

POHUEHUE

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Some months ago our secretary proposed the question, "What native * plant is called pohuehue?" At first sight it seems a simple question but I found that at least six different species had borne that name at various places and times. The first written record was by Banks and Solander who found Clematis odorata (now forsteri) bore the name pohue or poananga and Convolvulus lentus (now Calystegia sepium) also had the name pohue. So trouble right at the start!

Since then other authorities have found the name pohue or pohuehue used for Calystegia tuguriorum, the two muehlenbeckias M. complexa and M. australis, and Tetrapathaea tetrandra. As noted by Williams dictionary and H.H. Allan it was a name for many climbing or trailing plants (especially those with no prickles and with thin tough stems). What is worse is that these six plants each have other Maori names, in total about thirty-six. Some are sound variants but others are quite distinct, e.g., kohia and rauparaha.

However the question was, "What plant IS called pohuehue?" So let's try again. The Maori obviously called white-flowered clematis (either forsteri or paniculata) by variants of the name puawananga (e.g., poananga, puawhananga &c.) as well as other names. So let's call the two clematis, puawananga. Tetrapathaea tetrandra was also called kohia and as that has become popular let's stick with it. That now leaves two muehlenbeckias and two calystegias, and at the moment there seem to be no differentiating names.

You might like to try to popularise tororaro or waekau (waekahu) for M. complexa and puka for M. australis leaving pohuehue for the two calystegias; or vice versa try, nahinahi or panahi or panake or rauparaha for C. sepium and perhaps powhiwhi (not much help) for C. tuguriorum leaving pohuehue to the muehlenbeckias. Best of British luck!

So the answer at the moment; pohuehue is the name for at least four separate species of twining climbers. Does that help?

* In the News-sheet for May 1983.

New locality: Hymenophyllum bivalve - Centennial Park, Campbells Bay, Auckland, growing on Cyathea dealbata

It might be worth re-checking any H. multifidum you know of, especially on the North Shore. The two species are quite easily confused - same size frond, margins serrate - but in H. bivalve the sporangia occur at the end of the segments and do not stand up from the frond as they do in H. multifidum, and they lack the projecting bristle. (There are excellent drawings of both species in H.D. Wilson's Field Guide Stewart Island Plants.)

H. bivalve is known from Great Barrier Island and south from Cape Colville. It has not previously been reported from the Auckland peninsula.

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