

## ***Cordyline australis* at Lake Kopureherehe**

A note by N. T. Moar in *Bulletin* No. 26, p.29 (1959) described a fallen branch of cabbage tree at Lake Horowhenua. There was a copious growth of aerial rhizomes, some of which had grown into the ground, and also several new vertical trunks.

The complex form of a cabbage tree beside Lake Kopureherehe, west of Manakau (seen by me in July 1973), could be a later stage of similar origin. At the tip of a low promontory, in peaty ground of former swampland, a straight row of four large cabbage trees presented an unusual appearance. The shape of their bases, of fused leg-like supports, showed that much of this must have been below swamp-surface level, or in the midst of damp, moisture-retaining tussocks of swamp plants. All four trunks were close together in a line, but between them could be seen a horizontal piece of old trunk. Looking from the south side, one could plainly read the story. A mature cabbage tree had fallen in swampland from west to east. From the fallen trunk, rhizomes had grown down to the ground, and four new trunks had grown upwards. With age the lower portion of the younger trunks had rotted away on the south side, clearly revealing the remains of the old tree connecting them, its underside 61cm above the present ground surface.

Judging by other trees in the vicinity with exposed roots, the previous level of the lake must have been nearly 2m higher than the present-day level.

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## **Further record of matagouri in the North Island**

In 1926, when our property 6km north of Foxton was purchased, 80 hectares were covered in matagouri, manuka and muchlenbeckia. It was called Prickly Flat, and was the bane of the farm horses. In the shelter of the scrub matagouri grew 1.3-1.6m high, but in exposed places just 30-60cm. After one ploughing there was no regrowth at all, and it survived only where the plough couldn't cultivate around the large self-sown pines. On Queen's Birthday 1976 I searched everywhere, and found one very hoary gnarled shrub on the north side of the plantation about 1.6m high, with new growth and leaves coming forth.

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