

# An Ascent of Mt. Raukumara

R. D. Creswell, Tokomaru Bay

AT the end of December, 1957, four of us—P. Painter, G. M. Powell, R. A. Creswell and myself—explored Raukumara, 4,404 ft, twelve miles north of Hikurangi at the northern end of the Raukumara Range. Leaving the new bridge over the Raparapaririki Stm, locally known as the 'Rip', where this stream flows into the Tapuawairoa R., we tramped northward up the wide shingle bed for two miles through cleared country, then through a short stretch of country in second-growth before entering the bush. At about the fifth mile a side stream joined the 'Rip' and up this stream the steep leatherwood-covered ridge of Ahiapurua could be seen. The 'Rip' valley then turned eastward and narrowed into a gorge. The forest here was mainly red beech and kamahi, with silver beech on the less rocky slopes. The walls of the gorge were festooned with many plants, including large masses of *Ourisia macrophylla* with flowers white or pale mauve. After half a mile the 'Rip' broadened out to long flood banks of shingle covered with tutu. On the right a steep ridge led up onto the imposing crown of Komopara. The 'Rip' then ascended more steeply and logs made walking tedious.

After a short stop for lunch we decided to scramble up a slip and find a leading spur onto Raukumara. Here the forest was dominated by red beech, but the trees were mostly past maturity and there were few juvenile plants. On the steep hillside there was much rotting timber, a lot of lawyer and many broadleaved trees and shrubs replacing the beech. At 3,500 ft the spurs were dominated by silver beech, cedar and Hall's totara; a little higher up *Dracophyllum pyramidale*, *Senecio eleagnifolius*, *Olearia colensoi* and *O. ilicifolia* came in as the forest graded into scrub. Then the fog descended and we camped for the night in dripping wet bush.

With the weather improved at daybreak we were not sorry to leave a very uncomfortable camp site and continue upwards into the subalpine scrub. *Dracophyllum adamsii*, *Gaultheria paniculata*, *Phyllociadus alpinus*, *Gahnia procera* and a few shrubs of *Olearia nummularifolia* added variety to the dense leatherwood (*Olearia colensoi*) which, as elsewhere on the East Coast mountains, can be adequately described only by the use of unprintable adjectives. On the summit the scrub was much reduced in height and there were a few rocky outcrops. Here we found snow tussock (narrow-leaved), *Dacrydium laxifolium*, *Gaultheria depressa*, *Podocarpus nivalis*, *Pimelea buxifolia*, *Lycopodium fastigiatum*, *L. scariosum*, *Gentiana* sp., *Oreomyrrhis colensoi*, *Anisotome aromatica* and *Pentachondra pumila*.

When the fog lifted for short periods we could see, to the north, Cape Runaway; to the east, a steep escarpment with numerous spurs

marking the headwaters of the Mangaoparo R. which joins the Waiapu near Ruatoria; to the south, the summit of Komapara with, beyond, Mts Hikurangi, Aorangi and Honokawa; and to the west the farmlands in the Waikura V.

After a brief rest we fought our way westward through leatherwood for a hundred yards to the head of a long slip from which the 'Rip' starts. At the bottom of this slip a miniature gorge, flanked with masses of *Ourisia macrophylla*, extended right down to the silver beech forest. Mountain cabbage trees were numerous, and sprawling out of sheltered situations on steep banks was *Neopanax laetum*, recorded for the first time east of the main divide. A further mile brought us back to where we had left our stream the previous day and by nightfall we were half way back to our starting point. Next morning we continued and by 10 a.m. we had finished our trip, tired but triumphant: Raukumara had been set foot on — the first time since 1914.

## Hebe Speciosa in the Marlborough Sounds

F. A. Bodley, Wellington

ON a recent visit to Titirangi Bay in the Marlborough Sounds I had pointed out to me by Mr. Harry Paterson, a farmer living in the bay, a number of *Hebe speciosa* plants which are still surviving in their wild state. At least two dozen plants of various ages ranging from inch-high seedlings to two-foot high shrubs are growing in the crevices along a cliff 10 to 20 ft high. The grid reference is 433586 on map NZMS 1, sheet S 16. The cliff is just behind high-water mark and has been formed by the sea cutting back into alluvial deposits of greywacke gravel. Being on the face of the cliff the plants are not accessible to stock.

A second colony of about three dozen plants is to be found half a mile further east round the bay. The plants are all near the beach and are growing on almost inaccessible bluffs.

Some years ago Mr. J. R. Paterson, on whose property the plants are growing, transferred a number of seedlings to his garden, where seven specimens are now doing well, although no more so than those on the cliff face.

It is of interest to note that Titirangi is the Maori name for *Hebe speciosa*.

Botanical names used in the Bulletin are in most cases those used by Cheeseman (for monocotyledons) and Allan (for lycopods, ferns, gymnosperms and dicotyledons) in the "Manual of the N.Z. Flora" and the "Flora of N.Z., Vol. 1" respectively. If another name is used, following a revision, the original name used by Cheeseman or Allan is placed in brackets.