

# OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

## News and Views June, 2014

Web site: [www.otariwiltonsbush.org.nz](http://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

<b>The first Saturday of each month. 9am</b>	<b>Plant care</b> is usually on the first Saturday of each month. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 4991044.
<b>Friday 20 June 6.30pm</b>	<b>Glow worm Walk.</b> Take a look at night life in the native forest, down to the Kaiwharawhara stream. See page 6. Leader: <i>Dave Burton</i>
<b>Sunday 22 June 2pm</b>	<b>From Beeches to Kauri.</b> Visit two areas of Otari where trees from outside the Wellington district are well established. A well graded uphill walk between them with just a little botany and a little history. Wear sturdy shoes, one and half hours. Leader: <i>Rodney lewington</i>
<b>Friday 11 July 6.30pm</b>	<b>Glow worm Walk.</b> Take a look at night life in the native forest, down to the Kaiwharawhara stream. See page 6. (A repeat of earlier walk) Leader: <i>Dave Burton</i>
<b>Sunday 27 July 2pm</b>	<b>Reach for the sky</b> or what do plants tell us about past and present climate and geology. An easy one and half hour walk. Leaders: <i>Chris Moore</i>
<b>Sunday 24 August 2pm</b>	<b>What's in a name</b> - stories behind NZ plant names Leader: <i>Finn Michalak</i>

# Trust Board Report 2013-2014



It has been a busy and successful year for Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve and Native Botanic Garden. Rewi Elliot the curator/manager has completed his management course at Kew Gardens and is keen to implement the plans for Otari-Wilton's Bush using his experience and newly gained knowledge. The Trust has continued putting a number of building blocks in place to assist in improving the overall experience at Otari-Wilton's Bush. You will have noticed that following Trust submissions the renovations are now underway on the curator's cottage which will become part of the gardens again and provide a mix of facilities to complement the information centre.

The Board activities have included:

- 1) Representing member's interests in the annual plan process to ensure Otari-Wilton's Bush extra capital funding was confirmed.
- 2) Making submissions on long term plan and emphasising the role Otari-Wilton's Bush will play in the Green /Smart city 2040 plan.
- 3) Funding of new and upgraded pest eradication equipment
- 5) Assisting with printing of Treasure Trail brochures.
- 6) Arranging provision of Hosts at weekends at the information centre
- 7) Sponsorship for curator's attendance at Kew Gardens management course
- 8) A range of volunteer services during the week to assist with garden maintenance
- 9) Supervision of the revegetation maintenance and planting on a monthly basis
- 10) Planning volunteer guide operations for tourists to Otari-Wilton's Bush
- 11) Funding for attendance fees of Board members at BGCI & BGANZ conferences in Dunedin & Christchurch
- 12) Delivering the very successful series of March seminars on Tuesday evenings.
- 13) Provided a grant to New Zealand Plant Conservation Network for national initiatives
- 14) Joined a partnership with the Morgan Halo foundation to distribute traps to residents.

## Planning

The Board has been consulted in regard to the new Botanic Gardens of Wellington draft management plan. This is currently out for public consultation and we will be making a submission. You are encouraged to make personal submissions as well

## Project Rambo (Rats and Mustelid Blitzing at Otari)

This project has now been going for a number of years and the experience is making it more successful. As mentioned the Trust has agreed to replace some of the old rusting trap mechanisms with new ones and purchase further traps.

## Hosting and Guiding

The Trust has recruited and trained a considerable number of guides and hosts this year.

The cruise ship programme has continued its success with lower numbers this year. Next year is predicted to be larger again.

We are also getting more requests from NZ based group and conferences which is good promotion for Otari-Wilton's Bush.

Our special thanks go to Rodney Lewington who is leading this keen band of volunteers. Feedback has been great and improvements are always being made.

The monthly walks programme was well attended and ferns and fungi are growing in popularity. Our special thanks to Dr Geoff Ridley, Alison Stringer, Dr Barry Sneddon and Dr Leon Perrie for their help.



## **Membership**

The current membership is up slightly on last year and we are actively welcoming new members to assist with our many activities. A special welcome to all new members this year.

## **Finances**

A summarised financial results report shows an excess of income over expenditure with guiding income being down due to less boats coming this year to Wellington.

Expenses were not as great as expected due to delay in starting the curator's cottage.

Overall all though still a very satisfactory result with much help from volunteers.

## **Education and Newsletter**

Vera Burton continues to do a valuable job on our newsletter and we hope you enjoy the regular information about Otari-Wilton's Bush. We are continuing our education programs and we have had success with a secondary school initiative which Bev Abbott will expand upon in her presentation.

## **Conclusion**

In presenting this report on behalf of the Trust Board I would like to acknowledge and thank fellow trustees, the Otari-Wilton's Bush staff, WCC managers, Trust volunteers and members for their support during this year in all activities of the Trust.

We can look forward to an excellent year for Otari-Wilton's Bush with another major project coming to fruition.

Phil Parnell  
Chair

## **Otari Awards 2014**

This year the recipients were:

### **Bev Abbott**

Bev has been very helpful with submissions to various City Council plans. Bev is also an Otari guide. Over the last year she has spent many hours in consultation with secondary school teachers formulating an evolutionary tour of Otari for Year 13 biology school students. This has been a very successful initiative. :

### **Kay Poynton**

Kay is always willing to lend a hand, no matter what the task. She has been a Board member, a host and a guide. She has helped with heritage projects and with suggestions for various walks. Kay attends the Wellington Heritage Promotion Council and is preparing an Otari project for Heritage month.

### **Subscription renewals.**

A number of you have paid your subscriptions in recent weeks. You might be worrying about receiving a receipt. As the Treasurer is away you will not receive receipts until mid-June.

# Otari Report



Kia ora koutou,

Very nice to see many of you braved the weather to attend the recent AGM. After the formalities were over and a quick slideshow from me about progress at Otari over the previous year the members present were treated to a behind the scenes look at a newly developed secondary school educational tour. The tour has been developed by Bev Abbott and Rodney Lewington. Already successful it promises to be a great addition and fills a gap in the current educational activities carried out here.

Our forays into seed banking have wound down at the present after the fruiting season has come to an end. Our last trip collecting for ourselves and the NZ seed bank was to the Western Ruahine Ranges in March (see article in this newsletter). Our seed collected for Otari on the trip has largely been sown and we look forward to seeing it germinate in the coming months. We are well into planting season now we have begun moving plants out from our nursery into the gardens, making room for the next lot of growing plants.

Work on the Cockayne Centre (the former Curators house) began in April. It was exciting to see the trees and fence surrounding the building being removed, exposing a glimpse of what the final result will be. The house interior is currently being gutted and landscaping is being carried out in preparation for a substantial deck facing the Cockayne Lawn. Work is due to be completed in early September, with an official opening for the Centre at this years Open Day on Saturday 20 September.

Out in the gardens we have been tidying up a path between the Brockie Rock Garden and our grasses collection, reshaping this path to make it less of a primary path and at the same time taking care of a drainage issue we have in this area during heavy rainfalls. The resulting new garden space either side of the path will be planted with a mix of coastal and sub-alpine species gathered on previous collecting trips.

Our involvement with school holiday programmes has been increasing over the past year with visits from Wellington City Council, Upper Hutt City Council and Zealandia school holiday programmes. Staff here have had a great time getting children involved and thinking about plants. I've included in the newsletter a couple of artistic endeavours by the talented young attendees – enjoy!

Kind regards,

Rewi Elliot  
Curator/Manager  
Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve  
Email: [rewi.elliott@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:rewi.elliott@wcc.govt.nz)



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BUSH <sup>Weir</sup> PLANTS ARE THE  
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HELLO  
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OTARI  
WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

Your botanical oddity for this newsletter is *Lignocaroa* sp. .a very cryptic scree plant. The photo is of a plant on Mt Robert and is about 2cm across. Photo: Eleanor Burton



## Trust Board 2014 – 2015

At the AGM the current Trust Board was elected unopposed.

The Board of Trustees for the current year is:



### The Board of Trustees for the current year is:

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.	pebuxton@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 472 3456
Wilbur Dovey	40 Warwick St., Wilton.	<a href="mailto:cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz">cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz</a>	Phone: 499 1044
Jannine McCabe	40 Worcester Street, Wilton.	<a href="mailto:jannine_mccabe@yahoo.co.nz">jannine_mccabe@yahoo.co.nz</a>	Phone 475 5494
Ian Stockwell	2 Paisley Terrace, Karori .	<a href="mailto:stockwellian@hotmail.com">stockwellian@hotmail.com</a>	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 9388207. [davee@paradise.net.nz](mailto:davee@paradise.net.nz)*

## Glow worm walks at Otari-Wiltons Bush

### Walks on Friday July 12 and 26. 6.30pm

Otari has its share of glow worms – they prefer a moist, vertical bank, dark and sheltered from the wind so that they can hang their sticky nets and light their tails as a lure for midges. This time, we are doing the tour in the middle of winter, so that we can start early enough for young children to take part. Come for a walk through the bush at night – glow worms are guaranteed

Meet at the Otari Information Centre. at 6.30pm. You'll need good shoes, warm clothing, and a torch. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Donations of \$3 per adult go to the Otari – Wilton's Bush Trust. Children are free.

*Leader: Dave Burton*

## Rambo

This is just a quick update on predator control in Otari-Wilton's Bush, and the role of the RAMBO volunteers (RAMBO – Rat and Mustelid Blitzing Otari).

The Greater Wellington Regional Council has some 120 poison bait stations throughout Otari-Wilton's Bush and these are targeted at both opossums and rats. The Greater Wellington Regional Council also does biannual monitoring of both rats and mustelids with the tracking tunnels that can be seen around.

The main target for RAMBO are mustelids (stoats and weasels) and hedgehogs with rats being a very good by-catch. At present RAMBO has around 70 traps in five trap-lines, along the Skyline, along the Kaiwharawhara Stream and up the two main ridges from the stream to the Skyline. The Skyline trap-line is catching the most mustelids and hedgehog. These mustelids would be predators coming in from farmland beyond Otari. The lines along the stream get mostly rats and the occasional mustelid while lines in between get mostly rats and some mustelids.

Has this combined predator control been successful? DoC has told us in “uncontrolled” North Island forest up to 80% of monitoring tunnels will register overnight rat visits. Their trials have also shown that to grow a bird species no more than 5% of tunnels need to show an overnight rat visit.

The monitoring by the Greater Wellington Regional Council has shown since 2011 a range of 2% - 11%. Their latest report (February 2014) showed 6% tracking, down from 8% in September 2013 and 11% in February 2013. Previously it was never higher than 4%. This is consistent with the RAMBO catch figures for rats for 2013 which were the highest ever and a big jump from 2012.

The mustelid monitoring since 2011 has consistently shown 0% tracking. The Regional Council monitoring has also shown a decline in the hedgehog population, 10% of tracking tunnels showed hedgehog activity in Feb 2014 compared with 24% in Feb 2013.

It can be seen that the rat problem in particular is under control, but not controlled but we do seem to be on top of the mustelids.

Finally I would like to thank the Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust for their support of RAMBO with the purchase of traps.

*Jim Tait*

## Ruahine Ranges seed collecting trip

*Franz Tischler, Gardener, Otari-Wilton's Bush*

In late March three Otari staff and volunteer Luke Martin (ex Christchurch Botanic Garden) went on an overnight seed collection trip to the Western Ruahine Ranges on our third trip collecting for the New Zealand Indigenous Flora Seed Bank.

After a three and half hour drive we parked up at the end of Renfrew Rd (east of Mangaweka) and made our way up the hill along Deadmans Loop. It took us about three and a half hours to get to Rangiwahia hut, stopping to look at anything interesting along the way. A beautiful walk towards the hut I must say. With large beech trees, *Libocedrus plumosa*, *Cordyline banksii* and plenty of other interesting plants surrounding you it's definitely a walk I would recommend.



Once we got to Rangiwahia hut we proceeded to collect off of gigantic *Aciphylla colensoi* (for collecting for the seed bank we need a minimum of 1000 seed and ideally 10,000). Along with the sharp spines we also had to be careful not to collect a mite that was covering some the seed heads. We spent the night in the hut and in the morning collected off of the nearby *Halocarpus biformis* which was covered in colourful fruit.

After packing up we proceeded up along the ridges collecting *Pimelea buxifolia*, *Celmisia incana* and a few bits and pieces for Otari, all with the correct Department of Conservation permits. All the while you could see all the way to Mt Egmont (once the fog had lifted).



After about four hours of walking along the exposed ridges and nibbling at a few *Gaultheria* berries we descended back into the forest and collected *Pseudowintera colorata*. On Tuesday morning back at Otari we cleaned the seed over and left them on drying racks for about three weeks. After that we packaged them in paper bags with plenty of cushioning and sent them off to the Palmerston North seed bank.

The aim of the New Zealand Indigenous Flora Seed Bank is to collect the seeds of New Zealand flora as part of an ex-situ conservation strategy to conserve the biodiversity within New Zealand's indigenous flora. Seed once banked will remain viable in the bank for decades if not longer. As with any bank, withdrawals are possible but only for a limited range of purposes, such as for reintroduction of species where populations have been lost in the wild and, more rarely, for research projects that will help with ex-situ or in-situ conservation of the species. Seed may also be used for multiplication to replenish seed in the seed bank.

For more information about the New Zealand Indigenous Flora Seed Bank visit: [http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/page.aspx?conservation\\_seedbank](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/page.aspx?conservation_seedbank), or contact the seed bank co-ordinator, Jessica Schnell at [J.L.Schnell@massey.ac.nz](mailto:J.L.Schnell@massey.ac.nz)

## Missouri Botanical Gardens

Recently I visited the Missouri Botanical gardens in St Louis. They are considered by most to be one of the world's great botanical gardens. The Missouri Botanical Garden started by Henry Shaw opened to the public in 1859 and began to grow in the European tradition of horticultural display combined with education and the search for new knowledge.



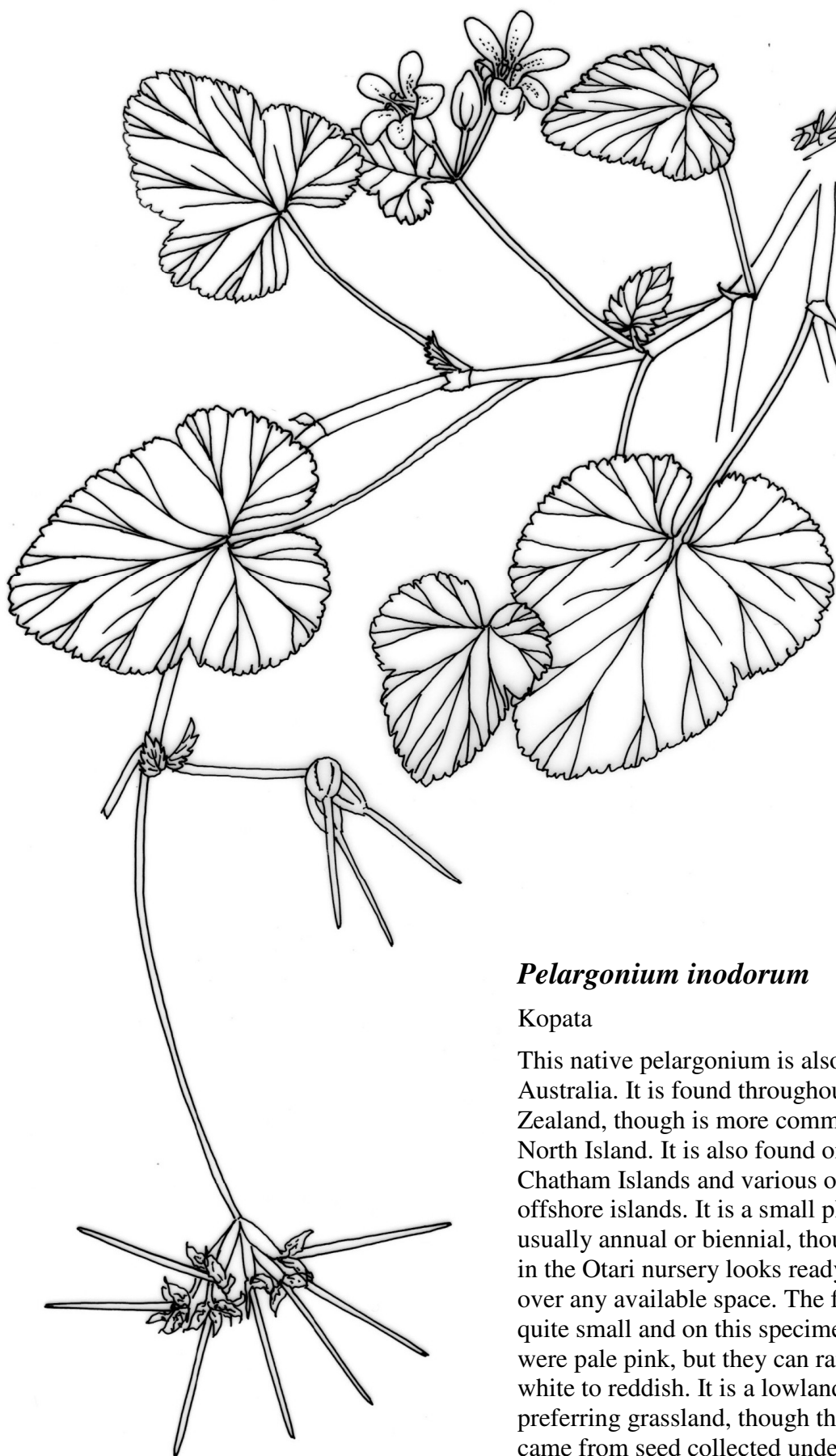
Today, 155 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a centre for science and conservation, education and horticultural display. We toured around the gardens on beautiful spring day.



They have a climatron glasshouse, many old buildings including a Linnean house and numerous water features all of which make for a fantastic visit. They are in the forefront of education and plant conservation driven by their Director Peter Wyse-Jackson who visited New Zealand last year for the BGCi conference which Otari-Wilton's Bush attended.

*Phil Parnell*





***Pelargonium inodorum***

Kopata

This native pelargonium is also found in Australia. It is found throughout New Zealand, though is more common in the North Island. It is also found on the Chatham Islands and various other offshore islands. It is a small plant, usually annual or biennial, though the one in the Otari nursery looks ready to take over any available space. The flowers are quite small and on this specimen they were pale pink, but they can range from white to reddish. It is a lowland species, preferring grassland, though this one came from seed collected under beech in the Marlborough Sounds.

# 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:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <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 :50. Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust. Please add your name for a reference.**