

SEPTEMBER, 1972.

WOODHILL.

F.W.

This trip proved to be most interesting. At an earlier date Mr Lediard had been out to the area and, with the assistance of one of the Forestry Officers, had picked out two spots for botanising by the members. The beautiful spring weather contributed much to the enjoyment of the day.

Leaving the bus at the top of the ridge, we walked along the road to the old lookout and then followed the old road downhill to a lower level. As would be expected, owing to the proximity to the coast and the presence of so much sand, the flora was different to that which we usually meet in bush areas. Corkia cotoneaster was plentiful, as were Pseudopanax crassifolium and Pseudopanax lessonii, along with numerous hybrids arising from these two. Lophomyrtus obcordata was not uncommon, some of the trees being about 30 feet in height. A good specimen of Paratrophis microphylla, with a trunk of about 9 inches diameter drew some expressions of surprise as to its size. However, Cheeseman describes it as a tree 15 - 40 feet high, with a trunk 9 - 24 inches in diameter, so this specimen was not unusually large. The writer has seen a very large one on the road to Whatipu.

Coprosma macrocarpa is considered to be somewhat rare about Auckland but, with the help of Mrs M. Taylor, we found it to be quite common in this area. It was easily identified by the stipules. To any who are interested it is suggested that a study be made of the illustrations in the Society's publication "Local Species of Coprosma etc." It is usually found in sight of the coast.

Orchids were represented by quite a few of the Pterostylis trullifolia type. Of the ferns Microsorium diversifolium was the most common. It seemed to revel in the sandy conditions. A few specimens of Pellaea rotundifolia were noted.

After lunch in pleasant, warm sunshine, we proceeded to a spot in the pine forest from where a short walk brought us to a basin containing part of the original native bush. The most interesting find here was Myrsine divaricata. This dainty leaved shrub was much admired by those who had not seen it before and believed at first that it was a species of Coprosma. It is rather local in its distribution in the North, but not rare. Other basins and gullies in the Woodhill forest contain one or more.

Pseudopanax ferox was not sighted during the day, much to the surprise of those who had visited Woodhill previously.

We tender our thanks to Mr Lediard for a most enjoyable day.