

PINK FLOWERED ALPINES AND YELLOW FLOWERED *MELILOTUS*

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Pink coloration in New Zealand plants

Simpson (1987) has described some instances of pink coloration in New Zealand plants. Two additional examples are described here. *Gentiana corymbifera* with pink colorations can be found easily and in plentiful supply between Balmoral Military Camp and the Pukaki Hydro Canal in the MacKenzie Basin. This area is rolling tussock country dotted with numerous tarns. As far as the eye could see were pink-coloured gentianas, gently mixed with white flowered gentians, *Pernettya*, *Eurphrasia*, *Celmisia*, *Carmichaelia*, several species of *Raouli*, *Drapetes* and that curious plant *Corallospartium crassicaule*. Near some of the tarns were swaths of little seedheads; my guess *Pterostylis montana*. It is possible that people may not see these botanical treasures because on 13 March 1988 the view of Mt Cook was splendid! (Hugh Wilson knows of a similar area of gentianas near Twizel.)

At the Lake Ohau summer camp (January 1986) a group of us climbed Ram Hill (1360 m) where we frequently found in shady pockets pink flowering *Lobelia linnaeoides*. Likewise other botanists have found these treasures on the Lake Ohau Ski field. In December 1985 I found this *Lobelia* in full flower in Rastus Burn, Double Cone (Remarkables Ski Field). In mid March 1988 I found this delicate flower still blooming below Ben Lomond Saddle. The plants were on a cold shady bank which would scarcely ever catch the sunshine. Although the Queenstown localities are not far apart I was surprised to find *Lobelia* still flowering.

Melilotus

Melilotus officinalis grows along the roadsides of the Kawarau Gorge. This species has a dazzling yellow flower and makes a cheerful roadside with other legumes, clovers, lupins, lucerne, lathyrus, medicago and vetch. Nature has her own way of arranging flowers because amongst all these bright colours are a variety of white adventives and grasses with a backdrop of the Kawarau River.

In the following week (19 March 1988) I crossed from Central Otago over Danseys Pass into the Hakataramea Valley. Here I saw

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Meilotus alba flowering between the Hakataramea township and Cattle Creek. Alas I did not bring back a suitable specimen for Botany Division. If someone is journeying in this area next March please bring back a white-flowering specimen for the Herbarium, Botany Division, D.S.I.R., Lincoln.

Reference

Simpson, M.J.A. 1987. Pink coloration in New Zealand plants. *Canterbury Botanical Society Journal* 21, 35.



Gentiana Dellidi folia