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Excerpts from Thomas Cheeseman's Field Notebooks

Transcribed by Bec Stanley

...This excerpt comprises notes made by Cheeseman as he walked down the Mangemangeroa (formerly (Maungamaungaroa) Creek in June 1873

June 5th Howick to Maungamaungaroa 1873. I have transcribed this entry adding asterisks to species not present in a recent species list (Stephens 1995) (from notebook five "Plants found in the North Island")

"The coast near Howick is bound by cliffs of moderate height composed of tertiary clays and sandstones arranged in nearly horizontal strata. The vegetation is decidedly scanty. *Metrosideros robusta**, *Olearia furfuracea**, *C. lucida** and *C. robusta*, *Leucopogon fasciculata*, and *Cassinia leptophylla** (*Ozothamnus leptophyllus*) all the principal trees. Among herbaceous plants, *Astelia banksii* is abundant as it always is in similar situations in the northern part of the province of Auckland. *Cladium sinclairii** (*Machaerina*), *Arthropodium cirratum**, *Poa anceps*, *Lobelia anceps*, are also common. About 2 miles from Howick the coast suddenly turns to the south and due centre the Maungamaungaroa Creek. This is a long shallow gully running nearly north and south. The tide runs up this creek for about a mile and a half but it is of inconsiderable depth and extremely muddy. The western side of the creek is steep and abrupt, and is distinguished with several patches of bush. The eastern side has a more gradual ascent and is principally open bush. Near the side of the creek *Carpodetus serratus*, *Myrsine urvillei* (*M. australis*), *Dysoxylum spectabile*, *Nesodaphne tarairi*, *N. tawa* (both now in the genus *Beilschmiedia*), and other common trees are found. The underwood is principally *supplejack**, *Rubus*, *Parsonia*, *Myrtus bullata** (*Lophomyrtus bullata*), *Freycinetia* etc. Near the bridge on the Maraetai Road, *Metrosideros florida* (*M. fulgens*) was observed still exhibiting a profusion of blossoms notwithstanding the late period of the year. A solitary plant of *Tupeia antarctica* was also seen parasitic on *Panax arboreus* (*Pseudopanax arboreus*).

Leaving the creek and ascending the hills on the eastern side of the stream, patches of bush were observed occupying the hollows and sides of many of the valleys, These patches gradually increased in width towards the head of the gullies and at length met, covering the top of the gullies of Turanga and Maungamaungaroa streams with a pretty continuous belt of forest. *N tawa*, *N tarairi* *Vitex littoralis* (*Vitex lucens*) *Myrsine salicina* and *M urvillei*, *Dysoxylum spectabile* are the commonest trees. A few specimens of the kauri were seen. The rimu and the kahikatea are more frequently met with, but still form a very small proportion of the bush. The undergrowth has been pretty well cleared off by cattle and what is left is composed of the commoner species. *Nephrodium hispidum* (*Lastreopsis hispidia*) is luxuriant and of large size in many places. Good specimens of *Leptopteris hymenophylloides* were also seen.