

the point north of Manuka Bay. Traces of this road are still evident to the south but it is completely washed away near Gore Bay and these days the best access is by a steep rough road which approaches direct to the middle of the very shallow bay. Before the railway penetrated north, Port Robinson quite overshadowed Gore Bay as it gave access to Cheviot (Mackenzie) and the surrounding country, and 70 to 80 years ago boasted a harbourmaster and an assistant. The port, graced by ramps and a shed and used by a few fishing boats, is backed by steep slopes with small pockets of bush in gullies. The bush, though not a reserve, is described by G. Kelly in the Lands & Survey Department compilation of the Canterbury Reserves. Listed therein is Cotyledon orbiculata. This a tall handsome succulent with thick, roundish, broad, opposite grey leaves and a cluster of drooping, reddish-orange flowers at the top of a tall stout stalk. It is abundant on the small rocky outcrops and clayey faces apparently from one end of the port to the other. So far as I know Port Robinson is the only locality where this species has become naturalised and it must have escaped from gardens many years ago.

On the flat at the south end of the port, lining either side of the road before it descends to Manuka Bay, are hedges of ngaio (Myoporum laetum) which shelter a number of native plants. A few of these may have been planted but mostly they are colonisers from the nearby bushy gullies. The hedge on the north side has been pollarded and is more open of the two and the colonisers are fewer :- akeake (Dodonaea viscosa), matipo (Myrsine australis), black matipo (Pittosporum tenuifolium), and a kowhai (Sophora microphyllum). Two specimens of a bronze, tri-foliolate Pseudopanax are presumably planted. The other hedge is denser and unpollarded. In its shelter beside matipo, black matipo, and kowhai grow koromiko (Hebe salicifolia), cabbage tree (Cordyline australis), karamu (Coprosma robusta), fivefinger (Pseudopanax arboreum), kawakawa (Macropiper excelsum), two totaras, Helichrysum glomeratum, Olearia paniculata, O. avicennaefolia, pohuehue (Muehlenbeckia complexa) and Astelia fragrans. Three specimens of pohutukawa may have been planted or be self sown from a tree near the front gate of the nearby house. Much Haloragis erecta grows under both hedges, as do various grasses and adventive herbs.

TYPHA SEEDLINGS

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In a recent paper Sharma and Gopal (1978)* report the widespread occurrence of Typha seedlings within natural stands of Typha in the states of Uttar Pradesh, India. This is of interest for as these authors note, although Typha plants produce countless seeds, seedlings have "rarely been reported in nature and never from the vicinity of Typha stands". This comment applies to Typha (T. orientalis) in New Zealand which depends upon stout underground rhizomes to form the dense stands so familiar to us. I have seen Typha seedlings twice, once at Lake Horowhenua, west of Levin, and in the same year in a now much reduced swamp at Raumai about 25 km north-east of Palmerston North.

About opposite the remains of an island pa built just off the western shores of Lake Horowhenua there were clumps of T. orientalis and Eleocharis sphacelata growing in shallow water on which floated Azolla rubra and Lemna minor. From the water's edge a narrow muddy band, bare except for some A. rubra, L. minor and Myriophyllum propinquum, extended into a zone dominated by Carex secta and including some Typha and Scirpus prolifer. There were fairly extensive patches of Eleocharis gracilis and M. propinquum within this zone, but there were also considerable areas of bare mud. In one of these bare areas there were about a dozen seedling Typha plants growing on almost liquid mud.

At Raumai a few seedlings were found growing on a similar substratum, but on this occasion close to an extensive stand of Typha. These are the only Typha seedlings preserved in Botany Division herbarium (CHR 64947) and this single sheet may reflect their rarity. In any event it seems worthwhile to make these records public with the hope that others may be forthcoming and to stimulate new observations.

The reasons for the paucity of reported finds is uncertain. Some claim that seedlings cannot establish themselves because of a toxic substance produced by adult plants or by decaying leaves, but the authors quoted above believe that light plays an important role in regulating germination of Typha seed and growth of seedlings.

* Sharma, K.P. and Gopal, B. 1978:

Seed germination and occurrence of seedlings of Typha species in nature. Aquatic Botany 4: 353-58.

EDITORIAL WANDERINGS

THELYMITRA

An examination of the ground below the pines growing near Orana Park in October will be rewarded by seeing many Thelymitra pauciflora and T. uniflora.

MYOSOTIS AUSTRALIS VAR. LYTTELTONENSIS

A search of the Lyttelton Reserve in 1975 and 1976 produced no plants of Myosotis australis var. lytteltonensis, it was feared that this very rare variety had died out. We were delighted to find two plants in flower growing under a flax bush on 5th October 1977.

CHILOGLOTTIS CORNUTA

What a breathtaking surprise it was to find growing in the open in the hollow of a decayed log on Mt. Pierce on 24th December 1977 over 115 massed flowers of Chiloglottis cornuta. An additional joy was the light golden colour of stems, leaves and flowers.

GIBRALTAR

A beautiful sight seen below Gibraltar on 26th October 1977 was two banks gaily decked with numerous white flowers of Mentha cunninghamii.