

FIELD TRIP ALONG THE WAIOTAHİ SAND DUNES TO THE WAIOEKA RIVER AND HUNTRESS CREEK WETLANDS

6 June 2015

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A small keen group of botanists gathered together on Saturday 6 June 2015. We met at Matekerepu Historic Reserve, inland of Ōhiwa Harbour, with the intention of fording the Nukuhou Stream and exploring the reserve, to look for *Peperomia tetraphylla* and *Bulbophyllum tuberculatum* (both At Risk-Naturally Uncommon; as per de Lange *et al.* 2013). I had previously found these species in the Reserve in 2011 whilst doing a threatened plant survey of Ōhiwa Harbour. However, on the day of the trip the stream was a raging torrent after recent heavy rain and we decided to proceed to the second half of the field trip, which was the Waiotahi Dunes and Huntress Creek wetland.

This was a good place to be as we managed to avoid the rainy weather occurring elsewhere in the Bay of Plenty. It was also botanically interesting. Indigenous species present on the dunes included spinifex (*Spinifex sericeus*), *Lachnagrostis billardierei*, *Calystegia soldanella*, *Oxalis rubens*, *Ficinia nodosa*, *Carex testacea*, *Carex pumila*, and *Muehlenbeckia complexa*. Various indigenous species had also been planted, including pingao (*Desmoschoenus spiralis*), *Coprosma acerosa*, taupata (*Coprosma repens*), akeake (*Dodonea viscosa*), ngaio (*Myoporum laetum*), *Euphorbia glauca*, sand daphne (*Pimelea villosa*), karo (*Pittosporum crassifolium*), and *Poa billardierei*. Some of these species also occurred naturally at the site (refer to the species list), and it appeared that pingao has naturalised at the site following planting.

We walked east along the dunes to the mouth of the Waioeka River and then explored around the end of the spit, where we found two small populations of native spinach (*Tetragonia tetragonioides*; At Risk-Naturally Uncommon). Cabbage trees and toetoe (*Cortaderia toetoe*) were present in a small wetland behind the foredune.

At the mouth of the Huntress Creek estuary we saw several royal spoonbills (At Risk-Naturally Uncommon, threat classifications from Robertson *et al.* 2013), along with some pied stilt (At Risk-Declining). Eelgrass (*Zostera muelleri* subsp. *novozelandica*) was present in the estuary. As we traversed the saltmarsh - through searush (*Juncus kraussii*), *Schoenoplectus pungens*, and oioi (*Apodasmia similis*) - we also saw arrow grass (*Triglochin striata*), *Lobelia anceps*, *Samolus repens*, and bachelor's button (*Cotula coronopifolia*). Near the head of the saltmarsh, in thick mud, there was a small population of *Thyridia repens* (At Risk-Naturally Uncommon). This was an exciting find as it is the first time this species has been seen in Ōpōtiki Ecological District, and is only one of three “current” populations in the Bay of Plenty (also known from one site in Tauranga Harbour and one site at Little Waihi Estuary), although it has previously been found in Little Waihi Wildlife Management Reserve, one site in Tauranga Harbour, and one site in Ōhiwa Harbour.

As we made our way back to the vehicles through the wetland we saw a bittern (Threatened-Nationally Endangered), and also heard and saw fernbird (At Risk-Declining), and along the margin of a drain we saw a small population of nahui (*Alternanthera denticulata*).

It was a great day out, full of interesting species, great company, and lovely to escape a wet wintery day in Rotorua, exploring the botany of another corner of the eastern Bay of Plenty.

REFERENCES

- de Lange P., Rolfe J., Champion P., Courtney S., Heenan P., Barkla J., Cameron E., Norton D. and Hitchmough R. 2013: Conservation status of New Zealand indigenous vascular plants, 2012. *New Zealand Threat Classification Series 3*. Department of Conservation, Wellington. 70 p.
- Robertson H.A., Dowding J.E., Elliott G.P., Hitchmough R.A., Miskelly C.M., O'Donnell C.J.F., Powlesland R.G., Sagar P.M., Scofield R.P., and Taylor G.A. 2013: Conservation status of New Zealand birds, 2012. *New Zealand Threat Classification Series 4*. Department of Conservation, Wellington. 22 p.

**Checklist of vascular plant species,
Waiotahi dunes and Huntress Creek wetland**

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Key N - Natural, P = Planted

INDIGENOUS SPECIES

Monocot. trees and shrubs

Cordyline australis (N) tī kōuka, cabbage tree

Dicot. trees and shrubs

Coprosma acerosa s.s (P) sand coprosma, tarakupenga, tātaraheke

Coprosma repens (N&P) taupata

Dodonaea viscosa (N&P) akeake

Metrosideros excelsa (N) pōhutukawa

Myoporum laetum (P) ngaio

Ozothamnus leptophyllus (N) tauhinu

Pimelea villosa s.s. (P) autetauranga; sand pimelea

Pittosporum crassifolium (N&P) karo

Plagianthus divaricatus (N) marsh ribbonwood mākaka

Dicot. lianes

Calystegia soldanella (N) panahi, shore bindweed

Calystegia sepium subsp. *roseata* (N) pōhue

Muehlenbeckia complexa (N&P) pōhuehue

Ferns

Pteridium esculentum (N) rārahu, bracken

Grasses

Austroderia toetoe (N) toetoe

Lachnagrostis billardierei (N) sand wind grass

Microlaena stipoides (N) pātītī, meadow rice grass

Poa billardierei (N&P) sand tussock, hinarepe

Spinifex sericeus (N) kōwhangatara, spinifex

Sedges

Bolboschoenus caldwellii (N) pūrua grass

Bolboschoenus fluviatilis (N) pūrua grass, kukuraho

Carex pumila (N)

Carex testacea (N)

Cyperus ustulatus f. *ustulatus* (N) toetoe upoko-tangata

<i>Ficinia nodosa</i> (N)	wīwī
<i>Ficinia spiralis</i> (P and naturalised from planting)	pīngao
<i>Isolepis cernua</i> (N)	
<i>Machaerina articulata</i> (<i>Baumea articulata</i>) (N)	
<i>Machaerina juncea</i> (<i>Baumea juncea</i>) (N)	
<i>Schoenoplectus pungens</i> (N)	

Rushes

<i>Apodasmia similis</i> (N)	oioi
<i>Juncus kraussii</i> var. <i>australiensis</i> (N)	wī, wīwī sea rush
<i>Juncus sarophorus</i> (N)	wī, wīwī

Monocot. herbs (other than orchids, grasses, sedges, and rushes)

<i>Lemna disperma</i> (<i>L. minor</i>) (N)	karearea
<i>Phormium tenax</i> (P&N)	harakeke, flax
<i>Triglochin striata</i> (N)	arrow grass
<i>Typha orientalis</i> (N)	raupō
<i>Zostera muelleri</i> subsp. <i>novozelandica</i> (N)	eelgrass, karepō

Composite herbs

<i>Cotula coronopifolia</i> (N)	bachelor's button
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Dicot. herbs (other than composites)

<i>Alternanthera denticulata</i> (N)	nahui
<i>Euphorbia glauca</i> (N&P)	New Zealand spurge, waiū-atua, waiū-o-Kahukura
<i>Lobelia anceps</i> (N)	punakura
<i>Oxalis rubens</i> (N)	sand oxalis
<i>Persicaria decipiens</i> (N)	tutunawai
<i>Samolus repens</i> var. <i>repens</i> (N)	māakoako
<i>Tetragonia tetragonioides</i> (N)	kōkihi, rengamutu, rengarenga, tūtae-ikamoana
<i>Thyridia repens</i> (N)	

NATURALISED AND EXOTIC SPECIES

Monocot. trees and shrubs

<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>	Phoenix palm
<i>Yucca gloriosa</i>	yucca

Dicot. trees and shrubs

<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	banksia
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	broom
<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	tree privet
<i>Ligustrum sinense</i>	Chinese privet

<i>Lupinus arboreus</i>	lupin
<i>Lycium ferocissimum</i>	boxthorn
<i>Myoporum insulare</i>	Australian ngaio
<i>Opuntia vulgaris</i>	prickly pear
<i>Paraserianthes lophantha</i>	brush wattle
<i>Pelargonium</i> sp.	geranium
<i>Rubus</i> sp. (<i>R. fruticosus</i> agg.)	blackberry
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	grey willow
<i>Solanum mauritianum</i>	woolly nightshade
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	gorse

Monocot. lianes

<i>Asparagus asparagoides</i>	smilax
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Dicot. lianes

<i>Rumex sagittatus</i>	climbing dock
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Grasses

<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	creeping bent
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	sweet vernal
<i>Bromus willdenowii</i>	prairie grass
<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	pampas
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Indian doab
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	cocksfoot
<i>Digitaria sanguinalis</i>	summer grass
<i>Ehrharta erecta</i>	veldt grass
<i>Eleusine indica</i>	crowfoot grass
<i>Elytrigia pycnantha</i>	sea couch
<i>Glyceria maxima</i>	reed sweetgrass
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire fog
<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	harestail
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	rye grass
<i>Paspalum vaginatum</i>	saltwater paspalum
<i>Poa annua</i>	annual poa
<i>Schedonorus arundinaceus</i>	tall fescue
<i>Sporobolus africanus</i>	ratstail
<i>Stenotaphrum secundatum</i>	buffalo grass

Sedges

<i>Cyperus eragrostis</i>	umbrella sedge
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Rushes

<i>Juncus effusus</i> var. <i>effusus</i>	soft rush, leafless rush
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Monocot. herbs (other than orchids, grasses, sedges, and rushes)

<i>Agapanthus praecox</i>	agapanthus
<i>Crocasmia</i> × <i>crocosmiiflora</i>	montbretia
<i>Tradescantia fluminensis</i> (fragments only, not rooted)	tradescantia

Composite herbs

<i>Arctotheca calendula</i>	cape weed
<i>Bidens frondosa</i>	beggars' ticks
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	California thistle
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Conyza sumatrensis</i>	broad-leaved fleabane
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	hawksbeard
<i>Gamochaeta coarctata</i>	purple cudweed
<i>Gazania linearis</i>	gazania
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	catsear
<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	ragwort
<i>Leontodon taraxacoides</i>	hawkbit
<i>Senecio bipinnatisectus</i>	Australian fireweed
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	groundsel
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	puha, sow thistle
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	dandelion

Dicot. herbs (other than composites)

<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	scarlet pimpernel
<i>Atriplex prostrata</i>	orache
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	sea rocket
<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>	ice plant
<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>	hornwort
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	fathen
<i>Euphorbia maculata</i>	spotted spurge
<i>Euphorbia peplus</i>	milkweed
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	fennel
<i>Fumaria muralis</i>	scrambling fumitory
<i>Galium aparine</i>	cleavers
<i>Galium palustre</i>	marsh bedstraw
<i>Lepidium africanum</i> agg.	pepper cress
<i>Lotus pedunculatus</i>	lotus
<i>Ludwigia palustris</i>	water purslane
<i>Modiola caroliniana</i>	creeping mallow
<i>Ornithopus perpusillus</i>	wild seradella
<i>Orobanche minor</i>	broomrape
<i>Oxalis latifolia</i>	fishtail oxalis
<i>Persicaria hydropiper</i>	water pepper
<i>Phytolacca octandra</i>	inkweed

Plantago lanceolata

Ranunculus repens

Rumex acetosella

Rumex obtusifolius

Silene gallica

Solanum chenopodioides

Solanum nigrum

narrow-leaved plantain

creeping buttercup

sheep's sorrel

broad-leaved dock

catchfly

velvety nightshade

black nightshade



Young fronds of *Thelypteris confluens* in the swamp beside East Cape Road. See article on East Cape field camp, p. 43. Photo: Nick Miller.