

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.