



1 - pole stand of kahikatea
 ~6-8m high; wind-shaped
 canopy; with titoki, kanuka,
 kowhai and cabbage tree over
 divaricating coprosmas, Melicope
 simplex, Melicytus micranthus,
 sedges and adventive weeds.
 Tall divaricating coprosmas
 predominate on exposed bush
 margins.

0 50 metres 100

Oporua Scenic Reserve

Area: 1.6919 ha

OPORUA SCENIC RESERVE

GRID REF S27 268660

AREA ha 1.6919

L.D. No. Lot 1 DP 49734 Block XII, Waikarapa SD

STATUS Scenic

RES sub-Cities

CONTROL CCH

GAZETTED 1981

RESERVED

HISTORY Gifted to Crown by Mr Reginald Matthews for preservation in 1976

AIR PHOTO 5497 M/10
date 16.10.79.

nearby town 17 km Martinborough

nearest reserve 1.5 km Holmes SR

public road Kihutara Road

sea (km) 10

ALTITUDE m 3 - 4

ASPECT (Flat)

RAIN mm 964 (approx)

NAT FERTILITY High

for: scenery [bush] ✓ [scrub tussock etc] [wetland] [plants] ✓ [animals] [geology soil] [history prehistory] [water supply]

LOCATION Situated off Kihutara Road, 20 km SE of Featherston, 4.5 km N of the Lake Waikarapa Shoreline.

ACCESS By a 5m wide 'right-of-way' from Kihutara Road, which is unfenced and crossed 200m of pasture, gate in northern-most corner of reserve.

OUTLINE & TOPO The recently fenced reserve is a square block of flat reclaimed swamp near the lake with pole stand regenerating kahikatea. Exposure to strong southerly winds has resulted in wind-scouring and shaping of the canopy.

SURROUNDINGS It is completely surrounded by pasture, with scattered cabbage trees and stock damaged kahikatea stands to the north. The extensive Te Hapai Basin Drainage Scheme includes this reserved land.

GEOLOGY Undifferentiated alluvium in fluvial flood plain deposit.

SPM Gravel deposits brought down by Ruamahanga River, overlain by windblown loam.

SOIL Central recent soils from alluvium: Kaitiapa and Manawatu.

DRAINAGE Good, although once poor.

MAIN HABITATS and FEATURES

RES	NOT		%	area	native	ex	regen	NAT	trend	exotics
	LD	NZ								
✓	✓		85	1.4	✓		M	I	I	L
✓	✓		15	0.3		✓				II
			100	1.7						

CONDITION The canopy is in good condition and the understorey is recovering very well since fencing. It has been heavily logged and stock-damaged in the past but there is little human impact now other than drainage. Wind damage is evident on the exposed south and west sides although not as severe as in neighbouring stock damaged stands. A number of native trees have been planted.

FENCING The reserve was fenced on all sides in 1972.

PRIORITY Low at present but standard must be maintained.

RATING 0-10

SCIENTIFIC 4... Pole stand of kahikatea of very small area, exposed to prevailing winds. Drainage likely to modify composition. Very low native bird numbers probably due to presence of magpies.

SCENIC 2... Low canopy height; distant from road, on farmland.

RECREATION 0... Awkward access across roadside ditch and rough farmland.

CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the reserve is very small, it is the only protected remnant of what was once a continuous belt of regenerating kahikatea forest on the north banks of the Ruamahanga River. Other remaining patches are rapidly deteriorating as a result of stock damage and wind scouring. The regeneration of the reserved bush to its original local composition is now in doubt as the land is incorporated in the Te Hapai Basin Drainage Scheme. If the reserve were to dry out further, some species may die out, possibly the kahikatea itself. With this in mind it becomes more urgent to fence off the nearby groups of kahikatea for preservation to encourage a more extensive bird habitat and seed source for further regeneration.

(Continued..)

There are three other reserves within 7km of Oporua Scenic Reserve: E.C. Holmes Memorial Scenic Reserve is a group of exotics and 'natives' amongst original kahikatea and tikoki; Kahutara Scenic Reserve is a deteriorated, species-depleted stand of titoki and kowhai on drier, drained ground, and Tubitarata Scenic Reserve is outstanding as the last remnant of true kahikatea/pukatea swamp forest in the lowlands east of Lake Wairarapa. In this intensive pastoral landscape small stands of bush like these and Oporua Scenic Reserve become significant records of original vegetation types, and what effect drainage for pastoral use has had on the forest composition. Although the Oporua stand of young kahikatea has been reserved, it is saddening to watch similar remnants deteriorating in neighbouring paddocks. It may be too late to negotiate fencing these stands as suggested in Recommendations, but the possibility should be discussed immediately by the appropriate expertise.

The reserve is really only of botanical interest. There are weeds throughout, ragwort and Jerusalem cherry are the only noxious weeds present and do not seem to be posing a threat to the undergrowth. The forest floor is well lit so the undergrowth is prolific, in particular sedges, buttercup, grasses, *Parsonsia* and ferns. Divericating shrubs and juveniles are concentrated at the bush margins. The canopy contains elements of semi-swamp forest (kahikatea and cabbage tree) and drier titoki, kanuka and kowhai, a mixture typical of Southern Wairarapa basin forests.

REFERENCES

% area	SUMMARY	HABITATS													ORGANISMS	INFER	OBSERVED																		
		WATER / SHORE															N	S	M	N	L	M	H	initials											
85	tall conifer ¹ forest/trees	a = adjoins reserve			large	small	several	hill/cut/stable	overhang	emergent	herbaceous	cliff	rock	stony	++shingle	mud	organic	rubbish	eutrophic	boat	boat	car	higher native plants ⁴³												
	conifer ² forest/trees																					lower plants													
	beech forest/trees																					exotic plants													
	BL ³ forest/trees	sw/fw coast																				bush													
	✓ scrub/shrubs < 6m	sw/fw beach																				exotic plants scrub													
	tall tussocks/grassland	sw/fw estuary																				in native grass													
	short tussocks/grassland	sw/fw rockpool																				higher freshwater plants	✓												
	grassland/grasses	lake 120m +																				lower freshwater plants	✓												
	sedgeland/sedges	pool/larn																				native mammals	✓												
	rushland/rushes/raupo	river 5m +																				native birds	✓												
	herbland/herbs	stream																				introduced birds													
	"tussock" herbland ⁴	spring/seepage																				waterfowl s.l.	✓												
fernland/ferns																					introduced waterfowl	✓													
"moss" land		MAMMALS																																	
brocken		cattle	goat group	sheep	wallaby	horse	cat ↑↑	deer group	possum	pig	hare	rabbit	stoat group ⁵	rat-norway	rat-ship	mouse ↑	N S M			✓															
15	exotic grassland ⁵																																		
✓	exotic herbland/woodland																																		
	exotic scrub/shrubs																																		
	exotic forest/trees																																		
	introduced "native" cover																																		
	bog/swamp/pakihi																																		
	marsh sw/fw																																		
	mudflat sw/fw																																		
	bluff/rocks																																		
	bluffs/rocks in bush																																		
	waterfall																																		
	cave/gorge																																		
	gravel habitat/scree																																		
	dune/sand																																		
	limestone																																		
	ultrabasics																																		
	geological site																																		
	breeding ground																																		
	rare/interesting animals																																		
	rare/interesting plants																																		
	historic site																																		
	historic building																																		
	prehistoric site																																		
	camp /midden/pits																																		
	terraces/earthworks																																		
	burial/tapu																																		
	100																																		

¹ tall conifer: kahikatea, kauri, matai, miro, rimu, totara ² remaining 11 tree-sized spp ³ broadleaved ⁴ e.g. flax ⁵ incl. rough grassland, pasture etc

NATIVE SPECIES

Trees and shrubs

Alectryon excelsus
Carmichaelia arborea
Coprosma areolata
C. propinqua
C. rigida
C. robusta
C. propinqua X *C. robusta*

Climbers, Lianes etc.

Muehlenbeckia australis
M. complexa

Grasses, rushes and like plants

Carex geminata
C. lambertiana
C. lessoniana

Herbs

Galium sp.
Haloragis erecta

Ferns

Asplenium bulbiferum
Blechnum fluviatile

buttercup
Californian thistle
Cyperus vegetus

fantail
greywarbler

Cordyline australis
Hoheria angustifolia
H. populnea var. *lanceolatum*
(incl *sexstylosa*)
Leptospermum ericoides
Melicope simplex
Melicytus micranthus

Parsonsia heterophylla
Passiflora tetrandra

Carex virgata
C. sp.
Cyperus ustulatus

Hydrocotyle americana
H. novae-zelandiae

Paesia scaberula
Polystichum vestitum

EXOTIC SPECIES

hawthorn
Jerusalem cherry
plantain

BIRDS

magpie

Melicytus ramiflorus
Myrsine divaricata
Pennantia corymbosa
Pittosporum tenuifolium
Plagianthus betulinus
Podocarpus dacrydioides
Sophora microphylla

Ripogonum scandens
Rubus schmidelioides

Microlaena stipoides
Uncinia uncinata

Oxalis lactea
Polygonum sp.

Pteris tremula

ragwort
tutsan
grasses

silvereve