

WANGANUI PLANT LIST 15

Swamp on Landcorp Land near Waitotara River Mouth, and near "Hawkins Lagoon" Conservation Area

Plant list revised 16 Jan 2002

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There is an unfenced area of swamp, one of the most intact examples in the district, which is surrounded by farmland near the access road to the "Hawkins Lagoon Reserve", and about 300m from both the reserve and the river. A substantial stream flows from the swamp into the tidal reaches of the river. This connects with a deep drain, recently excavated (or at least deepened), which separates farm from swamp on its south side.

Plants: A plant list (attached) was made for the swamp, based on a walk through it close to the drain. Undoubtedly a wider survey would have revealed further species. The most local species in a district sense is a native swamp grass, Isachne globosa (nearest known locations are L. Moumahaki inland from Waverley, Santoft forest near Bulls, and Mimi River in the North Taranaki). This grass is common in the "Waitotara Swamp", and is also common in coastal swamps in northern New Zealand.

Vegetation: Rather than being notable for rare plants, however, it is as a remnant of a now rare vegetation type that this swamp is worth preserving. It is quite unlike anything in the "Hawkins Lagoon Reserve", being dominated by tall flax, toetoe, Carex secta and karamu shrubs, with scattered raupo and cabbage trees. The sedge, Baumea rubiginosa is indicative of moderate fertility - ie the swamp has not been totally eutrophicated by run-off from surrounding farm land, unlike many lowland swamps of the district. The dense Carex clumps appear excellent habitat for spotless crakes, and even marsh crakes, although no birds were seen.

Stock: Stock have pugged the eastern end of the swamp and have been browsing karamu shrubs at least. Potential damage has been limited by difficulties of access caused by the deep drain marking the southern boundary of the swamp.

Fire: The western end of the swamp has been burnt perhaps several years ago.

Exit Stream: The drain has lowered the water table of the swamp, at least close to the drain itself where the peat is quite firm. The stream flows through a culvert under the vehicle track to "Hawken's Lake", and into the tidal part of the Waitotara River some 50m further downstream.

List of Vascular Plants

* = adventive species

Dicots

* <i>Callitriche stagnalis</i>	starwort
<i>Calystegia</i> sp.	convolvulus
<i>Coprosma robusta</i>	karamu
<i>Epilobium billardiereum</i>	willowherb
<i>E. pallidiflorum</i>	"
* <i>Galium aparine</i>	cleavers
* <i>G. palustre</i>	marsh bedstraw
* <i>Lotus pedunculatus</i>	lotus major
<i>Muehlenbeckia complexa</i>	pohuehue
* <i>Ranunculus repens</i>	creeping buttercup
* <i>R. sceleratus</i>	celery-leaved buttercup
* <i>Rorippa</i> sp.	watercress
* <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> (?)	dock
* <i>Senecio bipinnatisectus</i>	fireweed
<i>S. minimus</i>	
* <i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	puwha
* <i>Stellaria</i> sp.	chickweed
* <i>Ulex europaeus</i>	gorse

Monocots

<i>Baumea rubiginosa</i>	
<i>Carex lessoniana</i>	
<i>C. secta</i> s.s.	
<i>C. virgata</i>	
<i>Cordyline australis</i>	cabbage tree, ti kouka
<i>Cortaderia toetoe</i>	toetoe
<i>Cyperus ustulatus</i>	
<i>Eleocharis acuta</i>	spike sedge
* <i>Schedonorus phoenix</i>	tall fescue
* <i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire fog
<i>Isachne globosa</i>	swamp millet
* <i>Juncus articulatus</i>	jointed-leaved rush
<i>J. gregiflorus</i>	
<i>Phormium tenax</i>	NZ Flax
* <i>Potamogeton crispus</i>	curled pond weed

Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani
Typha orientalis

kapungawha
raupo

Ferns

Azolla filiculoides ssp. rubra
Blechnum minus (of NZ authors)
B. novae-zelandiae
Dicksonia squarrosa
Hypolepis ambigua
Pteridium esculentum

waterfern
swamp kiokio
kiokio
wheki

bracken