

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views March, 2016

Web site: www.otariwiltonsbush.org.nz. For all walks meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane unless otherwise stated. Walks with talks first will start at the Leonard Cockayne Centre. Unless otherwise stated walks are free to Trust members, otherwise \$5. 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.
Sunday 27 March 2pm	Plant Propagation at Otari-Wilton's Bush. Come and visit the Otari nursery to see how we propagate and care for a wide range of New Zealand natives. We will look at seed sowing, cuttings, propagation mixes and our nursery facilities. Meet at the Leonard Cockayne Centre. 1 hour. Booking essential – at the Treehouse. <i>Leader Rewi Elliot</i>
April Tuesdays 7.30pm	Seminars on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm , See page 5 for details.
Sunday 24 April 2pm	Fungal Foray Our popular seasonal walk, this fabulous foray into the threads of fungi is split into two streams. One will start at 2pm and the next at 3pm..Booking essential – at the Treehouse. Meet at the Leonard Cockayne Centre to investigate the many fungi to be found at this time of the year. <i>Leader Geoff Ridley</i>
Wednesday 18 May 7.15pm	Trust AGM
Sunday 22 May 2pm	Wellington Plants and their regeneration. A pause at the lookout and then follow the Red Trail to the Flax Patch. Return down the steps to the Bledisloe Gorge, and the picnic ground. This will give us an opportunity to look at the stages of regeneration from pasture in 1926 back to broad leaf/podocarp forest. We can admire some elderly Wellington natives (plants) on the way. Gentle uphill, quite a few steps downhill. Sensible shoes a good idea. Meet at the Information Centre. <i>Leader Rodney Lewington</i>
Sunday 29 May 2pm	Meet some of our threatened New Zealand plants and find out how Otari contributes to their conservation. Meet at the Otari Information Centre. An easy, 1 hour walk. <i>Leader Rewi Elliot</i>

Chairman's Message

Hi all,

What a summer Wellington has been having; a great number of visitors and lots of locals enjoying Otari in all its many facets. Hosts have been reporting large numbers of picnics, barbeques, family gatherings, etc, down on Troup picnic area. The visitors have also produced many enquiries on the range of plants in cultivation in the gardens.



Staff have been busy with the gardens and upcoming Festival event "For the Birds" due to start soon at Otari. The festival staff are also using the Cockayne centre while this is in progress. If you haven't got a ticket its worth considering, a number of Board members are also going.

The Trust has contributed to the funding of another collection trip by staff to the Nelson-Marlborough area of the South Island, home to many special and rare plants from the New Zealand flora. We look forward to see what finds they make when they appear in the collection gardens.

We are also considering further protection for the 800 year old rimu, and landscape designs for a suitable platform are currently getting revised. This could require a substantial investment which the Trust will consider once costings are available.

I do hope you all managed to enjoy walking and relaxing in Otari over the holiday period.

Thank you to all volunteers who help with weeding, revegetation and pest control, all of which make this garden and bush reserve unique.

Kind regards
Phil Parnell
Chair

Photos from Phil Parnell

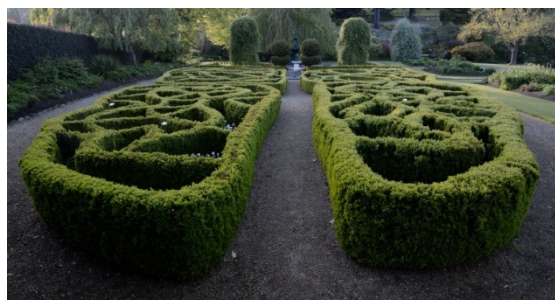
Left: Rewarewa flower Otari Trust logo

Next three are from the Dunedin Botanic Gardens taken on NZPCN conference

Far left: *Fagus sylvatica* European Beech

Below centre: Knot garden

Below: Mt Cook lily *Ranunculus lyallii*



Otari Report

Kia ora koutou.

As you know we've had a rather dry summer. Needless to say this has meant we've had a few thirsty plants over the last month. We are looking forward to autumn bringing a bit more rain that will allow us to carry out new plantings. Autumn is typically a busy time of year for us with a lot of plants coming into fruit around this time. This March we are planning to collect seed with other WCC nursery staff from several reserves around the Wellington region to contribute to our own revegetation programme across the city and for the New Zealand Indigenous Flora Seed Bank.



We've had a change in our gardening staff in February. Franz, who has been with us for about 6 years, has shifted to the Botanic Gardens for a few months to give Nas Mulligan from the Botanic Gardens a chance to experience working at Otari. Nas comes here after completing an apprenticeship with us two years ago. He has a keen interest in native plants and traditional uses of plants.

Our new Botanic Garden Educator, Anneke Mace, has been busy helping us with visiting school groups. We've had a steady flow already this term from Primary through to Secondary. Several visits from Landscape Architecture and Museums and Heritage Studies students are planned soon, along with a visit for schools that participate in the Wellington Enviroschools programme. Having Anneke here to help us deliver these programmes has been incredibly helpful.

For the last week we have had New Zealand Festival staff here setting up for the 'For the Birds' light show that starts on Thursday 3 March. It promises to be a spectacular event, comparable to the Powerplant light show held at the Botanic Gardens in 2014. Organisers are expecting up to 1000 people a night! The artists have been full of praise for Otari and have been incredibly sensitive to the environment they are working in. If you haven't already, 'For the Birds' is well worth looking up online.

If you are looking for something to do in the weekends over March try looking for our 'Hidden Gardens' dotted around Wellington. Our apprentices have been charged with creating small gardens around the city. The seven gardens are waiting to be discovered in secret locations. Seven riddles on the Wellington City Council website (www.wellington.govt.nz) lead to each hidden garden. They are all unique and well worth checking out. My favourite is the garden full of NZ native plants, but I shall say no more and let you hunt them down yourselves.

Kind regards,

Rewi Elliot
Team Manager
Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve
Email: rewi.elliott@wcc.govt.nz

Reminder from the Treasurer

Subscriptions for the next financial year fall due in March. If you pay early you won't be plagued by reminders.

Or pay by internet banking: Westpac Bank 030518: 0205713:00 :50. Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust. Please add your name for a reference.

Trust Board 2015 - 2016



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	
Bev Abbott	40 Pembroke Road, Northland	bevabbott@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 475 6468
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
Ian Stockwell	2 Paisley Terrace, Karori .	stockwellian@hotmail.com	Phone: 476 3630
Cathy Wylie	43 Huntleigh Park Way, Ngaio.	Cathy.wylie@nzcer.org.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. davee42@clear.net.nz

Otari Awards

The Board is calling for nominations for the Otari awards. These are granted for distinguished volunteer service.

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 of a framed certificate personalised for each of the recipients.

The awards will be presented at the AGM in May.

April Seminars 2016



Where: Otari-Wilton's Bush Information Centre

Time: 7.30pm. Gold coin donation

Tuesday, April 5

"Ensuring our forests are a legacy for our mokopuna - why we need a New Zealand forest policy"

New Zealand's forests, native, plantation and urban, provide society with a wider range of benefits than other land uses. For privately owned forests we need to strike a balance between the benefits society receives and the return the owners are entitled to receive on their investment. Many countries achieve this through a comprehensive and visionary long term forest policy, something we lack.

Andrew will describe aspects of a project currently drafting such a policy

Andrew McEwen

Tuesday, April 12

Understanding animal intelligence: should 'bird-brain' be a compliment?"

Rachael Shaw

Tuesday, April 19

New Zealand's native forget-me-nots: Current research at Te Papa

Heidi Meudt

Tuesday, April 26

"How to be sluggish". A talk about the basic structure of slugs and snails, why snails in various parts of the world evolve into slugs, and why the New Zealand slugs have broken the mould and gone further than any others as a result. The New Zealand slugs are unique, and have evolved a fundamentally different way of being a mollusc.

Dave Burton

The Trust Annual General Meeting

This important meeting will be held on Wednesday, 18 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 .

See nomination form on p 11.

For more information contact Phil Parnell or Margaret Crimp

RAMBO in 2015

For the RAMBO team 2015 represented a couple of milestones:

- The retirement from RAMBO of some of our long standing team members and the welcoming of new members.
- Depending on your point of view our best (or worst) year for the numbers of predators caught.



First a quick update on RAMBO (Rat and Mustelid Blitzing in Otari). We have been going since mid 2007 and now have around 65 traps spread over 5 trap lines covering all of Otari-Wilton's Bush and beyond.

Our trapping program is principally aimed at mustelids and hedgehogs and supplements the poison bait station program by the Wellington Regional Council. This program is aimed at opossums but the bait is also very attractive to rats. For RAMBO rats are a very good by-catch and an incentive to keep going as our mustelid and hedgehog catch is quite low.

Team Changes

During the year we said farewell to two long standing team members. Roger Crimp retired from RAMBO for medical reasons though he is still involved in other Trust activities. The Falloon family also withdrew when Dan left home to go flatting though Shirley is still available as backup.

We welcomed to the team Tony Cornelius and Matt Boyd.

Trapping Results

So how have we done? Since RAMBO was set up we have caught 419 rats, 58 mustelids (stoats and weasels), 71 hedgehogs and 20 rabbits. It should be noted we do not target rabbits but a number do manage to get into our traps.

Most of the mustelids and the hedgehogs are caught on the traps leading up to or on the Skyline with only the very occasional mustelid or hedgehog caught close to the Kaiwharawhara Stream. Up until 2015 most rats were being caught all through the Reserve – but in 2015 for the first time the Skyline traps started getting lots of rats.

So how did we do in 2015? In 2015 RAMBO caught 73 rats, 4 mustelids and 6 hedgehogs as well as a number of rabbits. All the mustelids and hedgehogs were caught on the Skyline trap line – none were caught in the Reserve itself. What also stood out was the very large increase in rats being caught by the Skyline trap line with the 2015 rat catch three times the previous highest catch. With the other lines, the trap line that runs from the Kaiwharawhara Stream to the Skyline also had its best year. The other lines were more or less in line with previous years. It was the very high rat catch by the Skyline trap line and the continuing high catches on the line up to the Skyline which boosted the 2015 result.

By way of contrast in 2014 RAMBO caught 57 rats, 10 stoats and weasels and 14 hedgehogs. In 2013 the catch was 61 rats, 9 stoats and weasels and 10 hedgehogs.

Is all this predator control making a difference? The Regional Council has around 65-70 monitoring tunnels in Otari-Wilton's Bush and every six months they bait them and see the percentage that show predator activity. The Dept of Conservation says that endangered birds can successfully breed when 5% or less of tunnels show activity. Over the last few years in Otari-Wilton's Bush they have not detected any mustelid activity, some sign of hedgehogs and rat activity showing in around 6% of tunnels, though it has recently been as low as 2% . This is the lowest amount of rat activity monitored in Greater Wellington. Other reserves the Regional Council monitors can be around 20-30% rat activity and in monitored areas where there is no predator control it can go as high as 90%.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the Regional Council who has provided us with 10 new traps – some as replacements for existing traps that after eight years are no longer safe to use. I would also like to thank the Otari-Wilton's Board Trust who has provided us with four new trap boxes for four of the traps to go out as additional traps on our trap lines.

Jim Tait
Feb 2016



Can Wilton be Predator Free?

Many of you will be aware of the initiative to make Crofton Downs a predator free community. This is the initiative of Kelvin Hastie of Crofton Downs who has organised various grants to provide traps for people to have in their back yards – and he now has over 100 community trappers using Victra traps. For more information on this Google 'Crofton Downs predator free'

In the year that it's been running the Crofton Downs Predator Free Community Project has caught 112 rats and 145 mice while there have been 14 kaka eggs in reserves in their area this year.

His group has also organised for DOC200 traps to go along the Skyline from where they connect with our RAMBO traps around to above Ngaio. These trap lines are aimed at stoats and weasels coming in from the farmland into the various reserves around where we live. These traps also get rats and hedgehogs.

For the RAMBO team the work by Kelvin's group is very valuable as it in effect limits re-invasion of predators from adjoining homes and farmland along our northern boundary.

Following on from the Crofton Downs Predator Free Community initiative, Kelvin has organised similar groups in Ngaio and Wadestown. These groups have local organisers. Now he has additional funding and is interested to see whether there is interest in the Wilton/Northland area. His funding could cover one trap per five households which has been found to be a good distribution to cover the average range of most rats.

What is needed is a person, or a group of people, who could organise this in this area. This person would distribute traps, keep records on trap locations and kills and generally keep people motivated.

For further details please contact me at jim.tait1@gmail.com

Jim Tait

OTARI: POEMS & PROSE Louise Wrightson

Booksellers NZ have just posted a review of this book and tied it in with the Festival and the “For the Birds” light show in March. You can read the review at <https://booksellersnz.wordpress.com/2016/02/23/book-review-otari-poems-and-prose-by-louise-wrightson/>

Wellington’s NZ Festival features **For the Birds**, a visual art show in Otari-Wilton bush. Perhaps you may like to buy this book as a companion-piece! Copies of Otari can be bought from the Otari-Wilton’s Bush Trust (Phone Margaret 475 3263) or from otaripress.com



TREASURE TRAIL: 13 HAIKU

1 The Fernery

The song of a bird
Mellifluous in the vault
Of the cathedral.

2 Thread Fern

My stitches are small.
It took time to embroider
A path to the tree.

3 Tree Ferns

Lime-green ponga fronds
Explode in a blaze of light.
Forest firecrackers.

4 Nīkau Palm

I gyrate my trunk
When no-one is watching me.
Hula hula hooooooooooooooooo

5 Pennantia baylisiana

You found me in time.
I am a tree of fortune.
Others have been lost.

6 Hīnau

I welcome my guests
But the wind sighs in my leaves.
All those sad widows.

7 Hybrid

(Pennantia baylisiana x Pennantia corymbosa)
My past is well known.
Can you name your relatives?
What is your story?

8 Speargrass

Yes, we took out eyes.
We adapted to survive.
Now the birds are small.

9 Mataī

You may not know me.
I am not what I will be
When I reach the sky.

10 Canopy Walkway

In the tops of trees
You can almost be a bird.
Flap your wings. Now sing!

11 Lancewood

Strap yourself to me.
I can be a rocket-tree.
Ready for lift-off?

12 Brockie Rock Garden

Can you hear the wind?
Or is it the sea sighing
Inside the boulders?

13 Dr Leonard Cockayne

While I rest with Maude
Take care of my legacy.
There is much to do.



Summer photos from Mt Cardrona, Central Otago.

Left: Raoulia grandiflora Right: Aciphylla.

Photos by Eleanor Burton (more on page 11)





Cassytha paniculata

This is an obligate parasite (all nourishment comes from the host) found growing on herbs and shrubs. It forms a tangled mass, looking like green string. The branches climb by twining around the host, forming haustoria (attachments to the host through which nourishment is obtained) as they go. The piece I untwined for the drawing had been climbing around itself, and had formed haustoria. The flowers are creamy yellow and small, not opening much. It is found in North Cape as far south as Ahipara, and also in Australia. The plant at Otari is growing on a small kanuka in the Adaptations garden, next to the Flax Cultivar border.

More photos from Mt Cardrona, Central Otago.
Left: Hectorella caespitosa, right: Leptinella pectinata
Photos by Eleanor Burton



OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

160 Wilton Road,

WELLINGTON 6012

NOMINATION FORM FOR THE ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

(To be completed by the nominator)

I (please print full name) _____

being a financial member of Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust, wish to nominate as a
Trustee:

Name of person being nominated: _____

Nominee's address:

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

DECLARATION

(to be completed by the person being nominated)

I (please print full name) _____ being a
financial member of Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust, agree to being nominated as a
Trustee.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

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