

A handsome immigrant

EARLY in February, 1969, I noticed a brilliant patch of colour beside the Hokio Stream. With the help of a friend I collected a flowering spike from its muddy habitat. This proved to be *Lythrum salicaria* (purple loosestrife or willowstrife), a native of Britain and other Northern Hemisphere countries. It must have been in the district for some time as it appeared to be well established in six or more colonies along the stream banks, as well as two conspicuous patches beside the southern shore of Lake Horowhenua and two small plants in a usually damp-to-wet sand flat near Hokio Beach settlement. Also at the village the same plant occurs in a low damp hollow near a house. Presumably it was planted there, and the nearby two small plants may have resulted from the tipping of garden rubbish.

The plant does not seem to have any special mechanism for distributing seeds so it appears unlikely that the Hokio village plants are the originators of the others. As Hokio Stream drains Horowhenua Lake, there is a remote possibility that birds or stock have disturbed roots which have then floated downstream to start new colonies along the stream banks. Unpleasantly marshy conditions at the lakeside and the general inaccessibility of the streambank sites make it improbable that these colonies were planted, and one can but wonder how they were introduced in the first place.

The tall spikes of magenta flowers are a striking addition to the mostly sombre streamside vegetation. When a new adventive is noted in a district, and seems unlikely to become a nuisance, one can enjoy its beauty.

F. C. DUGUID

Raoulia subsericea in the North Island

THOUGH common on mountains in the South Island *Raoulia subsericea* has not previously been recorded from the North Island. Mrs Rainforth, a member of the Wellington Botanical Society, has spent many hours botanising on the hills surrounding her Ngaio home. During an excursion in January 1970 she discovered a patch of *Raoulia subsericea*, several feet in diameter, on the west face of a ridge at about 1000 ft. The larger flower heads of this species caught her attention among the more common *Raoulia glabra*, which was also in flower. Bidibid, *Helichrysum filicaule*, and scattered, stunted coprosmas were among other plants present in the well grazed, spongy turf in which the raoulias were found. The grid reference is N164 310261.

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