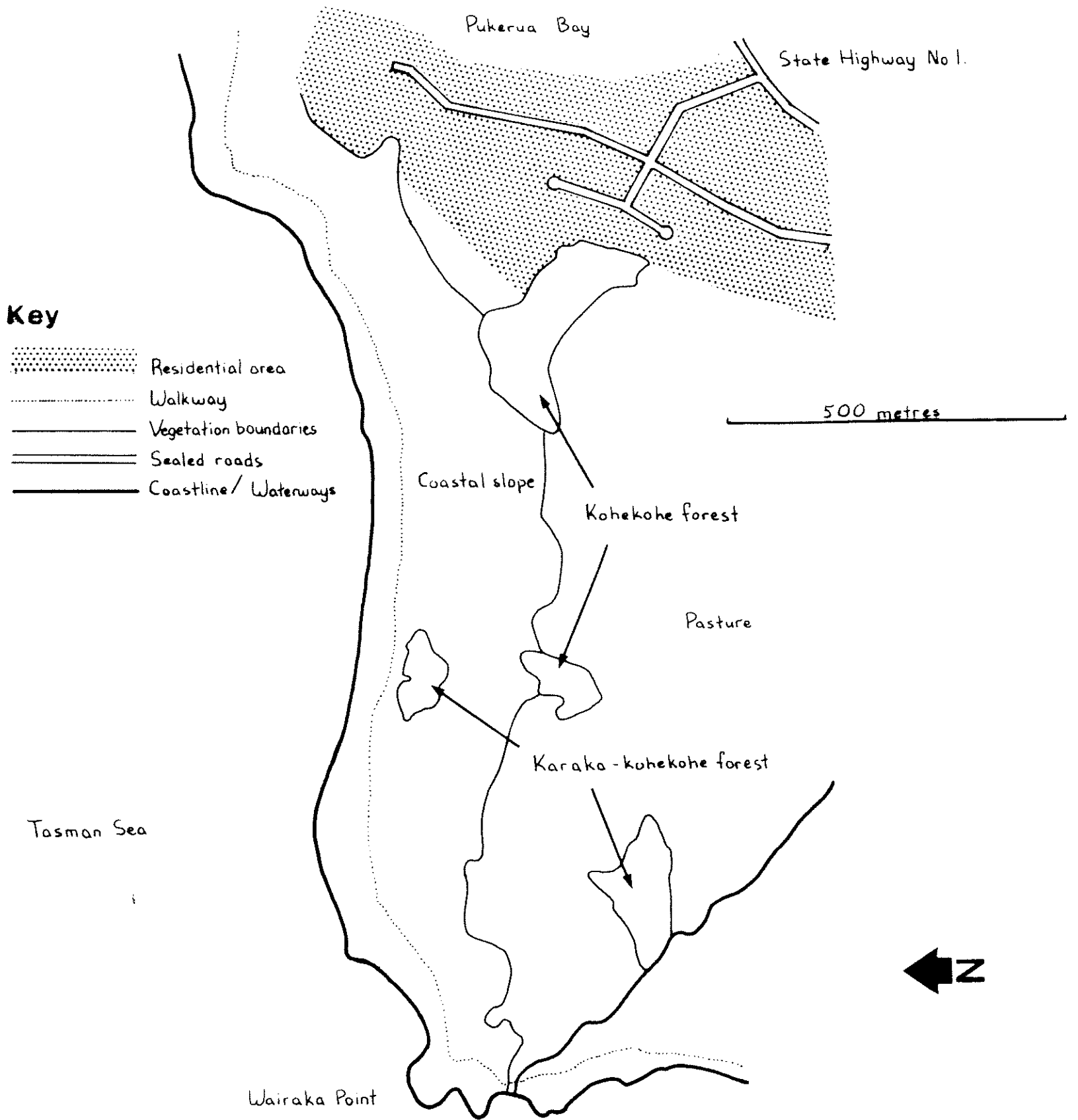


from: Clelland D (1984) *Of biogeography in*  
Unprotected natural areas of the Wellington Region



Map 2

Pukerua Bay to Wairaka Point

LOCATION Pukerua Bay between Plimmerton and Paekakariki.

AIR PHOTO 5497 F/2

AREA DESCRIPTION Pukerua Bay to Wairaka Point represents a stretch of coastline, approximately 2 km in length, and the adjacent coastal slopes leading up to farmland. The survey area begins at a road end at the western end of Pukerua Bay from where the coast heads westward for 1.5 km to Wairaka Point. Immediately around the headland a small stream runs down from the farmland and defines the end of the survey area. From this point the coast runs southwest toward Te Rewarewa Point. Included in the survey area is a small gully which contains a relatively large karaka stand and runs into the stream near Wairaka Point. This gully is situated directly inland from Wairaka Point. The main feature of the area is the steep coastal slopes which rise above the beach terrace to the farmland about 120 metres above. These slopes support a wide diversity of native vegetation which is attractive to view. The beach terrace is bouldery and provides an ideal environment for native lizards. A walking track follows along the top of the beach terrace from Pukerua Bay becoming poorly defined at Wairaka Point which is rugged with large rocks and cliffs. Erosion in the survey area is noticeably less than on the slopes further south toward Te Rewarewa Point.

SIZE Approx. 35 ha

OWNERS 1. Porirua City Council - eastern end.  
2. Ken and Joy Gray, John Carrad (partners) - western end

STATUS/CURRENT PROTECTION Zoned for recreational uses in Porirua City District Scheme, 1982. Approx. 10.2 ha of coastal slope at eastern end adjacent to Porirua Bay is within a Porirua City Council recreational reserve. No protection of flora or fauna.

ACCESS Access is from the west end of Ocean Parade in Pukerua Bay. A small car park marks the beginning of the foot track which follows the beach terrace to Wairaka Point. Ocean Parade is reached via Beach Road from State Highway 1.

JUSTIFICATION FOR RESERVE STATUS

RATING 0-10

1. Contains a wildlife site of national importance : Five species of native lizard have been found living here including the skink *Cyclodina whitakeri* which is found in only one other location in New Zealand. This is the only mainland population.
2. Contains representative Wellington coastal vegetation including some of the best remnant stands of karaka forest in the region. At present this combination of vegetation types is not represented in existing Wellington Region reserves.
3. Apart from the high scientific value of the area it also has significant educational, scenic and recreational value.

SCENIC 5...

SCIENTIFIC 8...

RECREATION 5...

BIOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

- COMMUNITY TYPES
1. Mosaic of vegetation types on steep coastal slope including
    - [a] Lupin shrubland.
    - [b] Flax shrubland.
    - [c] *Coprosma propinqua* - *Muehlenbeckia* shrubland.
    - [d] Introduced grassland with patches of native *Poa laevis* [silver tussock].
    - [e] Manuka shrubland.
    - [f] *Scirpus nodosus* sedge/land in seepages.
    - [g] Karaka-kohekohe/tree nettle-Californian thistle forest.
    - [h] Low, windshorn kohekohe/tree nettle forest.
  2. Scattered herbland - shrubland on coastal rock platform. Contains native and introduced spp. including *Hordeum murinum*, *Cryptostemma calendula*, *Bromus* spp., *Coprosma propinqua*, *Muehlenbeckia complexa*, veld grass, *Scirpus nodosus*.
  3. *Sarcocornia quinqueflora* - *Disphyma australe* herbfield on rocks near tidal zone.
  4. Shrubland on steep rocky cliffs with flax, *Coprosma repens*, *Linum monogynum*, *Pyrrhosia serpens*.
  5. Small area of *Cyperus ustulatus* bog.
  6. Small area of *Leptocarpus similis* salt marsh.

%	RES	WGTN	RARE/UNCOMMON PLANTS	NCC STATUS	RES
88		no	<i>Pelargonium inodorum</i>	-	yes
			<i>Cheilanthes distans</i> ) + other locations	-	no
			<i>C. sieberi</i> )	-	no
			<i>Pellaea</i> sp -unnamed )	-	no
			RARE/UNCOMMON ANIMALS		
			<i>Cyclodina whitakeri</i>	vulnerable	no
			other lizards present are:		
			Common skink <i>Leiopisma nigraplantare maccanni</i>	-	yes
			Common gecko <i>Hoplodactylus maculatus</i>	-	yes
			Copper skink <i>Cyclodina aenea</i>	-	yes
			<i>Leiopisma zealandicum</i>	-	no

MODIFICATIONS AND TRENDS

The introduction of stock into the area has resulted in some damage to the vegetation. Damage is most obvious under the forest remnants where regeneration is virtually non-existent. This leads to erosion which physically damages the trees. Without regeneration these forest remnants will certainly disappear. Exotics which have invaded this area now comprise about 45% of species found. Fortunately the vegetation has largely retained its natural form and is therefore of high value. A glance further down the coast will show coastal slopes which have completely lost their natural form, being very sparsely vegetated and extensively eroded.

THREATS

1. Depletion of the *Cyclodina whitakeri* population due to removal by collectors, and disruption of their habitat by grazing, erosion and fire.
2. Damage to vegetation by fire.
3. Continued damage to vegetation by stock.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

1. Exclusion of stock by fencing.
2. Effective protection measures to ensure the survival of *Cyclodina whitakeri* at this site.

COMMENTS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Very careful management of this area would be needed were it to become a reserve. There may be some conflict between the needs of the area as a site of wildlife significance and the needs of people wishing to enjoy the scenic and recreational aspects. There is at present a high public use of the area for walking, picnicking and diving. These activities should be encouraged but not at the expense of endemic wildlife. For this reason a close study of the lizard's biology and its ability to tolerate the above activities is needed. The Wildlife Service has already begun compiling information along these lines. This area should be protected as soon as is possible for the good of the wildlife and the vegetation. As a representative unit of Wellington coastal vegetation it must be among the best remaining and should be reserved in order to help reduce the bias towards inland bush areas which is evident in present reserves. Karaka forest is not represented in existing mainland Wellington regional reserves. This area contains possibly the best remaining stand within the region.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY DJC, DC, MCW

MONTH December 1983

COMMON VASCULAR PLANTS - PUKERUA BAY - WAIRAKA POINT

Trees and shrubs

*Alectryon excelsus*  
*Cassinia leptophylla*  
*Coprosma propinqua*  
*C. repens*  
*Cordyline australis*  
*Corynocarpus laevigatus*  
*Cytisus scoparius*  
*Dysoxylum spectabile*  
*Griselinia lucida*

*Hebe* sp (= *Veronica arborea*)  
*Knightia excelsa*  
*Leptospermum scoparium*  
\* *Lupinus arboreus*  
*Macropiper excelsum*  
\* *Malva sylvestris*  
*Meliccytus ramiflorus*  
*Metrosideros excelsa*  
*Myoporum laetum*

*Olaaria paniculata*  
*O. solandri*  
*Pennantia corymbosa*  
*Plagianthus divaricatus*  
*Pseudopanax arboreus*  
\* *Sambucus nigra*  
*Solanum aviculare*  
*Urtica ferox*

Climbing Plants

\* *Calystegia silvatica*  
*C. soldanella*  
*Clematis forsteri*

\* *Lathyrus latifolius*  
*Muehlenbeckia complexa*  
*Parsonsia heterophylla*

*Senecio angulatus*  
*Tetragonia trigyna*

Grasses, rushes and like plants

\* *Bromus catharticus*  
\* *B. mollis*  
\* *B. uniloides*  
*Carex flagellifera*  
*C. geminata*  
*C. secta*

*Cyperus ustulatus*  
\* *Dactylis glomerata*  
\* *Ehrharta erecta*  
\* *Hordeum murinum*  
*Juncus pallidus*  
\* *Lagurus ovatus*

*Leptocarpus similis*  
\* *Lolium perenne*  
*Luzula banksiana* var *mutabilis*  
*Poa laevis*  
*Scirpoides nodosa* (= *S. nodosus*)  
\* *Sporobolus africanus*

Herbs

\* *Alyssum* sp  
\* *Atriplex prostrata*  
\* *Brassica rapa*  
\* *Cirsium arvense*  
\* *C. vulgare*  
\* *Conyza* sp  
\* *Cryptostemma calendula*  
*Dichondra repens*  
*Disphyma australe*  
*Einadia triandra*  
\* *Foeniculum vulgare*  
\* *Fumaria muralis*  
\* *Galium aparine*  
\* *Geranium molle*  
\* *Glaucum flavum*  
*Gnaphalium audax*  
*Hydrocotyle moschata*

\* *Hypochaeris radicata*  
*Linum monogynum*  
\* *Marrubium vulgare*  
\* *Orobanche minor*  
\* *Oxalis* sp  
\* *Parietaria diffusa*  
*Pelargonium inodorum*  
*Peperomia urvilleana*  
*Phormium cookianum*  
\* *Picris echioides*  
\* *Plantago coronopus*  
*Pseudognaphalium luteo-album*  
\* *Rumex acetosella*  
*Sarcocornia quinqueflora*  
*Senecio lautus*  
\* *Silene gallica*  
\* *Silybum maritimum*

\* *Sisymbrium officinale*  
\* *Solanum nigrum*  
\* *S. tuberosum*  
\* *Sonchus oleraceus*  
\* *Stellaria media*  
*Tillaea moschata*  
\* *Torilis nodosa*  
\* *Trifolium dubium*  
\* *T. repens*  
\* *T. subterraneum*  
\* *T. sp*  
\* *Verbascum thapsus*  
\* *Vicia hirsuta*  
\* *V. sativa*  
*Vittadinia australis*  
*Wahlenbergia* sp

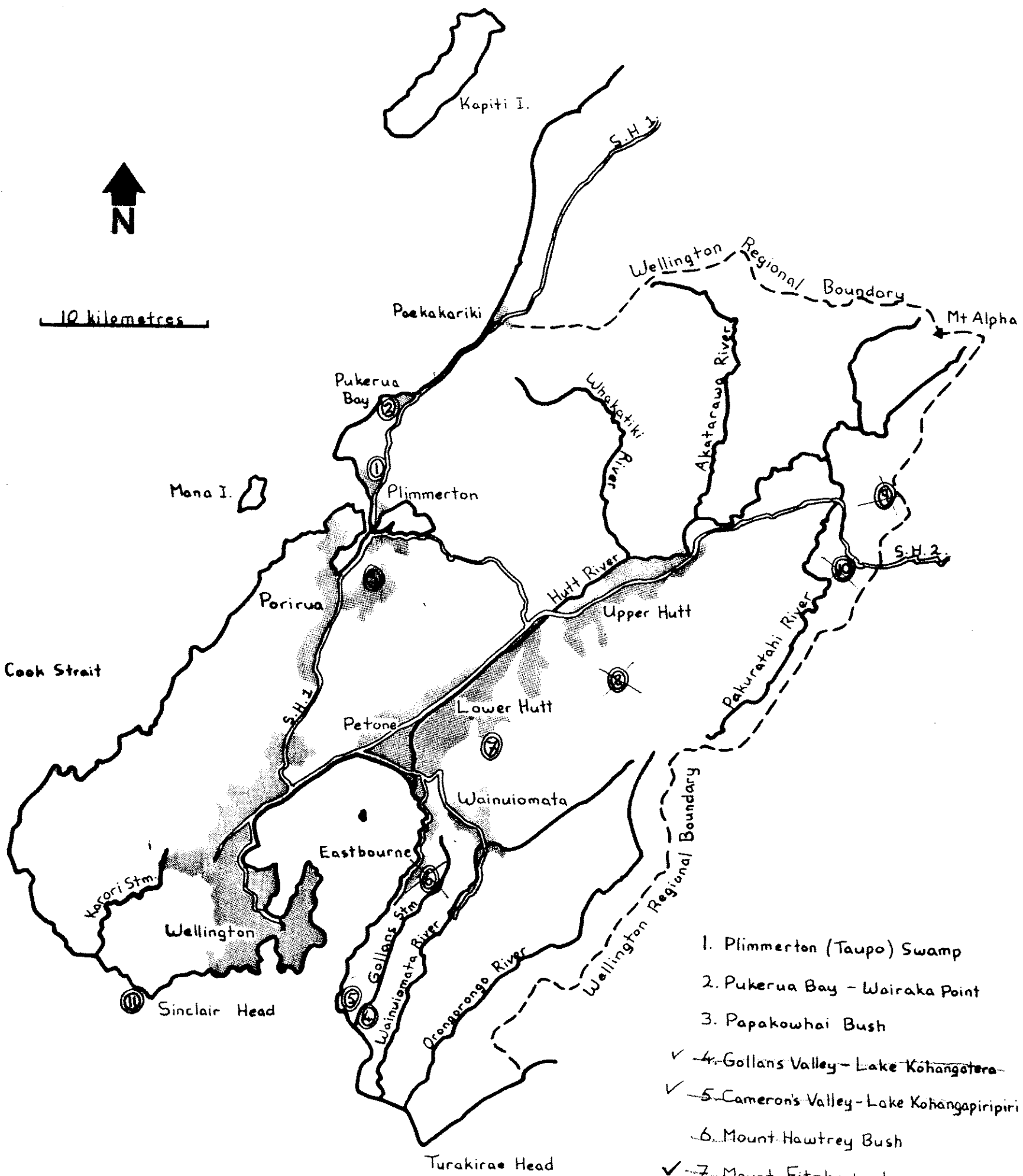
Ferns

*Asplenium oblongifolium*  
*A. terrestre* ssp *maritimum*  
*Cheilanthes distans*

*C. sieberi*  
*Pellaea rotundifolia*  
*Phymatosorus diversifolius*

*Polystichum richardii*  
*Pteridium esculentum*  
*Pyrrhosia serpens*

\* ADVENTIVES



- 1. Plimmerton (Taupo) Swamp
- 2. Pukerua Bay - Wairaka Point
- 3. Papakowhai Bush
- ✓ 4. Gollans Valley - Lake Kohangotera
- ✓ 5. Cameron's Valley - Lake Kohangapiripiri
- 6. Mount Hawtrey Bush
- ✓ 7. Mount Fitzherbert
- 8. Blue Mountains Bush
- 9. The Puffer
- 10. Rimutoka Bush A, B
- 11. Red Rocks to Karori Stream

## Locality Map

- Wellington Region showing location of surveyed sites.