

MORE ABOUT FERNS IN KARAMEA

By Jack Ballin

For a start - in a previous article I mentioned Coprosma areolata ... it seems to me this is quite wrong ... it could be C. rigida. Someone will have to go up and correct it properly. Well, firstly, dear old Lindsaea viridis is much more widespread ... a bank very near the road with great gaps where loving collectors have taken great armfuls ... then further upstream in Tidal creek. When you come to the limonite go up the true east bank about 120 metres and then as you strike the wall turn back and sidle round until you come to the mass of about 5 x 4 metre block, richer, greener and longer (about 39cms) than the extensive stream side lower down. But don't take takers with you as it too will soon disappear. I think there is a track up to the bank but Mel Aicken says my idea of this is different to his. Also it is well to remember that if you go up a creek your feet will get wet unless you wear waders which I sometimes do.

I am told that I should report that I have seen twin indusia in Hymenophyllum scabrum, and for the first time in 40 years little curls on the indusia of H. sanguinolentam simply because I didn't know it was there. If you want to see H. flexuosum at its superb best go to the Nikau grove at the start of the Heaphy Track, it is truly luscious.

Trichomanes strictum pops up there and almost anywhere else in this mad paradise (Karamea), mad because of gorgeous plants and outrageous natives, humans I mean. H. lyalli is common on the ground beneath little ledges and also occupies the whole trunks of trees but of a rather small size.

Then up at Burnetts face along the cedar grove there are H. malingii and H. rufescans on the same dead stump and also in association with the former H. flabellatum, which reminds us of Holloway's saying that the two latter are associated transitionally.

Then on the way up to Stockton just above the last bridge there is a pride of Gleichenia flabellata in its own dripping lime cave completely covering the floor and ceiling. Stephen King, the undainty landscaper (native) from Auckland, looking the image of a truncated Fred Dagg, disappeared into the middle of this glorious thing diminishing perceptibly into a tiny gnome and coming out with a chunk and muttering that it wasn't a bit like the Thames one, but then he is a Northerner poor chap. Ink McCleean has another lot pin pointed nearby with grid reference.

I have Trichomanes elongatum growing under glass ... the trick is to wet the bank thoroughly and lift it directly into the growing receptacle. Miss Crookes says T. elongatum gets its back covered with moss and lichens, which is so, and the new fronds in captivity do the same. Holloway says that it has double lateral walls so wonder if this is significant ... however other filmies have mosses and/or lichens growing on them too ... H. sanguinolentum, multifidum and demissum if small enough and damp enough. Incidentally Holloway states that there are other exceptions to one cellness in filmies ... Trichomanes reniforme is one and I have an idea that H. scabrum and maybe H. dilatatum are also ... this is worth checking in his exciting paper. Ross Elder tells of Holloway checking a whole coal sack of debris to find

one prothallus. Why hasn't his name been honoured in a species ... it is long overdue.

A toughie to grow is Lindsaea trichomanoides, it likes the light and has to come from an open site. Asplenium trichomanes grows well on punga root if you give it some lime. There are loads on the way to Harwoods hole on Takaka Hill and, of course, lots of Malings there in the extensive cedar groves. On the hill, too, is Senecio laxifolius growing prettily near by the road about the higher bends and past the lime works. The two lime Aspleniums, lyallii and anomodum grow side by side and are quite different despite disporting their double 48 chromosomes.

H. revolutum is the ground cover almost anywhere in the Karamea bush at least up to about 500 metres, with H. demissum, bivalve, multifidum and sanguinolentum clinging to branches. Cyathea colensoi is common at sea level. Pteris macilentata and Blechnum filiforme don't seem to descend south of the Kohihi and neither does Arthropteris tenella. This is very hard to grow as it clings to rocks and doesn't like moving.

Adiantum cunninghamii is rife among the higher limestones and also on dripping banks with L. viridis which is also found in Glass Eye Creek and on the banks near the road into the Wangapeka. Another Adiantum, aethiopicum ? grows by the banks of the Karamea ... there's some doubt about it but a good look at the indusium I think, at least, takes it away from the endemic lime stone species. I have A. diaphanum growing cutely on a punga stump, it likes to be moist and shaded. I got it on the track at Totaranui. David Given says that Miss Carson describes A. viridescens which he has seen at West Wanganui Inlet, N.W. Nelson.

This isn't, of course, a complete list, mention should be made of the almost crimson Blechnums, vulcanicum and lanceolatum a glorious sight. All in all if its ferns you are after this is the place. Oh ... there is Blechnum nigrum in maximum size and it is here that I found Trichomanes endlicherianum for the first time. A friend, Dale Duval, has T. colensoi and she has also found a filmy that David Given says calls for a reclassification. It has alternate plane and flexuous wing forms and looks like a diminutive flexuosum with atrovirens thrown in ... an odd bod indeed. Will Miss Crookes 'australe' come into its own. I have not seen H. cupressiforme but did bring it back once from Aussie's New England.

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