

## THE NEED TO NOTE

The following short article appeared in the first issue of the Canterbury Botanical Society Journal in 1968, written by Lester Kyle. Its message is one that applies equally as strongly today, as the destruction of remnant patches of native vegetation continues. All of us can play a role, and sometimes the most seemingly trivial record can turn out to be very important. Its also not only the rare things that matter, information on apparently common plants can also be very helpful. The 'rediscovery' of manuka and subsequent finding of *Drosera binata* at Travis Swamp in the middle of Christchurch (see Canterbury Botanical Society Journal 22, 1988, p47), and the finding of the single remaining Banks Peninsula adult *Libocedrus bidwillii* at Trig KK (see Canterbury Botanical Society Journal 12, 1978, p44) are both good examples of this. The extensive records compiled by members in the many issues of this journal have added a wealth to our knowledge of the local flora, but there is still lots more to do. So for these reasons I felt it useful to reprint this article (Ed.).

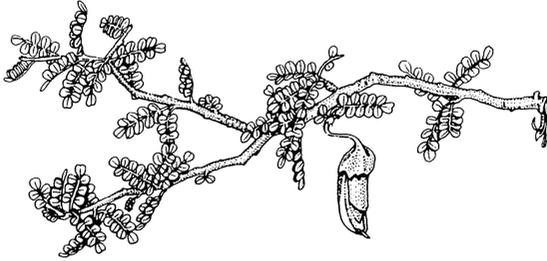
"On a recent Society trip to the Waipara Gorge, several botanical species were noted, which are known to be of very local occurrence, so local that their virtual extinction is by no means an impossibility. Indeed near the area which we explored, this same possibility was dramatically demonstrated; on some high flat land above the gorge there had been some spraying for briar, and an intense cloud of spray had drifted over the escarpment and down a long slope of broken limestone. On this slope, all shrubby vegetation had been killed, and this included many bushes of *Sophora prostrata*, and innumerable specimens of *Clematis afoliata*.

As New Zealand becomes more intensely farmed and civilised, it is inevitable that the private sanctuaries of certain local species be increasingly violated, and even destroyed. To some extent this can be hindered by the formation of small influential pressure groups (which our society does tend to become), but no matter how much we are on the watch, nor even if our preventative efforts are 100% successful wherever applied, certain circumstances will escape our notice. It is therefore most essential, wherever we go as a society or as botanically-minded individuals, that exact records of plant locations be kept, for posterity's sake if not for our own satisfaction.

The study of certain European plants would be considerably facilitated if only their past distribution on the Continent could be more exactly known. Already it is greatly regretted that more exact notes were not kept about plant locations on Banks Peninsula during the last century, before the burning was completed and the widespread grazing begun. To my mind, this is one of the most important works that our Society can do - to record what grows where - now. The need is right at our doorsteps, as Christchurch pushes out onto sand, swamp, river-bed and

hill; or we can go a little further afield, along foothills, where the bush continues to be pushed back, and the valleys to be further farmed.

Our members have the knowledge; let us put it to this common use."



*Sophora prostrata*. Drawing by Tim Galloway.