

FOOTNOTE

Greta Stevenson

Mr Garner's list of fungi from one small local reserve shows the range of beautiful interesting plants of this neglected group which may be seen in a restricted area. It must be remembered however that specific identifications from photographs only are nearly always tentative: see *Field Guide to Fungi* by Greta Stevenson, University of Canterbury, Publication No. 30, 1983.

Tree Ferns with the Bends

F. C. Duguid, Levin

Two mamaku ferns in my garden were so close together that for a number of years the trunks (caudices) were more or less parallel and the crowns interlocking. At intervals throughout the year, at times when a number of new fronds are growing up in the centre of the crowns, the older fronds spread out horizontally then hang down and die. While the two heads were interlocked many dead fronds remained entrapped in the crowns.

Early in December 1981, an excessive number of dead fronds were dropping off every few days so I gathered them up frequently to prevent untidy litter. At first the two trunks were parallel at about 16 cm apart. About five days later I was surprised to note that the width of the space at the top had increased perceptibly to about 25 cm. The numerous fronds of both ferns were exerting a horizontal thrust against each other from opposite directions, pushing the upper parts of the trunks apart. Barely a month later the space was about 30 cm. The thrust continued throughout the growing season, though less noticeably.

By late April 1982, growth had slowed down and the older fronds appeared likely to remain some time before falling. By this time the distance between the trunks just below their crowns was 41 cm, at a height of 3.35 m above ground level.

In August 1982 the older fronds were sagging to horizontal, with the two-way thrust as before. By the end of May 1983 the width between the trunks just below the crowns was 63 cm, at a height of 3.54 m above ground level.

The two trunks had remained closely parallel for as long as the fronds were too much interlocked to allow them to spread out horizontally.