About opposite the remains of an island pa built just off the western shores of Lake Horowhenua there were clumps of T. orientalis and Eleocharis sphacelata growing in shallow water on which floated Azolla rubra and Lemna minor. From the water's edge a narrow muddy band, bare except for some A. rubra, L. minor and Myriophyllum propinquum, extended into a zone dominated by Carex secta and including some Typha and Scirpus prolifer. There were fairly extensive patches of Eleocharis gracilis and M. propinquum within this zone, but there were also considerable areas of bare mud. In one of these bare areas there were about a dozen seedling Typha plants growing on almost liquid mud.

At Raumai a few seedlings were found growing on a similar substratum, but on this occasion close to an extensive stand of Typha. These are the only Typha seedlings preserved in Botany Division herbarium (CHR 64947) and this single sheet may reflect their rarity. In any event it seems worthwhile to make these records public with the hope that others may be forthcoming and to stimulate new observations.

The reasons for the paucity of reported finds is uncertain. Some claim that seedlings cannot establish themselves because of a toxic substance produced by adult plants or by decaying leaves, but the authors quoted above believe that light plays an important role in regulating germination of Typha seed and growth of seedlings.

* Sharma, K.P. and Gopal, B. 1978:

Seed germination and occurrence of seedlings of Typha species in nature. Aquatic Botany 4: 353-58.

EDITORIAL WANDERINGS

THELYMITRA

An examination of the ground below the pines growing near Orana Park in October will be rewarded by seeing many Thelymitra pauciflora and T. uniflora.

MYOSOTIS AUSTRALIS VAR. LYTTELTONENSIS

A search of the Lyttelton Reserve in 1975 and 1976 produced no plants of Myosotis australis var. lytteltonensis, it was feared that this very rare variety had died out. We were delighted to find two plants in flower growing under a flax bush on 5th October 1977.

CHILOGLOTTIS CORNUTA

What a breathtaking surprise it was to find growing in the open in the hollow of a decayed log on Mt. Pierce on 24th December 1977 over 115 massed flowers of Chiloglottis cornuta. An additional joy was the light golden colour of stems, leaves and flowers.

GIBRALTAR

A beautiful sight seen below Gibraltar on 26th October 1977 was two banks gaily decked with numerous white flowers of Mentha cunninghamii.

We also examined four shrubs of a hybrid Helichrysum probably H. bellidioides x H. aggregatum. These bore stouter branches than the Lyttelton Reserve hybrids which are probably H. filicaule x H. aggregatum.

The fern Hystiopteris incisa has not been recorded on the Port Hills for some years. Arnold Wall mentioned its disappearance. A good specimen was seen growing two and a half feet down an under runner hole not far from Pterostylis montana. Long may it live.

ELEOCHARIS GRACILIS

In Journal No. 9 I reported on finding four plants of Eleocharis gracilis at Chaneys which were the only recorded plants seen in the Christchurch area since Armstrong collected it near the mouth of the Waimakariri River. On the 1st February 1978 one further plant of this species was found in the Bottle Lake Forest Park.

GASTRODIA SESAMOIDES

It was a pleasant surprise to find growing in Kidds Bush on the shores of Lake Hawea on 11th February 1978 several flowering plants of Gastrodia sesamoides. The Flora Book 2 mentions that the most southerly record of the species was an old one at Kellys Creek near Otira. On ringing Dr. L.B. Moore to tell her that the southern limits of this species had now been extended by some 200 miles I was interested to learn that Dr. Moore had recently seen Gastrodia sesamoides near Invercargill! This orchid could be much more widespread than was thought. Members should examine a flower of all Gastrodia found.

In G. sesamoides the lip and the column are approximately the same length. In G. cunninghamii the column is much smaller in length than the lip.

GUNNERA ARENARIA

Gunnera arenaria is listed as one of the commoner sand dune plants but until the 12th April 1978 I had never seen it in the sand dunes of the Christchurch area. On that date several largish patches were observed in one restricted area just south of Spencer Park. Most of the orange fruit had dropped but enough remained to entice one to return next year at full fruiting time.

FUNGI

Many hundreds of fungi had found the growing conditions under the Bottle Lake Forest Park trees most suitable when we visited the Park on 27th May 1978. Particularly showy were the brilliantly coloured red caps of the numerous specimens of Amanita muscaria.