


OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views September, 2013

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, 499 1044.
Saturday 14 September	OTARI OPEN DAY Plant Sale. Walks and talks. Details and how to help see page 5.
Sunday 22 September 2pm	An introduction to the fascinating world of native conifers. Starting at the Information Centre with a beginner's guide to different types of foliage, then a stroll around the conifer garden, and a visit to the 800 year old rimu. Some steps, good shoes necessary. One and half hours. <i>Leader: Barry Sneddon</i>
Sunday 27 October 2pm	 <p>Did the Moa wear woolly socks? Does the parapara really want to catch small birds? How can a karaka berry pass through without poisoning the pigeon? Can rimu be conifers if they don't have cones? These are some of the not so inane questions that we will discuss as we take a genteel one and half hours walk in the Otari's garden and bush adjacent to the Wilton Road looking at examples of the way New Zealand plants distribute their seed. Wind and water, birds and reptiles, and just plain gravity all have their place. <i>Leader: Rodney Lewington</i></p>
Sunday 24 November 9am -4pm??	<p>'Redwoods in a rugged landscape'</p> <p>A Four wheel drive trip into the Akatarawas to look at some very large Redwoods and Japanese cedars then a bit of a tour through the forest. It's about a 10-15 minute walk from where we park, along a semi formed track, to see the trees. Those who can't manage it and/or just want to come along for the drive can have an extended morning tea! Max 20 people. \$10/person to cover vehicle access fees to be paid by November 20. Details for payment later. 9.00am at the Totara Park Bridge entrance to the Forest. Expect 4.00pm finish - but always the possibility of being later Bring food and drink for the day, coat and a solid pair of walking shoes (regardless) Bookings at the Treehouse from 1 October.</p>
Sunday 22 December 2pm	Plants that Poison, Maim and Kill One and a half hours, easy. <i>Leader: Margaret Crimp</i>

Chairman's Message

Hi all,

The winter is almost finished, we are now in spring according to the weather pundits which is some combination of spring and winter continuing till Christmas! Winter was punctuated with two major southerly storms which caused some issues for Otari-Wilton's Bush. Several trees are down or have already been removed and others will be dealt with over the coming months. It is intended that if possible some of the wood may be recovered from the larger tawa trees. Then we had two large earthquakes; however, no significant damage at Otari-Wilton's Bush.



There has been the odd garden tour or two and some members have been involved in a secondary education initiative in response to a request from a Hutt Valley college. Bev Abbott has been leading this with help from several others and the first outdoor class was held in July. It was most successful and thanks to all who helped, Otari-Wilton's Bush is a great outdoor classroom.

Rewi Elliot our curator/manager is now at Kew Gardens undertaking their Botanic garden management course and has had the opportunity to visit some interesting gardens in the hot temperatures of the Northern Hemisphere. The Trust has funded part of the costs and look forward to his new ideas in the future. Finn Michalak has been doing an excellent job in his absence.

We have been asked by the Department of Conservation to help in Project Halo being run by the Morgan Foundation. This will entail some work in distributing traps to people who sign up via their website. Training has been held and we will follow up with written advice to hosts.

For those interested in Wellington Heritage look at www.wrhpc.org.nz and click on newsletter library for lots of local history information and details on open day in the Heritage Month events list. Otari-Wilton's Bush as a Heritage garden is a member of this organisation.

The cruise ship season will start again in October and there will be 73 visits this year down from last year but fluctuations are normal.

We look forward to seeing you at Open day on September 14th.

Phil Parnell
Chair Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust

Photos by Phil Parnell: Left: The two Kauri outside the nursery unfortunately only one survived the storm. Right: Carlos and Jonathan planting the orchid seeds and associated fungi a project assisted by the OWB Trust.



Otari Report

Kia ora koutou

Hello from the sunny UK. Yes that's right - sunny! Since the 1st of July I have had the pleasure of undertaking a Diploma in Botanic Garden Management at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. The warm weather has been a wonderful sunny backdrop for this excellent course. Along with eleven other managers of Botanic Gardens from around the world I have been attending lectures with some of the leaders in our field and visiting some of the best gardens in the country. As I write this on the train we are off to visit the Millennium Seedbank at Wakehurst Place. Other gardens we have visited include Cambridge and Oxford Botanic Gardens, the Chelsea Physic Garden and the Eden Project in Cornwall. I will also visit Edinburgh Botanic Gardens after the course where I am planning to meet with the Directors of horticulture.



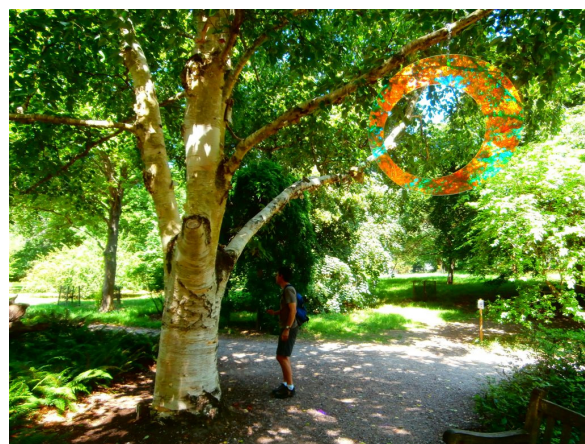
Of course I have also spent a lot of time touring Kew, yet with the course on I still haven't seen the entire place, and there certainly is a lot to see. There doesn't seem to be many areas of the plant world Kew is not involved with. I have had the privilege of staying with a Kew staff member so have been getting a bit more involved than perhaps the other students have had the opportunity to do. I've spent an evening volunteering in the quarantine house cleaning bugs off endangered Caribbean pines, and have had a bit more opportunity to socialise with other staff. I've also spent a few hours volunteering in the basement of the herbarium digitising herbarium specimens. However it took me so long to set up I only managed to get four done on the first session. Apparently ten digital scans is the number to aim for per session. Oh well, four down and only another seven million or so to go (yes they have between 7-8 million specimens in their herbarium)!

I hope you have all recovered from the stormy weather and spate of quakes. It seems like I might have left New Zealand at a convenient time. I hear from the team at Otari that the clean up is going well and the gardens are looking fantastic as always. After a short presentation to my colleagues on the course here several of them mentioned that NZ is now on their destination list. The activities the staff and the Trust undertake at Otari along with the enthusiasm we have certainly stack up when considering the gardens I have visited here - and we'll only get better!

I look forward to catching up with you upon my return,

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

Below left: digitising herbarium specimens. Right: floating artwork at Hilliers



Greetings,

Firstly, the Otari team effort of regenerating this fine city is over for another year. Over the winter we have been planting and beautifying various waste lands with matai, miro, kahikatea, pukatea etc. in sites that were planted about 6 years ago. The slopes around Izard Park have been particularly successful.

The boardwalk through the fernery is almost complete. The addition of steps descending into the ferns will certainly tie the area together. Once the tawa has been milled, rebuilding the garden can begin. Dave is pondering on the plan of action as we speak.....

Very soon we will be meeting with the Friends of Baring Head to collect material from the two remnant *Muehlenbeckia astonii* plants on the site. The aim is to propagate and cultivate plants for reintroduction. Other locally threatened species we are growing are *Streblus banksii*, *Lepidium banksii*, *Brachyglottis kirkii* and *Rhabdothamnus solandri*. Hopefully the plants grown here will be replanted next year. Watch this space.

Sirocco the kakapo, who is in residence at Zealandia until September, has a sweet beak for crown fern fronds and kauri cones. Otari is providing for this very special parrot. If you have the chance, go visit him on one of the night tours and learn about the important work of the Kakapo Recovery Programme.

A big thank you to our volunteers. The help in getting Otari up and running after the big storms of June has been invaluable. The place really was a mess, but we are back to business as usual with many new planting opportunities throughout the garden.

Spring feels very much to be upon us, if the weather continues like this we will certainly be in store for a floriferous September. I hope that everyone is enjoying the gardens as much as we are at the moment. Open day is the next big event on the calendar. There will be a workshop on plant and garden photography and the official opening of the Otari Photo competition 2013. Hope to see you all there.....

Many thanks

Finn Michalak
Otari Collection Curator

Left:

A photo taken by Finn of the *Pissonia brunnoniana* (bird catcher) that caught a bird here at Otari.



Open Day:

Saturday 14 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, 13 September, or delivered to the cake stall on Saturday morning.

For any questions or to volunteer please contact

Jocelyn Hoskin, 475 8696, jocelynhoskin@clear.net.nz or

Margaret Crimp 475 3263 m.crimp@xtra.co.nz



Open Day Programme

10am Native plants for sale on the Cockayne Lawn

11am Otari Treasure Trail Join our Otari guides for a walk through the Native Botanic Gardens looking at New Zealand plant treasures. 1 hour

12pm Workshop. Photographing plants, gardens and landscapes. With Tim O'Leary. Handy hints for taking pictures using compact and SLR digital cameras

The Launch of the Otari Photographic Competition. Details to be confirmed.

1pm Bush walk to 800-year-old rimu and beyond. Visit the oldest tree in Wellington City. Some steps, sleep in places. Good footwear required. 1-2hours

2pm The nature trail. 1 hour A fantastic guided walk through the Native Botanic Garden and forest remnants. Some steps, steep in places. Good footwear required.

All guided walks start at the Information Centre

Stop Press

The memorial seat for Jock Fleming has just been installed at the flax clearing, just below Jock's track.



Trust Board 2012 - 2013



The Board of Trustees for the current year is:

Chairman Phil Parnell	93 Amritsar St, Khandallah.	landy@xtra.co.nz	
	Phone: 479 2239		
Secretary: Margaret Crimp:	167 Wilton Rd., Wilton.	m.crimp@xtra.co.nz	
	Phone: 475 326		
Treasurer. Jocelyn Hoskin	14 Warwick St, Wilton.	jocelynhoskin@clear.net.nz	
	Phone: 475 8696		
Peter Buxton	106 Weld St, Wadestown.	pebuxton@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 472 3456
Wilbur Dovey	40 Warwick St., Wilton.	cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 499 1044
Jannine McCabe	40 Worcester Street, Wilton.	jannine_mccabe@yahoo.co.nz	Phone 475 5494
Ian Stockwell	2 Paisley Terrace, Karori .	stockwellian@hotmail.com	Phone: 476 – 3630
Cathy Wylie	43 Huntleigh Park Way, Ngaio.	Cathy.wylie@vuw.ac.nz	Phone: 938 6498

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 938 8207. davee@paradise.net.nz

New Zealand Plant Conservation Network Endowment Fund

The NZPCN was established in 2003 with the vision that 'No indigenous species of plant will become extinct nor be placed at risk of extinction as a result of human action or indifference, and that the rich, diverse and unique plant life of New Zealand will be recognised, cherished and restored'.

Collaboration is the driving force for network members to achieve the NZPCN goals. They do this in four ways as their website www.nzpcn.org.nz sets out

- dissemination of information about indigenous plant species and communities
- coordination of ex-situ management of threatened plants
- plant conservation training programmes
- conservation activities to protect threatened plants and communities

At its Conference dinner on 25 May 2013 the Plant Conservation Network launched a fund for plant conservation. This fund is intended in the years ahead to sponsor plant conservation action including fencing, weeding, pest control, planting, monitoring and any other activity that helps protect indigenous plants.

The Otari Wilton Trust Board supports the activities of the Plant Conservation Network and has made a donation of \$500 to the endowment fund. Members of the Otari Wilton Trust who wish to make an individual donation should contact the NZPCN at info@nzpcn.org.nz

Otari Website

Did you know that Otari-Wilton's Bush has its own website? You'll find it by doing a Google search or if you want to go directly to it, the http address is:

<http://www.kennett.co.nz/otariwiltonsbusbush2/>.

The Kennett Brothers have been involved with Otari for many years through the initial restoration programme in the Kaiwharawhara Stream Valley and now with the trapping programme Rambo. They set up the original website in 2004 to incorporate material prepared by the late Jock Fleming for a website for the Trust that didn't get off the ground. The Kennett Brothers have generously allowed the Trust to use it as its website but it has proved difficult to add material to it lately or update it as the software on which it is based, CMS Made Simple, has become outdated.



We therefore need to find a way to update it and make it more user-friendly. I have discussed this with Bronwen Wall, Jonathan Kennett's partner, who has set out the options as follows:

1. Stay with the system the website currently uses. The problem with this is that it is no longer easy to add either images or files - such as the pdfs. It would require someone who knows html coding to continue uploading these things; so someone from the Trust who felt so inclined could take up the baton and have a lesson from Paul Kennett on how to do this. However, .. it requires a bit more work for the chosen person from the Trust.
2. Install the latest version of CMS Made Simple to take the website management from the current Version 1.0.2 to 1.11.7. Paul Kennett could probably assist us with this. Then someone from the Trust would need to copy all the content from the old version to the new version. The website has 19 pages and about 40 images, so it won't be a 5-minute job, but it wouldn't be a very complicated job either; it would just take a bit of time (could be 5 hours or it could be 25 hours depending on how quickly the person latched on to the system).
3. Go to an entirely new content management system, such as Blogger or Wordpress. This would however require someone with a very good knowledge of and skill with that system as the Kennett Brothers would not be able to assist us with that.
4. Abandon the website altogether and rely on the City Council website to advertise what is happening at Otari. This would be a pity as a lot of good material could be lost. So therefore we're looking for anyone out there who has views on what should happen or would be prepared to assist us with developing any of the above options.

Please contact me with your views and suggestions. I'd love to hear from you. My phone is: 499 1044, email: cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz.

Wilbur Dovey

BMX Track: Ian Galloway Park

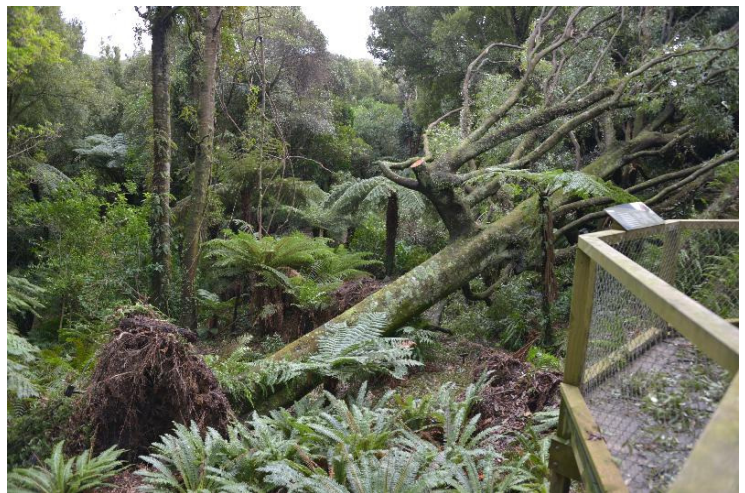
Otari Wilton Bush Trust members will have observed over the years the overgrown, weed infested, muddy and poorly drained area of Ian Galloway Park that was the BMX track.

We have been advised by the Capital BMX Club that they are working on a lease with the Council for this area. It is planned that the re-constructed BMX track will be for the use of Club members and the general public and will be to international standard.

Rebecca Maresca, President of the Capital BMX Club Inc has told us that 'their vision is to completely revitalize the area and make it available to a much wider range of people, to make the site a landmark and a destination for kids and their bikes from all around the Wellington region'. She said that 'Our project will address the poor drainage which currently causes significant mud and flooding at the site and will finish with revegetation of the area to improve the visual aspect of the space'. Hopefully, by the end of the first quarter of 2014, we will see these proposed changes implemented.

Storm Damage

Members will be aware that the storm in June last caused some major damage at Otari. Several large trees were down and unfortunately the Fernery board walk was hit by a fallen tawa (see below before and after photos from Chris Moore). There are also other trees in the fernery area that may be unsafe and require assessment from our arborist team, who are still busy with other priority work around the city. Until this is done the fernery will remain closed. We are working to re-open the 38 degrees garden and other forest trails by the end of this week. The forest areas seem relatively unscathed, however some work was required on the Nature Trail and Blue Trail, and there were several minor clean up jobs around the collections.



Did you see this?

Locals turn out to see Glowworms

Over 40 people turned out to enjoy one of Wellington's nature attractions, Otari-Wilton's Bush as part of the concluding Matariki celebrations.

Victoria University biologist Dr Dave Burton, Wilton's own David Attenborough, was on hand to give a brief talk to a group of adults and children outlining the lifecycle of the glowworm before tracking down some physical specimens.

Families enjoyed a hot milo and a crisp, clear evening before embarking on a 30 minute walk down to the stream in Otari-

Wilton's Bush to see the glowworms.

Wadestown Community Centre Advocate Louise Davies says she was delighted with the turnout of 46 adults and children at the event.

"It's the second year Wadestown Community Centre has organised the walks in conjunction with Otari-Wilton Trust and again the event has proved popular with local families who enjoyed the opportunity to explore a local nature attraction with a knowledgeable guide."

From the Independent Herald. July 21st 2013.

Well, they are both called David!

Arbor Day 5 June 2013

Arbor Day marks the start of the winter planting season and as the Council says 'is about inspiring people to plant and nurture and celebrate trees'. Ian Galloway Park, as a very important link between Otari Wilton's Bush and Zealandia, was the focus of the 2013 Arbor Day planting by schools and the Wellington City Council.



The weather was too cold for Northland School students to participate in the morning session so it was over to volunteers - some members of the OWB Trust, and Council staff (including those from Otari Wilton Bush). In the afternoon session Churton Park School students, Trust members and Council staff planted hardy native trees. Almost 3000 were planted, during the day, in the area near the unused BMX track (see separate report in the newsletter), on the park's lower level below the playing fields, and on the boundary of the dog walking zone, which is accessible by the parking space, alongside the skate board rink.

In the Council's 'Branch Out' Winter Issue 45 2013 Park Ranger Brian Thomas is quoted: *'Ian Galloway Park is on the flight path for birds between Otari and Zealandia, and the aim is to do more targeted planting along the corridor as an additional food source'*.

A learning experience for guides and students at Otari

It wasn't just the students whose knowledge expanded when Hutt Valley High School decided to bring three classes of Year 13 biology students to Otari as part of their studies of the evolutionary processes leading to speciation. The five guides, Margaret Crimp, Mary McEwen, Jane Humble, Chris Moore and me (Bev Abbott) now know much more about the origins of many New Zealand plants.

It all started when Richard Edwards, one of the teachers, e-mailed Rewi Elliott, saying "We are keen for students to see NZ examples of adaptive radiation and convergent evolution in plants like Hebe, Coprosma and Dracophyllum etc". It wasn't long before Rodney Lewington and I were involved. There was lots to think about. A quick look at recent exam papers confirmed that we'd need to update our understanding of speciation. We would have to work out which parts of Otari's plant collections to use to explain each speciation process, and then prepare a commentary for the guides. We would need at least four guides if we were going to split each of the three bus loads into more manageable groups of 12-13 students. Unfortunately Rodney intended to be overseas on the big day, Tuesday 25 July.

The Hutt Valley teachers helped design the tour. We met with them at Otari a couple of times to explore various combinations of speciation topics, plants and routes. The teachers then used our draft commentary to prepare a work sheet for the students so that the students would record key teaching points during the visit. The teachers have made this work sheet available to the Trust to use with other groups, and the Trust appreciates their generosity.

The guides helped refine the commentary. We needed to understand each concept and how best to explain it. We needed to clarify when we could use our own words and when scientifically accurate statements were essential. Over time, the commentary became shorter and tighter as we found better ways of structuring the content within the constraints of a one hour tour. Our confidence grew as we rehearsed, responded to peer feedback, anticipated the questions the students may ask, and used the web and scientific papers to expand our knowledge of the plants and their origins. As the planning and preparations continued, many other people became involved:

- Rodney developed a simplified phylogenetic tree and some new photocards to help explain the evolution of the hebes.

- Relatives and friends supported individual guides as they rehearsed the commentary and route. Some members of the Trust also turned out for an early run-through, and provided valuable feedback about the content and the importance of engaging with the audience.
- Rewi and his team trialled the tour and developed some new plant labels. I forgot to ask for a label for a *Raoulia*, and had to spell the word several times on the day as it was the answer to a question on the work sheet about mat plants.
- Chris Moore prepared an enlarged, laminated plant label for *Coprosma acerosa* to help us explain the information on plant labels, particularly where to find the genus.
- Eleanor Burton searched records so we could say with confidence that there are 106 hebe taxa in the Otari collection including several subspecies and varieties. (This total doesn't include the 35 hebe cultivars.)



After a particularly cold practice session in early July, I e-mailed the school.

Please stress the importance of wearing/bringing lots of warm clothing, We've experienced just how cold Otari can be at this time of the year, Despite long johns, long socks, boots, jersey, thick jacket, parka, gloves and a woolly hat, I was still wishing I'd put on an extra layer and a scarf.

Then, five days before our big day, a storm caused colossal damage at Otari, and key parts of our route vanished behind "Area Closed" signs and barriers. The Otari staff did a magnificent job clearing up the mess, and were still busy with the chainsaw just before the students arrived.

It was a clear, calm and sunny day, and everything went very well. The only regrettable incident — a kereru pooped on a student. Next time we'll carry wipes.

As the third bus drew away, it was very satisfying to think that 63 young adults from the Hutt Valley were now much more aware of Otari and the fascinating stories behind the evolution of New Zealand's flora. Perhaps more important in the longer term, the Trust now has an educational programme aligned to the Year 13 syllabus and one of the educational themes in Otari's Management Plan (evolution).

And what did the students think?

The guide was very knowledgeable. I understood what a Hebe is and everything about Hebes. Could have been a whole day trip. Very informative with great clarity. A different classroom experience. Learnt a lot about key areas such as adaptive radiation and evolution. Really nice guides. Lovely ladies guiding the tour, very nice. I got cold toes. Go in summer and



spend more time there. Hard to listen and write answers at the same time. When we asked questions we got answers straight away. Can see the real plants, not just pictures in books. Despite the recent storm the gardens were wonderfully presented. The tour guides were enthusiastic and really easy to talk to. The guides were passionate and friendly, could tell they were very knowledgeable. I liked being able to look and physically touch the plants which helped me to understand and learn.

The next visit will be by Onslow College in mid August.

Bev Abbott, Visit Coordinator.

Photo by Richard Edwards, Hutt Valley High School



Melicytus crassifolius

This is a small divaricating shrub with a mostly coastal distribution from Kapiti through Marlborough and extending to Banks Peninsula. It is dioecious, so bears male and female flowers on separate plants. Fruits tend to be borne underneath the branches, suggestive of dispersal by lizards. It is not very difficult to grow though probably not in a wet position. At Otari it can be seen growing in the Brockie Rock Garden, near the pond.

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

Or pay by internet banking: .

Westpac Bank 030518: 0205713:00. Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust. Please add your name for a reference.