4. Islands created by pongas, both live and dead, on steep, rubbly slopes promote successional changes. During life, the trunk bases provide firm rooting for other species, and soil movement is restricted by fallen fronds. Dead stumps and prostrate trunks continue to provide stability for many decades. Hence, the Quadrat 15/1984 ponga tallies, mainly at the trunkless stage, may be expected to have a bearing on slope stabilisation which could outweight the suppression of growth by competitors.

5. Man's activities outside the reserve may, unwittingly, be responsible for severe wind damage during southerly storms. During the 50 years, 1934-1984, the "Wahine" wind-storm of April 1968 and the rain-storm of December 1976 caused damage at Otari of cataclysmic proportions. Another factor affecting native plant succession adversely is the introduction of adventive plants and animals among which gorse and possums are too well-known to need further comment. In 1934 Quadrat 15 was pegged-out and mapped following removal of most of the bracken as a fire protection measure. Following that substantial tampering with the botanical succession, there has been virtually no human interference except for the felling of one cabbage tree in Quadrat 15.

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A P Druce