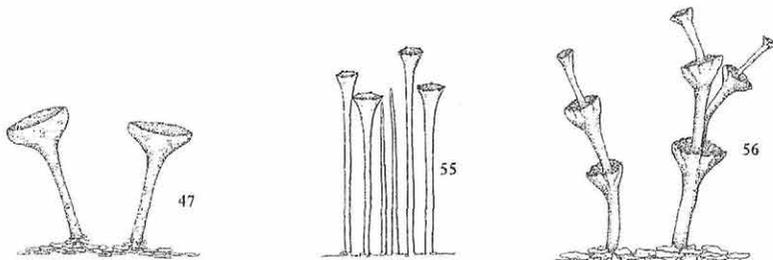


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Footnote: The Science Library of the University recently 'phoned me to suggest that I no longer needed a document that I had requested from them, because they gathered the author himself had just sent me a copy. I asked which document this was, and was told Schimper (1898). Perhaps they thought that, as it is said King Arthur and Rob Muldoon only sleep and will one day awaken to save their respective countries, so the great ecologist Schimper only sleeps and had woken to save ecology, or at least woken for long enough to catch the post. Still, he wouldn't have known about airmail. Perhaps a copy is on the way yet.

Editors note: Three more 'pixie-cup' lichens that can be found in elfin woods in Great Britain and in goblin forests in New Zealand (if such forests exist!). The lichens are real enough, and can be verified in the OTA Herbarium. *Cladonia* figures from NG Hodgetts, *Cladonia: a field guide*, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, UK.



Cladonia fimbriata (fig 47) *Cladonia gracilis* (fig 55) *C. cervicornis* ssp *verticillata* (fig 56)

TRIP REPORTS

Kennedy's Bush, 17.2.01 - *Moira Parker*

Helen Clarke, QEII representative for Coastal Otago, was the leader for the day and a very small group comprising Nola, Bastow and myself, set off for Taieri Mouth.

Our first stop was Brighton, to look at a saltmarsh that is likely to be fenced from stock in the near future. Several spoonbills were present. The water level was much higher than on Helen's previous visit in November and many of the flowering *Cotula coronopifolia* and the smaller *Cotula dioica* were submerged. Another submerged plant

was *Mimulus repens*. Other plants we found were the creeping herb *Lilaeopsis novae-zelandiae* with its unusual cylindrical septate leaves, *Lachnagrostis* in drier areas, *Selliera radicans*, small clumps of a salt grass *Puccinellia* (either *P. distans* or *P. stricta*), with fine, bluegreen leaves, and *Juncus pallidus*.

The saltmarsh is only a few minutes drive from Brighton beach, but we were unsure whether or not it is tidal and there were far too many sheep droppings to want to do a taste test. So we walked to the beach to find that sand deposits had closed off the exit. It seems that periodically, when the water levels in the saltmarsh get too high, the sand bar is cleared and the salt marsh becomes tidal again.

We then drove on to Taieri Mouth and took the Waiholo Road to Norman and Dorothy Kennedy's farm. As we approached the house we could see two stands of tall rimu poles across the valley. The Kennedys have a QE II covenant on 50 ha of bush situated in two steep sided gullies. The bush was fenced in 1991 and has not been grazed by farm stock since - though goats have been a problem. Norman joined us on our 3-hour walk and he was able to tell us a lot about the bush and how it is managed. We were impressed with the tracks Norman has made. The steps cut into the steeper slopes made the walking easy going, so we could concentrate on the plants.

Helen provided copies of Ralph Allen's 1985 vegetation survey of the Kennedy property, but the task of a proper update of the species list was beyond the four of us. As soon as we climbed over the stile and entered the bush the regeneration was evident - a variety of *Coprosma* species and ferns, and seedlings of marbleleaf, pokaka (only a few) clematis, mahoe, lemonwood, miro, totara and matai. There were lots of mature rimu and quite a number of tree ferns. White flowering rata vines, *Metrosideros diffusa*, were common in places, and some of the vines growing up the rimu were as thick as my wrist.

While we had lunch under a giant rimu - one of thousands on the property - Helen got out her polystyrene bird squeaker. The bellbirds were quite put out by this "invader" and soon there were four or five bellbirds all calling noisily, then a tui joined in and even a tomtit came to investigate the racket.

We saw *Corybas* and patches of *Pterostylis* orchids in damp spots beside the edge of the track, and at the bottom of the gully Norman showed us what he believes are the remains of a sawmill - two notched iron wheels and a water race leading to a rectangular pit. It was fascinating to walk through one stand of rimu poles, most were about 15 -17m high, very closely spaced and of a similar trunk diameter. Ralph Allen estimates stem densities of 1000-2500 stems/ha. Interesting to speculate on events that might have led to such a large number of rimu trees of the same age.

Goats are a bit of a problem in the bush and we saw goat droppings and browsed crown fern and mahoe. Broadleaf was being browsed by possums, and bait stations had recently been set up by Pest Services as part of the Tb control programme. I was surprised at the absence of weed species - just one small nightshade on the track and an

elder at the creek. There was some gorse along one perimeter fence that provided low shelter and will eventually be taken over by kanuka.

Our afternoon tea stop was by a huge pokaka that had recently blown down. The cut sections of trunk made good seats. Then we climbed up the gully, over the stile and, as I headed across the grassy paddock towards the vehicle, I turned round to see Nola and Bastow on their knees, peering into the grass. To everyone's surprise this exotic grassland supported a dense carpet of turf plants below the pasture grasses.

Native species recorded were:

Acaena novae-zelandiae

Anisotome aromatica

Centella uniflora

Geranium sessiflorum

Gonocarpus micranthus

Gunnera monoica

Helichrysum filicaule

Hydrocotyle novae-zelandiae var. *montana*

Kunzea ericoides

Microtis unifolia

Rytidosperma sp.

Awakiki Bush and Otanomomo, 25 .04 .01 - Helen Clarke.

A small group of six traveled South to visit these areas, ably led by Kelvin Lloyd. At Otanomomo we were joined by Noeline and Donald MacLean who own bush on the south edge of the Awakiki Reserve and have it covenanted with Q E II National Trust.

First stop was at Otanomomo Scientific Reserve, which is easily seen and often admired from SH 92 on the way to the Catlins. I was keen to see inside this interesting looking bush. Alas, as Kelvin had warned us, it was an exercise in "spot the most invasive weed" and there were many to choose from! We were alarmed to find, in the north west corner, Chilean Flame Creeper (*Tropaeolum speciosum*) abundant but also Holly, Elderberry, *Solanum dulcamara*, *Daphne laureola*, and very dense blackberry. Below the towering Matai and Kahikatea in this area we found very little in the way of healthy undergrowth. Talk during the visit was focussed pretty much on the weed invasion.

On the way to Awakiki Bush we made a quick check on another edge of Otanomomo for *Olearia hectori*, but were unable to locate any.

Awakiki Bush is reached via a farm track and just prior to entering the bush the trail passes by a derelict farmhouse and the remains of a garden. A very large Ivy smothers part of the back of the house and Hawthorn trees mark the garden boundaries. From the edge the bush looks degraded and scrappy but, surprisingly, once inside it is significantly more intact and healthy looking than Otanomomo.