

ART. XXXI.—Notice of the Occurrence of a Species of *Rhagodia* at Port Nicholson. By T. KIRK, F.L.S.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 14th November, 1883.]

THE genus *Rhagodia* has long been supposed peculiar to Australia, its addition to the New Zealand Flora is therefore a matter of considerable interest as it increases the number of important genera common to both countries.

In this district a species belonging to the genus occurs in rocky places by the sea on the Miramar Peninsula, and in other localities on the coast. It closely resembles *Chenopodium triandrum* in external characters, and it is to this cause that we must attribute the fact of its having so long escaped notice. It may, however, be distinguished from any species of *Chenopodium* by its succulent bright crimson fruits.

Our plant was originally added to the Flora and identified as *Rhagodia nutans*, R. Br., var., by Mr. T. F. Cheeseman, of Auckland, who discovered it on an island in the Hauraki Gulf, and kindly favoured me with specimens in May last. On a recent examination of a collection of plants formed by my youngest son, H. B. Kirk, I was agreeably surprised to find the plant represented by specimens collected at Miramar, in the vicinity of Wellington, and have but little doubt that most of the littoral stations recorded for *Chenopodium triandrum* will prove to belong to the New Zealand form of *Rhagodia nutans*.

The Wellington plant appears to be more robust than the Auckland plant; the leaves of the latter also are green and membranous, while those of the former are mealy-white beneath.

Our plant is characterized by slender branches one to two feet long or more, trailing amongst rocks or supporting themselves amongst the lower branches of shrubs. The stems are woody at the base, and sometimes of considerable thickness; leaves usually mealy-white, opposite or rarely alternate, about $\frac{1}{2}$ " long, on slender petioles, broadly lanceolate with an angular base (never hastate in the specimens examined), not unfrequently the points turned inwards, acute. Inflorescence in axillary fascicles, near the extremity of the branches, or in slender, shortly-branched terminal panicles. Fruit succulent, bright crimson.

Further acquaintance with the plant will probably show that it is worthy of permanent distinction as a variety, in which case it might be appropriately designated:—

Rhagodia nutans, R. Br., var. *nova-zealandia*.

Apparently it was first observed in this colony by Dr. Hector, who supposed it to be a form of *Chenopodium triandrum* with succulent fruits. Sir Joseph Hooker, in the supplemental reference to *C. triandrum* in

the Handbook of the New Zealand Flora, writes,—“Hector observes that the utricle is fleshy.” It is somewhat remarkable that this statement did not suggest the possibility of the plant in question being a *Rhagodia* since the fruits of all our *Chenopodia* are dry.

On examining the specimens of *Chenopodium triandrum* in the herbarium of the Colonial Museum, I observed specimens of *Rhagodia* from The Brothers rocks, and other localities not stated, but probably in the vicinity of Wellington.

It is worthy of remark that no fewer than nine genera formerly supposed endemic in Australia have been added to our flora since the publication of the “Handbook.” They are :—

Actinotus.
Rhagodia.
Poranthera.
Calochilus.
Epiblema.
Amphibromus.
Liparophyllum.
Lepilana.
Iphigenia.

ART. XXXII.—Description of a new Pine. By T. KIRK, F.L.S.

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Plate XXVI.

Podocarpus acutifolius, n. s.

A low growing shrub, 2–5 feet high; branches lax, slender. Leaves scattered, green, coriaceous, spreading, straight, linear, acuminate, pungent; midrib prominent beneath. Peduncles of male catkins $\frac{1}{2}$ –1" long or more, naked or with one or two short pungent leaves: catkins solitary, or in fascicles of from two to five, extremely slender. Involucre at the base of each catkin consisting of four scarious acuminate bracts. Female flowers solitary, axillary, on short peduncles, which in the young state are invested with a loose membranous sheath. Drupe (immature), small, ovoid.

Hab. South Island—Upper part of the Buller Valley: *T. Kirk*, 1875.

Our plant belongs to the section *Eupodocarpus*, its nearest allies being *P. totara*, A. Cunn., and *P. nivalis*, Hook. f. From the former it is distinguished by its low stature, lax habit, narrow linear leaves, and slender catkins with uniseriate involucres; it differs from the latter in the slender habit and acute spreading leaves, which are never imbricated,