

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views September, 2011

Web site: www.otariwiltonsbush.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

The first Saturday of each month. 9am	Plant care is on the first Saturday of each month. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 4991044.
Friday 9 September 7.30pm	Glow Worm Trail. Take a look at night life in the native forest, down to the Kaiwharawhara stream. See page 4. <i>Leader: Dave Burton</i>
Saturday 10 September	4WD south coast tour. See p 10.
Saturday 17 September	OPEN DAY Plant Sale, Walks and talks. Details see page 5.
Sunday 25 September 11am - 4pm	Heritage Picnic in the Troup Picnic Ground
Sunday 23 October 2pm	What's happening at Otari <i>Leader: Rewi Elliot</i>
Sunday 27 November 2pm	Plants that poison, maim and kill <i>Leader: Rewi Elliott</i>
Sunday 18 December 2pm	Prepare for your Christmas festivities! Bring your out of town visitors and come and walk up the Blue Trail through the forest to the 800 year old rimu Steep with some steps. Good shoes recommended. 2 hours <i>Leader: John Dawson</i>

Chairman's Message

Kia Ora,

The spring season this year will be a busy one with many events and tours going on at Otari-Wilton's Bush. The staff has done a great job on the gardens and bush, set off by the new signs to help visitors with interpretation.

Open day to be held during conservation week (September 17th), will bring a large number of visitors to Otari-Wilton's Bush and we are grateful for any assistance you can give.

We are mounting a heritage photographic display during September showing a few of the many people and past events at Otari-Wilton's Bush. This will be at the Information Centre. If you want to contribute an image contact me to arrange for a copy to be made.

Later in the month September 25th we are holding a heritage picnic at the Troup picnic area as part of Wellington Heritage month and hope as many members and families are able to attend. Any assistance would also be welcome contact Kay Poynton. (4730665)

See www.wellingtonheritagepromotions.org.nz for more detail under Wellington events 2011. An invitation will be sent shortly to members and posters will be at Otari-Wilton's Bush.

We have also recently added some toys and books suitable for children in a basket in the cupboard so hopefully this may help entertaining younger visitors. You may also notice a collection of stuffed birds which has been donated to Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust and this is on top of the railing above the main room at the Information Centre.

Progress on the plans for the curator's house is coming along slowly but hopefully some consent notices will be seen shortly.

We are keeping a watching brief on the proposed consent application for the Mitre 10 in the Creswick valley (near Karori Garden Centre). We put a submission of our concerns to Council on this proposal. The proposal is currently on hold pending further work by Council on the district plan change 73.

Please do all you can for Otari-Wilton's Bush and assist those from New Zealand and overseas to enjoy their experience during this busy period.

Regards

Phil Parnell

Chair Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust



Glow worm walks

Walks on August 26 and September 9.

Meet at the Otari Information Centre. at 7.30pm

Glow worms are alive and well and living in Otari. We walk down through the bush at night, past tree ferns, rimus, epiphytes in profusion, ratas, crayfish – and glow worms. This is your chance to see glow worms up close and personal, complete with their midge-catching, sticky-thread nets. The tour starts from the information centre, and you'll need good shoes, warm clothing, and a torch. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Glow worms guaranteed! The cost is \$4, \$2 for children. In the event of bad weather, for cancellations ring 499 4444 after 5pm.

Otari Report

Kia ora koutou

Spring certainly seemed to be on its way, already new growth is sprouting on some plants. A little too early for some that have had fresh tips burnt by the few frosts – and the snow! It will be interesting to see how the plants respond to the icy spell. Tuesday 16 August was absolutely magical at Otari, with snow covered the skyline hills and for once we had a real alpine garden.

New signs have begun popping up in some of the collections. The rainshadow, coastal, tree fern and 38 degrees gardens have all received new signs that help interpret the gardens to our visitors. We have put twelve signs in this month and hope to produce several more over the next year. These along with new map boards and way-finding signs will help make Otari much more comprehensible – particularly to first time visitors.

It will be nice to see an influx of international visitors while the Rugby World Cup is on from 9 September to 23 October. Hopefully fine weather and the allure of seeing Wellington's best natural attraction draws a few faces away from the games. We will be keeping the gardens in (extra) first-class shape over this period.

We have been gearing up for Otari Open Day which will be held on Saturday 17 September. This year is the United Nations Year of Forests, which ties in quite nicely with Otari. We will have the usual array of plants for sale with some interesting walks, talks and displays by environmental groups. A programme of the day is included in this newsletter.

Not long after Open Day is the heritage picnic at the Troup lawn organized by the Trust as part of heritage month. I predict sunny skies and no more snow and look forward to seeing you there.

Ka kite,

Rewi Elliot
Curator/Manager
Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve



Rat and Mustelid Blitzing at Otari (RAMBO)

The birds and other wildlife at Otari are under constant threat from introduced predators. Predators that they have hopeless defences against. Rats and mustelids (stoats and weasels) are the worst killers. In an effort to give a wider range and number of native birds a chance to flourish at Otari, a hardy group of volunteers has been trapping since June 2007.

Over the last four years, 5 teams have been regularly setting and checking, 56 traps set out on a grid between Wilton Road and the skyline above Otari. These volunteers have caught 162 rats, 30 stoats and weasels, and 33 hedgehogs. Each of these animals was, until they were caught, negatively impacting on the ecosystems in the reserve. Stoats in particular are considered to be opportunistic and insatiable killers. If given the chance, they will kill far more than they can possibly eat. Their removal from Otari is a matter of considerable importance to their potential prey, and to those of us that enjoy seeing the growing birdlife at Otari.

If you have the time and temperament to adopt one of these trapping lines, and give the native wildlife a better chance of survival, please contact me at jonathan@kennett.co.nz or phone 472 5891. One of the trapping teams has recently retired and needs replacing. It takes an hour to walk the trapping line and should be done once a month.



The Board of Trustees

Chairman Phil Parnell	93 Amritsar St, Khandallah. Phone: 479 2239. landy@xtra.co.nz	
Secretary: Margaret Crimp:	167 Wilton Rd., Wilton. Phone: 475 3263. m.crimp@xtra.co.nz	
Treasurer. Jocelyn Hoskin	14 Warwick St, Wilton. Phone: 475 8696. jocelynhoskin@clear.net.nz	
Peter Buxton	106 Weld St, Wadestown. Phone: 472 3456.	pebuxton@xtra.co.nz
Wilbur Dovey	40 Warwick St. Wilton. Phone: 499 1044.	cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz
John Shrapnell	27 Hanover St., Wadestown. Phone: 473 7128.	shrapnell@clear.net.nz
Ian Stockwell	2 Paisley Terrace, Karori. phone: 476 3630.	stockwellian@hotmail.com
Cathy Wylie	43 Huntleigh Park Way, Ngaio. Phone: 938 6498. Cathy.wylie@vuw.ac.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

Profile: Franz Tischler

My name is Franz Tischler-Hablutzel and in January 2011 I started work as a Gardener at Otari Native Botanic Gardens.

Up until then I was working for the Wellington City Council as an Apprentice Gardener for two and a half years. I worked in various depots such as Berhampore nursery where revegetation plants are grown, the city gardens team who maintain the roadside gardens in town and the suburbs, but I spent most of the time working in the Wellington Botanic Gardens.

I started in horticulture after I finished school in 2005; I first started working at an organic blueberry farm based in the Akatarawas maintaining the blueberry plants and later setting up a market garden from scratch. I had a stint working for Excel as a gardener in Lower Hutt and then as soon as I saw the next apprenticeship opening come up at WCC I went for it.

I have always had a strong interest in gardening and conservation and have since a kid loved working with plants. I have also spent my spare time out in the bush enjoying the variety and beauty NZ has to offer.

I have very much enjoyed the past 7 months working here at Otari, it is a very unique experience to work with such passionate experienced staff and the opportunity to help maintain and continue to improve such an important landmark is truly awesome.



Open Day:

Saturday, 17 September.

HELP!

We need your help in different ways:

- ★ **We need help to man the refreshment table and the barbecue.**
- ★ **We also ask you to help by providing cakes, muffins, loaves, biscuits etc to sell.**

The Cake stall/ refreshment stand and barbecue are our great fundraisers but they can only be successful with your help.

Contributions can be left in the meeting room of the Information Centre on Friday afternoon, 16 September, or delivered to the cake stall on Saturday morning.

For any questions or to volunteer please contact Margaret Crimp, 475 3263 m.crimp@xtra.co.nz

Otari-Wilton's Bush Open Day

Programme of events

All guided walks start at the Information Centre.

Refreshments available all day.

- 10am. Native plants for sale on the Cockayne Lawn.

- 11am. Otari Treasure Trail with Dr John Dawson.

Join renowned botanist and author Dr John Dawson for a walk through the native botanic gardens.

- 12 noon. Gardening at Otari.

A walk with the Otari Curators looking at how we care for the gardens.

- 1pm. Bush walk to 800-year-old rimu and beyond.

Visit the oldest tree in Wellington City. Some steps, steep in places. Good footwear required.

- 2pm. The Nature Trail.

A fantastic one-hour guided walk through the native botanic garden and forest remnants. Some steps, steep in places. Good footwear required.

- All day: Pest plant identification.

Experts from Greater Wellington Regional Council will be on hand to show you the best ways to control a range of Wellington weeds.



Snow at Otari

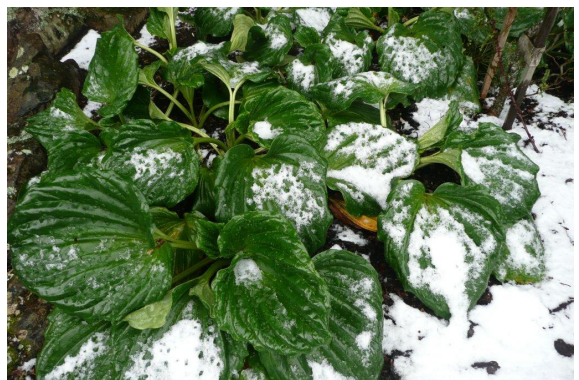
Above and right: Rewi, Finn, Dave, Franz & Eleanor braved the storm and went up from the top of the Blue trail to see the snow.

Middle lefr: Snow falling on the Education Centre
Below left: Coastal Border and Cockayne's Grave

Middle right: Mamaku

Below right: Chatham Islands Forget-Me-Not.

Photos Eleanor Burton and Rewi Elliot.



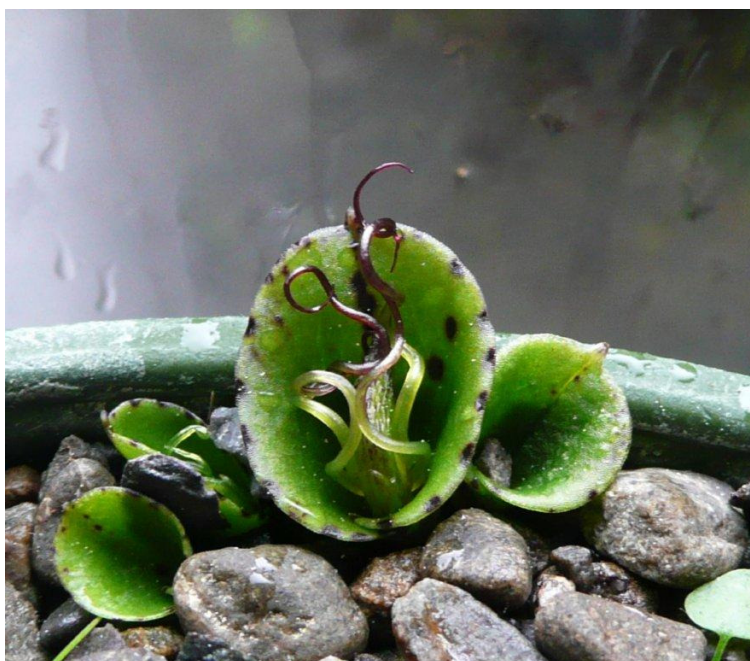
Saturday volunteers

Since winter 2010 the Saturday Otari Plant Care volunteers have been concentrating on revegetating the old Wilton Tip face just below Ian Galloway Park at the southern end of the track up the Kaiwharawhara Stream from the Troup Picnic Area. Over four hundred trees have been planted last winter and this winter and the strike rate has been good thanks to a not too dry summer and a good autumn and a relatively mild early winter this year.

Over summer we cleared grass and vegetation around the trees as well as clearing a lot of weeds including fennel, gorse and broom which continue to grow in that area. In spring we will be concentrating on removing gorse, broom and fennel at the top of the area to prevent it from seeding and reinfesting the lower area. The Trust purchased some heavy duty grubbers earlier this year which have been put to good use and some volunteers also bring their own tools. As well as grubbers, saws and loppers are useful tools.

Our thanks to a really dedicated team of regular volunteers (Alison, Jeff, Laurel, Leo, Lynley, Nicola, Owen, Ron, Ros, Wayne, Yannik and Terry (currently away)), who turn up each first Saturday of the month if they can without needing a reminder. You can see real progress is being made in converting what had been something of a wasteland into an integral part of the forest up the valley. If you'd like to join us please contact Liz or Wilbur Dovey on 499 1044 or just turn up at 9am on the first Saturday of the month at the Information Centre. Good footwear is essential. We work for around two hours and then adjourn for morning tea with home baking in the Information Centre.

Wilbur Dovey



Nematoceras longipetalum.

Orchids from the Arnold Dench orchid collection flowering in pots at Otari.

Photos by Rewi Elliot and Eleanor Burton.

Jock Fleming

It is with sadness we record the death of Jock Fleming earlier this month.

Ian Fleming, known to all as Jock, was born in Wellington in 1923, one of 4 children. Older brother Jim, twin sister Janet, and younger sister Cara. Jock left school at 16, and worked in the Wairarapa before enlisting in the Army in 1941. The following year he transferred to the Air Force, which led to service at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. His older brother Jim, a pilot in the RAF, was killed at the age of 20, in 1940. The shock of losing his much loved and admired brother at such an early age had a profound effect on Jock.



In 1953 Jock graduated with a medical degree from Otago University and in the same momentous year married his devoted Betty, who was also at Otago. They had 4 children together; John, Lindy, Michael, and Emily.

From 1955, Jock worked as a GP in Thorndon, with Pat Skinner. He actively supported the College of General Practitioners, and encouraged academic facilities at the Medical School for those going into general practice. During this time he also worked as a medical officer in the Department of Inland Affairs where he was an advisor for the Colombo Plan and helped overseas students.

This work inspired an interest in adolescent medicine. Following the establishment of the Student Health Service at Victoria University, he was appointed Medical Director in 1964. It was a job he thoroughly enjoyed until his retirement.



After the pressure and long hours of his medical career, he began the next stage of his life, where he was free to throw himself into his many and varied projects. He was never idle. Jock was an enthusiastic follower of the arts, and was an active friend of almost every association connected with them. He was an active member of the Wellington Potters, producing beautiful ceramic ware finished with his own glazes. He was also a founding member of the Serac Ski Club on Mount Ruapehu, but later changed his allegiance to the "One Ski in the Grave" club as he continued his skiing on into his eighties. Jock was an avid traveller, from sabbaticals during his Student Health days, to visiting his children around the world in later years. On these trips, he revelled in all types of cultural experiences and adventures; from mastering the metro in Moscow, to getting to know Cambridge and London. On his trips to Europe, Jock would always take time to visit the grave of his brother Jim, at Wick in Scotland.

But of course his special interest to us was in his association with Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust.

Having established his home close to our beautiful Native Reserve, it was inevitable that Jock would spend much of his spare time visiting and becoming involved in the various activities and developments there.



In late 1999, he was the principal initiator for the formation of a community support group (*Otari-Wilton's Bush Support Group*) to assist the City Council in their management of the Reserve.

In his history interview he explained that he and Margaret Chetwin had gone to a meeting and decided that they should set up a stand-alone organisation to support Otari-Wiltons Bush. This led to the first public meeting, which he remembered well as a possum ran across the deck and someone (might have been Margaret Crimp) exclaimed "What next - a mountain biker!".

He was able to muster interested participants and the group later became the founding members of Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust, with Jock elected as its Chairman, a role he relinquished at the end of the inaugural year, but continued as deputy chairman for a number of years and as a Board Trustee till May 2007. He was the initiator and manager of the very successful revegetation project.

Promotion of Otari and the work of the Trust was of paramount interest to him, and he regularly attended meetings of related organisations such as the Trelissick Park group and conservation events such as the annual Conservation Week presentations. He wrote many articles for the newsletter including those on Carl Linnaeus, Charles Darwin, and Alfred Wallace whose lives fascinated him. He was also responsible for setting up the first web site.

A project of particular interest to Jock was the revegetation of the degraded areas along the Kaiwharawhara stream down from the tip face. He initiated this very successful project working closely with the Otari staff to obtain and grow seedlings; the City Council and the Regional Council to obtain funding; and encouraging Jonathan Kennet and Bronnie Wall to manage the project.

Jonathan Kennett recalls that *"Jock was instrumental in the success of the revegetation project along Kaiwharawhara Stream and it was during a planting day in 2001 that he first met him. I joined a large group to plant out the top half of site 4, and the two oldest in the group (more than twice my age) were the convivial Jock and his friend Athol. They both clambered up the slope and set to planting right beside me at a steady and impressive rate of knots. Neither had much of an idea of what they were planting, but they sure knew how to dig, and I would guess they plugged a hundred trees in the ground between them, then sat down and pulled out a beer each! It should have been filmed for an advertising campaign, it was that cool."*

Yes, they certainly had style, and so the following year, when Jock asked me to supervise the revegetation project I didn't fob him off immediately. He warned me that he was very persuasive, and sure enough I found myself accepting the job, but it was his charm rather than his persistence that won me over. At revegetation meetings he called himself a 'raconteur' rather than a secretary, and listened intently to new ideas. He was brilliant at attracting funding, and fully supportive of novel initiatives, like monitoring the growth and survival rates of plants, or trying different species, or quirky advertising posters. He helped make the project fun as well as successful. Over five years, tens of thousands of trees were not only planted, but most survived, and so the upper valley was transformed from an impenetrable tangle of weeds that hardly anyone ever went near, to a lovely forested valley enjoyed by people and birds alike."

Grant Preston-Thomas recalls:

"In the year 2000 as chairman of the Otari Wilton's Bush Trust, Jock approached our voluntary track building group to see if we could put in a track from the Flax Clearing on the western slopes of Otari to the skyline. We agreed on 3 conditions; that it was not to be steep, had no steps and that he join us on the job. He threw his heart and soul into it and became a valued member of the group. Naturally he was appointed as our medical officer and as such insisted that we stop mid morning for a drink of water when he would dole out to each of us 2 peppermints so that we didn't start flagging toward the end of the session. It became quite a welcome ritual."



Having seen the way that Jock attacked the gorse and scrub, no one had the courage to report an injury to him for fear of his whipping out his scalpel before one could say "No, No!"

Apart from his skill with the grubber, he was also skilled with the pen. Even after he relinquished the chairmanship, he made regular contributions to the O.W.B.T. newsletter and it was entirely due to his penmanship that I received a Conservation Award in 2001.

Our track-work took us to many of Wellington's hills, but one event sticks out vividly in my memory. We were making a possum bait-line on a steep hillside at the south end of the Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park and Jock was struggling with a large rock, when suddenly Jock and rock tumbled down the hillside together. As Jock was in his 80's, it was with fear and trepidation that we looked over the edge, but were greatly relieved to see a smiling bespectacled figure clambering up toward us. We are not sure that Jock told Betty about this.

When Jock became so breathless that he could no longer join us, he kept a lively interest in where we were working and what we were doing. Last November, on a glorious day a WCC park ranger kindly drove us up to the skyline above Otari, from where on one side we could see the South Island and on the other the Rimutakas with Jock's former home on Wilton Road in the foreground. Jock was then delighted to walk the bush tracks that he had only heard about, as he and I strolled down to the Karori Cemetery.

Jock, the group, Derek Pope, Dave Henderson, Wayne Holmes and I miss you, as you added an extra dimension to things. We miss your enthusiasm and your dry humour. We also miss the peppermints!

Thank you Jock."

The track officially called the Cockayne Heights track is always called Jock's Track.

His contribution will not be forgotten. Jock was given an inaugural Orari Award in 2009.

Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust notes from Athol Swan, Margaret Crimp, Jonathan Kennett, Grant Preston-Thomas. Biographical notes from his grandson Alexander Prujean Fleming.

4WD south coast tour

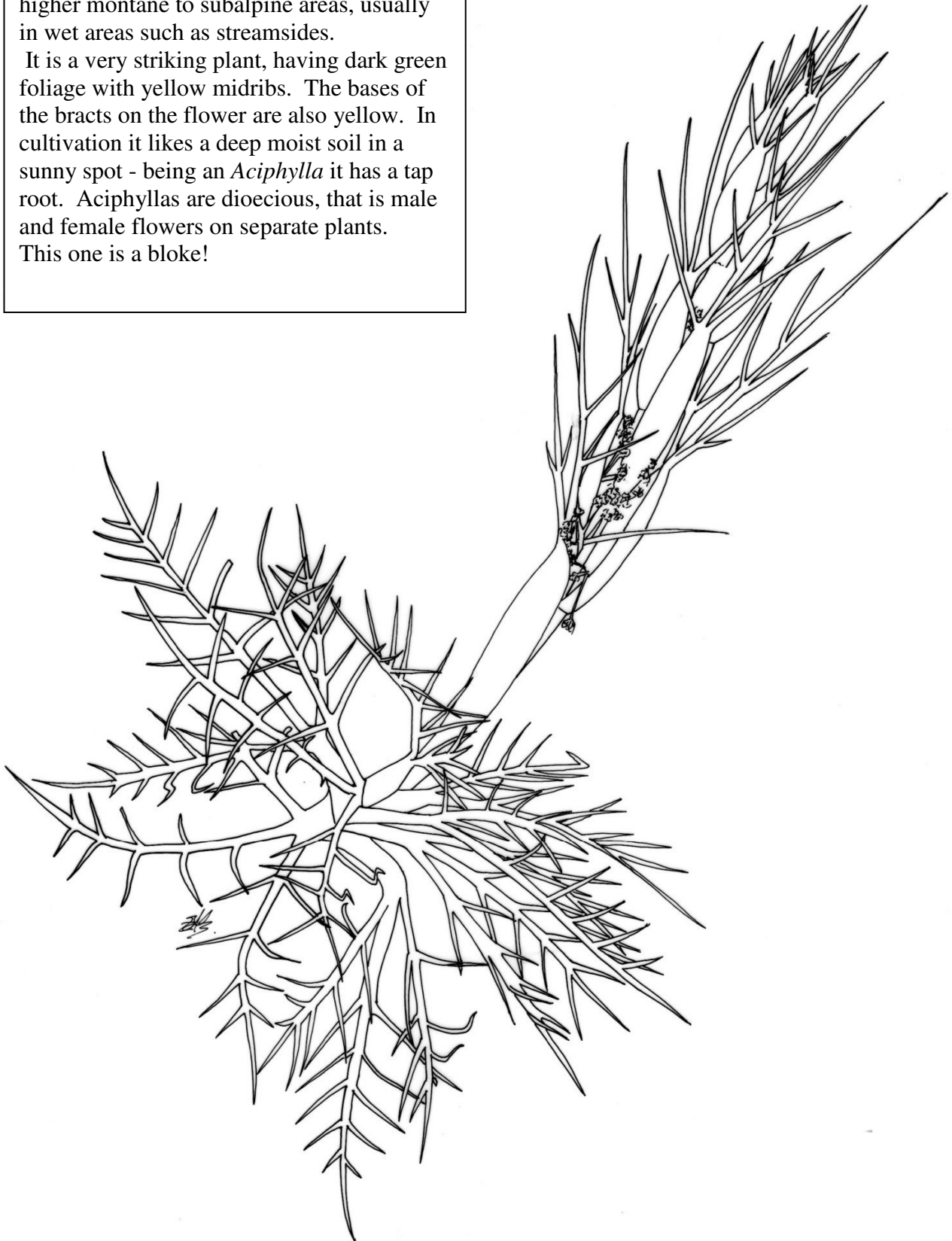
Saturday 10 September.

Celebrate Wellington's rugged south coast with Otari-Wilton's Bush curators and the Wellington Cross Country Vehicle Club. Learn more about the special plants of Wellington's coast on this 4WD tour past the Owhiro Bay visitor centre. \$5.00 per passenger trip fee includes BBQ lunch. Limited to 30 people. Bookings taken by the Wellington Botanic Gardens Treehouse reception: phone 499 1400, or email treehouse@wcc.govt.nz by 4.00pm Wednesday 7 September.

Aciphylla pinnatifida

This is a smallish species of *Aciphylla* from Otago and Southland, where it grows in higher montane to subalpine areas, usually in wet areas such as streamsides.

It is a very striking plant, having dark green foliage with yellow midribs. The bases of the bracts on the flower are also yellow. In cultivation it likes a deep moist soil in a sunny spot - being an *Aciphylla* it has a tap root. *Aciphyllas* are dioecious, that is male and female flowers on separate plants. This one is a bloke!



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)

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:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work parties | <input type="checkbox"/> Hosting at the Information centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Guiding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historical Research | |

Please send this completed form with your cheque to:

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