

A District Officer travelling between houses usually 15 miles apart walks through a bush tunnel 25' high, and sees only a fraction of the animals living near and including snakes (the royal python is 15' long), leopards antelopes, and birds. The female hornbill, high in the forest, is walled up with mud inside a cavity in a tree, receiving her food through a small hole which she can block with her beak to keep snakes and other enemies from her nest. Monkeys are the commonest animals, but the chimpanzees live on hill tops, and baboons more in grasslands where they can run.

Questions elicited more information about birds, flowers, storms and timbers, only to leave us feeling how much more Mr. Fenton could have told us.

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WAIKANAE ESTUARY.

On December 6th. 1947 some twenty members and friends journeyed to Paraparaumu where they met five members of the Levin N.Z. Flora Club, their guests for the day's outing. Had the morning not dawned showery the number from Levin would have been greater.

Miss Neumann led us to where high tides had left the usual collection of debris amongst the plants that love the sun and salty marsh. Higher up grew sedges, rushes and small shrubs of Olearia solandri, Plagianthus divaricatus with berries, and Leptospermum scoparium. Smaller plants were Puccinellia stricta, a fine small grass; Plantago coronopifolia with finely cut leaves; Pratia angulata with its pretty white one-sided flowers and pink berries; Salicornia australis (glasswort) hugging the sand out in the open patches, with Samolus repens of primrose family scattered about, its small starry white flowers wide open. The trifoliate dark green leaves of Ranunculus acaulis shone like polished greenstone and its small pale yellow buttercups looked shy amid the leaves. Pinkish flowers gave colour to the wee plants of Tillaea sinclairii. Cotula minor, ferny-leaved with dark base, was found amongst taller neighbours. Selliera radicans was another little creeping plant with one-sided white flowers and yellow throat.

A call comes that the billy is boiling and we lunch under a ngaio tree, discussing the morning's booty. Appetites appeased, the party set out along the river where Juncus maritimus, the common big rush is conspicuous, its golden brown heads not yet quite in full bloom. Miss Neumann's boat carried some of us across the river to new hunting grounds. Scirpus nodosus with brown knobby head and smooth rush-like stem grew taller than the bluish-green Scirpus americanus with stems sharply triangular in section. Mazus pumilio is a low creeping plant also with lop-sided flowers white with a dash of purple near the throat and narrow leaves lightly touched with brown.

Boggy places and small pools were encountered where were seen Potamogeton cheesemanii with smooth entire floating leaves, the exotic P. crispum with small, soft, wavy-edged leaves that do not reach the water surface, and the rather string-like Ruppia with spirally coiled peduncles that make its species doubtful.

Glossostigma elatinoides, its cream flowers an eighth of an inch across set in clustering narrow leaves has a sensitive stigma which when touched springs erect. Lilaeopsis (Crantzia) belonging to the carrot family has narrow jointed "leaves" and tiny white starry flower flushed with pink and purple throat. When seen through the lens this is one of the most beautiful of the sand plants and has a look as if it were sprinkled with frost.

Time passed all too quickly and after recrossing the stream we enjoyed tea at Miss Neumann's home, where we found many New Zealand plants, some of them rare ones, growing quite happily in this well-sheltered spot. It was with many thanks to Miss Neumann that the party left for home.

E. C. Parsons.

(The Editor has taken the liberty of adding notes on a few species of water-plants seen after Mrs. Parsons had to go.)