

plant does not flower every year by any means. I would certainly be glad to have a snippet off one of the racemes to accompany the leaf specimen in our herbarium. If the fruits are not developing normally it could well be through lack of suitable pollen -- you would certainly have noticed if there had been a male plant of the same species anywhere near. It would have been interesting to try whether pollen of A. trinervia or A. solandri applied artificially would have had any result. Here when we had female but no male Collospermum flowers we tried Astelia pollen on them, and certainly the fruits are swelling nicely and much better than those not treated, though that does not necessarily mean that seed will set.

You may remember that I took a fan off this same plant -- one that was overlapping the pathway. It languished for a while but is now looking very healthy and growing well, but I would not expect it to flower this year and perhaps not even next.

In the shadehouse our Collospermums have flowered very well this year, especially C. microspermum in which the male flowers are white and in short squat racemes as distinct from the longer, fuller, almost butter yellow racemes of C. hastatum. The male (and perhaps female too) of C. microspermum has an unpleasantly heavy almost acrid smell whereas C. hastatum, judging by flowers just out today, smells of damp bush and leaf mould, a nostalgic smell in Canterbury that is anything but unpleasant. Have you come across C. microspermum (distinguished also by its milk-white fruits) in the Waitakeres? The next few months would be the time when it would be most easily recognised."

Note - Would members please keep a lookout for C. microspermum, and send in a report regarding any plants found.

NGAWHA HOT SPRINGS TRIP - JAN. 28 to 31st, 1966 - MISS M. TODD

Friday 28th dawned fair and bright, with 36 members, our special bus left Auckland at 9 a.m. for the journey north. At Whangarei (108 miles), reached by 12.30 p.m., we had a picnic lunch in the grounds of the beautiful MAIR PARK. Recent rains had kept this area in good, fresh condition, and a stroll by the stream and walks up the lower bush tracks of Mt Parahaki showed us the predominating trees - Towai, Rata (white, flowering), Karaka (orange berried), Tanekaha and, most impressive, a pair of handsome Kawakas guarding the entrance to the grassed area. At 2.30 p.m. we continued our journey north through rolling bush country. On the flats stands of Kahikatea grew, on the hills the rounded heads of Puriri and groves of Totara flourished while, in the smaller settlements along the way, still in use, were the little old wooden houses of early days. An excellent sealed highway prevailed, then 2 miles of dusty road brought us at 5 p.m. to NGAWHA SPRINGS (57 miles from Whangarei). Here we were accommodated at the two hotels, set in a hollow amid open-air hot mineral pools with the warm atmosphere of a thermal region. A walk after tea through scrubland brought us to a small but very peculiar lake. Here, owing to volcanic disturbance, the original old kauri beds had been thrown up, and the huge trunks now littered the sides. The water's surface lay thick with oily bubbles, due to gases forced up from below. The area had been,

a few years back, mined for Mercury, so these were mercurial waters. Back to the hotel we went for supper and, before retiring, most of the party went down to the Baths for a hot soak in the various pools.

OMAHUTA FOREST. Saturday was fine, a little overcast, and cooler. At 9 a.m. we set out with destination Omahuta Forest. Upon topping a hill at Okaihau there below us lay a beautiful fertile valley of farmlands, the fields heavy with seeding pas-palum, and interspersed with Totaras. Surrounding this were high ranges of dense forest and, behind this again, the serrated peaks of range upon range showed lavender on the horizon. Glimpses of estuary waters of the Hokianga Harbour, extinct volcanoes, and the hill-sites of original Maori pas all showed up as we traversed the old gum digging land of the north. Thirty-nine miles from Ngawha, and near Mangamuka Bridge, we were joined by Major Newton, our leader for the day. Three miles up a side road lay Forest Headquarters, and here we signed the visitors book. Written permission to enter the Omahuta Forest had already been obtained. This is part of the Maungataniwha Range, and is a reserve of magnificent kauri. Still climbing along a twisty narrow road through native bush for 7 miles, we stopped at the Reserve entrance for our picnic lunch. Here at 800 ft. we were afforded a wonderful view of forest land. A NOTICE read :-

This reserve was set aside in 1951 as a Kauri Sanctuary. It contains some of the largest remaining Kauri in Northland.

Botanical interests on the track to the giant kauris were - *Alseuosmia linariifolia*, the fern *Dicksonia lanata*, the baby *Libertia pulchella* in flower, the handsome *Tawari* (*Ixerba brexioides*), *Maire*, *Mida salicifolia* var. *myrtifolia* etc. From then on our interest was taken up by the big Kauris as they presented themselves, and magnificent they were indeed.

NGATUEHINE (Sisters)		RAKAUNUI (Big Tree)	
Height 39'	Girth 22'	Height 68'	Girth 28'10"
Contents 10,539	Board feet	Contents 30,746	Board feet
Height 48'	Girth 22'	This trunk had a spiral twist from tip to toe - very unusual.	
Contents 12,766	Board feet		

TANIWHA (Monster)		HOKIANGA (Turning Point)	
Height 54'	Girth 33'6"	Height 49'	Girth 31'9"
Contents 34,237	Bd Ft	Contents 27,929	Bd Ft

And there in the depths a tall handsome Kauri

NGAFUHI (Principal tribe) North Auckland		KOPI (Principal Chief)	
Height 61'	Girth 27'2"	Height 55'	Girth 45'
Contents 24,625	Board feet	Contents 64,200	Board feet

Members posed, and cameras clicked to record "the giant and I". But, enclosed in a high rough textured, nut brown punga fence, amidst the dense forest of Omahuta, stood the mightiest of all:

Its bowl humped high out of the ground around, with trunk clean and of a warm pink colour.

We were back to the road and Reserve entrance by 2 p.m. Evidence was still there of the damage caused to the tall timbers by a tornado that hit this area some years ago. Stark white trunks (with heads wrenched off) of one time powerful kauris stood amidst the forest's new growth, bleaching in the sun. Bird life seemed scarce. Wandering down the road we found many delights, including luscious big blackberries to eat. Besides Kauris, other tall timbers were Miro, Rimu and Kahikatea and, here, hanging thickly massed throughout the branches were the scarlet berries of the Supple-jack. The Fuchsias were also in fruit, their subtle flavour rather nice. The large Hināu trees were well berried (green). Kirk's Daisy was starry with blossom, and the five-finger, Neopanax boreum, was very handsome with large heads of beady black berries. The Bushlawyer too added its quota of fruits - lovely bunches of small translucent berries with colours from gold to plum. The weather cleared, and suddenly a beautiful scene came into view - APPLE DAM, a small, still lake of clear golden water, set in the heart of open bush. Reeds of every hue and of many varieties fringed the foreground, and waterlilies of lemon and white (orange stamened) floated round the outlet, where were a tiny stream and waterfall. Across the way the reflections of every stick, leaf and bough lay pictured in its waters. It was a most peaceful and picturesque place, but actually created for a water-reserve for fire fighting.

Tree ferns here were exceptionally fine specimens, all with very wide, healthy green fronds. We were Ngāwhā bound by 3.15 p.m. and Major Newton, whom we were very much indebted to for a most informative day, left us at the main road junction. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded him.

Crossing the Rariki river and bridge, with forested ranges as a backdrop, came an unscheduled stop - the old world garden of Mr Cheeseman. The long verandah of his home was three deep with introduced flowering pot-plants of every variety in containers of all types - a very bright patch of massed colour that forced us to stop and view, say hello, and wander round his small, but very full, garden. We made the Springs by 5 p.m. and a welcome dinner at 5.30 p.m. Afterwards a walk with Mr Lediard and Mr Warren to Tiger Baths and the thermal area at the back of the hotels proved most interesting. Here were bubbling pools. Hot gas pressured up through the waters gives the heat to the pools. Again, in Sulphur Valley, were to be seen the huge grotesque shapes of old kauri trunks brought up to the surface by volcanic action. A note of interest was supplied by Mr and Mrs Holt. The previous evening they had seen by the small lake the much discussed little bird that, since 1958, has made its home in Northland - an Australian dweller normally, but perhaps blown here and increasing rapidly - the Welcome Swallow.

By now it was supper time and, at 8.30 p.m., everybody went down to the Baths (Domain, Maori Spa - 1/- entrance) for some fun in the pools. These were of varying temperatures, and individually named, e.g. "Bulldog" pool with its black waters and natural rock floor, temp. 102 Fh. Earth base was usual, though with hot gases coming through to the water's surface. In this area, an experimental bore had recorded a higher pressure than at Wairakei.

PUKETI FOREST. Sunday was dull with a little rain and at 9 a.m. we were off to the southern corner of the Maungataniwha Range where this particular forest lies. Going via Kaikohe we skirted Lake OMAPERE with its wild life of black swans. Crossing the main highway we climbed through scrubby sheep country, and here we obtained a view of the Kerikeri inlet. Then as the forest closed in about us, we parked the bus on the roadside where a large NOTICE read -

MANGINANGINA SCENIC RESERVE

This Kauri reserve of 250 acres has been set aside as a permanent Sanctuary.

We had covered 24 miles from Ngawha, and it was now 10.30 a.m. Wide tracks into the forest led to big Kauris. One recorded :-
Height 39' Girth 31'9"
Volume 2,900 cubic feet
Sawn timber 22,000 Bd ft.

By the entrance three Wood-pigeons showed themselves in the branches above, and gave their throaty calls. Botanical interests included the Toropapa (*Alseuosmia macrophylla*), the spiderwood (*Dracophyllum latifolium*) which appeared plentiful, *Pittosporum kirki* in berry with its green flat fruits, the fine creeping *Alseuosmia banksii*, the filmy fern *Hymenophyllum flexuosum* in the wet marshy area of the forest and the minute species of orchid, *Bulbophyllum pygmaeum*. Apart from this find, orchids were scarce. Abundant was the beautiful Makamaka tree (*Ackama rosaefolia*).

By 1.30 p.m. it was dull. We broke up into three parties and took separate tracks. Mr Warren's party dived off into the bush and took a long tramp down through the lower valley - a pig track - but most rewarding. Indeed there was evidence of very recent pig-rooting along the way. Perhaps our noise had disturbed them. The floor of the valley was wet indeed, and so here was a very rich source of mosses, filmy fern, lichen and fungi. As we pushed our way through the undergrowth, over trees and under trees, we saw botanical material that would gladden any botanist's heart, so abundant and luscious was the growth; on prone trunks especially. Mosses of every variety appeared to exist there including the King-Moss (*Dawsonia superba*). Eventually we found our way out through a grove of huge kauris, with the typical low bush, and so back to the road and bus. At 3.30 p.m. it was overcast, but fine and dry; in fact excellent conditions prevailed. We returned to Ngawha via Kaikohe township, with a look round the shopping centre of this prosperous little town. That evening a walk to the waterfall was arranged, but some took advantage of viewing, on T.V., the Auckland Air Pageant (the Opening of the Mangere Airport, Sat. 29th). Most members indulged in the hot mineral baths before retiring, either to relax or for fun and games. Our members at the Spa Hotel ran a Bathing Beauty Contest at their Baths.

WAITANGI (17 miles); Monday was overcast with showers, and at 9.45 a.m. we said farewell to Ngawha Springs. All this part of Northland is full of history and tales of battles with British Military and Maoris are often retold. Old churches and old homesteads of the staunch pioneers are preserved for historical interest and we were right amongst them, e.g. Waimate North. But all these things take time to view and absorb, so we pressed on to see the most significant of all, the Treaty House of Waitangi

in the Bay of Islands.

The weather cleared as we left, and soon we were at the Haururu Falls, a wide, solid sheet of the Waitangi River which falls over, and flows on and out to the Bay of Islands. In the early days this water-way was used to transport goods up to Waimate North.

A little further on we came to the beach. The sea sparkled in brilliant sunshine. We passed the new Waitangi Hotel where a beautiful golf course lay opposite, and here we stopped at the Treaty Memorial (1840).

The Treaty House was set in very beautiful grounds, ablaze with brilliant flower beds of Zinnias, Dahlias and Hibiscus. An enormous frontage of mown ground faced the sea, and here stands the flag-staff pole. Huge native trees surround this, and excellent were the views of the harbour, Russell across the water, Nine-pins rocks off the headland, and Paihia beach which stretched away from us. We had half an hour to look-see, so into the Treaty House we went (old documents, pictures, greenstone and the copy of the Treaty), then over to view the magnificent carved canoe (housed) and into the spacious Meeting House, rich with carving, reed panels, and patterned beams.

On we went to Paihia with its ferry, beach and homesteads, and into the Church of St Paul; the H. & W. Williams Memorial Church, opened in 1926 in honour of the missionaries who built the first church in N.Z. here at Paihia in 1823.

On good sealed roads our route led round the coastline, over the bush-clad hills, past areas of mangroves to Opuia and on through Kawakawa, with its railroad down the middle of the street. We travelled the high ridge after this, which afforded us views of the bush cleared ranges waving back to the sea on either side, the east side cultivated and the west bare. Past small settlements we sped to Hikurangi, with its Fisheries for smoking fish, and on to Whangarei for our picnic lunch at the lovely Rose Gardens. It was sunny with a warm breeze.

Leaving Whangarei at 1.45 p.m. for Auckland, it became overcast and by 2.40 p.m. rain had set in. The very old church at OTAIKA still sits atop its hill, and the new road construction to Whangarei progresses across the lowland. Wonderful views of sea and valleys were obtained from the ridge road, and beautiful bush was passed through the gorge. We reached Wellsford by 3.30 p.m. and partook of a most welcome pot of tea. By 4 p.m. the drizzle had dried up. Pohuehue gorge was beautiful with Tree Ferns. Then rain came down again. "Prize Giving" to the Beauty Queens of the Spa Hotel took place - Miss Pindlay (for being such a good sport), Hilda Cookson (for her antics) and the "Queens" (for the best figures) were Barbara and Dorace Mason. Cheo bars were presented to each amid applause.

Mr Lediard expressed our appreciation and thanks to TOM, our driver, for his excellent execution of duty, and to Mr WARREN for his fine organising and leadership. Members showed their appreciation to Mr LEDIARD (President) for his sincere attention to their welfare by hearty applause.

The weather cleared at Hatfield Beach, but other troubles began - holiday traffic hold-ups. At 4.45 p.m. we crawled, or just stopped, till Silverdale was reached an hour later. Then the roads cleared, and we sped along arriving at the City terminus by 6.30 p.m. So off we went home, happy with our holiday and friendly companionship and richer for the experience.