



Pressing Problem – Collecting Specimens

Preserving specimens

Often on a ship, specimens collected by naturalists had to be preserved so the artists could work on them at a later date. Plants were mainly collected during the voyages, as they were easiest to preserve by pressing and drying in a press. Animal specimens rotted easily and the naturalists and artists often had to sketch them in the galley where the rest of the crew ate their meals! Alcohol was sometimes used to preserve animals, although plants were more commonly pressed and preserved.

Flora is the name for all plants found in a region. It is a modern word from the Latin *flos floris* (meaning goddess of flowers). **Fauna** is the term given to all animals in a region. **Endemic** plants or animals are only found in a certain region such as an island or country. A plant may be endemic to New Zealand, or endemic to India (that is only found in those islands or countries – nowhere else). **Indigenous** plants or animals are native to a particular area and are not introduced. They would have evolved on the continent or countries in which they are found. For example, Antarctic beech (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*) is native to Australia, South America, and Antarctica. **Native** generally means the same as indigenous. It is also used by Europeans to describe indigenous people in various countries (eg Aborigines or Kooris in Australia, New Zealand Maoris may all be referred to as natives).

The plants below are drawn as specimens in the exhibit ‘Pressing Problem’



Silk Cotton Tree (*Kokia drynioides*)

A very rare Hawaiian plant, which is similar to the Hibiscus. A specimen was collected by David Nelson in Hawaii, during the HMS *Resolution II* voyage.



Native Laurel (*Anopterus glandulosus*)

This tree is endemic to Tasmania. Usually, it is found in wet eucalypt forests and rainforests. They have serrated leathery, glossy leaves and white or pale pink flowers.



Pukatea (*Laurelia novae-zelandiae*)

This tree is endemic to New Zealand, with more than 1900 endemic plants in New Zealand. The pukatea is a tall tree found in damp to swampy places and water logged soils, where the roots must loop up above the surface to serve as breathing organs. It is found on New Zealand's north island and northern coast of the south island.



Tamanu (*Callophyllum inophyllum*)

The Tamanu tree is found on various Pacific Islands such as Cook Islands, Tahiti and Hawaii. A specimen of Tamanu was collected during HMS *Resolution* II's voyage from the Cook Islands. This tree serves many uses to the Tahitian people. Its wood was used to build furniture and ships, while ointments have been made for skin conditions.