

Notes

Kapakapanui Burn. Commenting on the article "Succession after Forest Fires in the Southern Tararua Mountains", by D. R. McQueen (Well. Bot. Soc. Bull. No. 24), Mr. N. L. Elder, Havelock North, writes: "I have two or three photographs of the Kapakapanui burn taken in 1912 which might be of interest —. It might be possible to find out the date of that burn for it was started by some of the Reikiorangi people —. From my recollection of Kapakapanui in 1912 it had changed very little up to 1930. Even in 1912 there was little visible mark of fire: dead tree trunks standing in a closed association of tussock and an infernal number of hidden fallen logs to climb over."

Aerial Rhizomes on a Cabbage Tree. Mr. N. T. Moar, Wellington, sends the following note: "A cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*) with rhizomes growing from an almost horizontal branch has been observed on the eastern shore of Lake Horowhenua, near Levin. The habit of the cabbage tree and the nature of the rhizomes can be seen in the accompanying photograph. The branch is not more than six inches above the ground at its junction with the main stem, and gradually increases to a height of about three feet above the ground. The lower rhizomes are well developed and have grown into the ground, but the rest, only a few inches long, have failed to do so. It is interesting to note that well developed stems have also grown from the branch. It is a well known fact that the cabbage tree can produce aerial rhizomes, and Cockayne (*Trans. N.Z. Inst.*, 41) has reported the occurrence of such rhizomes on a dying tree in Christchurch. The rhizomes found on the cabbage tree at Lake Horowhenua were so well developed and conspicuous that a brief note of their occurrence seemed worthwhile."

Red Tussock in the Tararuas. Red tussock (*Danthonia rigida*, but called by Cockayne *D. raoulii* var. "rubra") is well known in the centre of the North Island because of the distinctive reddish tinge it



gives to so much of the tussock grassland in the volcanic country there. It was thought to be absent from the southern portion of the North Island, south of the Whanahuia Ra. (Ruahine Mountains), so that it came as a surprise to hear from Mr. R. M. Greenwood, Palmerston North, that he had found it in the northern Tararua "— on a ridge not properly shown on the map, running northwards from just west of Taramia Peak towards the Mangahao. It was associated with the broader-leaved variety of snow-grass (*Danthonia flavescens*), together with intermediates, and was confined to the flatter tops and more exposed areas not covered with leatherwood, altitude 2500-2700 feet."

Australian Orchid found in N.Z. Hitherto only one species of *Pterostylis* with more than a single flower to each stem has been known in New Zealand, namely, *P. mutica*. In 1951 another species was found in the South Island and identified as the Australian *P. cycnocephala*. This species (illustrated below) differs from *P. mutica* in having larger flowers (galea or hood three-tenths inch long as compared with two-tenths in *P. mutica*) and in the structure of the labellum or lip. The orchid was collected by Mr. H. Talbot, Springfield, and identified by Mr. J. B. Irwin, Pukerua Bay, Wellington, who writes as follows: "Hearing that Mr. Talbot had found both brown and green forms of *Pterostylis mutica*, I wrote asking if he could send fresh flowers. In November 1951 Mr. Talbot kindly sent specimens of a green many-flowered *Pterostylis* from dry stony ground near the Kowai River. He named them *P. mutica*, but added a question mark. In the flowers sent, the appendage to the labellum faced outwards from the galea, and as this character has been used to distinguish the Australian *P. cycnocephala* from *P. mutica*, in which

Flowers of *Pterostylis cycnocephala* nearly four times natural size, showing (in the upper flower) the sensitive labellum or lip with its appendage (dark) pointing downwards. In the lower flower the labellum has been tripped (by lightly touching the appendage), causing it to flick upwards and close the entrance to the galea or hood. In this way it is thought that small insects are trapped and that in escaping via the keel of the galea, they effect cross pollination, the stigma being passed of necessity before the anther.

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Pterostylis cycnocephala, an Australian orchid recently found near the Kowai River, Springfield, by Mr. H. Talbot. Plants sent by Mr. Talbot were grown at Pukerua Bay, Wellington, by Mr. J. B. Irwin and flowered at the end of October 1952, when this photograph was taken. A note on the orchid appears on the opposite page. Scale: slightly less than natural size.

the appendage points inwards, I suspected that the Kowai River plants were *P. cycnocephala*. A week later Mr. Talbot sent some plants in which the appendage faced inwards. These were *P. mutica*, and both green and brown colour forms were present. Mr. E. D. Hatch later confirmed both identifications." *Postscript*: Shortly after this note was written, *P. cycnocephala* was also discovered by Mr. G. Bayliss of Tinwald, Canterbury, who records it from two localities, near Westerfield and Winslow, between the Ashburton and Hinds rivers.

Myosotis Astoni. This forget-me-not which for a long time has been known only from the type locality, Mt. Holdsworth, and from the Ruahines, where it was described as *M. diversifolia*, has been found by Mr. Norman Potts, Opotiki, who writes: "Some two years ago a friend of mine named Bob Green and I met with a *Myosotis* growing on rocks about 400 feet above Te Waiti River, a tributary of the Otara River—about eight miles south of here. I grew it from seed and made it *M. petiolata* sensu lato—but it's very different from plants I have collected in other places, e.g., the robust form at Anawhata."