SOME INDIGENOUS VASCULAR PLANTS OF NORTHERN SECTION OF KOHANGAPIRIPIRI WETLAND, PART SITE 28, RECORDED ON 23-6-97 BY B.J. MITCALFE AND J.C. HORNE.

Note: This site was briefly surveyed only, not botanised.

BOTANICAL NAME	MAORI NAME	COMMON NAME
MONOCOT TREES		
Cordyline australis	ti kouka	cabbage tree
DICOT TREES AND SHRUBS		
Cassinia leptophylla	tauhinu	tauhinu
Coprosma areolata		
Coprosma propinqua	mingimingi	
Coprosma rhamnoides		
Kunzea ericoides	kanuka	kanuka
Leptospermum scoparium	manuka	manuka
FERNS		
Blechnum minus		
Blechnum sp ("lowland")	kiokio	
GRASSES		
Cortaderia toetoe		
SEDGES		
Carex flagellifera		
Carex geminata		
Carex secta	puurei	
Carex virgata		
Cyperus ustulatus	upoko tangata	
Uncinia uncinata	matau a Maui	
RUSHES		
Juncus sarophorus	wii	
Juncus sp.		
MONOCOT HERBS		
Phormium tenax		
DICOT HERBS		
Hydrocotyle elongata		
Hydrocotyle sp.		
Nertera depressa		
Ranunculus reflexus		

NOTES ON NORTHERN SECTION OF KOHANGAPIRIPIRI WETLAND, PART SITE 28.

This site is ecologically significant for the reasons specified below.

BOUNDARY...
The SNA boundary should include the esplanade reserve. It should be noted that the esplanade reserve protects *only* the 20 metre marginal strip, not the wetland itself.

HISTORY
The geological history is as for Kohangatera.

VEGETATION GENERAL
The site contains associations in varying proportions, of flax, toetoe, raupo, sedges and rushes forming a mosaic throughout. Manuka, kanuka and *Coprosma propinqua* with an understorey of ferns and sedges, fringe the upper section. Ti kouka is also present in the upper section.

REPRESENTATIVENESS
As the above paragraph indicates, site 28 has representative, indigenous, lowland, early-stage, freshwater wetland vegetation.

DIVERSITY
A north-south gradation of freshwater habitat from drier to wetter, supports a range of ecological communities. Clelland (1984) lists 107 indigenous vascular plants for the lower sections of Kohangatera and Kohangapiripiri together. An intensive botanical survey would establish a wider range of plants for Site 28 than the brief attached species recorded on 23-6-97.

RARITY
The site and the Kohangatera wetlands are the only large areas of their type in the Tararua Ecological Region. Kohangapiripiri is at a later stage of succession from estuarine to freshwater communities, than Kohangatera. Like Kohangatera, it has features which indicate that it was once a salt marsh.

Clelland (1984) lists 16 rare/uncommon plants in the Kohangapiripiri wetland, of which two, *Elatine gratioloides* and *Lepilaena bilocularis* are not found in Kohangatera.

While it is not known at this point how many rare species are present specifically in the northern part of the Kohangapiripiri wetland, the *association of indigenous plant species* is very uncommon in the Wellington region because of the rarity of wetlands themselves.

Clelland also records three rare/uncommon animals, Spotless crake, pukeko and Giant kokopu in Kohangapiripiri.

DISTINCTIVENESS
Site 28 is comprises intact, dense populations of wetland plant species. Apart from some trampling and browsing by stock, it almost 100% indigenous.
One of its strongest natural values is the ecotone where the swamp vegetation grades into

Site 6's black beech/podocarp/broadleaf forest, forming an uninterrupted ecological sequence.

CONTINUITY/LINKAGE
The Pencarrow Lakes complex forms a coherent, landscape and ecological unit, separated by a low ridge.

LANDSCAPE INTEGRITY/CULTURAL VALUES
The site has high aesthetic values because of its indigenous, typically-NZ character, forming part of the regionally-significant Pencarrow landscape. (See photo ...)

SUSTAINABILITY/ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION
Freedom from fires, stock, pest animals and invasion/planting of exotic species in the vicinity would ensure the continued natural succession of this ecosystem. The relative isolation of this site and Site 6, with the resultant, mutual buffering, should make restoration easier.

OTHER CONSERVATION BENEFITS
The Pencarrow wetlands are of high scientific interest because of their geological/ecological values. They are therefore of great importance as study sites.

They are breeding habitat for four regionally-uncommon species of native bird.