

Arthur's Pass, Easter 1968

Five members of the Society arrived at Arthur's Pass on Easter Thursday only to find that, on account of gales and the "Wahine" disaster, the main party from Wellington had decided to cancel the trip. The next morning we were glad to welcome an Auckland member who had managed to join us despite the weather, and members of the Canterbury Botanical Society who happened to be staying at the Pass too joined in our excursions from Saturday onwards. (They also arranged two enjoyable slide evenings of botanical and general interest to which all were invited.) We were fortunate to have in the party Mr Ivor Robins, who knows the region well, and fortunate also that two members had brought cars.

Friday seemed a day for the Waimakariri riverbed, so we went upstream from the Bealey bridge through mountain beech to the Jordan flat. Beside a creek was a patch of orange-fruited *Gunnera* and nearby the dead-looking *Helichrysum depressum*. In the grass on the flat were many small plants of interest including *Haloragis micrantha*. On our way back to the Pass we stopped at the railway bridge and saw *Parahebe decora* with a few late flowers. *Senecio bellidioides*, *Helichrysum selago* and the ferns *Grammitis pumila*, *G. ciliata*, *Blechnum capense* and several species of *Hymenophyllum* were also seen here. At Rough Creek the lovely blue berries of *Coprosma brunnea* were in great abundance.

We decided to explore the upper Otira Valley on Saturday, and there saw *Polystichum cystostegia*, *Ranunculus lyallii*, *Aciphylla horrida*, *Anisotome imbricata*, *Hebe haastii*, *Parahebe cheesemani*, *Haastia sinclairii*, *Coprosma serrulata* and *C. depressa*, the last aglow with red translucent berries.

On Sunday we climbed the track to Temple Basin in sunshine interspersed with cloud and occasional snow. Near the road *Astelia nervosa* was seen and *Parahebe linifolia* found after some searching. *Astelia petriei*, *A. linearis* var. *novae-zelandiae* and a small spaniard (*Aciphylla similis*) were further up the track. High above the ski lodges *Prasophyllum colensoi* was growing, also *Pygmea pulvinaris* and *Raoulia grandiflora*, and higher still we were delighted to see the small rosettes of *Hectorella caespitosa*, some still bearing flowers. Up near Blimit Col *Ranunculus sericophyllus* was growing amongst the rocks.

Monday began in perfect sunshine as we drove down to Cass and past Lake Sarah. In the Kettlehole bog we were excited to find *Hypsela rivalis* and *Gratiola nana* in flower. On the Sugar Loaf the pale blue berries of *Coprosma petriei* var. *petriei* were glittering in the sun and a few dark red berries of *C. petriei* var. *atropurpurea* were to be seen. We were impressed by the large fruits of *Gaultheria depressa*, both white and red, and intrigued

by a fungus looking like a bird's egg which, when broken, revealed long scarlet arms. After seeing a *Myosotis* in the scree and *Celmisia viscosa* about half way up the Sugar Loaf we were driven down by a hailstorm, — fortunately, for we encountered two Christchurch members of the Society who returned to the Pass with us.

Next day they brought us back to Christchurch, a day of sun, snowcapped mountains and botanising by the way. Near Broken River we saw the pink fruit of *Pernettya nana*, and along the shore of Lake Lyndon found *Parahebe canescens* and a small-leaved plant which later proved to be an unnamed species of *Galium*.

I. M. MORICE

Book Review

New Zealand Flowering Plants, by Marguerite Johnson (with illustrations by Elizabeth Johnson). Caxton Press, Christchurch. 196 pp. Price \$1.50.

New Zealand Flowering Plants is a pleasant little book at a reasonable price. It treats the N.Z. flora in a brief manner, giving interesting information about many families, and includes black and white drawings of numerous species. The artist has captured the characteristic features of the plants and they are portrayed in an artistic, but accurate, manner.

Some features of the book are unorthodox. The author is obviously interested in the early history of native plants. It is this aspect that dominates the introduction and determines the unusual sequence of presentation of families (with the monocotyledons in the middle of the dicotyledons), but this emphasis may lead some readers to expect more mention of past history in the text. Not all generic and specific names are in italics, and there are specific names and other words given unwarranted capitals. Unfortunately, too, quite a number of spelling mistakes have slipped past the proof-readers.

An attempt has been made to overcome the confusion caused by name changes by following the plant names used in Allan's *Flora* and Cheeseman's *Manual* (for monocotyledons). However we see hard beech referred to as "*N. truncata* (var. *colensoi*); "Palmaceae"; and "*Rubus australis*" where the plant depicted is probably *R. cissoides*.

Congratulations to the author for breaking with tradition and choosing for the cover picture a colourful native plant which is not widely known.

A. E. ESLER