

ART. XXXIX.—*Descriptions of new Native Plants.*

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[Read before the Otago Institute, 17th November, 1886.]

1. *Ranunculus kirkii*, n. sp.

A SMALL slender herb, very sparingly clothed with long soft hairs, and sending down numerous stout and long roots.

Radical leaves ternate on slightly hairy petioles, 1–2½ inches long; leaflets small, coriaceous, 3-lobed (often to the middle), glabrescent or with sparse hairs; the lobes entire or slightly cut.

Cauline leaves spatulate-oblong, on slender petioles of variable length.

Scapes very slender, 3–4½ inches long, branched or undivided, sparsely clothed with long soft hairs.

Flowers small, solitary, on the ends of the scapes, or of the scape-branches.

Sepals lanceolate or oblong-lanceolate, glabrous or with a few hairs.

Petals 5, oblong, rounded, obtuse, twice as long as the sepals, with a narrow claw and a distinct gland just above the claw.

Carpels few, flattened and discoid, smooth at the sides, with a somewhat thickened ridge round the margin, and a subulate terminal slightly hooked beak.

*Hab.* Paterson's Inlet, Stewart Island.

This species is most closely allied to *R. ternatifolius*, T. Kirk.

2. *Lepidium matau*, n. sp.

A small, erect, sub-pilose dioecious herb.

Root stout, long, enlarged or subdivided at the crown, perennial.

Stems one or several, branched, leafy, 3–4 inches high.

Lower leaves numerous, 1–1½ inches long, linear, pinnatisect, the lobes rounded or cuneate, entire or incised (chiefly on the upper edge), pilose or sub-pilose; petioles short.

Cauline leaves sessile, broadly oblong, sub-acute, usually entire.

Flowers imperfect; petals, none.

Male flowers in crowded racemes often 2 inches in length; pedicels slender, pilose, ¼ inch long.

Female flowers in shorter and laxer racemes; pedicels decurved.

Pods ovate-elliptic, similar to those of *L. kawarau* (mihi).

*Hab.* Alexandra South. This plant stands close to *L. kawaranu*, but differs in so many respects, and, so far as I know, so constantly from that species, that I think it must be regarded as distinct. The discovery of intermediate forms may yet reduce these species to a single variable series. Unlike *L. kawaranu*, this species does not appear to be eaten by sheep or cattle.

3. *Tillaea multicaulis*, n. sp.

A minute, slender, reddish, much branched glabrous herb.

Stems several, frequently branched,  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches long or less, set at close intervals ( $\frac{1}{12}$ — $\frac{1}{10}$  inch) with pairs of small opposite connate subulate concave leaves, bearing in their axils very short branchlets clothed with sub-connate imbricating leaves similar to those of the stems.

Flowers, few, in the axils of the uppermost leaves, rosy, shortly pedicelled.

Sepals 4, subulate, acute.

Petals 4, broadly oblong, obtuse, twice the length of the sepals.

Carpels (immature) 4, with a scale at the outer base of each.

*Hab.* Maniototo Plain, 1,600 feet.

This species stands near *Tillaea sinclairii*, Hook. f. It grows in drier situations, and though slightly tufted never forms dense patches, as *T. sinclairii* does.

4. *Erechtites diversifolia*, n. sp.

A slender, unbranched, strict erect herb, 15–26 inches high.

Stems swollen at the base and sending off a strong tuft of roots, terete, strongly grooved, leafy, glabrate or sparingly cottony.

Lower leaves linear-oblong, obtuse, rather membranous, with few distant blunt teeth (having a very shallow sinus between), and recurved margins, obtuse, glabrous above, glabrate or puberulous below, gradually narrowed into long flat petioles, not auricled, the whole  $2\frac{1}{2}$ — $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches long.

Cauline leaves narrower, more acute, with shorter petioles and less prominent teeth, the upper linear and sessile, glabrate or slightly cottony, not auricled.

Inflorescence usually much branched, lax or compact; heads numerous or rather few,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch long, on slender bracteate pedicels. Involucral scales glabrate or slightly cottony, linear, acute, with scarious margins, shorter than the florets.

Achene linear-oblong, grooved, hispid, slightly contracted below the flattened top.

*Hab.* Hills near Dunedin, and westwards as far as the Tuapeka District, 200 to 1,000 feet.