The Distributional Overlap of WEINMANNIA SYLVICOLA and WEINMANNIA RACEMOSA

W. sylvicola is of course very plentiful north of Auckland. At Clevedon is occurs rather sparingly but I have found it plentiful on the Coromandel Peninsula. The furthest south there I saw recently was between Whangamata and Waihi. I have not noted it be ond that point. Cheeseman says that it extends to the East Cape and Taupo. This will no doubt be correct, but I would like to know in what localities and in what quantity it occurs south and east of Waihi.

Of W. racemosa, Cheeseman states "plentiful in forests from the Thames goldfields and middle Waikato southwards". This could mean that it may occur further north though less than "plentiful". At Clevedon there is a mixture of the two species, both on the hills west of the river mouth and throughout much of the country on the eastern side. On the west side, Miss Joy McKenzie found a tree of each growing side by side. I cannot recollect finding it north of Auckland City and would be glad to know whether anyone else has done so. Also I do not know its status throughout the Coromandel Peninsula. If this is not too elementary would other members be so good as to lend a helping hand?

Ross McKenzie.

(We hope that some of our members may be able to help Mr. McKenzie. Our two species of Weinmannia are often confused. For the benefit of members, the following differences are to be noted.

	Weinmannia sylvicola	Weinmannia racemosa
1.	Usu. 25-50 ft. tho. s.t.60-70'	Taller, 50-80 ft. or more.
2.	Lv. 3-foliate or pinnate (rarely i-foliate)	I-foliate
3.	Lvs. 1-2 in. long	Lvs. 1-4 in. long.
4.	Branchlets usu. softly hairy.	Branchlets usu. glabrous (hairless

According to Cheeseman, tawhero (W. sylvicola) flowers from December to April, and kamahi (W. racemosa) from December to January. Ed.

Not having any botanical observations, Mrs. Risbridge contributes by sharing her reading with us.

"Recently I bought a copy of A.W. Anderson's 'Plants of The Bible'. This book has given me great pleasure as I am interested in the stories of plants - especially of Bible plants and Roses.

Mr. Anderson refers to 'Old London Gardens' by Gladys Taylor (a Batsford Book). I managed after a deal of searching to obtain a copy, to me it is fascinating and there may be other members who would enjoy reading it."

She continues "At the Floral Art Festival held in May I noticed a lovely spray of golden-leaved Ginkgo biloba. So dainty and colourful this looked in its autumn gown, I gazed at it in wonder. In the book "Old London Gardens" Gladys Taylor tells of the Ginkgo under the title "Two Trees of Prehistoric Times". "A sacred Chinese tree, the Ginkgo was supposed until recent times to have grown nowhere but in China, but fossil specimens have been found, proving that it grew in our own forests (i.e. English forests, Ed.) before the Ice Age. The Chinese found a resemblance to ducks' feet in the leaves and so names it Gin Ko. We are reminded of the leaves of a fern and the Ginko becomes the 'Maiden Hair Tree' for us".

(Mrs. Risbridge mentions that there is a good tree of Ginkgo in the garden of the Auckland Zoo. There are also two fine ones in Gillies Avenue and also one in Albert Park, quite close to Wellesley St., and easily seen from the road.

Ginkgo is an extremely primitive coniferous tree, frozen out of Europe, together with the Big Trees of California, Magnolias, Hickories etc., during the Ice Age. It was found in China only as a temple tree and introduced into England in 1754. It was believed to be unknown in the wild state, but a single grove of these beautiful trees was recently discovered growing wild by a group of Chinese Scientists. The Ginkgo is a deciduous tree, its leaves turning a rich golden yellow before they fall. It may reach a height of 80 ft.

There is a very lovely picture in full colour of the mature Ginkgo in Kew Garden opposite page 281 in "Trees, Woods and Man", by H.L. Edlin (another fine book in "The New Naturalist" series by Collins).

The juicy-looking plum-like fruit of the female tree contains an edible kernel, but don't be misled by the nice appearance of the pulp.

It has been described as "hardy and accommodating". It is to be hoped that it is. The specimen growing at Brockis Holt has had three moves, and one waits to see how it survives in the Waitakere clay with the tea-tree growing around it. So far it has not come into leaf, but the buds look quite vigorous - at least they haven't fallen off! Ed.)

It is good indeed to hear from old friends overseas, and a letter from Mrs. Watson Smith (Lucy Cranwell) is of interest to all of us. Mrs. Watson Smith is still hard at work on her pollens, she says, "I am trying to describe and figure all the pollen types in our flora and give comparative notes on allied species overseas..... My pollen Atlas will be popularly arranged, in contradistinction to the monocot volume, which is of most use to specialists." She goes on to say she has few gaps now, and thinks members of the Botanical Society may be able to help her to bridge those remaining. She needs sprigs of material in full flower or in bud. "I like to have a sprig large enough for me to check the identification, of course. If a Voucher sheet is placed in the Auckland Museum, or in the herbarium at the University, that would be all right. There is a growing demand on the part of critics to have voucher material available for future checking, and I have always believed in this too".

Duplicate specimens could be collected, slipped in some magazine with absorbent news print, and a beginning made of pressing them by slipping them under some weight. Mrs. Smith, who is nothing of not practical, suggests sitting on them in the car coming home. Sprigs could be handed to the Museum for forwarding or posted directly to

Mrs. Watson Smith,
5045 East Grand Road,
Tucson,
Arizona,
U.S.A.

The specimens required by Mrs. Smith, are unfortunately not all available round Auckland, but I publish the complete list with a few comments in case country members might be able to help, or know friends in some of the localities who could assist.

Local Species Required.

Scleranthus biflorus.

This odd little member of the pink family (Caryophyllaceae) is sometimes used on rock gardens. It forms compact cushions of from 1-5i in diameter. Cheeseman describes it as abundant throughout and growing up to 4000 ft. Last time I remember collecting it was by the banks of the Waitakere stream, beyond the cartshed. Its flowers are very minute and possess only one stamen.

All species of Nertera. The local species are:

Nertera dichondraefolia.

This species is found throughout N.Z. except in the extreme north. It is the common one locally, and there are few patches of bush where one does not meet it. It flowers October-December, but like so many of our local plants one may find it flowering out of season.

Nertera cunninghamii

This species differs in having narrower leaves, a more slender habit, and being perfectly glabrous, i.e. hairless. It flowers October-January. It is not easy to find these little plants in flower though it seems possible to find abundance of drupes at all times. Mrs. Wood managed to run across N.cunninghamii in bloom some weeks back, near Rua-Te-Whenua but so far I have encountered no flowers.

Sideroxylon novo-zelandicum.

The tawapou, famous for its beautiful berries is a tree not common round Auckland. It is to be found on Waiheke, so perhaps some members who have batches down there may be able to help? It is usually found on islands and rocky headlands.

Meterosideros hypericifolia.

A very common small white-flowered rata. The flowers are on the old wood, not terminal.

Non-Local Species Required.

Gunnera prorepens

Hilly and sub-alpine wet localities from lower Waikato southwards. Not uncommon in Sphagnum swamps

Gunnera densiflora: Nelson, Acheron and Clarence Rivers. Lake Tennyson, Canterbury, Craigieburn Mountains.

Gunnera hamiltoni: Southland, hills near the mouth of Oreti River. Stewart Island, Mason Bay.

Isotoma fluviatilis: Nelson, lower portion of Buller Valley, marshy places near Westport. Mokohiou River. Canterbury, Broken River Basin. Mount Torlesse, Lake Tekapo. Otago Macrae's, Lake Hauroko. Cheeseman says this is probably an abundant mountain plant. It is rather similar to a small form of Pratia angulata. It has pale blue flowers.

Meterosideros colensoi var. pendens:

This species is closely allied to M.hypericifolia, but more slender in habit with pubescent (softly hairy) branches and narrower leaves. Rare and local. Found in both North and South Islands. In vicinity of Nelson and Matai Valley, between Westport and Charleston. The variety pendens hasmore slender, almost pendulous branchlets and white flowers.

Nothopanax anomolum var. microphyllum

Smaller and more slender than the type, with smaller leaves. The common form south of the Waikato.

N.depressa.

Ruahine, Tararua and Kaimanawa Mountains. Common in South Island. Flrs. Oct.-Jan.

N. balfouriana.

South Island. Waimakariri, Rakaia, Ashburton and Rangitata Valleys. Mt. Cook district.
Creeping on Sphagnum.

N. setulosa.

North Cape district, Kaitaia, between Kaihu and Maungonui Bluff, Patete Plateau, Dannevirke and Norsewood, Wairarapa, nr. Marton, nr. Wellington, Kapiti Island, South Island, plentiful.
Stewart Island. Nov.-January.