

disappeared. Now this year another young plant has appeared on the opposite side. The cliffs of the Manikau Harbour are the home of many of these ferns where occasionally they appear among the more usual Blechnum capense species.

SMALL BEECH STAND AT WHATIPU

Mrs. K. Wood

The Auckland Centennial Memorial Park's chief ranger, Mr Bill Beveridge, first noticed these trees about two years ago while following an old logging track. Early this year they were visited again by senior ranger John Walsh who told me of their existence. I was very interested to hear of them, for the only known remnants of beech, Nothofagus truncata, in the Waitakeres grow in two gullies at Titirangi.

On 3rd October Mr Beveridge took me and some friends in to see this stand and we found them located on a small ridge beside the upper Whatipu stream. There were four adult trees, the largest 63" in girth, the others 38", 29½" and 10" in girth respectively. We searched for and found a seedling about 1 ft high. Down below in the stream bed, growing in some moss was another tiny plant about 1½ inches high. The surrounding area had been subjected to extensive milling operations in earlier days so it is possible that many other beech trees as well as kauris could have been cut and milled. Monoao, Dacrydium kirkii, now so rare in the Waitakeres, also once grew here and we were shown a fence post cut from this species.

FUCHSIA PERSCANDENS. WHAT IS THE NORTHERN LIMIT?

R.D. Creswell

In the Waimata River country, 16 km north of Gisborne, sprawling down a grassy bank is Fuchsia perscandens. The long trailing stems up to 4 cm in diameter, with fine light grey bark, are most distinct from the brown of F. excorticata. In early September most of the laminae were immature - some were advanced enough to show sinuate margins, with minute serrations, though not distinctly so as shown in "Trees and Shrubs of New Zealand" by A.L.Poole and N.M.Adams.

This liane had profuse flowers, single or 2 to 3 together. In character similar to F. colensoi or F. excorticata, but smaller, the colouring being similar.

Allan only quotes one North Island habitat - "Forest remnants near Fielding" growing with F. excorticata and F. colensoi. I would like to hear of other North Island occurrences of F. perscandens. This habitat a few km north of Gisborne could be the most northern yet recorded.

Another plant used to grow - it may still be there - at Parikanapa, about 32 km south-west of Gisborne.

I have only seen one plant of F. colensoi - fastigiate stems up to 2 m with bark similar in character to F. excorticata, the colour the same but flaking off in smaller plates. Flowers similar. A plant grew near the Mata River, Waiapu County until a slip completely swept it away. Having now seen F. perscandens I feel, like Hooker and Allan, that F. colensoi is F. excorticata X perscandens.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Members will have noted that we have only had two Newsletters this year. It is a most unfortunate occurrence, particularly as the Newsletter is often the only communication between the Society and our country members. However at the time the July issue is normally published we only had enough material to fill about one side and even this issue is not exactly bulging at the seams! This is your Newsletter and can only flourish with your support, so please plenty of articles or notes for the March issue.

Lack of support has also forced cancellation of several outings this year, which is also most regrettable. Inflation has had its effect and has led to considerably increased travel and accommodation costs, which have put our traditional type of trip beyond the reach of many members pockets. It may well be that we will have to consider slightly different kinds of trips in future, such as booking huts or hostels and doing our own catering - something which can work very well as I'm sure all those who went on the Moehau trip will agree. The committee would be interested to hear members views on this.

It is to be hoped that we are at last emerging from the bleak wet winter and can look forward to better things. Many kowhais do not seem to have flowered well this year (or is it just that we hardly ventured out to see them because of the weather), but of particular note is the quite fantastic display that is at present being turned on by Olearia rani in the Waitakeres.

Marc Heginbotham, one of our country members in Opotiki, is doing a survey of all the 'wild plants', indigenous and adventive, within 15 miles of the Opotiki post office. He keeps a pressed specimen of each species, together with notes and a card system. When I last heard he had close on 700 different species and varieties. If anyone else has projects like this that they are involved in, we would be interested to hear from them.