

A revamp of the vascular flora of the Rotorua Ecological District

J.F.F. Hobbs

Early this millennium I found that the Rotorua Botanical Society's 1990 publication "Annotated list of vascular plants in the Rotorua Ecological District" was getting horribly out of date and I had the time and the inclination to do something about it. Over the last 15 years I have been gathering data from areas of mainly native bush (mainly Scenic Reserves and other reserves administered by the Department of Conservation, and public access lands that are mainly Local Body Reserves). Occasionally working on the principal "no fence no trespass", wanderings went further afield until a fence was found. This theme got me from Lake Road in Rotorua to Mamaku village along the disused railway without impediment. The timing was great as now roughly a third is fenced off for a private enterprise.

Searches of literature such as the Rotorua Botanical Society Newsletters, local body reports and unpublished species lists, formed part of the database. Data was also obtained from the Auckland Museum Herbarium, Te Papa Museum Herbarium, Landcare Herbarium, National Forestry Herbarium, Waikato and Massey University herbaria. By far the greatest source was getting out into the field and accumulating more than 50,000 taxa records, from some 930 sites. The result is a database of over 63,500 taxa records.

Data will be published early in 2018 in the form of a booklet of some 230 pages. Included will be a brief history of botanical collection and exploration and flora statistics. Species will be listed alphabetically in families and family groups (Ferns and Fern Allies, Gymnosperms, Dicotyledons and Monocotyledons). Each species will have (where applicable) common name, synonyms, a representative voucher number, herbaria data, national conservation status, number of times it was recorded in the district, the recorded year range, its frequency of observation within the five major lake catchments in the district, its recorded altitude range, phenology, habitat and some relevant comments.