

This was eight years ago and we have since watched nests and family groups in at least six other localities on the farm.

Neopanax laetum, Olearia albida, Coprosma cunninghamii, Coprosma tenuifolia and an erect moss which looks like a young pine tree about nine inches high, are among the pleasant surprises that pop up occasionally. I must admit to being a bit confused with the Coprosmas. C. robusta and C. rotundifolia are everywhere and C. rhamnoides and C. areolata are very common also. Less common is C. australis (because the goats seem to prefer it to any other tree). Fairly common, but variable is what I suppose to be C. cunninghamii, and C. tenuifolia so far seems to be limited to one plant growing in a swamp.

This article is, of course, an admission of failure. A good farmer does not have swamps for rare birds or useless wasteland for little gems of ferns, but there are times when I feel like going berserk and giving the farm away and all that keeps my sense of proportion are those same little patches of wild nature, the sounds, the smells and the feel of something unmanmade.

MOSSES IN MY GARDEN

E.D.H.

The family gave me a copy of Allison & Childs Mosses of N.Z. for my birthday! I read it through a couple of times, studied the drawings and photographs, and took it for a walk round the garden. I have long been aware that the Laingholm Hill was wet, but I had no idea that I lived in such a bog.

Under every tree and in the shadow of the hedges Thuidiopsis furfurosum abounds and wanders out into the lawn. Among the stones around the fish pond and along the road frontage this is mixed with Hypnum cupressiforme. A couple of areas of short manuka scrub which lie in a hollow, sport much Cratoneuropsis relaxa, while Cyatophorum bulbosum thrives on the edge of a ditch. A species of Fissidens grows literally in water under the drip from a shed roof and around the outflow from a downpipe. Campylopus clavatus, together with a fairly robust species of Bryum occurs over the whole area, while Tortula muralis grows on the tops of concrete fence posts and on scoria boulders in the rockery. There must be at least six other species I haven't identified, some on the ground and some on the trees round about, and of course I could be wrong about some that I think I've identified. But most interesting.

THE LAKE LAWN AT WESTERN SPRINGS

E.D.H.

From the bus window, the lake at Western Springs looked like a well kept lawn. In fact it was difficult to decide where the grass