

Saturday 14 June - Three Mile Creek, Manawatu Coast

Just three BotSoccers (Jill, Vic Vercoe and Keith Young) headed off to this previously unvisited (well, by us!) spot for a look at the dunes behind the beach. Firstly we rang the farmer for permission, and he was delighted that anyone bothered, being much troubled by 4WD vehicles.

We drove along the beach from Himitungi towards Foxton, making several stops to explore the depths of the behind-foredune vegetation. Much of this was actually in pines or acacias, with the best bits being closest to Himitungi (where we didn't have permission to go), and at 3 Mile Creek (which was at low flow!). There we spent some time exploring the deflation plain vegetation and the rare dunes. The latter were largely covered by marram, which dominates much of the coast, although the foredune here is a lovely soft spinifex slope. Of interest were some *Peziza* fungal pouches on the tops of dunes, opening out for photography.

There were several deflation plains lined up along the coast, and it is easy to see that more such plains might form or open up in the right dune and weather conditions, as some large, unvegetated plains did exist. Where vegetated, the plant communities were rather disappointing, being mainly weeds overtopping a carpet of *Selliera rotundifolia*. Some *Juncus caespiticus* was a novel find. Apparently there used to be some *Pimelea actea*, formerly known as *Pimelea* "Turakina", in the area but none were spotted. We finished with a cruise along the beach and back again like good hoons, and altogether had a great day in the sun!



The classic foredune of *Spinifex sericeus* stretching along the Manawatu coast, with Kapiti Island in the background. Photo: Keith Young



Our fungus, *Peziza*. Photo: Keith Young



Inspecting the flora of an old deflation basin, now largely invaded by weeds, but with some remnant wetland species. Photo: Jill Rapson.



Sometimes even marram can be intriguing! Photo: Jill Rapson

Jill Rapson