

NEWS LETTER

AUCKLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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Remuera  
AUCKLAND.5.

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ANOTHER RARITY - - - K. Wood

Blechnum colensoi ( syn. patersonii ) is a fern that usually grows from Thames and Te Aroha southwards. In 1950 some members of the Auckland University Field Club reported finding specimens in George's Creek, a stream that drops steeply from the Huia Ridge and emerges at Middle Camp, halfway to the Huia Dam. As far as I know this was the first time it had been found in the ranges. Later we searched for it without success, probably because we did not go beyond the first large waterfall.

Recently a young lad, Tom Moore, son of the waterworks foreman at Huia, showed me specimens of Blechnum colensoi which he had collected from high up on the Karamatura Stream. In March this year my husband went on a lone climb up this beautiful stream, clambering up the many waterfalls and passing the remains of a dam of the old timber milling days en route. Far up near the source of the stream, at a height of about 1000ft above sea level he located quite a large patch of this fern growing beside a 20ft waterfall. This was probably the same patch that was seen by Tom Moore, and is yet another example of the way in which isolated pockets of plants survive in odd places in Auckland. In this case the altitude probably provided the right conditions for its survival, and I am hoping that its inaccessibility to all except the extremely energetic will continue to give protection to a plant so rare in this area.

( There was another small colony of Blechnum colensoi to the east of Mill Bay, in a narrow, rather dark ravine, by the edge of a small stream, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile in from the road and at an altitude of some 450ft. I found it in 1947 and recorded 3 plants, but have never been back to see if they still survive. ( Allan - 1961, p.80 - gives latitude 37 as the northernmost limit of the species, which would include the Whatipu - Parau coastline. E.D.H.)