

NOTES AND NEW LOCALITIES - - - E.D.H.

Phyllocladus glaucus - Mt. Donald McLean ( Waitakere Range )  
11.1967 E.D.H.

Marattia salicina - Clevedon Reserve 12.1967 E.D.H.

Gastrodia sesamoides - Greenhithe ( Albany ) 12.1966-67  
R.E.Silvester

On 2 December 1967 I went with Mr. Silvester to examine this colony. I counted 25 flower stems up to 60cm high, in an area some 85cm diameter. These obviously belonged to a single rhizome-system, and varied from 2mm diameter with 2 flowers, to 7mm diameter with 40 flowers. Mr. Silvester told me that he photographed, early in November, a stem which carried 66 flowers. Originally there were 2 colonies, one on either side the gate, but the northern one failed to survive the onslaught of a bulldozer. The remaining colony was growing in a roadside copse of black wattle ( Acacia decurrens ), several of which had been rough-felled 2 years previously, leaving rotting stumps up to 1 metre high. Bracken ( Pteridium ) and pampas grass ( Cortaderia dioica ) grew among the wattles. A close inspection of the Acacia stumps revealed no sign of 'bracket-fungus' fructifications, which disappointed me, for at Silverdale Miss Campbell found that the orchid was utilising the bracket fungus Fomes mastoporus. The characteristic Acacia stem galls, caused ( so the book says ) by the parasitic fungus Uromycladium, were both large and plentiful, but what effect if any they would have on the orchid, I am not competent to guess. I noted with glee, the apparent continuing association of this Gastrodia with a leguminous host plant. As at Glorit the flowers were all inverted, with the labellum uppermost. The presence of dense and robust Pteridium is perhaps significant, for Miss Campbell also reported that G. sesamoides occurred among Pteridium at Takaka ( Nelson ), and that Fomes did on occasion infect the fern.

This shows signs of becoming involved. One has today to be expert in a dozen complicated sciences - mycology, cytology, bacteriology, horticulture and taxonomy. What price now the amateur botanist ? Shades of Abu ben Adhem !!! 'write me then as one who loves the bush' .

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MEETING - - - 1. November 1967

In the Newsletter for March 1966.p.4, I noted a talk given to the Society on 3 November 1965 by Miss Ella Campbell. Among other things Miss Campbell discussed the restiad bogs of the Waikato basin from the viewpoint of one interested in both mycology and liverworts.

On 1 November 1967 Mr. E.W.E. Butcher discussed these same bogs from the viewpoint of one interested in water plants, illustrating his talk with diagrams, specimens and slides ( including some most interesting photo-micrographs ). There

was surprisingly little overlap between the two talks, considering that they were based upon the same material. There seems to be no point in repeating what I wrote earlier, so I will confine myself here to Mr. Butcher's explanation of the nutritive mechanism of the two bladderworts, Utricularia delicatula and novae-zelandiae, which occur in the bogs. These plants overcome the nitrogen deficiency characteristic of the raised bogs, by trapping insects and small animals which live in the water. ( The sundews by contrast, achieve the same result by trapping insects which fly about in the air above the bogs ). The traps or bladders of Utricularia, have watertight doors which close firmly. The interior surface of the bladder is covered in 4-fid, stalked hairs, which absorb the water within and pass it through to the outside. This absorption gradually reduces the internal pressure until it is less than that of the surrounding water. The door opens, allowing an inrush of water and any contained insect larvae, algae, plankton etc. Even small tadpoles have been caught. The captives die and decompose, and the nitrogenous remains are absorbed by the plant. E.D.H.

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UNUSUAL LEAF VARIANT OF JUVENILE PIGEONWOOD - - - A.D.Mead

Saplings of pigeonwood ( Hedycarya arborea ) with their smooth erect and nearly black stems carrying neatly spaced pairs of opposite leaves, are quite common in the Waitakeres. I have recently come across a very few examples with leaves in whorls of 3, instead of pairs, a variant feature which does not appear to have been previously reported. I communicated with Lincoln and received a letter in reply from Mr. T.W.Rawson, Herbarium keeper, who says that he has searched through their specimens and literature without finding any mention of this variation, though a similar variation is known to occur occasionally in other genera which have opposite leaves, for example Lonicera, Lycestria and Coprosma. A specimen growing near my house at Piha is branching at 6 ft. above ground, and the branches have normal opposite leaves. The sketch herewith is drawn from this tree, showing a portion of the main stem with leaves in threes.

