

The nursery and other experimental parts were visited but our time was too short to see everything. However, we did see Pittosporum turnerii, Olearia virgata, that odd-looking tree, Hymenanthera dentata var. angustifolia, Nothopanax parvum, Gaultheria paniculata, Gentiana grisebachii, Nothopanax anomalum with other divaricating shrubs, Gastrodia cunninghamii, Hypolepis millefolium, Blechnum vulcanicum and Botrychium australe var. millefolium, and a host of other interesting plants.

Monday we turned eastwards for our homeward journey, calling at Barryville and from there an escort took us to the Pouakani Block to see the largest known totara tree in New Zealand. It is 43 ft. 6 ins. at scarfing point, a truly remarkable sight. Further on we lunched by the Rangiaui Block which is estimated to contain 85,000 board feet to the acre. The long straight boles of these magnificent trees, over 100 ft. tall left us spellbound.

Another stop was made at Whakamaru Dam before turning northwards for Auckland.

Our grateful thanks are due to the Officers of the Forestry Department for their kindness and to Mr. Farnell, not only for his leadership but for all the preliminary work which made this 1960 trip possible. Our appreciation of Pureora forests was expressed in a general desire for another visit.

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Once again Katie Wood returns from her holidays with something to share with members. We welcome her delightful account of pleasant botanising a little off the main track.

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### RAMBLES IN COLLINGWOOD

While making our way to Collingwood in the Golden Bay area of Nelson Province, we passed over Takaka hill with its fascinating outcrops of limestone. Stopping on the summit, 2595 ft., we had a short scramble among these rocks and we were rewarded by finding some interesting native plants. Tucked away in nooks and crannies were the lime-loving ferns Asplenium trichomanes and A. anomodum. Some Daphne, Pimelia longifolia was found in flower and other plants that grew there were Hebe pinguifolia, Coprosma propinqua and hybrids, Hymenanthera obovata, Pittosporum colensoi, Olearia Spp., and the large-leaved shrub daisy, Senecio hectori.

In the vicinity of Collingwood are large flats of Pakihi land, rather like our own Auckland gumlands in appearance, with similar

plant associations such as Umbrella ferns, Gleichenia circinata; the comb fern, Schizaea fistulosa; dainty Lindsaya linearis and the heath, Epacris pauciflora. Others strange to Auckland however, were the daisy, Celmisia graminifolia (short-leaved type), the Sundew, Drosera spatulata and the club moss, Lycopodium ramulosum.

The Dolomite quarry was visited for it was there that I had a date with a rare little filmy fern, Mecodium montanum. Robert Lowe, a keen young collector from Nelson had found it there and had instructed me how to locate this rarity. Climbing up the steep tram line to the quarry, we noticed an abundance of Pukateas, Laurelia novae-zealandiae in the mixed bush, also large stinging nettles, Urtica Spp. The grass verges were starred with Pratias, Cotulas, and Lagenophoras. Above the quarry we followed the stream bed which was dry but flowing freely higher up. Mosses, Liverworts and lichens grew in great abundance but filmy ferns were not plentiful as we would expect to see them in a similar stream in our Waitakeres. Some Aspleniums and Blechnums were noted, also Rumohra hispida. Robert Lowe collected Lindsaya viridis, Selenodensium elongatum and Magroglena stricta, probably from higher up the stream than we ventured, but time did not permit us to proceed farther. It was indeed a thrill when our objective was achieved, and Mecodium montanum located in the wet place just as he had indicated. This fern is rather like Mecodium rarum in appearance and even more closely resembles M. atrovirens and M. australe. Only with the expert help of Miss Crookes and her microscope could its identification be confirmed for the thick obscurely-pitted internal walls of the cells and single-celled margin determined its species.

Growing in association was another filmy fern with finely cut fronds, Vandenboschia colensoi. This fern was also new to me so that proved an interesting find. Another pleasurable moment was experienced when we found a lovely little patch of Jovellana repens, the creeping calceolaria. It nestled on a damp shelf with its dainty little pocket-shaped flowers uplifted to show the tiny red spots within.

Another day was spent exploring Westhaven Inlet, rather sketchily from a botanical point of view but a few plants of interest were noted. This large inlet near Cape Farewell boasts very attractive scenery. It has many tidal arms which are crossed by bridges and causeways and up these arms the bush grows to the water's edge. With a full tide the scene is one of great beauty.

We could not help admiring the scarlet-flowered ratas, Metrosideros robusta which overhung the cliffs growing just as Pohutukawas do in the North. Many white daisy flowers of Gnaphalium kerienne were seen. At the head of the inlet in the mixed coastal forest we noticed an abundance of Kaikomako, Pennantia corymbosa, and many matais, Podocarpus spicatus. Specimens of Senecio hectori were everywhere and with their large leaves and showy white flowers gave the bush an alien appearance to an Aucklanders' eyes. We continued to the coast at the mouth of the Paturau River, then

retraced our journey once more.

Twelve miles from Collingwood situated beside the Aorere river is a small village called Bainham. We crossed the river by the suspension bridge and explored the river bank. There, several beeches supported masses of mistletoe, Elytranthe colensoi and the pale pink climbing ratas, Metrosideros diffusa (Forst) W.R. Oliv., syn M. hypericifolia were flowering heavily. Hebe leiophylla was found growing in the rocks on the river bed and masses of heavily flowering Kanukas, Leptospermum ericoides grew in that area.

Three days in the Collingwood and Takaka areas were not sufficient for detailed botanical exploration and no doubt we missed many plants of interest. However, a little more was added to our store of impressions gathered on an even more rushed visit made six years earlier.

K. Wood.

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#### ON THE SLOPES OF PIRONGIA

It would have been pleasant to spend more than the few hours available on Mount Pirongia. As it was we found much to interest wandering up a spur on the northern side. We entered the bush from Mr. Firth's farm at a height of about 600 ft., and wandered up to a height of about 1500 ft. Some of the larger trees had been milled from the lower part of the bush, but Mr. Firth had carefully fenced the area so it was protected from marauding cattle, and Mr. A.C. Caldwell who was our guide tells me that as a consequence the bush has improved greatly since. Would that all farm owners were so far-sighted!

Owing to the previous milling there were numerous log-runs in this part of the bush bordered by a luxuriant growth of Histopteris incisa and Pteris scaberula. The Histopteris was taller than is usual on the Waitakeres, being well over my head, while I thought the Paesia distinctly outside. I measured a typical frond from one clump and found it well over four feet six inches long. Here and there among these typical roadside ferns were clumps of Hypolepis rugosula, a fern which I have not myself collected on the Waitakeres, though Katie Wood, who accompanied us has found a clump here and there. The Parsley Fern, Botrychium australe var. millefolium had been observed by Mr. Gudex, near the entrance to the bush, but we were not able to locate it.

We soon passed through the more open part of the bush and entered the reserve proper. Here as we ascended the character of the bush altered. Though there was still little undergrowth, the