

NGĀ HOA O TE MĀRA REO

The Friends of Te Māra Reo

Kawerongo / Newsletter #5,

Raumati / Summer 2024/5 - Kōanga / Spring 2025

“Kua tangi te wharauora, ko te karere o Mahuru.”¹

E hoa mā, tēnā rā koutou katoa.

Despite my optimism in the last newsletter, I have to report that the struggle against the moso bamboo is constant and has become increasingly dispiriting. Originally planted near the collection of harakeke and Astelias (whara) to represent the Taiwanese beginnings of Austronesian languages, after being assured that it was easy to control, the moso bamboo (*Phyllostachys edulis*) has proven intractable, despite thousands of dollars spent on equipment and poisons, hundreds of hours of hard labour spent, and debilitating injuries my son Alan and I have sustained while trying to subdue it. While we have been clearing one area, parts already cleared have been re-colonised, and so much time has had to be spent trying to push back on the bamboo that other parts of the garden have been neglected.



However, I must admit, albeit reluctantly, that the same moso bamboo has once more proved to have some redeeming social value. Culms have on occasions been used to support the plumes on the waka taua sailed on ceremonial occasions from Tūrāngawāwae marae. In October 2024 we were able to supply the greenery to decorate the prow and stern of the barge moored there, to celebrate the coronation of Te Arikinui Kuini Ngā Wai Hono i Te Pō – in the photo on the left, you can see the leaves of several culms bound together gracing the bow, against the background of the river and the Hakarimata range.

A great deal of my time and energy from November 2024 to July this year (2025) was spent editing the Taitokerau Māori dictionary, a project long overdue for completion, very interesting, and now in the hands of the publisher’s editorial and production staff. This did little to advance Te Māra Reo either as a physical reality or the website which complements it, of course. Nor did my slipping on wet leaves and being put out of action for a couple of months because of complications from the fall (no bones broken, fortunately, but one leg is still feeling older than it used to). I have also had advisory roles in relation to a project to integrate Māori approaches into teaching reading to young children, another on facilitating the use of te reo Māori as the primary language of the home, and a third on indigenous customary law. I was also asked to write an article on aspects of my research on Māori language issues for *The Spinoff*. I know that at least four other people besides the Editor have read it: click [this link](#) if you would like to do so too. So, as usual, life has been full of interruptions; my patient PhD supervisor reminded me many years ago that this is the natural order of things.

¹ “The wharauora has called, the messenger of Spring” – when the shining cuckoo is heard, Spring has also arrived.

Ngā Mihi – Thanks

As always, we are grateful to all the people who have helped us, directly and indirectly: members of the NZPCN and others in Aotearoa and overseas who have allowed us to use their photographs to illustrate our web pages, friends who have encouraged us to continue with the project, and those who have generously provided us with advice and information. Our thanks go also to those who from time to time have helped with pushing back against the bamboo and also with putting at least some of the felled culms to good use. Ngā mihi nui rawa atu ki a koutou katoa.

Additions and Subtractions

I mentioned in the last newsletter that my plan over the last 20 years has been to develop an ethnobotanical garden and resource centre on our five acres. This is still the dream, which at times actually touches on reality.

Right now, however, a good chunk of the garden is obscured by invasive moso bamboo, unwanted adventitious trees and other unwelcome intrusive vegetation. This is taken care of to the best of our ability; the days when we could afford to pay for regular help are long gone. Possums are a perennial problem, but do little visible damage. They are very difficult to trap – after one is caught, the others seem to work out how to avoid the trap, or even how to set it off and eat the bait without being caught. More obviously damaging are the perennial rabbits and occasional invading cattle, and pigs. Many of the smaller ferns and herbs have been eaten by these visitors, but some survive, and recover well from being munched or trampled (the para, *Psitana salicina*, are amazingly resilient in this regard), and others, like the Astelias, are simply ignored. There are also changes because of the passing of time – for example, mānuka tend to weaken and die after twenty years -- or perhaps climate change: poroporo (*Solanum laciniatum*) used to grow here like weeds, but all the shrubs and trees have now died and only a few residual seedlings remain. Hebes (*Veronica* spp.) also require replacement after five, ten or 15 years. The tī (*Cordyline* spp.) show varying degrees of resistance to the virus that takes many of them; some are still growing happily after more than 25 years since they were planted, others have succumbed.

Additions and Updates to the Web Site

We have had an ongoing problem with our web hosting since the beginning of September, when I received a note from Google telling me that Google Analytics could not access our pages. Since then numerous uploads have been made to the site, including four of the new pages listed below. All are listed under temarareo.org on the Crazy Domains server, but the only pages accessible are those uploaded earlier. Google Analytics has not monitored our pages effectively since September 4, as access to the public html directory on the server remains blocked. If you type www.temarareo.org into a browser you will get the cached (to August 2025) version of the site: the page that appears will be temarareo/index.html, but if you try that, or even the “home” option on the website, which takes you to the *current* version of that page, you will be told “Not Found. The requested URL was not

found on this server.” Nothing that is new or updated since last August is currently accessible via what is displayed on the web, although it is all there on the host Server. Since our hosting is paid up to 2032 I am reluctant to change providers, but if we cannot get remedial action from our host Crazy Domains by early in the New Year, I will be forced to do this.

The chart below summarizes the pages which have been added to the website or substantially revised since the last *Kawerongo*.

Pages added or revised July 2023-November 2025

<i>Change made</i>	<i>Pages</i>
New pages	* Pakilangi/Pakiraki , * Pele/Pere , * Tūtae/Tutae , * Kisikisi/Kōkihi , * Tawahi/Tawhai , * Nonu/Nonokia/Nonorangi , * Tutu/Tutu , * Tewe/Tewe , * Masele/Māereere . ² * Koka/Koka , * Luna/Runa , * Nefe/Nehe , * Pōniu/Poniu . ³
Substantial revisions	* Kofe, Kahikātoa/Mānuka
Revised or reformatted	* Nukanuka, Mānuka (the name), 19 remaining old-format pages transferred to new format (further revisions will be made to these ā te wā).

A Question Still Unresolved.

Revision of the page for Proto Polynesian ***Pala** raised an intriguing question about a species of moss, *Campylopus vesticaulis*, found on Easter Island. Chilean botanists list it as found also in Aotearoa, but local botanists I have consulted say this species is not part of our flora. Enquiries are still proceeding!

New Botanical Names for Old Plants.

We discussed changes in the classification of ferns in *Kawerongo* #3 & #4, and to the *Leptospermum* (and incidentally *Kunzea*) species in *Kawerongo* #4. The changes to the *Leptospermum* (Mānuka, Kahikātoa – *Leptospermum scoparium* s.l.) classification, splitting variations that used to be lumped together into several distinct species and subspecies seem now to have been generally accepted (they are recognized in the NZ Plant Conservation Network, Biota of NZ, and World Flora Online databases), although the changes to *Kunzea* (Kānuka) reflected in the NZPCN database, and Te Māra Reo, remain controversial; currently both Biota NZ and WFO regard *Kunzea ericoides* as a single

² These pages are all visible on the web and can be accessed through the cached index page.

³ These pages, along with others added after August 2025, including the updated index and bibliography pages are on the web hosting server but not displayed as at 7 December 2025.

species. One change reported in Kawerongo #3 has been partially reversed – to those accepting the changes proposed by Rolla Tryon, *Cyathea dealbata* (Ponga) remains in the genus *Alsophila*, but it has retained its specific name, becoming again *Alsophila dealbata* (it was re-named this by the Czech botanist August Condra in 1838 – a fact discovered only recently. That meant that the other *Alsophila dealbata* described by Carl Presl in 1848 had been given that name in error, and that it belonged after all to the tree fern from Aotearoa.

As promised in the last Newsletter, I have checked all the botanical names of New Zealand plants listed in our database and brought the “index” page up to date, a worthwhile exercise as I discovered a few out-of-date names still there, and quite a few typos which had gone undetected. These have now been corrected. Some of the older names will still be found in many useful publications from past years. The list below includes all the recent name changes I have encountered and some quite ancient ones. No doubt there will be more to come! There are notes too about those changes that are still controversial. The changes listed are only those affecting the scientific names of plants whose Māori names were brought from Tropical Polynesia and a few others included on the Te Māra Reo website.

<i>Older Name</i>	<i>Māori Name</i>	<i>Currently Accepted Botanical Name</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Angelica montana	Naupiro	Gingilia montana	
Asplenium lucidum	Paretao	Asplenium oblongifolium	
Azolla filiculoides	Retoreto	Azolla rubra	
Blechnum discolor	Piupiu	Lomaria discolor	(1)
Blechnum fluvatilis	Kiwakiwa	Cranfilia fluvatilis	(1)
Blechnum novae-zelandiae	Piupiu	Parablechnum novae-zelandiae	(1)
Blechnum procerum	Piupiu	Parablechnum procerum	(1)
Calystegia sepium	Pōhue	Calystegia sepium s. roseata	
Cassinia leptophylla	Tauhinu, Neineikura	Ozothamnus leptophyllus	
Clematis indivisa	Puawānanga	Clematis paniculata	
Collospermum hastatum	Pūwharawhara	Astelia hastatum	
Colocasia esculenta	Taro	Colocasia antiquorum	(2)
Coprosma autumnalis	Kawariki, Kanono	Coprosma grandifolia	(3)
Coprosma baueri	Naupata, Taupata	Coprosma repens	(3)
Cortaderia splendens	Kākaho	Austroderia splendens	
Cyathea dealbata	Ponga	Alsophila dealbata	(4)
Cyathea medullaris	Māmaku, Kōrau	Sphaeropteris medullaris	(5)
Cyathea smithii	Ponga	Alsophila smithii	(5)
Cyathodes fraseri	Tōtara	Styphelia nesophila	(8)
Cyathodes juniperina	Tōtara	Leptecophylla juniperina	(8)
Cyathodes fasciculatis	Mingimingi	Leucopogon fasciculatis	
Dysoxylum spectabile	Māota, Kohekohe	Didymocheton spectabilis	
Elytranthe colensoi	Pirita	Peraxilla colensoi	
Elytranthe tetrapetala	Pirita	Peraxilla tetrapetala	
Geniostoma rupestre v. ligustrifolium	Hangehange	Geniostoma ligustrifolium	(6)
Haloragus incanus	Piripiri	Gonocarpus incanus	
Haloragus micranthus	Piripiri	Gonocarpus micranthus	

<i>Hebe diosmifolia</i>	Aute	<i>Veronica diosmifolia</i>	
<i>Hebe stricta</i>	Koromiko	<i>Veronica stricta</i>	
<i>Hierochloa antarctica</i>	Karetu	<i>Anthoxanthum redolens</i>	
<i>Hierochloa redolens</i>	Karetu	<i>Anthoxanthum redolens</i>	
<i>Kunzea ericoides</i>	Kānuka	<i>Kunzea robusta</i> , <i>K. ericoides</i> , <i>K. amathicola</i> , <i>K. linearis</i> , <i>K. salterae</i> , <i>K. serotina</i> , <i>K. sinclairii</i> , <i>K. tenuicaulis</i> , <i>K. toelkenii</i> , <i>K. triregensis</i> .	(7)
<i>Lagarostrobos colensoi</i>	Manoao	<i>Manoao colensoi</i>	
<i>Leptospermum ericoides</i>	Kānuka	<i>Kunzea ericoides</i> etc. (see above)	(7)
<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i>	Kahikātoa, Mānuka	<i>Leptospermum hoipolloi</i> , <i>L. scoparium</i> , <i>L. tairawhitiense</i> , <i>L. repo</i>	
<i>Leucopogon fraseri</i>	Tōtara	<i>Styphelia nesophila</i>	(8)
<i>Loranthus micranthus</i>	Pirita	<i>Ileostylus micranthus</i>	
<i>Macropiper excelsum</i>	Kawakawa	<i>Piper excelsum</i>	
<i>Marattia salicina</i>	Para	<i>Ptisana salicina</i>	
<i>Metrosideros tomentosa</i>	Pōhutukawa	<i>Metrosideros excelsa</i>	
<i>Myrtus bullata</i>	Ramarama	<i>Lophomyrtus bullata</i>	
<i>Nestegis cunninghamii</i>	Maire raunui, Pau	<i>Notelaea cunninghamii</i>	
<i>Nestegis lanceolata</i>	Maire rauriki	<i>Notelaea lanceolata</i>	
<i>Nestegis montana</i>	Maire rōroro	<i>Notelaea montana</i>	
<i>Nestegis apetala</i>	Maire	<i>Notelaea apetala</i>	
<i>Nothofagus fusca</i>	Hutu, Tawhai raunui	<i>Fuscospora fusca</i>	
<i>Nothofagus menziesii</i>	Tawhai	<i>Lophozonia menziesii</i>	
<i>Nothofagus solandri</i>	Tawhai rauriki	<i>Fuscospora solandri</i>	
<i>Nothofagus truncata</i>	Hutu, Tawhai raunui	<i>Fuscospora truncata</i>	
<i>Olearia traversii</i>	Akeake	<i>Olearia traversiorum</i>	
<i>Orthoceras strictum</i>	Māika, Māikaika	<i>Orthoceras novae-seelandiae</i>	
<i>Paratrophis microphylla</i>	Karakariki, Tūrepo	(reinstated 2025)	(9)
<i>Peraxilla flavida</i>	Pirita	<i>Alepis flavida</i>	
<i>Phebalium nudum</i>	Mairehau	<i>Leionema nudum</i>	
<i>Pisonia brunoniana</i>	Parapara	<i>Ceodes brunoniana</i>	
<i>Planchonella novaezelandica</i>	Tawāpou	<i>Planchonella costata</i>	
<i>Pneumanopteris pennigera</i>	Piupiu	<i>Pakau pennigera</i>	
<i>Podocarpus cunninghamii</i>	Tōtara	<i>Podocarpus laetus</i>	
<i>Podocarpus dacrydioides</i>	Kahikatea	<i>Dacrycarpus dacrydioides</i>	
<i>Podocarpus ferruginea</i>	Miro, Toromiro	<i>Pectinopitys ferruginea</i>	
<i>Podocarpus hallii</i>	Tōtara	<i>Podocarpus laetus</i>	
<i>Polystichum richardii</i>	Pikopiko	<i>Polystichum neozelandicum</i> s. <i>zerophyllum</i>	
<i>Pontentilla anserinoides</i>	Kōwhai kura	<i>Argentina anserinoides</i>	
<i>Prumnopitys ferruginea</i>	Miro, Toromiro	<i>Pectinopitys ferruginea</i>	
<i>Pseudolycopodium densum</i>	Puakarimu	<i>Lycopodium deuterodensum</i>	
<i>Rorippa islandica</i>	Poniu	<i>R. palustris</i>	
<i>Selliera radicans</i>	Remuremu	<i>Goodenia radicans</i>	
<i>Sicyos australis</i>	Māwhai	<i>Sicyos mawhai</i>	

<i>Solanum nodiflorum</i>	Pōporo, Poroporo	<i>Solanum americanum</i>	
<i>Sonchus littoralis</i>	Pūhā	<i>Sonchus kirkii</i>	
<i>Streblus heterophyllus</i>	Karakariki, Turepo	<i>Paratrophis microphylla</i>	(9)
<i>Tetragona expansa</i>	Kōkihi	<i>Tetragona tetragonoides</i>	
<i>Tetrapathaea tetrandra</i>	Kōhia	<i>Passiflora tetrandra</i>	
<i>Thelypteris pennigera</i>	Piupiu	<i>Pakau pennigera</i>	
<i>Typha angustifolia</i>	Raupō	<i>Typha orientalis</i>	
<i>Weinmannia racemosa</i>	Tāwhero	<i>Pterophylla racemosa</i>	
<i>Zostera novaezelandica</i>	Rimurehia	<i>Z. muelleri</i> s. <i>novaezelandica</i>	

Notes.

(1) The changes to the names of these ferns are accepted by the NZ Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) and the international World Flora on Line (WFO) databases, but the Biota NZ database retains *Blechnum* as their preferred generic name.

(2). *Colocasia antiquorum* is preferred as the name for taro by the NZPCN and WFO databases, *C. esculenta* is the preferred name in the BiotaNZ database.

(3) *Coprosma lucida* has also been known as *C. grandifolia* and *C. australis* in some publications in the past (and as *C. baueri* in others).

(4) The Ponga briefly became *Alsophila tricolor* when the tree ferns formerly grouped under the generic name *Cyathea* were reclassified (see Note 5, below), as the name *Alsophila dealbata* had once been given in 1848 to another tree fern (later renamed *Sphaeropteris glauca*). William Colenso had published in 1881 a description of a specimen under the name of *Cyathea tricolor*, which turned out later to be indistinguishable from *Cyathea dealbata*, so *tricolor* became the specific name for the Ponga when it was transferred to the genus *Alsophila*. It has now been discovered that in fact the Ponga had already been named *A. dealbata* in 1838, so that name, after all, took priority.

(5) The splitting of the genus *Cyathea* into *Cyathea* (mostly American species), *Sphaeropteris* (one species in NZ) and *Alsophila* (the other NZ species) has been accepted by the NZPCN and WFO databases, but not by BiotaNZ (see TMR *Kawerongo* #4, p.7 for more information about this).

(6) This change is accepted by NZPCN, but *G. rupetree v. ligustrifolium* is retained at present as the name for this plant by BiotaNZ and WFO.

(7) The *Kunzea* changes are recognized by the NZPCN and reflected on our website, but currently Biota NZ and WFO retain *Kunzea ericoides* s.l. as the sole accepted name for these plants.

(8) This is not the stately forest tree, but a small prickly shrub which shares the name because of its sharp-tipped leaves.

(9) Research conducted on the mulberry family (Moraceae) and published in 2021 found that new genetic evidence justified the reinstatement of the genus *Paratrophis*; this proposition has now been accepted by New Zealand botanists, so the karakariki, a.k.a. tūrepo, once more becomes a *Paratrophis*. (*Trilepidea*, No. 249 (March 2025), p.8)

Visitors to the Website

Since the last newsletter up until the end of January 2025 we had visitors to the website from 167 countries, but three countries – Aotearoa New Zealand (69%), the United States (9%) and Australia (6%) still accounted for the vast majority. However, this time visitors from Viet Nam also constituted 3% of the total. Visitors from tropical Polynesia (Samoa, Tonga, French Polynesia, the Cook Islands, American Samoa, and Niue) made up 1.7% combined. The others contributing 0.4% or more were the United Kingdom (0.9%), India and Indonesia (both 0.8%), Germany (0.7%) The Philippines (0.6%), China and Fiji (each 0.5%) and Canada and France (0.4% each). Little has changed from previous years, apart from the sudden influx of visitors from Viet Nam, very interesting but so far unexplained (no-one from there has yet asked to be included as a Friend of Te Māra Reo). The Viet Nam phenomenon was not repeated (as far as we can tell) in 2025, but there was a surge in visitors from Germany (6.8% of the total), who up to the end of August outnumbered those from Australia (4.3%), but otherwise there was little change.

Sought-after Plant Names

The table below lists the top five (and for the last four years the top ten) plant-name pages visited in each of the last six years. At long last **poroporo** has fallen in the rankings – it had been in the top five ever since the site was first monitored by Google Analytics in 2015 until dropping to sixth in 2023, and then to 19th last year. Up to September in 2025 it was even further down, to 32nd when last counted. Why this word was so popular for so long is still hard to explain, but its demise may be linked to its rankings in a Google search; the page would come up among the first few items until about a year ago, but is now well down, at the top of page 3 in January. The vagaries of Google’s algorithms may be the cause or the result of the dramatic drop in enquiries, and also of the rise to fame of the page for hue, which was the most often viewed page last year and was still the front runner for 2025 when counting stopped in September – a Google search for “hue” unqualified will bring up pages of entries devoted to lightbulbs, but for the moment a search for “hue plant” brings up the Te Māra Reo page among the first few entries. On the other hand a search for “pakilangi”, which is at 188th place out of 201 pages searched on our site, will bring the Te Māra Reo page up at the top of the first page of results – but then, it has little competition!

The thirteen new pages noted in this newsletter are all combined Aotearoa / Pacific plant pages, rather than following the earlier policy of having separate pages for the tropical and local plants respectively sharing the same inherited name, with a very few exceptions, unless the plant was also inherited (like the hue and the taro). The result has been that comparatively few people look at the cross-referenced page discussing the Pacific plants, although those plants are the tuākana of the New Zealand ones in the whakapapa of names. Last year Hue, a combined page, was the most often visited, but Taputoki, the companion page to the runner-up, Tītoki, came in at no. 149. There are still about 15 sets of names (Tropical Polynesian/Māori) left to go (unless more inherited names are discovered in the meantime), and these will be prepared as combined rather than paired pages. It won’t speed things up much, unfortunately, as it is researching the plants which now takes most time – the names with their whakapapa are already waiting in the wings – but it will allow the story to

appear in a single chapter rather than being serialized, with sometimes a long interlude between installments.

Front-Runners in the Hit Parade, in order of frequency:

2019 Jan-Dec	2020 Jan-Dec	2021 Jan-Dec	2022 Jan-Dec	2023 Jan-Dec	2024 Jan-Dec
Kauri	Mānuka	Poroporo	<u>Hue</u>	Rengarenga	<u>Hue</u>
Poroporo	Poroporo	<u>Hue</u>	Rengarenga	<i>Whau</i>	<u>Tītoki</u>
Mānuka	Kauri	Mānuka	Poroporo	<i>Kawariki</i>	Pūriri
Nīkau	Kōwhai	Kōwhai	Pūriri	Whara	<i>Whau</i>
Kōwhai / Whara	Whara	<u>Raupō</u>	Puka	<u>Hue</u>	<i>Kawariki</i>

From January 1 to September 4 this year: (1) Hue, (2) **Tawa** (3) **Pūriri**, (4) **Aruhe**, (5) *Kawariki*.
6th to 10th place:

January 1 to September 4 this year: Toa, **Pua**, **Taramoa**, Pohutukawa, *Aute*

2024: Pohutukawa, Toa, *Miro*, *Kawa*, *Aute*

2023: **Poroporo**, Pohutukawa, Raupō, **Pūriri**, **Kauri**

2022: **Kōwhai**, Raupō, *Hīnau*, **Kauri**, **Mānuka**

2021: **Tawa**, **Pūriri**, *Aute*, **Kauri**, **Rengarenga**

Names are coded to indicate when they were first included in the “top five”: **2015**, 2017, **2018**, **2019**, 2021, **2022**, **2023**, 2024. This year’s first appearances in the top ten are highlighted. There were no new names in 2016 or 2020.

E Whai ake ana: In the mix to be dealt with next time.

A reader suggested after the last Kawerongo that these newsletters should be shorter, more frequent, and contain explanations of terms and phrases such as “cognate”, “reflex”, and “East Polynesia”, that appear often in the web pages but may puzzle many readers. These are good ideas, and I will try to incorporate them along with questions and interesting bits of information that come our way in future issues.

He Kupu Whakamutunga ~ Ngā Mihi o te Wā

*Heoi anō mō te wā nei – ko ngā tūmanako pai mō te Wā Whānau o tō Tātou Ariki
ā ko ngā mihi hoki mō te Tau Hou ki a Koutou Katoa.*



This newsletter was prepared for Te Māra Reo, <http://www.temarareo.org>, by Richard Benton.
- [Photo; Ceremonial barge with foliage supplied by Te Māra Reo. R.B.]

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