

exactly agrees. Its characters will be found in the following description :—

***Sonchus oleraceus*, L.,  $\gamma$ . *littoralis*.**

Robust, stems 1ft. to 1½ft. high, sparingly branched, radical leaves sessile, ovate-oblong, entire or sparingly lobed, obtuse, finely or coarsely toothed, somewhat fleshy, rosulate, and closely appressed to the ground; cauline leaves few, acute, auricles rounded or subacute. Outer involucral bracts acute, inner obtuse; achenes glabrous, 3-5-ribbed.

*Hab.* On maritime cliffs from Auckland to Stewart Island, but often local, and rarely occurring in great abundance.

The uniformly undivided, rosulate, slightly fleshy leaves, the more robust habit, and copious milky juice are well worthy of notice, as is the large fleshy root. I have never seen this form on cultivated land, and, as far as I am aware, it is absolutely restricted to maritime localities. The singular absence of variation is a remarkable feature when this plant is compared with the typical form and variety  $\beta$ .

It seems not unlikely that the plant observed by Banks and Solander is identical with var. *littoralis*, the fruits of which resemble those of var.  $\beta$ , but are slightly larger. This point could doubtless be settled by an examination of the specimens in the Banksian Herbarium. It is worthy of note that Dr. Anderson, who acted as naturalist in Cook's third expedition, mentions the occurrence of "sow-thistles" in Queen Charlotte Sound: there can be but little doubt that the plant observed by him was var. *littoralis*.

Shortly before my old friend Mr. J. D. Enys, F.G.S., left the colony he made a hasty trip to the Chatham Islands, where he obtained specimens of a handsome sow-thistle, with leaves upwards of 2ft. in length, and large flower-heads, which he kindly sent to me, but unfortunately they were in such a bad state of decay when they came to hand that I was unable to dissect them. However, on examining the type collection of Chatham Island plants in the herbarium of the Colonial Museum I found two specimens, one of which was *S. oleraceus*, L.; the other proved to be identical with the plant collected by Mr. Enys. In justice to Mr. Buchanan, who arranged the type collection, it should be mentioned that both specimens are small, and in bad condition. Unhappily, my efforts to obtain good specimens so far have failed, although a valued correspondent sent me a strong root, which, however, failed to grow. It was therefore with no little pleasure I learned that the plant had flowered in the rich collection of native species cultivated by Messrs. Adams and Sons, of Christchurch, and I am indebted to these gentlemen for their kindness in sending the shrivelled receptacles and ripe fruits.



Unlike the forms mentioned in the early part of this paper, it is a strongly-marked species, as will be seen from the appended description.

**Sonchus grandifolius**, n. s.

A succulent herb, 2ft.—4ft. high, rhizomes stout, fleshy, creeping, sometimes 2½in. diameter. Radical leaves erect, 1½ft.—2ft. long, 4in.—7in. broad, petiole 6in.—9in. long, stout, dilated at base, but not clasping, blade oblong or ovate-oblong, deeply lobed, pinnatifid or pinnate; segments 4–6 on each side, broad, lobulate, often overlapping, coarsely doubly serrate or dentate, almost coriaceous, scabrid above. Lower cauline leaves petiolate, upper broadly sessile, not auriculate. Heads large, 1in.—1½in. diameter, peduncles white, with cottony wool. Involucral leaves in 3–4 series, broad, subacute, outer with a median line of spinous or almost foliaceous processes. Achenes large, broad, with 1 or 2 stout median longitudinal ribs, and about 4 finer ones, margins broad.

*Hab.* Chatham Islands.

The ligulate florets appear to be yellow, tinged at the apices with faint salmon-colour or purple. It is a noble addition to the New Zealand flora, and adds another remarkable species to the singular group of endemic plants on the Chatham Islands.

The fleshy rhizome may possibly prove valuable for cattle-food.

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ART. XXV.—*Descriptions of New Native Plants, &c.*

By D. PETRIE, M.A., F.L.S.

[*Read before the Otago Institute, 13th June, 1893.*]

1. **Ranunculus novæ-zelandiæ**, sp. nov.

A rather small glabrous fleshy glaucous plant. Rootstock covered by the withered fibres of decayed petioles, and sending down many rather stout fibrous roots.

Leaves all radical; petioles about 1in. long, flattened, expanded and provided with broad membranous wings at the base; blades ternately divided, the lower leaflets sessile and subdivided into two or three deeply 3-lobed crenate segments; upper leaflet distant, broadly petiolate, subdivided into three deeply 3-lobed crenate segments.

Scapes solitary, or very few, one-flowered, glabrous, rather stout, 1in. to 2½in. long.

Sepals broadly oblong, obtuse, the back purplish and