

PTEROSTYLIS NUTANS - THE CASE OF THE WANDERING GUNPOSTE.D. Hatch

In the Botany of Auckland, 2nd ed., 1943, p. 2, Lucy Cranwell wrote -
 '... a few additions ... (including Pterostylis matthewsii
 from a gun post!) ...'
 and on p. 43, in the checklist -

'Pterostylis matthewsii, North Shore, very rare'.

In 1945, in the course of working up a paper on Pterostylis, I examined Dr. Cranwell's voucher material. The collection sheet (AK 108497) consists of 5 rather shrivelled flowering specimens. Presumably the plants had been gathered and carried about for some time before pressing. The label in (I think) Miss Molesworth's handwriting read -

'Pterostylis matthewsii Cheesem. - gunpost Whangaparaoa?
 during 1942'.

Attached to the sheet was a slip in Dr. Cranwell's writing

'Pterostylis matthewsii - gunpost Whangaparaoa? see corresp.
 spring 1942'.

I crossed out the matthewsii on the label, wrote nutans R.Br. above it, initialled the alteration and went on my way.

In Trans.R.S.N.Z. 77: 1949, p.237 I included Whangaparaoa in the NZ distribution of P. nutans, and mentioned it in both the 1951 and 1959 editions of Auckland's Orchids.

But in 1963, when Dr. Cranwell was beginning her long haul towards a third edition of the Botany of Auckland, she queried my reference to Whangaparaoa.

'I found this species over on the Shore, by a gunpost above Campbell's Bay, on heavy pipeclay, bared in parts by the military stationed there. The plants were quite near the edge of the sea cliff'.

I replied that the slip was in her own handwriting, and sent her a xerox of the sheet to prove it. It transpired that she had in fact visited Whangaparaoa on that same trip and had become a trifle confused over the insert slips. On second thoughts she was also fairly sure that the gunpost in question was not at Campbell's Bay, but at Castor Bay!

Meanwhile Dr. Moore, working from the herbarium sheet in AK, and unaware of all this confusing correspondence, also cited Whangaparaoa in Flora of New Zealand 2: 1970, p. 137.

Eventually AK 108497 was emended by Dr. Cranwell on one of her trips home, and a new label now reads

'Pterostylis nutans R.Br. Castor Bay, gunpost, L.M. Cranwell,
 spring 1942'

and is signed

'Lucy M. Cranwell, corrected 19.4.79'.

The original handwritten 'Whangaparaoa?' slip is still attached to the sheet.

AUCKLAND INSTITUTE & MUSEUM HERBARIUM (AK)
PLANTS OF NEW ZEALAND

Pterostylis nutans R.Br.

Loc. North Island, Waitemata County.
Castor Bay, gunpost.

Map. Lat. S., Long. E.
Coll. L.M.Cranwell Date Spring 1942

Notes
Lucy M. Cranwell
corrected 19/4/79

HERBARIUM 108497

Pterostylis nutans R.Br.
Pterostylis matheronii (R.Br.)
Green

Locality: *gunpost & Whangaparaoa?*
Altitude: Date: *Spring 1942*
Collected by:
Identified by:

Auckland Institute and Museum, New Zealand

Pterostylis matheronii
gunpost
Whangaparaoa?
see correct.
Spring 1942.
Castor Bay

Pterostylis matheronii
gunpost
Whangaparaoa?
see correct.
Spring 1942.