



Botany of Rotorua

Botany of Rotorua is compiled by Bruce D. Clarkson, Mark C. Smale and Chris E. Ecroyd and was published in 1991 by Forest Research Institute, Rotorua. The retail price is \$39.95.

This well-laid-out book describes and illustrates the botany of the Rotorua Lakes Ecological District which is described in the introductory chapter as one of the most distinctive districts in New Zealand.

Short chapters by a variety of authors cover the following topics: physical factors that shape plant habitats; history of the vegetation; native forest; exotic forest; pasture; naturalised vegetation of roadsides, waste places and urban areas; aquatic vegetation, lake shore vegetation; mires; vegetation of thermal areas; a century of change on Mount Tarawera; threatened and local native plants; coastal plants inland; mosses and liverworts; fungi; and traditional uses of wild plants. Each chapter is illustrated with well-chosen, high-quality photos that illustrate particular points in the text. In addition, each chapter comes with its own title page laid out in a uniform style.

At the back of the book there is a list of references and recommended reading for each chapter. This is followed by a glossary of technical terms and a detailed index that includes both common and scientific names for plant species mentioned in the text.

The overall emphasis of the text is descriptive rather than analytical or ecological. This may mean that the book will be used more for referencing rather than being read from cover to cover. More information on, for example, why particular native forest types are in certain locations would have made for more interesting reading. In addition, it would have been helpful for the book to indicate areas and vegetation associations that are of particular significance. Several chapters (for example vegetation of thermal areas and aquatic vegetation) did include more ecological information.

Careful editing has standardised the writing style, which is generally easy to read. Careful attention has been paid to the up-to-date use of scientific names. Common names are used where they exist and they are followed by the scientific name in brackets.

A strong point of the book is the use of many high-quality photographs throughout the text. These photos which are of habitats, plants, plant communities and individual communities are a valuable supplement to the text. This extensive use of such high-quality photographs considerably widens the potential readership.

BOOK REVIEWS

I found the chapter on the History of the Vegetation very interesting, although to be true to its title the chapter should have covered more than the terrestrial plants of the district. At the other end of the book, the chapter on Traditional Uses of Wild Plants is particularly interesting and appropriate for a book on the Botany of Rotorua.

The Aquatic Vegetation is another important chapter for Rotorua, given

the importance of lakes in the district. I would have liked to have seen a clearer distinction made between native and exotic vegetation and in particular between a major lake without exotic oxygen weeds (now only Lake Rotomahana) and lakes with oxygen weeds.

Another distinctive habitat in the Rotorua district is the thermal areas. The two chapters on these areas provide the reader with information on each of the major thermal areas, which should be helpful for visitors.

At \$39.95 the Botany of Rotorua represents good value for money. The extensive use of high-quality photographs and the well-laid-out, clearly-written text gives the book a wide potential readership.

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The Young Eucalypt Report

The Young Eucalypt Report, edited by C.M. Kerruish and W.H.M. Rawlins and published by CSIRO, is available from CSIRO Bookshop, 314 Albert St., East Melbourne, Victoria 3002.

The sub-title of this important publication is: Some management options for Australia's regrowth forests. The report outlines the results of the "young eucalypt programme, an ambitious five-year research, development and demonstration project funded and managed by CSIRO and the forest authorities and forest industries of Victoria and Tasmania. The participants combined their resources to examine the implications of thinning the faster-growing, ash-type eucalypts and of using the young wood.

Within the programme there were eight projects, and the bulk of the book consists of reports on these individual aspects written by the project coordinators. The major results can be briefly summarised as follows:

- About 100,000 ha of fast-growing

regrowth suitable for thinning was identified. This consisted largely of regenerating *Eucalyptus regnans*, *E. delegatensis*, *E. nitens*, *E. obliqua* and *E. globulus* following logging and wildfire.

- The most productive regime was predicted to yield, per hectare per year over a shorter rotation, 55% more wood than the traditional unthinned regime.
- Sawlog losses from decay as a result of wounding can be restricted to only 5% of the total volume.
- Levels of drying degrade obtained in the younger wood using the best technique were little different from those currently attained by using traditional practices (quarter-sawing and drying) on timber from older and larger trees. With effective drying, back-sawing is more profitable even for large trees and allows the sawing of much smaller trees.
- Thinning could be used profitably as pulpwood.
- Thinned stands have higher NPVs than unthinned stands and this ranking is insensitive to changes in key parameters