

The remaining species are common in many parts of Canterbury. Orthotrichum pulvinatum has strongly papillose leaves and frequently grows in narrow rock crevices.

Leptodon smithii more often grows on bark of trees than on rock and is easily recognised by the fact that the branches roll up in a tight knot when dry.

Triquetrella papillata has its leaves typically in three rows and grows in loose patches on sandy soils. It is a common species at Birdlings Flat and on the Port Hills.

It is expected that future visits to this area will turn up many more interesting species and greatly add to this list.

NATIVE ORCHIDS IN THE CHRISTCHURCH AREA

L.J. Metcalf

Although most of metropolitan Christchurch is intensely urban it can still yield some surprises when it comes to recording species of native plants. Various species of shrubs and certain ferns are by no means uncommon, but native orchids in a city environment are, perhaps, another story.

Several years ago during one of my routine perambulations around the Christchurch Botanic Gardens an unusual plant growing in the almost bare ground beneath some rhododendron bushes caught my eye. A closer examination showed it to be Chiloglottis cornuta, an orchid which is fairly common throughout much of the country although was the first time that I had observed it in the city area. This particular plant was under the rhododendrons just a few metres west of the display case at the Woodland Bridge. It persisted for two or three years and then failed to reappear. Whether its disappearance was caused by the intense summer droughts which were being experienced then, or not I do not know. Perhaps a diligent search of other areas of the Botanic Gardens might reveal this species as still being present.

A few years ago when the Ministry of Works was undertaking some roadwork at the summit of Arthurs Pass the Christchurch Botanic Gardens was given permission to remove some plant material from the site of the road deviation. This plant material was planted in the alpine garden in the Cockayne Memorial Garden and by chance it contained one or two plants of Microtis unifolia. They flowered the following spring and since then this species has become firmly established in the alpine garden. It grows with great freedom and plants of it may be seen popping up from amongst low shrubs, between rocks and in various other situations. No doubt in time Microtis will extend its territory and appear in other parts of the Botanic Gardens.

There is a third species of native orchid to be found growing in the Botanic Gardens. About three years ago one of the gardeners asked me

about a strange plant that he had discovered growing in one of the shrub borders. An inspection showed this plant to be none other than Gastrodia cunninghamii. This species is to be found in the azalea and magnolia border just near the Director's residence inside the Cashel Street gate. Without careful digging it would be difficult to say what it was attached to, but in all probability it would be the fleshy roots of the magnolias.

The last species of orchid to be mentioned came from outside the urban area but it is sufficiently interesting to mention. Early last year Mr. C.H. Johns, the Christchurch City Council's Head Forester, brought me a specimen of an unusual plant that he had found growing in the Bottle Lake plantations. This also proved to be a Gastrodia but it did not have quite the appearance of G. cunninghamii. From an examination of its characters it would appear to answer to G. sesamoides. If this is correct it is an unusual record. In "the Flora of New Zealand" Vol II, 157 the distribution of G. sesamoides is given as "N.S. Mostly north of lat. 42°". A footnote says that the most southerly record is an old one from Kelly's Creek. A specimen from the plant at Bottle Lake is deposited in the herbarium at the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

BLEDISLOE TROPHY

In Journal number 11 Mr. L.J. Metcalf supplied a brief history of the trophy donated in 1953 by Lord Bledisloe and of the reasons why it has not been awarded in recent years.

It has now been decided that the trophy shall be awarded annually for the best contribution to the Journal made by a non-professional member of the Society.

The trophy will be presented at the November meeting of the Society.
