



Figs. 1–5: 1. Single flower stem of *Gastrodia sesamoides*, with D. Gauld for scale. Photo: R.K. Barraclough, 2023. 2. Swollen, tuberous rhizome of *Gastrodia sesamoides*, D. Gauld’s hand pictured for scale. Photo: R.K. Barraclough, 2023. 3. Three flowers plus a fourth stem of *Gastrodia sesamoides* with the tallest stem c.1.25 m Photo: R.K. Barraclough, 2023. 4. One of several *Danhatchia australis* plants (all in bud), Taraire Valley. Photo: T. Smith, 2018. 5. *Danhatchia australis* inflorescence with three flower buds, Taraire Valley. Note densely hairy stem. Photo: T. Smith, 2018.

from what appeared to be a single rhizome (Fig. 3). They were growing under a partial canopy of ponga and kanuka located on the NE slope of the southern of two streams draining into Houseboat Bay (approximate Lat/Long: 36° 10' 49" S latitude and 175° 19' 57" E).

Another saprophytic orchid species, *Danhatchia australis*, had previously been recorded by Cameron (2007) and also in 2018 by T. Smith (Figs. 4, 5). The latter was found amongst taraire leaf litter near the track in Taraire Valley.

Also, two algal species new to Motu Kaikōura have been identified by Michael Wilcox. One was the red

seaweed *Bostrychia harveyi*, Phylum RHODOPHYTA, Class FLORIDEOPHYCEAE, collected by R.K. Barraclough from Houseboat Bay in December 2023, where it was resting in a shallow pool. It is currently listed as nationally data deficient (Nelson et al. 2019) but there have been lots of records of this from Auckland waters (M. Wilcox pers. comm.). The other, *Vaucheria bursata*, Kingdom CHROMISTA, Phylum OCHROPHYTA, Class XANTHOPHYCEAE, was collected by T. Smith in December 2024 from the Waterline (western) Stream. The latter represents a new class on the island, Class XANTHOPHYCEAE, the yellow-green algae.

References

- Cameron, E.K. 1995: Notes on the vegetation and flora of Kaikoura Island. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal* 50: 71-77.
Nelson, W.A.; Neill, K.; D'Archino, R.; Rolf, J.R. 2019: *Conservation status of New Zealand macroalgae, 2019*. New Zealand Threat Classification Series 30. New Zealand Department of Conservation.
NZPCN – New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (www.nzpcn.org.nz), retrieved 18/4/25.

Botany of the Harania Creek catchment, Māngere Inlet, Manukau Harbour, Favona, Auckland

Mike Wilcox

INTRODUCTION

The land described here comprises eight Auckland Council reserves (Fig. 1): **A:** Harania/Marys Foreshore Reserve, **B:** Leonore Foreshore Reserve, **C:** Pacific Steel Reserve, **D:** Blake Road Reserve, **E:** Kukume / Wickman Way / Tennessee Reserve, **F:** Norana Esplanade Path, **G:** Kaitirotiro/Beach Road Esplanade, and **H:** James Fletcher Esplanade. They fringe the Harania Creek – near its entrance to Māngere Inlet in the Manukau Harbour (Auckland Council 2021), beside the mangrove-lined estuary, and on the banks of the upper freshwater reaches. I explored and recorded the plants here in 2024 and 2025 (for species list see Appendix) and report here on the vegetation and flora with the objective of contributing to a better understanding of this forlorn creek's ecology, in view of the serious flooding that has occurred in the adjoining residential properties (Auckland Council 2024a, 2024b).

HISTORY OF THE LAND

Favona is a suburb in South Auckland, bordering the Māngere Inlet of Manukau Harbour. The land is flat and has an elevation of c. 2 m. above sea level. Moon (2007) has provided an account of Auckland's history up to 1820, preceding the invasion by Ngāpuhi from Northland in the mid-1820s, and the founding of Auckland and European settlement from

1840 onwards. Land such as this at Favona, a flat area with good soil, would have supported a large Māori population (particularly those living in fortified villages on the volcanic cones) from the 1400s to the early 1800s, starting with pre-European crops (taro, yam, kumara, gourd), fern root, and later, potatoes, wheat and various other crops, and pigs, acquired from early contact with European visitors (Davidson 2010). These settlements would have abounded with food, including fish and shellfish from the Manukau Harbour.

What is now Favona had strategic importance to early Māori, being close to the east-west canoe portage, Te Tō Waka, from Ōtāhuhu to the Māngere Inlet, linking the Tāmaki Estuary to the Manukau Harbour. Kirk (1871) mentioned this portage as being from "Halswell's Creek on the Tamaki to Fairburn's Creek on the Manukau". Through intertribal warfare (the Musket Wars), the Māori populations had dwindled drastically from 1825 to 1835, but many began to return to the Manukau during the mid-1830s once peace had been restored (Judge & Mohns 2024). During European settlement from 1840 to 1870, most land was sold or confiscated in large blocks (e.g. the Fairburn purchase), cleared of scrub and fern and developed and run as farms (Fig. 2), and later subdivided into