

KAIPARA HARBOUR AUTHORITY: SURVEY OF KAIPARA HARBOUR AND  
ITS CATCHMENT 1981

[In response to a request from Rodney County council for information the botanical resources of Kaipara Harbour and its catchment, J. Beaver prepared this submission on behalf of Auckland Botanical Society. - Ed.]

may be seen, by comparing present-day vegetation with the map of -European vegetation (attached) that there is really very little the original plant cover left. This means that whatever is left of particular value and interest, including areas where plant regeneration is occurring. The main habitats, which should be looked as a whole, as places where plants, animals and birds live in interdependence, would be: wet lands, dune lakes, mangrove swamps, upland and bush. Some of these have been reduced to beneath a upland and bush. Some of these have been reduced to beneath a irable minimum, e.g. bush; while in other cases, e.g. mangrove mps, reclamation has still left us some remnants which must be ched very carefully.

lands These, especially raupo, flax and cabbage tree swamps, were tures of the Kaipara Harbour in many inlets and notably along the nders of the Kaipara River above Helensville towards Waimauku. tlement and farming have reduced these interesting botanical areas to ll proportions and as they also provide a refuge for wild fowl and er animals, must be preserved. This does not envisage their use as as for wild duck shooting.

ubland, which consists primarily of manuka and fern with other similar ed native plants was the main vegetation surrounding the harbour, as own by the pre-European map. Most of this is gone, but for the same usons as wet-lands preservation, some sizeable areas should be positively eserved for posterity. Some of New Zealand's beautiful native orchids e found only in such areas of scrub.

ie lakes These are a feature largely restricted to the North and South ad peninsulas and worthy of preservation for that reason alone. If areas dune lakes surrounded by swamp and scrub are available it would be ghly desirable that the whole complexes be kept as reserves.

ngrove swamps are a special harbour feature which have their special place fish life in the harbour, as well as acting as wild life refuges as tioned for the above habitats.

sh, finally but not least. As the Kaipara Harbour was for many years the eatest producer of kauri timber it would be fitting that some remnants ould remain for posterity. This can scarcely be said to be true. The rgest bush reserve bordering the harbour is the Atuanui State Forest around Auckland at Glorit. See the enclosed unpublished notes on the area eever, Beaver and Esler, 1974) which you will note is 605 hectares in ea.

e Auckland Botanical Society has used this area for trips every year or o since about 1960, long before the official walkway was instituted in e 1970s. The area contains a few medium sized kauris and patches of generating kauri and is a fine example of the northern broadleaf forest th taraire as the dominant tree.

contains also the only known large spread of the rare saprophytic chid Yoania australis first described from specimens found there in 1962.

Another unusual plant found there is the sub-species "robusta" of the epiphyte Tmesipteris elongata (see p.764 in the enclosed photocopy of an article in the New Zealand Journal of Botany, vol 13, 1975 by R.J. Chinnock).

In order to preserve this most valuable reserve with its unique features the Kaipara Harbour Authority should press for a more secure status than State Forest which allows it to be milled at the whim of the Forestry Department.

Other reserves that have been visited by parties or individual members are:-

- (a) The reserve on the Kaukapakapa River near its mouth presented by the West family of Helensville; similar, in a smaller area, to Mt Auckland;
- (b) The tiny Omira Reserve near the mouth of the Makarau River. This little gem has kauri, kowhai and clematis and waterfalls as features. Unfortunately its small size allows drift of weed killer from nearby farms to affect the show of flowers from the kowhai;
- (c) The bush along the Upper Kaukapakapa River in the property of Mr Matensen which he has preserved on his own farm;
- (d) The small bush near Lake Ototoa towards South Head. A small remnant that could be given a new lease of life if it were shut away from grazing animals.
- (e) At the northern end of the harbour the small bush of regenerating kauri on Pukekaroro near Kaiwaka is another of the very small reserves left.

16 November 1981

Enclosures:

R.E. Beever, J. Beever, A.E. Esler, Unpublished notes on Atuanui State Forest, 1974

J. Beever, A map of the Pre-European vegetation of Lower Northland, New Zealand, New Zealand Journal of Botany, 1981, Vol. 19: 105-110

R.J. Chinnock, The New Zealand Species of Tmesipteris (Psilotaceae), New Zealand Journal of Botany, 13:743-68, 1975.