

Late November: Porters Pass. Great masses of flowers, 10 to 30 minutes easy walking from the road, notably Cyathodes colensoi and Drabetis dieffenbachii. An hour up the hill, Ranunculus haastii scattered everywhere like yellow or golden stars on the running scree. Seen for the first time, they were marvellous.

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HERPOLIRION NOVAE - ZELANDIAE

by Barbara De Lambert

Family Liliaceae. Grass Lily. HERPOLIRION NOVAE-ZELANDIAE.

This remarkable creeping, wiry plant which forms extensive grasslike swords is probably the smallest lily in the world. The glaucous, narrow crowded leaves sheath the stem alternately. Height: - Leaves 2.5 cm. - 5 cm.

Flowers 6 mm. - 12 mm. Sexes together. A very short flower stalk almost hidden by the leaves supports a white or pale blue flower, large for the size of the plant, funnel shaped, divided into six segments and containing six erect stamens which curve with flowering. The round capsule is embedded in the funnel which remains after the flower dies, and the black oblong seeds are ripe. Flowers December - February. Distribution - Waitomo Caves to Stewart Island in peaty places, especially sub alpine swamps, from sea level to 4,000 feet.

Reference:

Flora of New Zealand, L.B. Moore and E. Edgar.

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OUT IN THE OPEN

Monday, 1st March, 1886

Amongst plants probably useful for the manufacture of scents or essences, may be mentioned the ti-tree (Cordyline), ake-ake (Olearia) in its varieties, hine-hine (Meliccytus); Senecio cassinioides, one of the most fragrant of alpiners. One could point to an extensive area in the alpine country where this last-named shrub grew luxuriantly, delighting the wanderer with its most agreeable perfume, but for the sake of an annual rental of £5, the whole vegetation of the district, by a supine government, was allowed to be burnt and charred to ashes, truly metamorphosing the landscape, turning Elysium into Hades. Nor did the blunder end here, the drainage suddenly affected, floods and freshes overflowed and laid waste some of the most fertile low-lying lands; leaving huge shingle heaps and boulders as memorials of their destructive inroads. All this was allowed to pass so entirely without notice, that not even a few yards of red tape were expended in any enquiry on the subject.

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