

A visit to "Seaforth", between Hatfields Beach and Waiwera 21 September 2013

Maureen Young

Participants: *Hugo Baynes, Warren Brewer, Jan Butcher, Bruce Calvert, Ewen Cameron, Lisa Clapperton, Brian Cumber, Esther Dale, Neil Davies, Leslie Haines, John Lambert, Cynthia & James Mackenzie (the owners and our leaders), John Millett, Philip Moll, Joshua Salter, Vijay Soma, Louise Stewart, Val Tomlinson, Harold Waite, Elizabeth Walker, Alison Wesley, Mike Wilcox, Philip Wrigley, Angelina Young, Maureen Young.*

In 1929 Dr. H.E.B. (Bruce) Mackenzie bought the cliff-top property stretching halfway to Waiwera from Hatfields Beach (Fig. 1), and planted pines (*Pinus radiata*) there. The name of the property, "Seaforth", comes from the Highland regiment, the Seaforth Highlanders, founded by a Mackenzie ancestor in Scotland. Our hosts for the day, Bruce's grandson, James, and his wife Cynthia (Figs. 2, 3, 4), enthusiastically led our party around the 60 ha that has remained in the hands of the Mackenzie family, 84 years on.

Some of the pines have been felled, and most of those that remain have not thrived on the nutrient-poor soils. The original clearing of the land left the bush in the gullies largely intact, but the ridges, slopes and cliff tops support regenerating kauri (*Agathis australis*) (Fig. 5) and the vegetation that we call gumland scrub.

It is 23 years since Bot Soc last visited Seaforth, and this trip was planned to coincide with the peak flowering of kumarahou (*Pomaderris kumeraho*) (Fig. 6), clematis (*C. paniculata*), *Pimelea longifolia*, *Mida salicifolia*, mairehau (*Leionema nudum*) and *Alseuosmia macrophylla*. The *Pimelea*, in particular, was plentiful, mostly along the cliff tops, and was spectacularly in flower (Figs. 7, 8). Of the 21 species of orchids that have been recorded on the property over many years, it was mostly greenhoods that were noted on the day. It was rather too early for the sun orchids.

Gumland scrub is renewed where there has been disturbance, and areas where the pines have been felled (Fig. 9) show early successional growth of *Machaerina teretifolia*, *Gonocarpus micranthus*, *Drosera auriculata*, and *D. hookeri*, and this is where many of the sun orchids thrive in season.

Drosera hookeri was an interesting addition to the species list on the day of the trip. This Australian sundew was first collected in New Zealand in 1968



Fig. 1. Cliff-top shrubland at Seaforth. Hatfields Beach in distance. Photo: Josh Salter, 21 Sep 2013.



Fig. 2. James talking to ABS group outside old cottage, Seaforth. Photo: Philip Moll, 21 Sep 2013.



Fig. 3. James Mackenzie, on cottage steps, Seaforth. Photo: Josh Salter, 21 Sep 2013.



Fig. 4. Cynthia Mackenzie during lunch break on cottage verandah. Photo: Philip Moll, 21 Sep 2013.



Fig. 5. Regenerating bush; from the Mackenzie's house. Photo: Josh Salter, 21 Sep 2013.



Fig. 6. Kumarahou (*Pomaderris kumeraho*) in full flower, Seaforth. Photo: Josh Salter, 21 Sep 2013.



Fig. 7. Abundantly flowering *Pimelia longifolia*. Photo: Josh Salter, 21 Sep 2013.



Fig. 8. *Pimelia longifolia* terminal inflorescence. Photo: Philip Moll, 21 Sep 2013.



Fig. 9. In search of *Drosera hookeri* among the *D. auriculata*. Photo: Ewen Cameron, 21 Sep 2013.

near Dargaville, but was not recognised here in NZ as a species distinct from the native *D. auriculata* until 1991 (under the name *D. peltata*) (Salmon 2001: p. 90). It was confined largely to the far north of the Northland peninsula, and appears to have been gradually moving southwards. An unfortunate invader of these poor soils is the South African blue-flowered *Aristea ecklonii*.

The one large tree of hard beech (*Fuscospora truncata*) on the property was visited, and James explained that the family wondered whether it had been planted in his grandfather's day, but it was agreed by those present that it was much older than 84 years.

Five weeks after the field trip took place a small party returned to see if the sun orchids were flowering. Many plants were still in bud, but with a little manipulation it was proved that most were *Thelymitra pauciflora*, and one was *T. aemula*. On the clay bank near the house were white-flowering plants of *T. longifolia*.

In the afternoon we came upon many tall plants, dark-coloured in all parts except for the green bracts up the stem. These belong to the species which has not yet been officially named, but has the tag name of *Thelymitra* aff. *pauciflora* "darkie" (Rolfe et al. 2010: p. 38). For many years it was only known from the far north, though it has been found near the Waitakeres in recent times. The species is a very shy flowerer, so we were thrilled to find that the warm, still, humid conditions had encouraged one plant to bloom (Fig. 10). The column has a split hood similar to that of *T. pauciflora*, but the flower has an intensely blue/purple coloration. Alison was still busy photographing this, when, disguised among the blue flowers of the weedy *Aristea ecklonii*, we found two plants of *T. aff. ixioides* (Fig. 11). The flowers had spotted petals and the very distinctive column of the species, and although the cilia on the column arms are often white, on both of these plants they were pinkish mauve.



Fig. 10. *Thelymitra* aff. *pauciflora* "darkie" – note the split column. Photo: Alison Wesley, Seaforth, 25 Oct 2013.



Fig. 11. *Thelymitra* aff. *ixioides*, with spots on upper tepals. Photo: Alison Wesley, Seaforth, 25 Oct 2013.

This property is one of the botanical treasures of our district, and our gratitude is extended to the three generations of the Mackenzie family who have cared for and preserved it in such good condition.

Acknowledgements

Our thanks to James and Cynthia Mackenzie for permission to visit, and for their leadership on the day; and to Joshua Salter for sorting out the images.

References

- Rolfe, J.R.; de Lange, P.J. 2010: Illustrated guide to New Zealand sun orchids, *Thelymitra* (Orchidaceae). Published by J.R.Rolfe, Lower Hutt, NZ.
- Salmon, Bruce. 2001: *Carnivorous plants of New Zealand*. Ecosphere Publications, Auckland. 303p.

Appendix: Vascular indigenous plants of "Seaforth", Hatfields Beach (ABS 1991, Enid Asquith & Maureen Young 1990, 2001, 2002, ABS 2013).

Key

= added to the species list by ABS 2013

Lycophytes

Lycopodiella cernua
Lycopodium deuterodensum

Ferns

Adiantum cunninghamii
Asplenium flaccidum
Asplenium gracillimum
Asplenium oblongifolium
Asplenium polyodon
Blechnum filiforme
Blechnum fraseri
Blechnum membranaceum
Blechnum novae-zelandiae
Cardiomanes reniforme
Cyathea dealbata
Cyathea medullaris
Dicksonia squarrosa
Doodia australis
Gleichenia dicarpa
Gleichenia microphylla
Histiopteris incisa
Hymenophyllum dilatatum
Hymenophyllum flexuosum
Hymenophyllum multifidum
Hymenophyllum sanguinolentum
Lindsaea linearis
Lindsaea trichomanoides
Loxogramme dictyopteris

Lygodium articulatum
Microsorium pustulatum
Microsorium scandens
Notogrammitis ciliata
Paesia scaberula
Pneumatopteris pennigera
Pteridium esculentum
Pteris macilenta
Pteris tremula
Ptisana salicina (planted)
Pyrrosia eleagnifolia
Schizaea fistulosa
Tmesipteris elongata
Tmesipteris lanceolata
Trichomanes elongatum

Gymnosperms

Agathis australis
Dacrycarpus dacrydioides
Dacrydium cupressinum
Libocedrus plumosa (planted)
Phyllocladus trichomanoides
Podocarpus totara
Prumnopitys taxifolia

Dicotyledons

Alectryon excelsus
Alseuosmia macrophylla
Beilschmiedia tarairi

Beilschmiedia tawa
Brachyglottis repanda
Callitriche muelleri
Carmichaelia australis
Centella uniflora
Clematis paniculata
Coprosma arborea
Coprosma areolata
Coprosma grandifolia
Coprosma lucida
Coprosma macrocarpa
Coprosma rhamnoides
Coprosma robusta
Coprosma spathulata
Coriaria arborea
Corokia buddleioides
Corynocarpus laevigatus
Dichondra repens
Dracophyllum sinclairii
Drosera auriculata
Drosera hookeri #
Dysoxylum spectabile
Elaeocarpus dentatus
Euchiton japonicus
Fuscospora truncata
Galium propinquum
Geniostoma ligustrifolium
Gonocarpus incanus
Gonocarpus micranthus #

Haloragis erecta
Hebe macrocarpa
Hedycarya arborea
Hydrocotyle moschata
Knightsia excelsa
Kunzea ericoides
Lagenophora lanata
Leionema nudum
Leptecophylla juniperina
Leptospermum scoparium
Leucopogon fasciculatus
Lobelia anceps
Melicope ternata
Melicytus ramiflorus
Metrosideros diffusa
Metrosideros excelsa
Metrosideros fulgens
Metrosideros perforata
Mida salicifolia
Muehlenbeckia australis
Myrsine australis
Nertera dichondrifolia
Nestegis lanceolata
Olearia furfuracea
Olearia rani
Parsonsia heterophylla
Pimelea longifolia
Piper excelsum
Pittosporum cornifolium
Pittosporum crassifolium
Pittosporum eugenioides
Pomaderris amoena
Pomaderris kumeraho
Pseudopanax arboreus
Pseudopanax crassifolius
Pseudopanax crassifolius × *lessonii*

Pseudopanax lessonii
Ranunculus reflexus
Rubus australis
Rubus cissoides
Sophora chathamica
Toronia toru
Vitex lucens
Wahlenbergia violacea
Weinmannia silvicola

Monocotyledons

Acianthus sinclairii
Astelia banksii
Astelia solandri
Astelia trinervia
Carex dissita
Carex flagellifera
Carex lambertiana
Collosporum hastatum
Cordyline australis
Cordyline pumilio
Corunastylis pumila
Cyperus ustulatus
Cyrtostylis oblonga
Dianella nigra
Dichelachne crinita
Diplodium alobulum
Diplodium brumalium
Diplodium trullifolium
Earina mucronata
Ficinia nodosa
Freycinetia banksii
Gahnia lacera
Gahnia setifolia
Gahnia xanthocarpa
Isolepis reticularis

Juncus planifolius
Lepidosperma australe
Libertia ixioides
Machaerina tenax
Machaerina teretifolia
Microlaena avenacea
Microlaena stipoides
Microtis unifolia
Morelotia affinis
Nematoceras trilobum (= *Corybas*)
Oplismenus hirtellus subsp. *imbecillis*
Orthoceras novaezeelandiae
Phormium tenax
Poa anceps
Pterostylis agathicola
Pterostylis banksii
Pterostylis graminea
Rhopalostylis sapida
Ripogonum scandens
Schoenus apogon
Schoenus maschalinus
Schoenus tendo
Singularibas oblongus (= *Corybas*)
Stegostyla atradenia (= *Caladenia*)
Thelymitra aemula
Thelymitra carnea
Thelymitra aff. *ixioides*
Thelymitra longifolia
Thelymitra pauciflora
Thelymitra aff. *pauciflora* "darkie"
Thelymitra pulchella
Uncinia banksii
Uncinia uncinata
Uncinia zotovii

Matheson's Farm Bush, Mangawhai, 19 October 2013

Maureen Young



Fig. 1. Botanists at work in Matheson's Bush.
Photo: Joshua Salter, 19 Oct 2013.

Participants: Bruce Calvert, Frances Duff, Bill Fletcher, Leigh Forsyth, Leslie Haines, John Lambert, John and Gale Matheson (leaders), John Millett, Carol and Gary McSweeney, Penny and Steve Palmer, Vivienne Paterson, Joshua Salter, Doug Sheppard, Vijay Soma, Alison Wesley, Angelina Young, Maureen Young.

John and Gale Matheson, who farm on Lawrence Road, between Mangawhai and Kaiwaka, belong to the growing number of farmers who have fenced off bush remnants on their farms and are undertaking pest control. Fifteen years without grazing has ensured that a rich and varied ground cover is now replacing the bare, eaten-out understorey of the bush, and fortunately there are no problem weeds present. They were pleased to lead Bot Soccers through their patches of bush, and to show off the botanical treasures to be found there (Fig. 1).