

**A NOTE ON THE MISTLETOE *Ileostylus micranthus*  
IN THE KAHAROA AREA**

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In October 2002 I was invited by Paul Cashmore (DoC, BoP Conservancy) and George Pardy (DoC, Rotorua Lakes Area Office) to accompany them to investigate a sighting of mistletoe at the eastern end of Kaharoa Road, north of Lake Rotorua. The report of the sighting had been made to DoC's Rotorua Lakes Area office by a DoC possum control contractor. The hosts were reported as tree lucerne (*Chamaecytisus palmensis*) and Himalayan honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*).

Three plants of *Ileostylus* were found on branches of a tree lucerne overhanging the roadside of property belonging to Winston Fleming. Further investigation along the roadsides in the area revealed another plant growing on an unidentifiable deciduous tree. Samples of the host were collected for tentative identification at NZFRI. Because of the lack of reproductive structures the sample could only be identified as belonging to the family Rosaceae.

The sighting of the mistletoe on Himalayan honeysuckle was confirmed. This host shrub was growing in the Onaia Ecological Area on the boundary with farmland. Himalayan honeysuckle has not been previously reported (Norton *et al.* 1996) as a host for *Ileostylus*.

On a follow up trip to collect an identifiable specimen of the unknown host the author noticed a lone tawa tree (*Beilschmiedia tawa*) in a poor state of health, in that the canopy was very sparse, on farmland close to Kaharoa Road some 200m west of Kaharoa School. Within the canopy there were clumps of denser foliage that warranted closer inspection. As there were no vines / roots hanging down from these clumps it was deduced that they could only be mistletoes and most probably

*Ileostylus*. This was confirmed after a Botanical Society field trip to the Onaia Stream in June 2003 when Sarah Beadel leaped over an electric fence and found some ripe fruit on the ground under the mistletoe (*sic*). Fourteen *Ileostylus* were recorded on this tree. Following this, Paul Cashmore and the author investigated tawa on farmland further to the east and found a group of isolated tawa that were very heavily infested with mistletoe. In July 2004 an extensive DoC survey of the Kaharoa Farm and environs confirmed over 100 *Ileostylus* plants at this site. Only one other *Ileostylus* plant was found on the property and that was growing on a mahoe (*Melicactus ramiflorus*). The only other *Ileostylus* known in the area has been found growing on mahoe, hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and a London plane (*Platanus x acerifolia*) at, and in the vicinity of Hamurana Springs some 5km to the south (Hobbs 2001). The landowner was willing to fence off this large *Ileostylus* population and DoC has subsequently provided the fencing materials to enable this to be completed (P. Cashmore *pers. comm.*). The Department has also planted up the fenced off area with native species (G. Pardy *pers. comm.*).

Tawa had previously been recorded as a host, from a specimen of *Ileostylus* handed to a foreman of a logging gang, near Mamaku, who was told it had been growing on a tawa tree. The specimen was subsequently deposited in the NZFRI Herbarium (NZFRI 5392) in 1952 and the host recorded as a Category 3 host (Host mentioned on herbarium sheet see Norton *et al.* 1996). Tawa can now be recorded as a Category 1 host with a sample of host and mistletoe together with photograph has been deposited in the NZFRI Herbarium (NZFRI 25375).

The unidentified Rosaceae host has now been identified as a *Cotoneaster* sp.

*Ileostylus* was listed (Norton *et al.* 1996) as a threatened species but has now been removed from the threatened plant list because it is “more abundant than previously believed” de Lange *et al.* (2004).

## REFERENCES

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