N E W S L E T T E R

A U C K L A N D B O T A N I C A L S O C I E T Y

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FLOWER SHOW 14-15 March 1964

Officially opened by Mr. J.A.McPherson of the Parks Dept., and intended to fill the gap left by the cancellation of the familiar Cheeseman Show, the Society's Exhibition of Native Flora was successful in several directions. It proved first of all that a native flower show could be staged with material taken from private and public gardens and school grounds, with a minimum of damage to the bush. Secondly it attracted sufficient interested visitors to balance the budget - the donations at the door equalled, almost to a penny, the expenses incurred. And finally it was most informative - my own knowledge at least was considerably increased. Plants I had long heard of but never before seen included Arthropodium candidum, Coprosma rubra, Gleichenia flabellata, Loxoma cunninghamii and Melicytus macrophyllous. Doubtless others were similarly rewarded.

The considerable efforts of the Society's members were aided and abetted by most interesting displays put on by other groups -

The Forest and Bird Society, under the able control of Mrs. Prickett, gathered together an assortment of nectar producing and berry bearing plants used as food for birds, with a couple of nests, one I think belonging to a fantail, thrown in for good measure.

Students from the Auckland Girls Grammar, the Epsom Girls Grammar and Northcote College, displayed plants grown in the school grounds.

The Auckland University was represented by Miss J. Milne with a realistic arrangement of shore plants - and Dr.Rattenbury with a collection of seedling plants in pots - several of which looked most unlike their adult forms.

The City Council Parks Dept. put on a display of native species used in public planting, while Mr. Otto and the Horticultural Council arranged some very decorative sets and added a section on native plants useful in horticulture.

Our Taranaki friends sent up some interesting alpine plants from Mt. Egmont and Mr. Farnell added his generous quota from Middlemore. Miss Crookes was there with her ferns, and Mrs. Hynes and Mrs. Wood with their extensive knowledge. Finally Whitcombe and Tombs loaned us a selection of botanical books, several of which I still havent been able to afford. E.D.H.

FLOWERING TIME OF TAWAPOU - - - K. Wood

A specimen of tawapou, Planchonella novo-zelandica, in flower was obtained by Mr. A.D.Mead from Karekare and this was on display at our autumn flower show in March. No flowering time is given in Allans Flora, but a specimen I gathered from Matapouri Bay in Northland on 26 December 1954 was in flower at that time, so this appears to extend the season from December to March. The flowers are very small and insignificant but the berry which follows about June, is large and shining, and ranges in colour from yellow through orange to purple. The Maoris strung them into necklaces.

Another name for the tree is Orewa, and according to Florence Keen in O te Raki, there is a legend that it was brought here by the first Maoris to arrive in the north. Brought as skids for the canoes, they were stuck in the ground and grew first at Otengi Bay.

THE SUMMER FLOWERING FORM OF EARINA MUCRONATA

Mr. Lediard has in cultivation an Earina which has over a number of years, flowered consistently between December and March. It has short, relatively robust stems and a dark orange labellum, and is probably the E.aestivalis of Cheeseman. This plant crops up from time to time and always raises the question of the validity of Cheeseman's species, which I included in E.mucronata in Trans.R.S.N.Z.78:p102.1950. I am still of the opinion that this summer flowering form is an epharmonic variation of the common spring flowering plant and that the two forms are but parts of a single species. The ' forma aestivalis ' has shorter thicker stems and broader leaves, The flowers are fewer and correspondingly larger, with a darker coloured labellum, sometimes almost red. The growth habit, and stem and leaf structure, and the form of the flowers, are identical in both forms. E.D.H.