

NATIVES GROWING AT DARFIELD

By Alastair Macdonald

Winter Growth

In March, 1978, I collected several alpine native plants and planted them in my scree garden at Darfield.

I have closely observed these plants during the winter and have written this short article concerning their growth.

The Weather

At Darfield there were a number of hard frosts from May to June and there was 1-2 cm of frost-heave in the scree garden itself. There was also 5 inches of snow that lay for 5 days from the night of the 29th of June, and 22.23 inches of rain from March to July the 10th.

Gentiana corymbifera

These were scattered as seed on the 28th March 1978 and germinated some time in May. One has formed a rosette 60 mm across as at the 10th July and 3 others have also germinated and are now an average of 23 mm across.

Cotula atrata

These were collected and planted as whole plants on 12th March 1978. During the period up to 10th July, the existing leaves have withered or just gone yellow, but in the centre of each plant there is a 22 mm rosette of about 7 new leaves that have grown since planting.

Haastia pulvinaris

Three of these were planted on the 12th March 1978 and lay dormant until they settled into their new surroundings and then in May they started to grow. Each vegetative tip has set an average of 3 new leaves forming a rosette of new growth 5 mm across. They have been under a small piece of glass to keep their down dry but they have been exposed to the frosts.

Haastia recurva

In contrast to the *H. pulvinaris*, the *H. recurva* has lain dormant from March, when it was planted to the 10th July, when I prepared this article, except for one vegetative tip which has one new leaf, the rest are still alive but definitely not growing.

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