

Rangiwahia, Ruahine Mountains

A. P. Druce

In the Tararua Mt. Holdsworth is the most easily reached top where mountain plants may be seen. The equivalent place in the Ruahines is Rangiwahia, part of the Whana Huia Range, a western outlier of the main range about twelve miles from Mangaweka. In January 1952 ten of us went on the Society's trip there and climbed to the tops. The lower bush slopes of the range are clothed with red beech, the upper with cedar and leatherwood. The flat-topped ridges and rounded summits above the bush are softened by closely placed tussocks of snow-grass. Here and there in hollows and gentle valleys nestle clear tarns, surrounded by bogs in which many small plants grow. Some of the tarns are held up only by walls of sphagnum peat, and it looks as though erosion of these natural dams will unfortunately lead to their disappearance in time. Most interesting also was the occurrence of many logs of bog-pine in the peaty tussock soil up to at least 200 feet above the present tree-line.

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