

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views March, 2009

Web site: www.otari100.org.nz For all walks meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane unless otherwise stated. Unless otherwise stated walks are free to Trust members, otherwise \$3. For information re walks and seminars contact the Treehouse on (04) 499 1400

<p>The first Saturday of each month. 9am</p>	<p>Plant care will run on the first Saturday of each month. Also Thursdays 8.30am. See page 4. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 4991044</p>
<p>Sunday 22 February 9am at Otari</p>	<p>Day visit to Tunnel Gully forest, Te Marua. The Tunnel Gully Reserve is near the old rail bed and has a number of tall conifers and other trees. A track on the other side leads through beech forest. If you want to share transport meet at the Otari carpark at 9am, otherwise meet us at the carpark in front of the shop where the road to Te Marua turns off to the right from Highway 2. Easy walk. 5 hours. Bring your lunch <i>Leader: John Dawson</i></p>
<p>Tuesdays in March 7.30pm</p>	<p>In the Information Centre - A series of seminars. Cost: a gold coin donation. For details see elsewhere in newsletter.</p>
<p>Sunday 22 March 2pm</p>	<p>Cemetery and Blue Trail. Walk along the Kaiwharawhara Stream to the Karori Cemetery, briefly explore the cemetery, and return via the Blue Trail. Easy along the stream but there are some steep parts, with some steps, after leaving the stream. 2.5 hours Those not wanting to return along the Blue Trail could retrace their steps along the valley floor. <i>Leader Chris Moore</i>.</p>
<p>Sunday 26 April 2pm</p>	<p>The French Connection. This walk concentrates on those tracks in Otari-Wilton's Bush that commemorate the French explorer/botanists. There will be a little of the history of the New Zealand exploration by French botanists (Raoul, Richard, D'Urville, Lesson, Hombron, Jaquinot) and their contribution to the knowledge of the New Zealand flora. Included also will be the relevant history of the development of the Otari track system following the 1926 Cockayne/MacKensie plan. The route will also take us along the paths commemorating early English botanists who will get a mention (Solander, Hooker, Cunningham among other) For those who are interested there will be at least one botanist to point out and identify the native flora. Easy walk with some steps, "sensible" shoes or sneakers will be adequate. About 2 hours. If very inclement the talk part will take place inside the Information Centre, with a rather faster walk. <i>Leader: Rodney Lewington</i>.</p>
<p>Sunday 24 May 2pm</p>	<p>Fungal Foray: A ramble along the tracks spotting the many fungi to be found at this time of the year. 2 hours. Easy walk. <i>Leaders: Alison Stringer and Geoff Ridley</i></p>

Chairman's Message

I am writing this as rain falls all over New Zealand and although it reduces visitors it certainly is great for the bush and recent plantings down in the Kaiwharawhara valley.

This year will be a busy one for the planning process and the gardening staff at Otari. We welcome the new recruits. Rewi and his team have been busy out collecting seeds and cuttings for planned new plantings within the collection gardens. The current changes being made in the wild garden will increase the interest and range of plants displayed. They are in line with the collections review and make the paths a little more logical for visitors.

As you will have no doubt read the Wellington City Council is currently going through a cost reduction process as part of the Long Term Planning Process. Board members will be attending some of the environment section planning meetings to ensure that Otari is not significantly disadvantaged in the search for essential savings. Our aim should be to retain as much of the current garden improvement and bush maintenance as possible and to reduce non essential areas.

The Landscape Plan second draft has now been commented on by the Trust and those comments have been submitted to the Parks and Gardens Management for review and discussion with the landscape architects. It is due to go out for public consultation in late March pending completion of other reports. Some of the items identified have been put into the Long Term Plan requirements.

The warmer weather has recently has brought high usage for the new BBQ's and the Troup picnic is now a popular site for picnics echoing the historical usage of Wilton's bush. Many overseas visitors have commented favourably on Otari-Wilton's Bush and its bird life which seems to get more active every year. The recent Kauri walk was a sell out with many new faces attending.

We have also received a number of donations recently. These are always welcome and the Trust will be considering how these can be used and any ideas you might have please pass these on to the Board. Meanwhile enjoy the many fine days to come!

Regards
Phil Parnell

OTARI AWARDS

A recent Board meeting of the Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust recommended annual awards be granted for distinguished volunteer service at Otari – Wilton's Bush. These awards are to be known as the Otari Awards.

The Board felt it was one small way to show their appreciation to the many volunteers who have played such a major role in the development of Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve.

Many people have made outstanding contributions so the early selections will not be easy. The number of awards will be limited to no more than three each year.

Only financial members, or the staff, are eligible to nominate volunteer workers for these awards. Nominees must have made a considerable contribution to the work of the Trust and they must also be financial members of Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust.

The Chairman of the Board will appoint a panel of no more than three to make the final selection. It will contain one independent (non-Board) member. The selection panel will be chaired by the Chairman of the Board.

Nominations should be submitted in writing by 31 March to the Secretary of the Board.

The awards will take the form a framed certificate personalised for each of the recipients.

The awards will be presented at the AGM in May, or at a special event.

Otari Report

Hello everyone,

Happy New Year to you all from the staff at Otari, I hope you all enjoyed yourselves over the festive season. I certainly did while taking some Xmas leave in both Taranaki and Hawkes Bay. After returning to work I headed down to Westport and Karamea to botanise with the Wellington Botanical Society.

(See p.4 – Ed) I certainly learned a lot from some of those folk and from seeing species I'm familiar with in cultivation growing in the wild.]

I was reminded of the words expressed by Dr Cockayne's companion

Robert Brown: "*Heed not what books or authorities teach, but in order to really learn, go to the plants themselves*".

Staff have been busy carrying out some changes to the Wild Garden. A new path layout is now open to the public and is also now accessible by tractor and trailer (a great efficiency for us). Five paths here have been closed as a result of this work which ties in with a longer term look at how people move into and around the fernery, *Dracophyllum*, and alpine collections. The path network here has historically been of some confusion to visitors, the new layout is a start at creating a legibility that has already received favourable comment. Other changes have been carried out in the divaricate collection area, which is due to be planted this autumn.

We have had the welcome assistance recently of Finn Michalak and Amy Moffatt, two English horticulturists who have worked here over the summer period. Both trained in Cornwall and have travelled to New Zealand to learn about New Zealand plants firsthand – they came to the right place!

Our two waharoa (carved Maori gateways) have been refurbished by Taranaki based carver Bryce Manu. Bryce carved these magnificent waharoa which were installed in 1999 at the same time the canopy walkway was constructed and they have become somewhat of an Otari icon since. Bryce is very pleased with how they have weathered and is confident they have many years left in them.

I had some discussion late last year with the Council GIS (geographic information systems) team regarding mapping species that are sparse in the forest here. Hopefully this technology can be used to help us locate and record information about these species which we aim to proliferate. This is especially important when new staff arrive. Some species have less than 10 known representatives in the reserve, including *Nestegis cunninghamii*, *Pseudowintera axillaris*, and *Raukawa edgerleyi*.

This month we have become part of a Landcare Research programme run by Trent Bell to determine the extent and mechanisms of decline, establish original habitat characteristics, and improve the effectiveness of reintroduction and restoration techniques for Duvaucel's gecko. Currently Duvaucel's gecko is only found on predator-free offshore islands of New Zealand. Trent will be monitoring Otari for the next five years to make comparisons with the analogous forest gecko present at Otari.

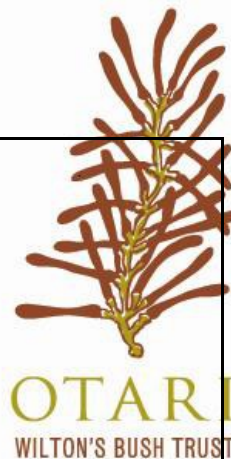
Enjoy the rest of summer everyone.

Rewi Elliot
Curator/Manager Otari-Wilton's Bush

March Seminars 2009

Tuesdays. 7.30pm. Otari Information Centre.
Gold coin donation.

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|-------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Tuesday, March 3 | Susan Waugh | <i>Wings over Otari</i> |
| Tuesday, March 10 | Jean-Claude Stahl | <i>Natural history imaging at Te Papa</i> |
| Tuesday, March 17 | Mike Oates and Amber Bill | <i>Taking Action for Wellington's Biodiversity</i> |
| Tuesday, March 24 | Tim O'Leary | <i>Plant propagation techniques – a practical demonstration</i> |
| Tuesday, March 31 | Rewi Elliott | <i>Up, Up and Away! Otari beyond 2009</i> |



WESTPORT, WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY, 2009

THE NEWS

A Reminder from the Treasurer.

Subscriptions for the next financial year fall due in March.



Out in the field: Rewi Elliott, curator of Otari Native Botanic Garden, checks out native turf near Charleston. Mr Elliott is one of 36 Wellington Botanical Society members visiting Buller this week. Today the group left Westport for Karamea for the second half of its 10-day summer field trip. (Photo – Mick Parsons)

The Trust Annual General Meeting.

This important meeting will be held on Wednesday, 13 May at 7.15pm. At this meeting there will be the election of Trustees. We would be delighted to hear from any member who is interested in becoming a Trustee. For more information contact Phil Parnell or Margaret Crimp.

Trust Board 2008 - 2009

Postal Address: 160 Wilton Road, Wilton, Wellington. 6012

The Board of Trustees for the current year is:

Chairman Phil Parnell	Phone: 4792239	landy@xtra.co.nz
Secretary: Margaret Crimp:	Phone: 475 3263	m.crimp@xtra.co.nz
Treasurer: Jocelyn Hoskin	Phone: 475 8696	jocelynhoskin@clear.net.nz
Peter Buxton	Phone: 472 3456	jbuxton@paradise.net.nz
Wilbur Dovey	Phone: 499 1044	cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz
Geoffrey Moss	Phone: 472 8226	moss@xtra.co.nz
Susan Waugh-Filippi	Phone: 976 422	Waugh.filippi@paradise.net.nz
Cathy Wylie	Phone: 938 6498	cathy.wylie@nzcer.org.nz
John Shrapnell	Phone: 473 7128	shrapnell@clear.net.nz

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. davee@paradise.net.nz

Otari and its London connection.

Leonard Cockayne, who had a close association with Otari was probably the first New Zealand resident, to be awarded the respected **Fellowship** of the **Linnean Society of London**. At the time –1910—he was living and working his private horticultural garden in Christchurch, but traveled widely throughout NZ, collecting, describing native plants and publishing his research findings. Like most Fellows, he kept the Society informed about new native flora, and would have received regular reports of their meetings, journals and other publications. He was born in England, and still living there when the the **Linnean Society of London** had a meeting that shortly was to be recognized as the most momentous / epoch-making _scientific meeting of the century.

The most recent NZ recipient of this respected **Fellowship** is Dr. John Dawson, who received the award in October last year. Dr. Dawson has witnessed, and strongly supported the progressive development of the plan presented by Dr. Leonard Cockayne --Otari Open-Air Native Plant Museum. (1) With the need to preserve the Otari collection, and with the promise of great advances that “the genomics revolution” will bring to biologists, his award strengthens the link between Otari and the crucial research monitored by the **Linnean Society of London**.

The Linnaea Society of London

Indirectly, this society provided support and interest in the development of the Otari Open-Air Plant Museum. Founded over 200 years ago the Linnean Society is the worlds oldest active biological Society. It took its name from Carl Linnaeus (1708-1778) the great Swedish naturalist and physician. (2) Shortly after its foundation it was granted a Royal Charter for the purpose of : “ *the cultivation of the Sciences of Natural History, in all its branches* “ . Its status was now secure alongside the long-standing Royal Society which had been the responsible for “*all Natural Knowledge*”.

From its inception the Linnaea Society provided the infrastructure for the advancement of natural science, by encouraging research , study, and the archival preservation of historical biological specimen and manuscripts. It has also taken a major role, world - wide, communicating new information and biological advances through its regular meetings, international seminars, reports, journals, and other special publications.

The Linnean Society moves on.

The **Society**, from its outset, never intended to confine its scope of activity to the great Swedish naturalist. It merely took-up the adjectival spelling of his name in recognition of his work. But since the work of Linnaeus, the science of Natural History has had an exponential growth. To the present day, the Society has had regular scholarly meetings of its **Fellows** in London. Often there are presentations submitted from overseas by international **Fellows**, who have been unable to attend.

The **Linnean Society of London** was the chosen venue for the presentation, on the first of July 1858, of two papers, which were independently written, and whose scholarly material were derived from two quite different sources. This was the most momentous meeting of any organized society of naturalists, making public for the first time, the scientific theory that evolution could occur by natural forces.

One paper was written by **Charles Darwin** whose research started with his journey around the world on the *Beagle* and was continued while living at Down House, in Kent.

The other paper, of equal scientific value, was written by **Alfred Russel Wallace**, a naturalist who had been working for many years in tropical Malaya, and further east in the Moluccas. Alfred Russel Wallace actually sent his paper to Charles Darwin from the Molluccas probably with the expectation that it would be made public, in London, when appropriate.

One reaction from this epoch-making meeting, came from T.H. Huxley, who considered the theory to be so simple, he couldn't understand why he hadn't thought of it himself !.

However there were some conservative reactions, but the **Linnean Society** was respected. and many scientists felt a little more liberated to explore the complexities of living species, when previously there had been some constraints.

The Otari / London link today.

Similar to Otari, there are many native reserves throughout the world whose supporters have concern about the biodiversity and the increasing threat to their conservation.

These concerns include environmental change, their ecology and the many other issues which influence their well-being.

The **Linnaean Society of London** is one of the many world-wide organizations whose history and experience of support has been most effective for centuries.

We are most fortunate to have a close link with the **Society** through the recent award to Dr. John Dawson, to **Fellowship**.of the **Society**.

Jock Fleming

1. Cockayne L. 1932. A Scheme for the Development and Arrangement of the Otari Open-air Native Plant Museum,... Pub. Wellington City Council
2. Fleming J 2008 Carolus Linnaeus (1707- 1778): An Overview of his Life, Science, and Legacy. Pub. Wellington Botanical Bulletin. Number 51 pp.54-63

Courses at Otari in 2009

These courses are the result of collaboration between Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust and Onslow College Adult & Community Education. All courses are based at Otari Information Centre, Wilton Road. To enrol for these courses phone Onslow College 477 1118 or email commed@onslow.school.nz

Otari Wilton's Bush Talks and Walks. This continues our series of short courses comprising a Wednesday evening talk, and a practical workshop/walk the following Saturday.

The Cultivation of Native Plants

Rewi Elliot will talk about the development of the cultivated areas at Otari. The talk will be illustrated with historical and recent photos. The Saturday walk will highlight species of special merit for the home garden. Includes a tour of the nursery. Wed 18 March 7-9pm and Sat 21 March from 10am. Cost \$30.

Introduction to Forest Fungi

Alison Stringer will introduce you to the fascinating and colourful world of fungi, and their role in the New Zealand bush. Wednesday 15 April 7-9pm and Saturday 18 April from 10am. Cost \$30.



Blechnum chambersii

Nini

This fern is native to New Zealand and found throughout the country, but it is also found in Australia and may also be native to some Pacific Islands, so while it is native it is not endemic. It likes forest, particularly damp stream banks. Like all Blechnums, spores are borne only on fertile fronds which look quite different from the vegetative fronds. Both are illustrated here, along with a young fertile frond just starting to uncurl. In cultivation it likes it damp and shady, and will tolerate a range of soil conditions. *Blechnum chambersii* can be seen in the fernery 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 Ota
 - 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)

Subscription	Corporate	\$30	\$
	Double/Family	\$15	\$
	Individual	\$10	\$
	Student/Unwaged	\$5	\$
Donation*			\$
Total payment	(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 | () Hosting at the Information centre |
| () Administration | () Guiding |

Historical Research

Please send this completed form with your cheque to:

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