

CLEMATIS MARATA ON BANKS PENINSULA

Joe Cartman

Between 1863 and 1867 Armstrong collected Clematis marata on "Banks Peninsula", "near Christchurch", and "Harewood". The species is based upon these type specimens, at present in the Christchurch Botanic gardens herbarium. No other specimens of C. marata are known to have been collected from Banks Peninsula until last year.

While inspecting the Armstrong herbarium specimens in early 1980 Mr H.G. Gilpin, retired director of Christchurch Parks and Reserves, remarked, that he had seen C. marata on Banks Peninsula 30 years ago. Mr Gilpin gave me exact details of the location he had visited in 1950.

On the 18th of October 1980 Alice Dumbleton and I visited the location on Mansons Point and found the plant exactly where Mr Gilpin had stated. We found 2 female and 3 male plants growing on a rock outcrop along with Discaria, Coprosma, gorse and large amounts of Scandia geniculata.

Specimens were taken and deposited at the herbarium of Botany Division, D.S.I.R., Lincoln [CHR] and cuttings were taken from all the plants on the assumption that sooner or later the area will be sprayed due to the considerable amount of gorse present.

I would like to ask Society members to inspect rocky areas of scrub on their forays into Banks Peninsula and the Port Hills with a view to finding this small Clematis in other places.

The plant climbs on scrub, in particular matagouri, (Discaria toumatou), and is slender with small leaves and four sepalled green flowers. Due to its small size it is difficult to spot. It is plentiful in the valleys on the eastern side of the ranges of the South Island. It is not known to occur in the North Island.