

JULY 20 - DUDER'S BUSH

Marie Taylor

The day was cold and blustery with intermittent heavy showers, but six cars met at Clevedon P.O. for the trip. It was noticeable that there was only one party of 3 'entsocs' to 10 'botsocs' and one photographer making 14 people in all. The senior entsoc member assured us that "all self-respecting insects would be holed up in dry sheltered places on such a day", and it seems that sensible entomologists usually follow their example.

We met Mr Brian Duder who led us across the bottom paddock of his farm and into the foot of the gully he has fenced from animals. The first fungi seen were those bright orange 'weeds' Favolaschia. Under the dripping kanuka were yellow Hygrophorus, white Hygrophorus, flat Peziza-like cup fungi, several different colours of fairy clubs or corals, green Cortinarius and blue Cortinarius with a gleaming orange centre. The green Cortinarius was particularly conspicuous growing out from the basal buttresses of a Cyathea. High overhead we spotted a white agaric (Oudemansiella) on dead kanuka. The little stream was well up to the level of its banks, the water being bright orange from the clay it carried.

Up the track we added the frilled rosettes of Podoscypha, various small brown Cortinarii and Russula acrolamellata to our list of fungi. There was a noticeably sudden change in the fungi present as soon as we had climbed a gate and were standing under the first Nothofagus truncata. Here there was a carpet of Laccaria fibrillosa coming up through the beech leaves, and the purple tobacco pouch, Thaxterogaster porphyreum was also present. These are conspicuous members of the beech mycoflora further south. Small erect white gelatinous 'fingers' were seen on a twig, representatives of the jelly fungi with a shape similar to the fairy clubs, but very different microstructure from the Clavariaceae. Also on a beech twig was a small dark fan-shaped Polyporus sp.

We had lunch in the shelter of the beeches, and close by, the entomologists demonstrated to us a native termite nest, complete with 'guard' insects with huge heads and aggressive stance.

Fomitopsis hemitephrum, a large perennial bracket fungus with pure white pore surface, was found on a fallen beech tree. This bracket has a distinctive smell.

In the afternoon the party explored further up the valley, some browsing for Bryophytes near the stream, one party crossing over and making their way up to the kauri rickers, while the main body kept to the true left bank and slopes above. Two genera of birds nest fungi were noted - Crucibulum on stipes of Cyathea medullaris and Nidula on woody twigs. The lone pine tree yielded Rhizopogon on its roots. Other conspicuous agarics in the clay soil amongst clumps of very green Leucobryum moss were Cantharellus wellingtonensis and Gliophorus versicolor. We came across a large colony of Lycoperdon pyriforme at the foot of a dead standing tree (Nothofagus?). The bark had been shed from this tree and we could observe the labyrinth of galleries excavated by insects. The ones full of frass were made by beetles, termites evidently leave their tunnels clean. There was clear evidence of the tunnels being lined with a film of fungal mycelium - the wood surfaces were quite velvety in places, and the general texture of the wood was obviously altered by insect activity and fungal enzymes. Neither beetles nor termites can colonise or survive in dead wood without the co-operation of (a) fungi decaying the wood and (b) micro-organisms living

in their gut, both of which provide the enzymes to digest the cellulose and/or lignin.

As there was no sign of a break in the weather, the party agreed on a fairly early retreat back to the cars and home.

WOODCOCKS KAWAKA PARK SCENIC RESERVE

Maureen Young

Three ferns in Woodcocks Kawaka Park Scenic Reserve near Warkworth - Loxoma cunninghamii, Gleichenia flabellata and Pteris comans (July news-sheet) - greatly surprised Frank Hudson and myself when we found them growing there. The Loxoma and the Gleichenia we have seen in the Russell Forest, Great Barrier Island and Kauaeranga Valley, but we have no knowledge of them growing in this district. The coastal Pteris comans, which we have found at Mimiwhangata and Mayor Island, looked most out of place in a shady, damp patch of bush c. 15 km from either coast. When Lucy Moore was consulted she was immediately suspicious on seeing one patch of each fern growing near the road and nowhere else. She concluded that they had probably been planted, maybe by Cam Finlayson or Jack Edgerley - both now deceased, but both very active in the botanical field in the post-war years. We spoke to Mr Edgerley's son Bill, who lives near the reserve. He was quite sure that his father was not responsible, as he was mainly interested in trees. However, he feels it is quite likely that Mr Finlayson may have planted them.

We will probably never know for sure how these ferns came to be in Woodcocks Reserve, but their presence remains a subject of conjecture.

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WHAKATIWAI SCIENTIFIC RESERVE

E.S. Moore & R.B. West

Whakatiwai Scientific Reserve is part of Whakatiwai Block, Kaukapakapa Riding, Rodney County.

This was first owned by the Outhwaite family and kauri was first milled about 1880. The terrain is steep and the project was not particularly lucrative for the family. Much of the kauri was of poor quality and a good number of the trees were left. In the early 1920's the last of the Outhwaite family died and the property was sold to timber firm Canutson and Lovatt. They cut the remaining millable kauri and it was rafted to Helensville by C.S. West and railed to Auckland - about 1928.

The land was then sold to Tung Oil Co. This Company was hoping to promote a new industry - namely growing tung oil trees and extracting the oil from the nuts that they bore. In this area the land was roughly cultivated and trees planted but the trees would not grow. In some northern areas they grew but produced no nuts.