

# OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

## News and Views March, 2007

Web site: [www.owb.co.nz](http://www.owb.co.nz) For all walks meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane  
For information re walks and seminars contact the Treehouse on (04) 499 1400

<p>The first Saturday of each month. 9am</p>	<p><b>Plant care</b> will run on the first Saturday of March, April and May. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 4991044</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Otari-Wilton's Bush Walks for Summer</b></p>	
<p><b>Sunday 11 March.</b> 2pm</p>	<p><b>This is part of the Stepping Out programme.</b> Who were these people some of our native plants were named after? Come and meet some of the species and hear the variously colourful, sad or notable stories of the people commemorated. Meet at the Otari Information Centre at 2 pm.</p>
<p><b>Saturday 24 March</b></p>	<p><b>BioBlitz Day</b></p> <p>There will be walks on the hour from 10 am until 2 pm with different themes. They will be led by different people according to the focus of the walk. Meet at the Otari Information Centre. See page x for details.</p> <p>Note that there will be no walk on Sunday 25 March as the BioBlitz event will include some walks.</p>
<p><b>Sunday 22 April, 9am.</b></p>	<p><b>Another visit to a place of interest elsewhere in the Wellington region, this time to the Nga Manu Nature Reserve in Waikanae.</b> This has an excellent swamp forest, with extensive boardwalks. It is a bit like walking in a tropical jungle. This is also a good place to see native parrots and other birds in walk-in aviaries, tuataras and, if you are lucky, a kiwi. Bring your lunch.</p> <p>If you want to share transport meet at the Otari carpark at 9 am, otherwise meet us at the Nga Manu visitor centre at 10 am. After the bridge on the main highway at Waikanae, turn left at the first lights on to Te Moana Road, then right on to Ngarara Road. Drive along it for a few kilometres to farmland, then turn right at the Nga Manu sign to the drive way to the Visitor Centre.</p>
<p><b>Sunday 27 May, 10am</b></p>	<p><b>A popular walk to the giant rimu, our largest and oldest tree.</b> 2 to 2.5 hours with some steps. Many interesting things to see along the way. Meet at the Otari Information Centre at 2 pm.</p>
<p><b>Sunday 24 June, 2pm</b></p>	<p><b>Come and learn about what goes on behind the scenes at Otari.</b> Curator Rewi Elliot will take you on a walk, which will include a visit to the nursery, and will talk about how he and his staff maintain and improve Otari-Wilton's</p>

Bush. Meet at the Otari Information Centre at 2 pm.



## Report from the Chairman

Since last newsletter the Board has been predominately occupied with two main activities; preparations for the Centenary Bioblitz event, scheduled for 23 -24 March which will be extensively covered later in this newsletter, and; our submission to Council on the Draft Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan.

The next phase of the process for the Management Plan is its completion by Council, incorporating such of the submissions content it considers should be included, and then its presentation to the Minister of Conservation for his approval as required under the Reserves Act 1977. Once approved, undertakings therein will be phased for implementation over the ten year term.

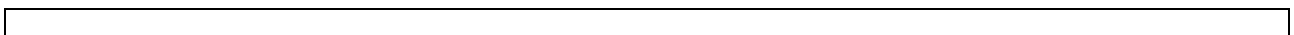
Good progress has been made on the History Projects. We were successful in obtaining a Wellington City Council grant enabling us to employ Jonathan Kennett for the Oral History collection and he has conducted interviews with some 15 persons who have particular knowledge of Otari-Wilton's Bush, capturing the information on tape. These tapes are currently being edited and will in due course be lodged in the National Library. A grant application to proceed with a History Book was declined but now that the Oral History project has been substantially completed, we will be developing other options which we hope will record the past history in an appropriate publication.

On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February, all Board Trustees met with Trustees, the Manager and staff of Nga Manu Nature Reserve at Waikanae. We were treated to a very interesting guided tour of their 15 hectare reserve which contains the largest remaining remnant of original coastal lowland swamp forest on the Kapiti coast. Tracks and boardwalks have been developed through this forest containing fine examples of Kahikatea, Pukatea, Swamp Maire, Kohekohe and other native flora which provides abundant food for the birdlife. Aviaries contain Kaka, Kiwi and other birds, some on recovery programmes. A highlight of the visit was the close encounter with the Tuatara placidly resting in our guide's hand, and observing many more of this species in their enclosure.

Overall, the visit was a great experience and educational and for this we thank our hosts and recommend to all our members that they should visit Nga Manu. *Note that the Trust April walk is actually a visit to Nga Manu.-see Diary page for details*

The end of our current year is rapidly approaching, and with this newsletter, members will receive the renewal notice for their membership. I appeal to all to respond positively and also encourage friends to become members. It is particularly important that our membership role be maintained and hopefully increased, as there are many projects that we will be pursuing to enhance our wonderful reserve. Also, although a date has not yet been set for our AGM (likely to be early May), I encourage those who would like to contribute their services as Board Trustees, to contact myself or Margaret Crimp, our secretary. (A particular need is for someone with accounting and computer skills, to fill the position of Treasurer.)

*Athol Swann*



**Contacts:**

**The Trust Board:** Postal Address: 160 Wilton Rd, Wilton, Wellington.

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|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 🕒 <b>Chairman:</b> Athol Swann:      | Phone: 472 8417              | <a href="mailto:athol.swann@paradise.net.nz">athol.swann@paradise.net.nz</a> |
| 🕒 <b>Deputy Chair:</b> Jock Fleming, | Phone: 475 7396              | <a href="mailto:jockfleming@paradise.net.nz">jockfleming@paradise.net.nz</a> |
| 🕒 <b>Secretary:</b> Margaret Crimp:  | Phone: 475 3263              | <a href="mailto:m.crimp@xtra.co.nz">m.crimp@xtra.co.nz</a>                   |
| 🕒 <b>Treasurer:</b> Johanne McComish | Phone: 476 2925, 027 2278357 | <a href="mailto:mccomish@paradise.net.nz">mccomish@paradise.net.nz</a>       |

The trustees welcome individual communications from members on any matters relating to Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve or the Trust, particularly from those who would like to assist and participate in our activities.

**Newsletter:** Vera Burton. Phone 9388207 Email [davee@paradise.net.nz](mailto:davee@paradise.net.nz)

## Manager's Otari Report

Hi everybody,

The last months of summer are here and it's been great to see loads of Wellingtonians and tourists enjoying Otari during the sunnier weather we've been having.

In January I had the pleasure of enjoying the weather down on the Chatham Islands, where I collected several species to grow in the collections at Otari. It was a great to see plants endemic to the Chatham's growing in the wild, and to see the valuable work the Department of Conservation performs, protecting the remaining wild areas there. You can expect to see some new introductions to the plant collections from this trip over the next couple of years.

Preparations for the BioBlitz are under full swing, and I have been receiving dozens of phone calls from scientists interested in having a closer look at what Wellington city's largest forest remnant contains. Both the event itself and the outcome of the scientist's findings promise to be a very special event. Walks and talks are being held every hour on the hour, and a special dawn ceremony is to be held at the Troup Picnic Lawn at sunrise on Saturday 24 March. There will be plenty to see in this 24 hour event, so come along and share with the scientists on the 23 and 24 of March.

Otari staff have been busy out in the plant collections after the warm wet days we had earlier in the summer. The weeds grew like mad, but have been kept well under control. We have also been busy with the redeveloped alpine garden, which is now open to the public. Several changes have been made to make the garden less tempting for people to climb onto. After removing quite a few rocks, the stepping stones that used to reach the highest point in the garden are now gone, and the available planting area has been increased dramatically.

Looking ahead, we have already begun planning for the annual Otari Open Day for 2007. Make sure to leave Saturday 11 August free so you can come and buy some of New Zealand's finest plants.

All the best,

Rewi Elliot  
Curator/Manager  
Otari-Wilton's Bush  
Phone: 475 3245

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**The Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust and Wellington City Council invite**

**All Otari Wilton's Bush Trust Members**

**to the opening of the**

**Otari BioBlitz**

**Friday 23 March 2007 at 2:30pm**

**Site: Cockayne Lawn, Otari-Wilton's Bush**

(Information Centre/Te Marae o Tane if wet)

The Otari BioBlitz is a 24-hour race against the clock to identify as many living organisms as possible in the reserve. Teams of scientists - experts in their fields – will be ready to start the 24 hour search. Please join us to witness Mayor Prendergast set the clock ticking and see the first organisms classified and counted.

**RSVP to [bioblitz@paradise.net.nz](mailto:bioblitz@paradise.net.nz) by 19 March.**

Check [www.otari100.org.nz](http://www.otari100.org.nz) or [www.wellington.govt.nz](http://www.wellington.govt.nz) for information about the BioBlitz.

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**OTARI BIOBLITZ 2007**

**23/24 March 2007**

**[www.otari100.org.nz](http://www.otari100.org.nz)**

**[bioblitz@paradise.net.nz](mailto:bioblitz@paradise.net.nz)**

The 30 day countdown is now on!

The current pleasant weather allows us to visualise two perfect days for 23/24 March – warm and windless!

Phil Garnock-Jones, School of Biological Sciences, Victoria University, and others are hard at work planning the co-ordination of 50 or more scientists into teams – plants, lichens & mosses, fungi, vertebrates, insects, other invertebrates, etc, etc.

## **Planning**

Planning is really hotting up now. There are weekly meetings of the Trust Bioblitz sub-committee with the Rewi Elliot (Curator at Otari Wilton's Bush), David Sole (Manager Botanic Gardens & Otari Wilton's Bush) and others.

There is a huge amount of interest and support from scientists and other volunteers – but we still need more help.

## **Calls for help!**

Any help you can offer will be most welcome.

We need lots of people on the day. Can you offer a couple of hours?

Elsewhere in the newsletter is a call for more people to assist with hosting on Friday and Saturday.

## **Billets**

Some of the scientists and other volunteers are coming from out of town.

Can any members living close to Otari offer a space for these Bioblitz volunteers to put their things, have a few hours sleep over night, and a shower???

Contact Margaret Crimp or Johanne McComish (see list of Board members).

## **Food**

You'll see elsewhere in the newsletter that Liz Dovey and Chris Haronga (OWB Trust members) are organising a food team to feed the Bioblitz scientists and other volunteer workers.

They are calling for help. HELP!

Get that kitchen bench clear & the aprons ironed to do your bit to fuel the Bioblitz.

## **Diary this! Diary this!**

We're sure all Otari Wilton's Bush Trust members have noted 23-24 March in their diaries.

But what's happening when?

## **Friday 23 March**

From 6am: Scientists will be setting up their equipment and displays at Otari School hall (in private).

12 noon to 2pm: Three primary school classes will work with the Royal Society Environmental Education staff and Regional Council educators.

2.30pm Opening Ceremony

The Mayor will set the 24 hour clock ticking and scientists will tell you about the scientific work of the Bioblitz.

All Trust members are invited. RSVP please.

3.30 approx: The first teams of scientists will go out on the hunt for organisms.

There are walks and talks regularly all through the day on Friday and Saturday.

Times and titles will be advertised soon.

Keep watching [www.otari100.org.nz](http://www.otari100.org.nz) for further information.

The bug hunters will be especially active at night.

Come and see what they find in their light traps.

Two years ago Rudi Schnitzler (one of the insect team co-ordinators) found a beetle in Otari that had only previously been found in the South Island. He's hoping to find it again during the Bioblitz. You might be with him!

## **Saturday 24 March**

6.30 am Opening Ceremony

Everyone is invited to start the day with the birds.

It's a public event – bring all your friends. Tell all your neighbours & mates.

We'll have an opening event & the scientists will update you on what's going on.

Then we'll have breakfast together.

An expert tree climbing team has already started preparations to get up in the tree tops on Saturday and find out what lives in the uppermost branches – the intrepid canopy crawlers are Jayden van Horik, Eleanor Burton and KC Burns. Come and watch.

Walks, talks, displays of exciting finds, and scientists hard at work against the count down clock continue.

The species list count mounts up on the display.

3pm (approx.) The 24 hour Otari Bioblitz ends and the final species count is shown.

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## **Schedule of talks for the BioBlitz Day 24 March**

**(some will include walks, other topics may be added in.)**

9am            Birds

10am    Spiders & Insects

11am            Fish (& stream life)

12 noon        Fungi, Slugs & Snails

1pm            Lichens & Ferns

2pm            Mosses & Liverworts

3pm Lizards

Don't forget to check out the websites.

[www.otari100.org.nz](http://www.otari100.org.nz)

[bioblitz@paradise.net.nz](mailto:bioblitz@paradise.net.nz)

**Now see the following pages for how you can help out!**

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Hi all,

As you will already know the Otari/Wilton Bush Bioblitz <http://otari100.org.nz/index.php/bioblitz> is fast approaching (3pm Friday 23rd – 3pm Saturday 24th March). This means it is time to start thinking seriously about the organisation of the 24hr event. Stephen Hartley [Stephen.Hartley@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Stephen.Hartley@vuw.ac.nz) and Rudi Schnitzler [bug\\_me@globe.net.nz](mailto:bug_me@globe.net.nz) will be organizing and synchronising the entomology section for the Bioblitz.

The event has a scientific and an educational aim, and we are seeking volunteers willing to assist in one or the other, or both:

- ⌚ Collecting, sorting and identification of arthropods (based in Otari School Hall)
- ⌚ Interacting with the public and providing interpretation (at the Otari-Wilton Bush Visitors Centre and also at the School Hall).

Traps will need to be set-up before Friday afternoon. From 3pm Friday onwards collected material will need to be brought to the main sorting and identification centre, which will be located at the Otari School Hall.

We would therefore appreciate a list of taxonomic expertise available and the times each person would be able to attend the event. Pre-sorting of the collected material could be carried out by volunteer students, so please pass this on to anybody who potentially could be involved. At present there are three tables available for insects, arachnids and crustaceans. At most, two people at any one time will be able to work at each table. PCs will be supplied for data entry, but all other equipment (microscopes, light sources, keys etc.) will have to be organised.

In addition we would like to know who is prepared to interact with the public. This could take the form of manning a set of displays at the Visitors' Centre, giving short presentations or leading walks through the bush. We will also need a few people to provide interpretation at the workstations in the School Hall as it is unlikely that the people working on identification will have much time to explain what is happening. The public will not do any collecting except as part of a guided walk. We also anticipate setting-up some extra microscopes for general viewing of specimens with a very simple key for the public to try.

To express your continued interest please reply to Stephen or Rudi with "BioBlitz Entomology" in the subject line. Please tell us what you would like to do, what times you are available, and if you have special equipment needs and/or equipment that you could supply.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the day.

Many thanks in advance,

Stephen & Rudi



## **Help! The Bioblitz is coming! Please Help!**

Over the time of the Bioblitz from Friday, March 23 to March 24, we will be providing food for the scientists and associated helpers. This means 2 lunches, dinner and breakfast as well as food for those working overnight. There will also need to be some food available in between meals

- Slices, biscuits, cakes to be dropped off at the Information Centre on Thursday, 5 -7.00 pm. It would be great if some of the slices could be "fancy" - ie dessert type.
- Salads (to serve 8 people) to be dropped off at the Information Centre on Friday, 5.00 - 5.30 pm
- Savoury/sweet muffins and scones to be dropped off at the Information Centre on Saturday, 11 am approx.

In addition to this, people are needed to supervise the kitchens of the Information Centre and the School Hall. This would involve checking on food supplies and tea, coffee etc at intervals. If you would like to do this choose from the following time slots:

Friday; 10.00 am -12 noon, 2 pm - 4 pm, 4.00 - 6.00 pm-

Saturday: 8 am - 10.00 am, 10.00 am - Noon,

You have always come up trumps for Open Day. Please help us to make this exciting event a great success.

Unlike Open Day it is vital that we know what food will be arriving. The scientists will need to be fed!

**Contact Liz Dovey with all offers of help by March 9. 499 1044.**

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## **More help with hosting!!**

The regular Otari hosts have been asked to help but we need still more hosts for this exciting event. . People will be needed to direct the crowds to the different venues, answer questions, manage crowd control in around the scientists etc.

There are the following time slots available

Friday 2. 00 - 5.00 pm

5.00 - 7.30 pm

Saturday 6.15 - 8.30 am

8.30 - 11.00

11.00. - .1.30 pm

1.30 - 3. pm

If you are willing to help could you please advise which time slot you can fill.  
[m.crimp@extra.conz](mailto:m.crimp@extra.conz). Phone 4753263

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## Revegetation project

Plant Care continues. Although Bronwen and Jonathan are no longer employed to organise these sessions, they and a faithful group of volunteers continue to gather at the Information Centre at 9am on the first Saturday of each month to do battle with the weeds on the areas planted in the Kaiwharawhara Stream valley over the past few years. Extra pairs of hands are always welcome and gloves are provided. Sessions will be organised on the first Saturday in March, April and May, then we will take a break over the winter.

There is no planting programme planned for Saturdays at Otari this year but the Thursday volunteer group will be undertaking some infill planting and planting at Site Zero under the guidance of Otari staff.

Kate Mackenzie will be organising Saturday morning planting at Blackbridge Road and sites in Trelissick Park probably starting in May and would welcome assistance with that work.

Any enquiries to Wilbur Dovey, 499 1044.

Cheers Wilbur

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## Project Kaiwharawhara

At the present time GWRC and WCC are looking at a report undertaken for them by Paul Blaschke, Frances Forsyth and Clive Anstey.

The report provides advice for the development of a restoration-planting plan of native plants in the greater Kaiwharawhara catchment.

**Project Kaiwharawhara** has been prompted by the ecological restoration activities of many volunteers and the territorial councils. At present there are at least eight community groups involved.

The 'Blaschke Report' considers that an appropriate aim is:

*"To establish a locally native vegetation canopy within restoration areas appropriate to their environment, and to establish ecologically effective linkages between restoration areas"*.

It is hoped that after consideration that both GWRC and WCC will accept and implement this professional report.

## John Holmes takes early retirement from GWRC

During the seven years of the Kaiwharawhara Stream Revegetation Project, John Holmes has quietly been at the helm guiding and advising the project. He ensured that it was a collaborative effort involving equally GWRC, WCC, Otari staff, and the Trust who were supported by the professional services of the Kennett Brothers.

John was an on-site participant who called in assistance from his co-workers in Biosecurity Division, and others whenever help was needed.

John was also a firm advocate of Project Kaiwharawhara.

The Kaiwharawhara Stream Restoration Project still goes on, spreading now into Trelissick Park and Ngaio Gorge, a testament to his foresight.

The many who have worked with, or are acquainted with John's determination, innovations, experience, abilities and humour, wish him all the best in retirement.

## **Oral Hearings**

### **Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan 8<sup>th</sup>. Feb. 2007**

Written submissions discussing the draft Management Plan closed on the 26<sup>th</sup>. of January this year. Persons or groups who had made a written submission were invited to present an oral submission on the 8<sup>th</sup>. of February.

It is said that going along to Council Committee hearings, adds substantially to the weight of a submission by allowing the full Council to question items and clarify any issue submitted that may not be understood.

It was encouraging to see the variety and calibre of those who had made submissions at these hearings.

From the Trust -- John Riseborough, Jock Fleming, Peter Buxton, Sandra Clarke and Athol Swann ( Trust Chairman ) in turn supported their written submissions. Other groups were Trelissick Park / Ngaio Gorge working Group, N.Z. Historic Places Trust, and the Wellington Botanical Society who all made substantive presentations.

The most consistent issue presented was that Otari-Wilton's Bush is only a part of the whole Kaiwharawhara catchment area -- stretching from the heights of the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary to its outlet near the Picton Ferry Terminal With this in mind, linkage with areas north and south of Otari was important to facilitate restoration and biodiversity conservation of the whole catchment area.

Provision of sufficient funding to support and extend the outstanding collection of native plants held at Otari (particularly those that are rare, endangered, or threatened) was also discussed.

Long term planning for improved educational facilities, was another item that was repeated.

Preservation of the historic heritage of Otari should be emphasised in the 'management plan', and a written history should be supported.

These are examples of issues discussed at the oral, hearings, but there were many more, and it was heartening to hear the high regard that Otari is held by diverse persons and groups.

*Jock Fleming.*

## **Plant Conservation.**

The Trust is a member of the NZ Plant Conservation Network (nzpcn).

A recent addition to their website enables downloading of lists of threatened plants that occur within each region in New Zealand. This can be found at [www.nzpcn.org.nz](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz) under Threatened species > Threatened vascular plants > Threatened plant lists.

NZPCN is also cataloguing important plant areas so that conservation efforts for wild plant species and their habitats can appropriately be targeted. These areas can be found at the address given above.

*Jock Fleming*

*Cyperus ustulatus*

## Giant umbrella sedge, toetoe upoko-tangata

This sedge is a plant of swamps and wet places, usually lowland. It is found throughout the North and South Islands, and on the Chatham and Kermadec Islands. It is an attractive sedge with olive green leaves contrasting with dark reddish brown seed heads, but should be approached carefully as the leaf edges can give a nasty cut. The plant gets to about 0.8m and can be grown in any damp site that isn't too shady, but the leaves can get tatty in exposed sites. *Cyperus ustulatus* can be seen growing by the pond in the General Rock Garden at Otari.



**OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST**

(Supporting Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve)

## Membership Application Form

We are delighted to welcome new members - whatever your interest in Otari -Wilton's Bush - from a desire to participate in active friendly volunteer support and educational activities, or just the satisfaction of being associated with this wonderful native plant reserve.

Our membership year is from 1 April to 31 March. New members joining after 1 January will have the membership accredited to the following year.

**Yes, I would like to join the Trust.**

Name (s) : .....

Postal Address : .....

.....

.....

Telephone contact number/s : ( ).....

E-mail address: < >

Billing Name and Address :.....

(if different from above) .....

<b>Subscription</b>	Corporate	\$30	\$
	Double/Family	\$15	\$
	Individual	\$10	\$
	Student/Unwaged	\$5	\$
<b>Donation*</b>			\$
<b>Total payment</b>	(please enclose cheque**)		\$

\*The Trust is registered as a Charitable organisation and donations over \$5.00 qualify for a tax rebate to individual taxpayers. (annual limits apply) We will provide a donation receipt to support your tax rebate claim

\*\*We regret we cannot process payments by Credit Card.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please indicate the areas of interest to you from the following list:

- Work parties
- Administration
- Historical Research
- Hosting at the Information centre
- Guiding

Please send this completed form with your cheque to:

The Treasurer,  
Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust,  
160 Wilton Road, Wilton,  
Wellington 6012