

SUMMER CAMP: THE WHISTLER RIVER, 19 JANUARY TO 22 JANUARY 1979

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Although Neroi and I joined the Canterbury Botanical Society in 1977, it was some time before we could attend our first Summer Camp. On that occasion, eight members met at the homestead of Maurice and Rosemary Harper of Mt. Pember Station near Lees Valley. Rosemary proudly showed us her recently constructed alpine garden. Husband Maurice loaned us his Landrover to carry our gear up the Whistler River. After leaving our cars off-road on the north side of the river, we loaded the Landrover and drove into a hut belonging to Xavier College, now Catholic Cathedral College. This hut was an A-frame, standing on the banks of Cunningham Stream and partly concealed by encroaching beech forest. Inside we found the usual rough sawn table and seats and most importantly, an open fireplace for cooking our meals. A vertical ladder led to an upper floor where we were to sleep.

By the end of the day, two other members had joined us. The complete party comprised John and Phyllis Thompson, Stan and Jean Reid, Dr. Mel Aitken, Alice Dumbleton, Les White and Nan van der Hoven, and Neroi and me. Alice was at that time the Society's secretary and the keeper of an amazing recipe book from which many Botsoc meals had been prepared over the years. As darkness fell we lit our candles and at last received relief from voracious sandflies.

Next morning, led by Stan and Jean, Neroi and I walked up Cunningham Stream to a fork in the creek. We took the spur between these two branches and bush-bashed our way through the *Nothofagus* forest to reach the subalpine by late morning. Near the summit of Mt. Pember (1692 m), we met for the first time those fabulous alpine plants that have long since held an enduring interest for me. Plants seen and recorded by Stan included *Leptinella atrata*, *Hebe haastii*, *Stellaria roughii*, *Lignocarpus carnulosa*, *Ranunculus haastii*. From our lunchtime perch on the summit we surveyed the Puketeraki Range, Chest Peak (1935 m) to the southwest and Lees Valley far away below. Later, working our way down a steep leading spur, we stopped to examine several large plants of *Raoulia eximia*. We returned to camp after botanising our way down the Whistler River. Other members

of the party had spent their day collecting and recording in other nearby places. Enthusiastic sandflies welcomed us home.

On the following day, in near perfect weather, we explored the true left branch of the Whistler River. Each evening we examined specimens collected and compiled our species list, finally, about 170 species. Unfortunately for Neroli and me, we had to return home the next day. This all too brief introduction to Botanical Society camps was enough to ensure our attendance at many other camps of the next twenty years or so. While writing these notes, I realized that as far as know, Alice and I are the only survivors of that wonderful trip. John Thompson was arguably the Society's most noted amateur botanist, ably assisted by his wife Phyllis, who was his "eyes." Stan and Jean Reid were active members of both the Canterbury and Wellington Botanical Societies. For many years they travelled south to be with us at Summer Camps. Both were remarkable people and also fine amateur botanists.

Table 1. Species listed from Whistler River (Editor's note: updated genus and species names shown in brackets; minor spelling changes made without comment)

Vascular plants

<i>Acaena caesiiglauca</i>	<i>Carpodetus serratus</i>
<i>Acaena inermis</i>	<i>Cassinia</i> (= <i>Ozothamnus</i>)
<i>Acaena microphylla</i> var. <i>robusta</i> (= spine-bearing <i>A. inermis</i>)	<i>vauvilliersii</i> (submerged in <i>O. leptophylla</i> in Webb et al. 1988)
<i>Aciphylla</i> sp.	<i>Celmisia angustifolia</i>
<i>Agropyrum scabrum</i> (= <i>Elymus</i> sp.)	<i>Celmisia gracilentia</i>
<i>Angelica</i> (= <i>Gingidia</i>) <i>decipiens</i>	<i>Celmisia lyallii</i>
<i>Anisotome filifolia</i> var.	<i>Celmisia spectabilis</i>
<i>Anisotome pilifera</i>	<i>Celmisia viscosa</i>
<i>Aristotelia fruticosa</i>	<i>Chionochloa crassiuscula</i>
<i>Astelia nervosa</i>	<i>Chionochloa rigida</i> (probably <i>C. macra</i>)
<i>Astelia</i> sp.	<i>Chionochloa rubra</i>
<i>Brachyscome sinclairii</i>	<i>Clematis petriei</i> (= <i>C. forsteri</i>)
<i>Callitriche</i> sp.	<i>Clematis</i> sp.
<i>Cardamine</i> sp.	<i>Colobanthus acicularis</i>
<i>Carex brevicaulis</i>	<i>Coprosma antipoda</i> (= <i>C. rugosa</i>)
<i>Carex coriacea</i>	<i>Coprosma polymorpha</i> (= <i>C. rhamnoides</i>)
<i>Carex dissita</i>	<i>Coprosma propinqua</i>
<i>Carex secta</i> var. <i>secta</i>	<i>Coprosma pseudocuneata</i>
<i>Carex secta</i> var. <i>tenuiculmis</i>	
<i>Carmichaelia</i> sp.	

- Coprosma* sp.
Coriaria arborea
Coriaria sarmentosa
Corokia cotoneaster
Cortaderia richardii
Cotula (= *Leptinella*) *atrata*
Cotula (= *Leptinella*) *pyrethrifolia*
Craspedia unifolia
Cyathodes (= *Leucopogon*) *fraseri*
Cyathodes juniperina
Discaria toumatou
Dracophyllum acerosum
Dracophyllum prunum
Dracophyllum sp.
Drapetes (= *Kelleria*) *lyallii*
Eleocharis acuta
Eleocharis gracilis
Epilobium alsinoides subsp.
 atriplicifolium
Epilobium alsinoides subsp. *tenuipes*
Epilobium brunnescens
Epilobium glabellum
Epilobium komarovianum
Epilobium macropus
Epilobium melanocaulon
Epilobium microphyllum
Epilobium pubens
Euphrasia cuneata
Euphrasia laingii
Festuca novae-zelandiae
Forstera bidwillii
Forstera tenella
Galium propinquum
Gaultheria crassa
Gaultheria depressa
Gentiana corymbifera
Geranium sessilifolium
Geum parvifolium
Griselinia littoralis
Gnaphalium (= *Euchiton*) *audax*
 subsp. *audax*
Gnaphalium (= *Euchiton*) *delicatum*
- Gnaphalium* (= *Pseudognaphalium*)
 luteo-album
Gnaphalium (= *Euchiton*)
 sphaericum
Gonocarpus micranthus subsp.
 micranthus
Gonocarpus sp.
Hebe canterburiensis
Hebe glaucophylla
Hebe haastii
Hebe odora
Hebe pinguifolia
Hebe rupicola
Hebe salicifolia
Hebe (= *Heliohebe*) *raoulii*
Hebe tetrasticha
Helichrysum (= *Anaphalioides*)
 bellidioides
Helichrysum filicaule
Helichrysum selago (= *H.*
 intermedium)
Hoheria lyallii
Hydrocotyle sp.
Hymenanthera (= *Melicytus*) *alpina*
Juncus distegus
Juncus gregiflorus
Juncus novae-zelandiae
Juncus planifolius
Leptospermum scoparium
Lagenifera pumila
Lignocarpa carnulosa
Luzula picta
Luzula rufa
Mentha cunninghamii
Muehlenbeckia axillaris
Muehlenbeckia complexa (?)
Mysotis australis
Mysotis forsteri
Nothofagus solandri var.
 cliffortioides
Olearia arborescens
Olearia avicemiifolia

Olearia cymbifolia (var. of *O.*
nummulariifolia in Allan 1961)
Oreomyrrhis colensoi
Oreomyrrhis ramosa
Ourisia caespitosa
Oxalis lactea (= *O. magellanica*)
Parahebe lyallii
Parsonsia heterophylla
Pentachondra pumila
Pernettya nana (= *Gaultheria*
nubicola)
Pimelea prostrata
Pimelea traversii
Potamogeton cheesemanii
Phyllachne colensoi
Phormium tenax
Poa sclerophylla (= *P. buechananii*)
Poa colensoi
Pratia angulata
Pratia macrodon
Pseudopanax crassifolius
Ranunculus hirtus (= *R. reflexus*)
Ranunculus rivularis (= *R.*
amphitrichus)
Ranunculus sp.
Raoulia australis
Raoulia eximia
Raoulia grandifolia
Raoulia subsericea
Raoulia tenuicaulis
Rubus australis
Rubus schmiedelioides
Rumex flexuosus
Schoenus pauciflorus
Scleranthus brockiei
Scleranthus uniflorus
Senecio (= *Brachyglottis*)
bellidioides
Senecio (= *Brachyglottis*)
cassinioides
Senecio (= *Brachyglottis*) *lagopus*
Senecio quadridentatus
Stellaria roughii

Uncinia divaricata
Uncinia rubra
Uncinia fuscovaginata
Viola cunninghamii
Viola lyallii
Wahlenbergia albomarginata
Wahlenbergia gracilis
Vittadinia australis

Orchids

Chiloglottis cornuta
Corybas macranthus
Corybas trilobus
Gastrodia sp.
Prasophyllum colensoi
Thelymitra hatchii
Thelymitra longifolia

Ferns and fern allies

Asplenium flabellifolium
Asplenium flaccidum
Blechnum capense (species
 segregated from this complex
 include *B. montanum*, *B. novae-*
zelandiae and *B. procerum*).
Blechnum fluviatile
Blechnum penna-marina
Botrychium australe
Cystopteris fragilis
Grammitis armstrongii (= *G.*
poepigiana)
Grammitis billardieri
Lycopodium fastigiatum
Lycopodium scariosum
Hymenophyllum sanguinolentum
Hypolepis millefolium
Ophioglossum coriaceum
Polystichum vestitum
Phymatodes (= *Microsorium*)
diversifolium
Pteridium aquilinum (= *P.*
esculentum)
Pyrrosia serpens

REFERENCES

- Allan, H. H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Wellington, Government Printer, 1085 pp.
- Webb, C. J., Sykes, W. R., Garnock-Jones, P. J. 1988: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV. Christchurch, Botany Division, DSIR 1365 pp.

*Good God. When I consider the melancholy
fate
of so many of botany's votaries,
I am tempted to ask
whether men are in their right mind
who so desperately risk life and everything else
through the love of collecting plants.*

Carl Linnaeus, Glory of the Scientist (1737) (Contributed by
Neil O'Brien)