

I am sure that the cultivation of these small white native daisies would be well worth while, either as border plants, as the little English daisy used to be grown or in fair sized patches as one sees at Otari Open Air Native Plant Museum. That they respond to care and attention in the way of good soil and watering I have already proved, and they make such a brave show, flowering from Spring far into Autumn and sending up new rosettes of leaves from the rhizomes or under ground runners. Indeed they seem to be the friendliest little flowers and should be much better known, especially in native gardens. Seeds of Brachycome Thomsoni, another small native daisy from Stewart Island, produced seedlings in about a fortnight after sowing in a pot. This has given me the idea of gathering the seed of Lagenophora for growing. I find that the seed when ripe is so viscid or sticky that it has to be rubbed from the fingers with a little dry earth. There are seven species of these daisies and I should be very pleased to help anyone who cares to get in touch with me about growing them.

Mrs. W.W. Samson

ALONG THE CHURA RIVER.

The Chura River, a tributary of the Wanganui, runs through valleys among great hills. There is very little wind at all, and misty conditions and intense sunshine provide perfect conditions for trees. On the river flats parklike areas are found. Kowhais are plentiful, often in groves, great spreading trees thirty feet in height, in late spring clothed with weeping cascades of blossom above the vivid green of the pastures. Tuis and bell-birds, filled with nectar, sing and warble. Other parklike areas have Cleas, both maire and narrow-leaved kinds, young kahikatea, rimus, totaras, miro, and matai. One great kahikatea, snapped off about one hundred feet from the ground has a fair sized cabbage tree growing up through the foliage from the broken trunk top, the more remarkable as cabbage trees are rare in this area.

Along the river banks Fuchsia perscandens with long thin trailing stems forms low mounds or climbs over stumps covering yards of ground. Clematis parviflora and various Muehlenbeckias are often part of the tangle while Myrtus bullata and many red and black berried hybrids and also Coprosma spathulata stand up amongst these trailers. Fuchsias appear also as semi-lianoid shrubs with scrambling branches, some like strong climbing roses, others having a trunk needing support. There are short trunked shrubs with many upright branches, longer trunks with slender drooping branches and variations of all kinds until the true type of Fuchsia excorticata is reached. Foliage varies too from the thin small rotund leaf of the trailer, through many forms, textures and sizes to the four-inch lanceolate leaf of the tree. Blossoms may be of many sizes and kinds, in no way corresponding to the leaf-types. Really interesting are their colours, green indigo-blue, soft blues, light reds, dark reds as the flowers mature.

In the silt at the river's edge grow that white-blossomed small shrub, Teucrium parvifolium, the large-flowered Pratia and a Violet. Plagianthus betulinus, with large bunches of tiny flowers, yellow-tinged instead of being entirely green, is one of the loveliest trees.

On the papa ridges Cordyline Banksii is a frequent companion of Dracophyllum strictum and Gaultheria rupestris, showy with masses of blossom. This Gaultheria is a good garden subject, forming compact bushes, flowering freely. In the papa wash area our tiny orange-berried Gunnera sometimes forms large colonies.

The rain forest of the Waitaanga Saddle above Ohura has great ratas, miro, rimu, towering often one hundred feet before branching. Below them Nothopanax laetum is at home - leaves are sixteen inches across, the separate leaflets nine inches long, sometimes glossy, sometimes dull, smooth-edged or toothed. N. Edgerlyi, lovely as a juvenile is plentiful, and N. arboreum and many hybrids. Schefflera digitata varies too, at times having enormous leaves.

Alseuosmia forms dense thickets on the roadside, seemingly coming up as second growth. The cane-like stems are four to five feet long and leaves large and broad, long

and narrow, or short and narrow. The red blossoms too show differences, but all fill the air with honeysuckle sweetness. The red berries are quite attractive. Plants in the forest branch more and are often esmi-prostrate.

This is a paradise for ferns. The filmy ferns, *Hymenophyllum* and *Trichomanes* are in profusion. The parsley fern, *Botrychium ternatum* var. *dissectum* is found in large colonies.

Mrs. E. Gower

HINTS ABOUT SOWING SEED.

Prepare your seed bed of light soil to allow the air to circulate. Have it well drained so that excessive moisture can escape; too much water is the cause of a large number of failures in germination, particularly with small seeds. Make the bed in as warm a place as possible, but if using heat to germinate seeds do not let it be above say 75° F. If the sun is going to dry out your soil too rapidly shade with a piece of hessian or similar material. Always sow seed thinly to allow a sturdy plant to develop. Avoid sowing seed too deep. A good rule, especially for fine seed is to cover to twice the depth of the seed. Do not water after the first watering if it can be avoided but should this be necessary use water the same temperature as the seed box.

D.A. McLaren, Propagator for W.C.C.

SCUTELLARIA NOVAEZEALANDIAE

A note from Mr. Beddie tells of a visit on a January evening to Mr. B.C. Aston's garden in Karori. The main objective was to see *Scutellaria novaezealandiae* in flower. This little labiate herb, endemic to the Sounds-Nelson Botanical District, is hardly ever seen in cultivation, though its dainty white flowers and characteristic Turk's cap fruits make it an attractive garden plant apart from its rarity interest. Members will recollect a small