

GUMLAND ORCHIDS.

Mr. F. W. Bartlett writes from his home, "Bankside," Silverdale, twenty miles north of Auckland, about orchids and other small interesting plants mostly growing in the rather scrubby country known as "gumland."

"The list of orchids I have located in the Silverdale area is quite considerable, - Dendrobium cunninghamii, Bulbophyllum pygmaeum, Earina micronata, Thelymitra longifolia, T. pauciflora, T. aemula (rare), T. caesia (fairly common), T. imberbis (scarce), Orthoceras strictum (common), Microtis unifolia (common), Prasopphyllum colensoi (rare), P. pumilum (fairly common), Pterostylis banksii (uncommon), P. graminea (common), P. trullifolia (common), with its varieties alobula and gracilis (uncommon), P. nana (syn. puberula) and P. barbata (both uncommon); Acianthus sinclairii (common), Caladenia carnea (syn. minor) (common) and its unpublished var. bartlettii (uncommon); Chiloglottis cornuta, Corybas aconitiflorus, and C. oblongus all three fairly common, C. trilobus and C. macrantha uncommon, and Gastrodia sesamoides (rare).

It is possible to see within 8-10 chains of my home Pterostylis barbata and P. nana growing alongside one another with P. trullifolia and P. graminea nearby, while Thelymitra caesia and T. imberbis bloom beside the dainty Caladenia carnea var. bartlettii and Prasopphyllum pumilum together with the more common orchids. Dotted through the scrub is the famous Phylloglossum with Lycopodium laterale, L. densum, Epacris pauciflora, Drosera binata and D. auriculata.

All this is on a piece of Crown Land rented by me. I live in dread that some day the Crown will resume ownership of the property and the scrub and its interesting plant life will go up in smoke or be overrun by crawler tractors in the name of progress."

(Could not the Wellington hills provide as long and interesting a list? Make a resolution to watch the orchids this spring! Ed.)

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WEEKEND TRIP TO WAIOPEHU. April 16 - 18th.

About 15 members of the Society travelled by truck from Wellington to Levin where Mrs. Duguid provided most welcome refreshment before we dossed down in and around her house. Next morning the truck took us to the Ohau River where breakfast was enjoyed in brilliant sunshine before we set off.

The first part of the route was through mixed bush which gave good opportunities to the collectors of fungi. Along the ridge leading to Waiopehu we passed through an extensive area of wind-thrown beeches; the shallow rooting systems of these trees, some of them of considerable size, were clearly shown. In addition to the tangle of Aristotelia, Rubus, etc., saplings of Nothofagus fusca were coming away well.

Some members reaching the hut early, climbed to the summit through the leatherwood and out on to the tussock; others delayed their visit until the following morning. After an early lunch at the hut we returned by the same route.

Even in the truck we had opportunities for botanical observation and watching for the seven headed nikau became almost a ritual!

The expedition was most successful, and we wish to record our thanks to the leader, Miss Mason, and incidentally to the weather which co-operated to the full.

J. M. Sansom.

GEASTRUM VELUTINUM.

This earth-star has fruited conspicuously in the month of July, in Wilton's Bush, on Johnston's Hill and in Ngaio Reserve. The fleshy rays of the outer shell open star-like, flesh-pink in colour, and develop reticulate cracks as they bend back and curl underneath. The inner part