

Filmy ferns were common in the damper places and there were many areas of the beautiful kidney fern, Cardiomanes reniforme, though nowhere as luxuriant as in the kidney fern gully near Rangitoto Wharf, where it carpets the ground over large areas.

In several places we saw the small leaved Metrosideros perforata scrambling over the scoria. Also seen were one or two specimens of Gaultheria antipoda in berry, a single specimen of Pomaderris phyllicifolia var. ericifolia, Knightia excelsa, Dodonaea viscosa, Olearia furfuracea, Drosera auriculata, Peperomia uvulifera, Microsorium diversifolium and Flagianthus divaricatus.

We arrived at Rangitoto Wharf in good time, rather weary after our day's crunching along the ankle-twisting track. Rangitoto really is a remarkable place, always well worth a visit and no less enjoyable on this occasion in spite of the wintry weather.

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RAINFALL AND FLOWERING IN THE WAITAKERES. ----- A.D.Mead.

During the spring and early summer of 1968 a number of species of plants and trees in the Waitakeres exhibited exceptionally profuse flowering, notably:-

<u>Cordyline australis.</u>	<u>Phormium tenax.</u>
<u>Cordyline banksii.</u>	<u>Pterostylis banksii.</u>
<u>Ilex brexioides.</u>	<u>Quintinia serrata.</u>
<u>Knightia excelsa.</u>	<u>Samolus repens.</u>
<u>Mariscus ustulatus.</u>	

There were probably others but I did not note them at the time and only recorded the list later from memory, not realising at first that something unusual was happening. As well as being very prolific, the flowering was in most cases somewhat later, perhaps a month or two, than normal. By way of contrast, pohutukawa and some others scarcely flowered at all.

The weather was somewhat abnormal during 1968, the rainfall being above average and varying considerably from the usual seasonal distribution. Wondering whether any connection could be traced with plant behaviour, I obtained from the Weather Office records of the monthly rainfalls at Albert Park, together with the long period average at the same station. As I understand from fruit bearing studies in England that the influence of the preceding year is more strongly felt than the current year, I also studied records for 1967.

The mean annual rainfall at Albert Park is 48.9 inches. The year 1967 had 49.4 inches and 1968 had 54.7 inches. The latter is 1.12 times mean, which is not a notable excess but the wettest consecutive 12 months in the two years was from September 1967 to August 1968, with 59.8 inches or 1.22 times mean.

Unusual features of the rainfall were the dry winter (April to July) of 1967, a very wet November and December of 1967, a drier than usual summer following, with a wet autumn (March to June) in 1968. The rainfall in the Waitakeres is about 40% above and roughly proportional to that of Albert Park.

Correlations between variations of local climate and the bearing of plants are said to be very difficult to establish and would require detailed observations over long periods. It is not suggested that the comparison in this note proves anything, although the coincidence of abnormal rainfall and flowering is interesting.

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