes to search for it at Waipoua, and indeed any taraire remnants will be worth searching at the turn of the year. Absence of any fire history or trampling (botanists please note!) would seem to be important factors in its survival, and even small remnant taraire is worth a search. Much remains to be discovered about the life-history of this orchid, and the nature of its association with taraire, and further records should facilitate this.

(See also Mr. Hatch's account of a second visit)

J.H.

Mr. Hatch sends in two new orchid records:

Gastrodia sesamoides - Henderson Valley, October, 1966. J. Cole

(Also in fine flower at Glorit, December, 1966. R. & J. Beaver. Ed.)

Corybas macranthus var. longipetalus - Coatesville, October, 1966. J. Smith.

Mr. A. D. Mead writes:

In November I found Parsonsia capsularis in flower near the summit of the 934 ft. peak in the block donated by Mrs. Godley to the Centennial Park, on the eastern flank of the Waitakere Ranges below the T.V. mast. I had not previously seen it in the ranges, and a few knowledgeable members of our Society from whom I enquired at our last outing did not recollect having seen it. It is listed in the Society's Jubilee Booklet as occurring in the Auckland district, but this may possibly derive from its known presence in the Hunua's. It would be surprising if it is confined, so far as the Waitakeres are concerned, to this one locality, and I should be glad of any information members can supply.

The leaves and flowers of the plant found accord with Cheeseman's var. parviflora, and the leaf-form is that of Allan's var. parviflora in his sketch on p. 553, though strangely he does not include parviflora as a valid variety in his text. (Carse thought hybrid forms possible. Ed.)