SMALL MOUNTAIN BLACK BUTTERFLY (Erebiola butleri) - Fereday 1879.

This species also was described by Fereday in 1879, on the basis of 3 individuals collected by J.D. Enys at 4,000' on Whitcombe Pass up the Rakaia River, on March 8th 1879. It is also known from the Humboldt Range, Harris Saddle, Mt. Earnslaw and Mount Cook. It is rarer and more local than Percnodaimon pluto. It has been taken in January and March. The expansion of the wings of the male is $1\frac{5}{8}$" and of the female $1\frac{1}{2}$". On the upper side all the wings of the male are smoky brown; the fore wings have a large black ocellus near the apex, enclosing 2 white dots, followed by a smaller ocellus toward the dorsum; the hind wings have 3 black spots near the termen, sometimes enclosing white dots. Occasionally these ocelli are surrounded by a patch of deep reddish-brown.

The female is much paler, with large patches of yellowish-brown surrounding the ocelli. On the underside the fore-wings of the male are smoky-brown with an irregular blotch of reddish brown near the apex, surrounding a small white centred black ocellus. The hind wings are dark reddish brown, with several conspicuous black-edged silvery markings, and 4 yellowish-red spots near the termen. The under side of the female is very much paler.

Erebiola butleri feeds on snow tussocks, the larvae of P. pluto may be distinguished by the different food plant, Poa colensoi.

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PLANT NAMES

by Eileen Fairbairn

In an article "Lob in the West Country" by Denis Doyle, in Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society Vol. XCIX November 1974 Part II, the author writes charmingly about the folk names of wild flowers of Britain but regrets that garden flowers are not so happily named. He blames the Linnean system, the dead weight of Latin, and "botanists who fill our gardens with foreign professors", for the lack of vivid flower names.

Yet, on the lips of country folk some of these can be curiously and delightfully changed; mesembryanthemum to Sally my handsome; Esther Read Shasta daisy to Astereen, and Laurestinus to "Lord sustine Us" a beautiful name and so comforting as the old cottager told her vicar.

In this category comes New Zealand's Senecio greyi which, in Cornwell has become "grey eyes", suiting its tight little buds.

What of New Zealand's own folk names? Unfortunately exploration and settlement came here later than systematic botany so that our native plants have all the foreign professors in Latin guise. There has been no time to develop such charming names as Texas "blue bonnets" or the Australian gum called "Nevergreen". Yet the wealth of Maori names continues to amaze and delight, so smooth sounding and observant; names by no means confined to trees and plants of importance to Maori economy. A Maori dictionary will spell out the meaning, and that is difficult enough for a South Islander, but what subtle implications, what fantasy, so difficult to convey in translation, lie hidden?

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TOADSTOOLS

This late-lasting autumn, with frequent rains in the foothills has brought beneath Notofagus solandri, var. cliffortoides, an unusual wealth of toadstools, more visible on a mown and mossy turf than on a covering of dead leaves, or among long grass. In clear autumn sunlight, a chestnut coloured one scattered thickly as if sown by a too generous hand, on its vivid green carpet has lasted until frost came.

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PERIWINKLE - A FIREBREAK - A SHEEPFOOD

R. Mason

Can periwinkle (Vinca major) act as an effective firebreak? Mr. Wilkinson asked, when I was looking at the railway reserve west of Chertsey, whether it was true that periwinkle made a good firebreak and whether the early Canterbury settlers, as said, always established it around homesteads for that reason. This was quite a new idea to me, but Dr. Lucy Moore has since said that she found when the fierce fires were raging on St. Andrews Hill and Mount Pleasant that a tall thick growth of periwinkle was looked on with a very favourable eye, although it was not put to the test. So the tradition may be fairly well known, though perhaps not recorded. Does anyone know whether there is a sound basis for the story?

In last year's journal I said that in the Prebbleton churchyard periwinkle was ignored entirely by sheep, even when grazing pressure was very heavy. Not so this winter. In July a dense patch of periwinkle, about 25 yards long by 5 wide and 4½ feet tall has been eaten down, leaving a foot length lying on the ground. Little leafage remains. The position is well sheltered from the south and the sheep concentrated there during the coldest spell, but it seems that neither a lack of other food nor the need to keep in shelter led to the eating of the periwinkle. The grass is by no means in poor condition and some young gorse is still untouched. It is not unusual for gorse to be grazed by sheep. Smaller, scattered, more exposed patches of periwinkle are also eaten down. Perhaps the exceptionally heavy frosts this winter have made the periwinkle more palatable.