

the fern Microsorium novae-zelandiae and below it in the ground Hypolepis rufobarbata. One or two other ferns were about and hundreds of small nettle plants. Thus ended most of my plant hunting activities of the trip, which had been enjoyable and worthwhile. All that remained was the two hour descent next morning and the drive back to Opotiki.

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AHURIRI ESTUARY THREATENED

Prof. V.J. CHAPMAN

Some members of the Botanical Society will know of, or will have seen, the Ahuriri estuary and the adjacent ponds just before the Taupo-Napier Road reaches Napier. The large lagoon, known as the Westshore pond is a reserve under the control of the Wildlife Trust. Recently the Napier City Council proposed a scheme to develop a large marina in the estuary and in association with this to carry out extensive dredging operations. The Trust, which leases the pond and adjoining reserve from the City Council, at the same time announced plans to develop the area into a tourist attraction and cater for some 10,000 visitors annually. Among new attractions envisaged were a deer park and zoo. Both proposals have aroused considerable local antagonism and a report by a firm of consultants commissioned by the City Council has pointed out the great dangers inherent in both proposals.

The Ahuriri estuary is of considerable interest botanically because, although the halophytic plants that grow there are not necessarily rare, they have appeared there as a result of the Napier earthquake. I believe, therefore, that it would be regrettable if these salt marshes were to disappear in order to make way for a marina. The low tide channel, the mud flats and the Westshore lagoon provide a major habitat for a large variety of plants and animals. The Consultants report indicates that if the proposals for the marina and the refuge are not good, neither can the ponds be left as they are because they are already silting up and unless some action is taken they will disappear.

At the moment the Harbour Board, City Council and Trust have called a halt but some positive action will be necessary in the future. There is scope for some development but anything that is done will have to proceed with great caution.

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MILLER'S RESERVE, WARKWORTH

J. BEEVER

Our November trip was to a new reserve so that even older members found something of interest. It is situated on a ridge on the Auckland side of Warkworth, looking back about half a mile across green fields to the T.V. Satellite Reception Station. The bush was given