along a well-formed track, following the coast a little way, and then moving a few hundred metres inland on the rough, rocky terrain. *Stipa stipoides* was present at the shore, and we soon encountered the curious, primitive *Psilotum nudum.* The necklace fern *Asplenium flabellifolium,* was a little further inland, as were the two *Cheilanthes* species, the woolly cloak fern C. distans and the rock fern *C. humilis.* Some of our members were using hand lenses to examine several species of native orchids flowering among the mosses in the rock crevices. *Pterostylis alobula, Cyrtostylis oblongus,* and *Acianthus reniformis* were mentioned, and tOhere were spectacular patches of *Pterostylis banksii.* The invasive evergreen buckthorn problem was present in many places in the rocky habitat just as it was in the deeper soils on Motutapu Island, and perhaps presenting a greater challenge to combat without damaging the precious small plants close nearby.

Many thanks to those on the committee who chose this location for a field trip. It was a positive experience, especially in the regenerating areas. Much more remains to be learned in this area, and we would do well to return there in future years; other regeneration areas on islands and mainland need to be compared for different influences.

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Fire damage re-growth at Piha

Chris McKain

Just over two years ago, a large fire swept up a steep hillside off Piha road, at the descending road near the beach (Q11 420703). The fire took some time to get under control, so that about six hectares of regenerating bush was destroyed. A year ago during the ginger (*Hedychium* spp.) inspections in the area, I found that the hillside had started to recover from the fire. The previous vegetation, which I was told was pampas grass (*Cortaderia* spp.) and mixed natives had apparently been burnt off. In September 1999, I revisited to check on the control work and was surprised with what I found.

The major revegetation is by toatoa (*Haloragis erecta*), followed by gorse (*Ulex europaeus*). In amongst these are other plants such as fireweed (*Senecio* spp.), manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*), plantains (*Plantago* spp.), and *Veronica.* Nearly all vegetation was less than 1 metre tall.

What was amazing was the number of natives that recovered from the fire: cabbage trees (*Cordyline australis*), nikau (*Rhopalostylis sapida*), mamaku (*Cyathea medullaris*), karamu (*Coprosma* spp.) and mahoe (*Melicytus ramiflorus*); these last standing out like statues amongst a sea of pale green and yellow.

Walking through the area is very difficult due to the steep slope and the gorse cover (ouch). Fortunately the ginger was confined to one area. It is apparent that the natural processes of recovery of burnt ground is rapid, by both natives and some exotic species.

A list of plants present:

Most abundant were Haloragis erecta 60%, and *Ulex europaeus 30%.

**Agapanthus praecox*
**Araujia sericifera*
**Artemisia* sp.
Carex dissita
**Cirsium vulgare*
Coprosma grandifolia
C. lucida
C. robusta
Cordyline australis
**Cortaderia jubata*
**C. selloana*
Cyathea medullaris
**Erigeron karvinskianus*
Gahnia lacera
Hebe stricta
**Hedychium gardnerianum*
Hydrocotyle spp.
Leptospermum scoparium
**Leucanthemum vulgare*
**Leycesteria formosa*
Libertia ixioides
**Linaria* sp.
**Lonicera japonica*
Melicytus ramiflorus
Passiflora tetrandra
Phormium tenax
**Physalis peruviana*
**Phytolacca octandra*
**Picris* spp.
**Plantago lanceolata*
Pteridium esculentum
Rhopalostylis sapida
**Senecio bipinnatisectus*
**Solanium mauritainum*
Sonchus spp.
**Veronica persica*