

in this case they seem to be found only on drier hillsides and poor soil, and more or less grouped. In the Waitakeres at Titirangi we have three almost pure small stands of beech; in the Hunuas the stands are larger and as it were islands in the surrounding sea of mixed bush, and as one proceeds further south in New Zealand the stands are much more extensive, until in the South Island whole forests are composed almost exclusively of beech. Aside from the beech, the reserve near Pukapuka, in the short time we were able to enjoy it, gave the impression that it would well merit a full botanical study.

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MT. HIKURANGI WEEK-END. 5th, 6th Dec. 1970.

What an inspiration of the Poverty Bay Horticultural Society's Committee to organize a trip to see the alpine garden on Mt. Hikurangi. Peter Pole's planning left nothing to be desired and our leader, Phil McDiarmid, with his kindness and tolerance, cheered along the grandmothers.

Some 23 of us started up that long 6 hour haul, mostly with our packs on our backs, reminiscent of all those snails we've been at such pains to exterminate! A pleasant crowd, we enjoyed the brilliantly fine day with its cooling breezes.

Few plants took our attention, apart from great drifts of the delightful little white Pratia angulata and, nearing the Gisborne Tramping Club's hut at 3910 ft. above sea level, some rather dry clumps of Polystichum vestitum, which were also abundant beside the hut in a damp watercourse.

Some slept indoors, while others of us preferred the stars above us, in spite of brisk breezes, and eager photographers were out to catch the British Empire's first beams of sunshine on the stark, dead tree trunks. By 6 a.m. all were scrambling up the 500 ft. high scree behind the hut. A large proportion of the rubble is now being stabilized by the tiny green tutu, Coriaria plumosa, and by Norman Pott's tutu, Coriaria pottsiana, a small fine-leaved reddish plant peculiar to Hikurangi. A tiny introduced nettle cunningly grows with this, as several members discovered when needing a handhold and the irritation and swelling lasted some hours.

Over the top of the scree and straight into stunted bush where broadleaf, Griselinia littoralis; konini, Fuchsia excorticata; three leatherwoods, Olearia colensoi, Olearia ilicifolia, Senecio cleasmifolius; three different beeches, Nothofagus menziesii, fusca and solandri; two grass-trees, Dracophyllum pyramidalis and D. recurvum; pink pine, Dacrydium bifforme; rimu, Dacrydium cupressinum; pepper tree, Pseudowintera colorata; tawari, Ilexbra brexioides; Persoonia toru; Libocedrus bidwillii were all seen and no doubt many others were present.

First delight in the bush was a cool bank with masses of Ourisia macrocarpa in bloom, with the little creeping lily, Luzuriaga parviflora not yet in bloom, hanging below shaded rocks.

Still climbing for some further 200 ft. we were soon amongst rocks literally covered with alpine flowers at their best. The little white everlasting, Helichrysum bellidioides carpeted everything, setting off the bright yellow 2" blooms of the buttercup, Ranunculus insignis. Great spires

of yellow bloom on the spaniard, Aciphylla colensoi stood out from afar and there was also the smaller Aciphylla glaucescens. In any slightly damp hollows the water fern Histiopteris incisa was unrolling hundreds of fronds. The tiny New Zealand violet, Viola cunninghamii was everywhere, in full bloom, with its roots tucked underneath rocks and seemingly not minding the very dry conditions.

Two of the three tarns over the saddle were quite dry, but still plants such as Celmisia spectabilis, the large white mountain daisy, grew well. The tiny parsley plant, Anisotome, with its fine white umbels of bloom, several small Dracophyllums, many Hebes, Gaultheria depressa, mountain totara, and even an odd plant of the beautiful Prince of Wales Feather fern, Leptopteris superba grew happily. Odd plants of the perching orchid, Earina autumnalis, Blechnum lanceolatum and B. fluviatile were seen and large patches of the tiny Blechnum penna-marina, all mixed up with Viola and Helichrysum.

It was so dry that all filmy ferns and Pyrrosia serpens on the tree trunks appeared quite dead, although of course they'll come to life miraculously with the rain.

Back at the hut by 10 a.m. and away downhill by 11 o'clock. Here the more lush pasture was populated by numerous terrestrial orchids, Microtis unifolia and Thelymitra longifolia in bloom and the sweet fern Paesia scaberula plentiful on the dry hillsides, with pockets of Blechnum minus tucked beside rocks.

A large stand of Fuchsia excorticata proved interesting, having one specimen of a deep plum colour, with extra bright blue in the flowers. Pieces of this are now rooting, we hope.

Reaching creek level, Phymatodes diversifolium seemed extra green as it adorned the damp logs above the water and here we saw our first tree-ferns, Cyathea medullaris.

We arrived back at the cars after  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours. While all agreed that the sight of that alpine garden made worthwhile those gruelling ascents and jelly-kneed descents, from now on I for one must be content with the Hikurangi flowers on my slides - I hope!

Mrs. C. Veitch.

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Further Psilotum nudum records.

Warren F.W.

Following the note in the last Newsletter I have been given three more records for Auckland. A recent one from Mr. B.H. Oumbar, who has found Psilotum growing out from between a low concrete wall and the wooden fence on top of it, at a house in Orakei Road between Elmstone Avenue and Rangitoto Avenue.

Mrs. P. Hynes has given me two other records. One from Ascot Avenue, Remuera collected by Miss M. Segar, 11-8-65 and the other near Coronation Road, Epsom where Miss M. Crookes found some growing a few years earlier.

Its occurrence in Remuera, at least, would seem to be fairly regular. I would be interested to receive any other records from urban Auckland.