

OUTINGS

GUMDIGGERS TRACK, WAITAKERE RANGES    20th September    L.W. Butler.

About 10 a.m. we arrived at the entrance of Winstone Track, a short distance from where the Kare Kare Road leaves the Piha Road, and followed the track downhill to Usher Cross on the Kauri Grove Track. This portion of the track runs through secondary growth occurring after cutting out and also a portion near the bottom which had been destroyed by fire.

The species seen were typical of this part of the Waitakeres, mostly fairly young specimens. DoDonaea viscosa was plentiful, also Coprosma arborea and a number of C. rhamoides which varied in leaf form considerably, Pterostylis trullifolia var. alobula, P. graminea, a few remains of P. trullifolia var. gracilis, and some P. banksii not yet mature, some beautiful flowering specimens of Barina mucronata, a few Corybas triloba ? (no flowers), Acianthus reniformis var. oblongus, and A. fornicatus var. sinclairii were numerous. Arriving at the area which had been burnt we found a profusion of the introduced Australian Hakea amongst which were the remains of Prasophyllum ?, Orthocerus strictum and numbers of Thelymitra (leaves only), some Cyathodes juniperina, C. fasciculata and Pittosporum tenuifolium.

At Usher Cross we followed the Glen Ness Falls Track through Leptospermum scrub for a short distance before turning left on the Gumdiggers' Track which leads uphill to Usher's Farm. This part of the track passes through regenerated farmland and the bush has a different appearance as would be expected. Here we found the Thelymitra carnea var. imberbis, several more various species of Pterostylis, Bulbophyllum pygmaeum and some Microtis unifolia not in flower. Other things seen were Clematis paniculata Quintinia serrata, Phyllocladus glaucus, Persoonia toru a mass of flower, Pittosporum ellipticum and numbers of Schizaea bifida.

We arrived at Usher's farm across the Piha Road in time for lunch, which we enjoyed sitting in the sun in a paddock at the rear of the farm. This paddock by the way was scattered with Thelymitra, mostly longifolia, the plants emerging every few yards.

After lunch we were taken by Mr. Halliday to see some ferns, Athyrium japonicum and A. australe, growing under some very old Macrocarpas. Some members wandered down the valley behind the farm, where one member found Corybas rivularis. After passing a vote of thanks to Mr. Halliday we left for home about 3.30 p.m. having enjoyed another of Mr. Mead's pleasant and interesting trips.