

Plectranthus—pretty in purple

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Plectranthus is the largest South African genus of the Lamiaceae (mint) family. Several different *Plectranthus* are featured in Pukekura Park. These plants are very good for their late summer-autumn flowering colour.

The purple-flowered plant is *P. ecklonii*. The pink-flowered plant is on our collection lists as *P. coleoides* pink, but it is now named *P. forsteri*. In the Fountain Lake - Palm Lawn area, the darker pink-flowered plant with leaves that are purple on the reverse is *P. fruticosus* 'Behr'. Also in this area, we have a species that has pale almost lime-green foliage and mauve flowers which has a sprawling mound-like habit making it an excellent ground-cover plant. This is *P. saccatus*.

P. ciliatus is also present in the Park. We are aware of its weed potential and manage it accordingly. We confine and prune it so that it does not overrun everything else in its path. Where this plant is not wanted we remove it completely. The more shrubby species such as those mentioned above don't seem to have the same weed potential as *P. ciliatus*. Again, if they are in places where we think they are inappropriate they are very easily removed as they tend to have very shallow root systems.

Plectranthus propagate easily from cuttings. Almost any piece of *P. ciliatus* that drops to or touches the ground can grow. Seeding-out seems only to occur with *P. ciliatus*. As yet, I have not seen seedlings of the other species in the Park. *Plectranthus*: an autumnal highlight.

Pukekura Park Plectranthus photos : click on a photo to view a larger image, use Back button to return

Woodland Bog Garden, Stainton Dell—Photos below by © Margaret Rossiter



Palm Lawn—Photos below by © Derek Hughes



Plectranthus are found throughout the Park—Photos below by © Derek Hughes

