

Book Review

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The Oxford Book of New Zealand Plants by *L. B. Moore and J. B. Irwin*, Oxford University Press, 1978, 234 pp. Price \$40.

This is a recognisable member of the "*Oxford Book of . . . Plants*" series, dealing, by way of pencil and colour plates, with the New Zealand plant kingdom generally. The non-flowering plants — algae, fungi, mosses, hepatics, ferns, etc — are dealt with in fairly short order but the 13 plates allocated to these are sufficient to give a good idea of them. The seed plants are dealt with at rather more length, though naturally it is not always possible to include every species in a genus or indeed every genus in a family. It is easy enough with a family with few New Zealand representatives, as in the Fagaceae, to include all species; it would be altogether another matter to do so in the case of the Compositae or the Umbelliferae. What results is a one-volume prospectus of the New Zealand flora, providing a good survey for the non-New Zealander and full of interest for the New Zealander who, like the artist, is an interested amateur.

The book contains 112 plates of which 32 are in colour. Generally a plate deals with several plants, including supplementary details of flower and fruit, in this respect often reminding one of the Cheeseman plates. The drawings and paintings are clear, accurate and pleasing, as is to be expected from Mr Irwin. It might have been gratifying to have more colour plates, but the difficulties of reproducing colour to give the exact tones and shades of an original painting or photograph are limiting. The reproduction of the paintings which are included, however, appears to be reasonable. Each plate is faced by a page of notes, of which the clarity and interest accords well with the illustrations.

The essential points about any expository book are what it sets out to do and how well it does it. The avowed theme of this work — structure in relation to the classification of New Zealand plants — has been well carried out and all "interested amateurs" will gain from it increased comprehension of where and why our plants are classified. But that is not the whole story. Many of the illustrations will, of themselves, give aesthetic pleasure as well as instruction. The textual notes are, as mentioned, clear and interesting. They are often discursive and here and there, from the wealth of her botanical knowledge and experience, Dr Moore drops a statement or discusses a point which is completely novel to the ordinary reader, and which gives him something to think about. Thus, in

dealing with *Vitex lucens*, the author includes a couple of sentences about the mysterious "domatia" in the leaves of various New Zealand species, and later describes just how a puriri seedling emerges from the "stone" of the fruit.

This book has something of value for most people and should be bought and read for many years, and not only in New Zealand. One could wish there were books of a similar compendious nature for other geographical areas, e.g. the Pacific Islands.

E. W. WILLIAMS

INDEX TO AREAS FOR WHICH CHECK-LISTS OF VASCULAR PLANTS HAVE BEEN COMPILED SUPPLEMENT 1

A. P. Druce, Wellington

Since the publication of the original index in 1976 (*Bulletin* No. 39) I have compiled further check-lists for areas in North and South Islands (Nos. 162-193). These are indexed in this supplement, along with a few further entries for previous lists.

Corrections that should be made to the original index are as follows:

Page 7: In Fig. 2 the circle for "Karioi coast (128)" is misplaced and should be moved 8 mm upwards, to the next major promontory.

Page 16: Opposite "Rimutaka (Mt), Rimutaka Ra" and "Rimutaka Ra: Mt Rimutaka", for '6' read '4'.

Page 17: Opposite: "Taranaki: Pukearuhe, N. Taranaki, W. of Mt Messenger", for '50' read '59'.

Page 19: "Ure (Waima R., Marlborough)" should be transferred to the previous page, above "Urewera National Park"; and for '103' read '107'.

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