

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views March, 2020

Web site: www.owbt.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 and children under 15, otherwise \$5. For information re walks and seminars contact the Treehouse on (04) 499 1400

The second Saturday of each month. 9am	Plant care is on the second Saturday of each month Contact Wilbur Dovey, 499 1044.
Tuesdays in March	March Seminars. 7.30pm. See page 5 for details
Sunday 23 February 2020 2pm	“Tiny plants that are everywhere: mosses, liverworts, and lichens” New Zealand is a world hotspot for liverworts. We’ve got lots of mosses and lichens too. This rich diversity is easily overlooked, but this walk will introduce these three groups, with tips for recognising them. Bring a magnifying glass if you can. To appreciate these plants is to reveal a new and wondrous world – you’ll afterwards look at your surrounds in a completely new way. <i>Leader: Leon Perrie, Curator of Botany at Te Papa</i>
Sunday 22 March 2pm	“Animal Pests & Predators in Otari” This 1 – 1.5 hour walk was rained out in June 2019, so here is another chance to learn about the animal pests and predators found in Otari and how they are being controlled. We will walk up the Red Trail following one of the trap lines to see traps and monitoring devices in action. Not all traps are on the trail so we will be climbing some steep terrain. Suitable footwear essential and a reasonable level of fitness. <i>Leader: Jim Tait</i>
Sunday 26 April 2pm	“Introduction to the Fungi Kingdom” A return to one of our most popular walks. Fungi differ from plants and have their own biological kingdom. This walk of about 1 – 1.5 hours will give you a basic understanding of this enormous kingdom and give you an idea of where to find them. <i>Presenter: Geoff Ridley PhD Mycology and past mycologist at SCION.</i> <i>Blog – http://sporesmouldsandfungi.wordpress.com</i> <i>Numbers limited to 30. Free to Trust members otherwise \$6 including \$1 booking fee – please make your booking via Eventfinda (eventfinda.co.nz)</i>

Chairman's Message

Kia ora koutou

Everyone is glad to see some rain at last. We seem quite lucky compared to other areas of NZ. Summer is now in full swing and the gardens and bush have been hosting lots of visitors from far & wide. The car parking has been under pressure and it is timely to remind members that you can use the first 15 parks on the left in the bowling club when required.



There has been a change in management with Rewi taking the Manager, Wellington Gardens role and Finn taking Rewi's position at Otari for a period of time. Extra staff are being recruited shortly. The Trust was pleased to assist staff member Meghan Ireland on her trip to the sub antarctic islands. We look forward to her seminar on March 3rd which I encourage you to attend. The other seminars also look great - they may be the last in the information centre in its current form.

The Board had one presentation by Story Inc. on the initial concepts for the interior revamp of the centre and we are looking forward to the opportunity for further input in the near future. In general the proposals include some new furniture and storage with a much brighter interior incorporating more screen based content and interactive facilities.

The pest eradication team is doing some upgrades to ageing equipment and will be looking for a volunteer for further trap line monitoring. The trap numbers have been consistent with the previous three years. There is likely to be a one off wasp eradication undertaken by an independent group and Jim Tait is also doing a rerun of his past years' walk on 22 March. All members are welcome to attend.

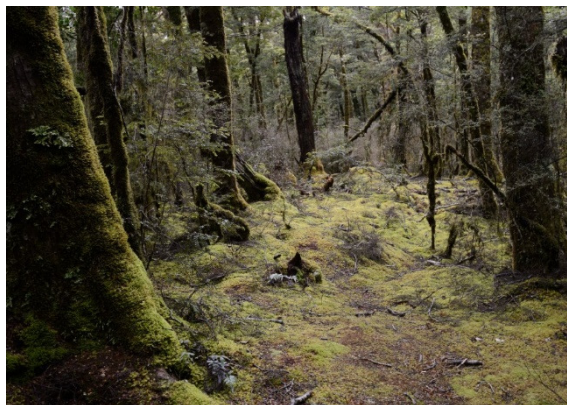
Thanks to Finn and staff for the BBQ and seminar in the Leonard Cockayne centre held recently for members. I am sure that everyone learnt a lot about changes and future plans for Otari. Thanks to Wilbur Dovey and all the guides who are running a large number of tours over the busy period. Feedback on the gardens and bush has been great and establishes Otari as a must visit for visitors to Wellington.

Finally thanks to all our volunteers. I hope you all managed some holidays and look forward to an excellent 2020 which marks the 20 year anniversary for this Trust and two very successful decades.

Cheers

Phil Parnell

Chair Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust



Photos from Phil Parnell taken in Mt Aspiring National Park.

Left: Umbrella Ferns Galore. *Right:* Moss in Beech Forest

Otari Report

Greetings.

It has been a rather relaxed summer here at Otari. Not much to report in the gardening department. This is very much the weeding and watering season. Although it hasn't been the hottest of summers it has been windy, and it's the wind that really dries us out. It has been a good year for flowers and fruits. The birds will eat well this year.



We have had some staff changes in the organisation; Rewi Elliot is now Botanic Gardens Manager for the next 12 months. I will be Otari Manager in his absence, so will be writing for the future newsletters. This also means sometime soon we will be recruiting for a temporary gardening position.

Our Wednesday volunteer for the past year, Sally Paine, has finished up and is headed to Otago University to study Botany. We successfully fired her enthusiasm for plants. Sally was one of the early Otari Bush Guides from the school next door and has a strong bond with the gardens. Good Luck Sally.

This week we had further discussions with Story Inc. who are responsible for the Information Centre upgrades. Lots to think about. The Story Inc. team seem to understand what Otari is all about. Which I now appreciate is a lot of different things for different people. The underlying message is to celebrate New Zealand plants! But, many other stories need to be told in what is essentially a very small space.

We organised a BBQ a few weeks ago to say thank you to all the volunteers who give so much of their time and knowledge to making Otari what it is. I want to take this time to say thank you again RAMBO, Plant Care, Hosts, Nursery help, Thursday volunteers, Guides, litter pickers and anyone else I have forgotten to include. We have talked for a few years about a volunteer event, and I shall endeavour to run another.

The Leonard Cockayne centre is being re-roofed and then repainted. Its colour scheme is being changed to reflect the heritage buildings in Wellington. 'Colonial Red' roof iron is being hammered on now as I write.

Look out for *Brachyglottis hectorii* if visiting soon. It is coming into full flower. Team Otari collected this plant from Takaka Hill some years ago. (See photo on right).



Till next time.....

Finn Michalak

Curator
Otari Native Botanic Garden.

Trust Board 2019 - 202



The Board of Trustees for the current year is:

Chairman Phil Parnell 93 Amritsar St, Khandallah. landy@xtra.co.nz
Phone: 479 2239

Secretary: Wilbur Dovey 40 Warwick St., Wilton. cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz
Phone: 499 1044

Treasurer. Treasurer. Tim Mason 54 Cashmere Ave, Khandallah.
timmason429@gmail.com
Phone: 479 0544

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Ian Stockwell	2 Paisley Terrace, Karori .	stockwellian@hotmail.com	Phone: 476 3630
Carol West	9 Mamari Street Rongotai	carolwest@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 387 3396

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. veeanddave93@gmail.com

FROM THE TREASURER

Our financial and membership year ends on 31 March, meaning that subscriptions for the 2020/21 year will be due from 1 April 2020. Members will be aware that we have updated our systems and we now have email addresses for almost all members. Membership renewal notices will be sent by email early in April and we are expecting to have an on-line response and payment system in place (which will also be available for new members and accessed via the Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust website). For those members without email, we will post the renewal notices which can then still be processed manually.

So the message is: expect a renewal notice in April and updates and payments can be made on line.

Tim Mason, Treasurer, timmason429@gmail.com

Otari March seminar series

All seminars will start at 7.30 p.m. in the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane, Wilton Road. Gold coin donation.



Tuesday March 3: “Beyond Fiordland”. Megan Ireland

Tuesday March 10: “Island syndrome in plants”. Professor Kevin Burns

Tuesday March 17: “Wellington lizards you may see at Otari”. Don Newman

Tuesday March 24: “Growing a Tree Sense for Aotearoa New Zealand”. Susette Goldsmith

Tuesday March 31: “Te Maimai – then and now”. Gillian, Lady Deane

Hosts sought for students keen on Aotearoa's culture and Otari.

Kia ora. Our small Minnesotan non profit off campus study network (www.hecua.org/about) is seeking homestay hosts for our students of environmental studies and social justice issues.

Would you have a spare room and the enthusiasm to welcome a positive young American third-year university student into your home? The students are volunteering at Ōtari or nearby environmental organisations. Last term two students worked on a project at Ōtari and our students love visiting Ōtari.

Hosts receive a \$300 weekly stipend for all food (3 meals each day and snacks) board, power/internet and other costs.

The dates are March 9 to May 11, 2020. For more information please email Anna.Kingsford@ntozinternational.co.nz and jomckenzie07@gmail.com; or free-call [04 586 0400](tel:045860400). Thank you

We need your help!

This year we want to produce our calendar in time for sale at Open Day.

We would love to include some of the beautiful, interesting, or quirky photos that you have taken at Otari.

So if you have a photo you would like to share please send it in – sooner is better!

Email to veeanddave93@gmail.com, or if it is in hard copy, phone Vera on 938 8207

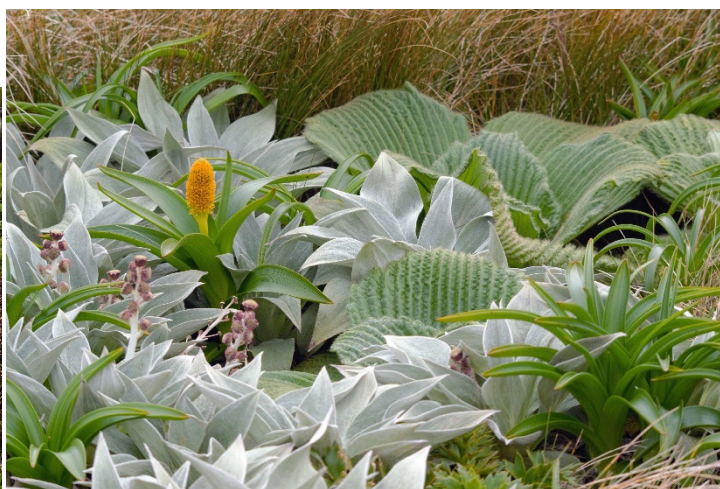
Beyond Fiordland

On Friday 13th December 2019 in a rainy and windy Invercargill I was excitedly and nervously double checking I had packed all my waterproofs and making my way to the Port of Bluff. I had been lucky enough to receive the 'True Young Explorer Scholarship' with Heritage Expeditions and was on my way down to the Subantarctic Islands. This was a 10 day trip visiting Campbell Island, Auckland Island, Enderby Island, The Snares, Stewart Island, Ulva Island and Fiordland (Dusky, Doubtful and Thompson Sounds). Some of the highlights: Southern Royal Albatross nesting in flowering mega herbs, flowering southern rata forest with mega herb flowering beneath or helicopter ride in Fiordland where I was able to check out alpinines.... Want to hear more? Come along on 3rd March where I will be talking more about my trip as part of the March Seminars.



I'd like to thank the Otari Wilton's bush Trust for their financial support, making a once in a life time trip possible!

Megan Ireland



Left:

Bulbinella rossii
on the shore of
Campbell island-
Perseverance
harbour.

Sea Lion chasing
through field of
Anaphalioides
bellidioides –
Campbell island.

Curious Kea on
top of Mount
Philips looking
over Dusky
Sounds.



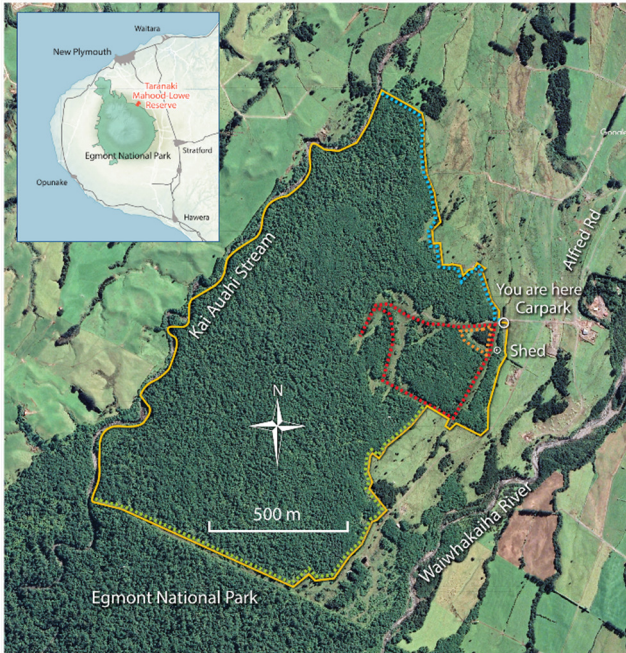
Above right:

Mega herbs of Campbell Island (*Bulbinella rossii*,
Pleurophyllum hookeri, *P. speciosum* and *Anisotome latifolia*).

Blooming *Stilbocarpa polaris* in Southern rata forest – Enderby Island.

Taranaki Mahood Lowe Wetland Forest Reserve

Phil Parnell, Chairman of the Otari Wilton's Bush Trust, his wife June, and Trust Board member Ian Stockwell attended the official opening of the Mahood Lowe Wetland Forest Reserve, near Inglewood, Taranaki, in 2019. The weather was good and the atmosphere very relaxed, as the Native Forest Restoration Trust (NFRT), with supporters, celebrated the opening with speeches followed by lunch under the erected marquee.



Location Map of Mahood Lowe Wetland Forest Reserve.

Photo supplied by NFRT www.nfirt.org.nz

NFRT Chairman Tim Oliver welcomed those attending the official opening and introduced the first speaker, Professor Bruce Clarkson, Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Director Environmental Research Institute, at Waikato University (see biodata under photograph). Bruce is from Taranaki and, as he said, had for over 40 years been advocating the purchase of the wetland. He showed the audience three reports which he had either written himself or contributed to, that recommended the protection of the wetland that had now been purchased. In his speech he spoke of the '*special significance*

of protecting the wetland forest which contained the entire sequence from lowland to montane vegetation, of the 'seasonal food elevator', the sequential ripening of seeds and fruit from the lower warm zone to the cooler uplands'. He emphasised the need for 'both fauna and flora to be able to move up and down the elevational sequence, in response to climate and other environmental variation.'

He highlighted the 1986 Egmont Ecological District Protected Natural Areas Programme report which described Alfred Road as a large remnant adjoining the national park, most of which had been logged resulting in secondary kamahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*) forest. Three forest types were listed; '*kamahi forest on interfluvium, Kamahi- swamp maire forest on interfluvium and kamahi forest on fluvium*'. He said that there was much diversity and richness of the flora and fauna despite the long years of it being unfenced without adequate pest control. The ingredients were there for '*a full recovery now that the forest is legally protected and intensive management has begun*'.

The key question was the nature and rate of the recovery. He said that to find this out a research programme has begun focused on '*the guild of specialised shrub epiphytes that grow perched in the upper crowns and branches of the tall emergent trees*', particularly northern rata (*Metrosideros robusta*), rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*), and kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus daccrydioides*). He said that this distinctive group of epiphytes is one of the special features of New Zealand's native vascular flora. It comprised four species: *Pittosporum kirkii* (thick leaved kohukohu), *Pittosporum cornifolium* (tawhiri karo), *Brachyglottis kirkii* var. *kirkii* (kohurangi), and *Griselinia lucida* (puka). All of these species were good indicators of forest health as they were susceptible to possum browsing.

In the Mahood Lowe Reserve there were fewer old trees of kahikatea, northern rata and rimu compared with the adjoining unlogged Egmont National Park. That, combined with a longer history of pest control means that the Park forests have considerably more shrub epiphytes than the Reserve. He said that this scenario *'provides us with an ideal experiment to monitor: will the shrub epiphytes recover in the Reserve and will they spread more widely in the recovering forest canopy, either from within the Reserve or from the adjoining Park forests?'*

The next steps Bruce Clarkson said are to quantify the abundance and condition of the shrub epiphytes and try to understand more about their population structure and health - do they exhibit any browsing damage, are they reproductively mature, flowering and producing seed and regenerating? Once sufficient data had been collected, he said, *'we will be in a position to determine their rate of recovery and make some predictions about the viability of the populations. The results would help to determine if pest control is sufficient to enable the recovery of these indicator species and the broader plant assemblage and even the birdlife.'*



After the Official Opening of the Mahood Lowe Wetland Forest Reserve

left to right

Ian Stockwell, Sandy Crichton (NFRT Manager), Sharen Graham, NFRT, Southern Reserves Manager, Phil Parnell.

Photo by June Parnell.

Other speakers were Ray Lowe, accompanied by a large number of family members - he and his late wife Jan Lowe provided 50% of the purchase price of \$500,000 for the wetland; Ray Weaver representing both the New Plymouth District Council (who paid half the cost of fencing the Reserve), and *'Wild for Taranaki'* of which he is the Chair; and Councillor Tom Cloke of the Taranaki Regional Council who are contributing to the cost of pest control.



Sharen Graham, Southern Reserves Manager, NFRT said that a Whio survey had been carried out at the Mahood Lowe Reserve by Dean Caskey, Taranaki Regional Council Senior Environment Officer – Biodiversity and Lyn, a Department of Conservation Ranger, with her Whio dog, 'Marti'. The survey revealed that at least one pair were still established on the Kai Auahi Stream which forms the western boundary of the Reserve.

About to start a walk around part of the Mahood Lowe Wetland Forest Reserve

left to right: Sue Cameron (NFRT Administrator), Ian Stockwell, Phil Parnell.

Photo by June Parnell.

And the last word should be from Bruce Clarkson *‘we should all be immensely grateful to the Native Forest Restoration Trust and the many donors who have enabled this addition to the reserves network. I look forward to an even brighter future when the Mahood Lowe Reserve becomes a cornerstone of a continuous ecological corridor extending from the Park down to the sea. Building on the excellent progress with riparian planting that should be a feasible goal within my own lifetime.’*

Sources: NFRT Canopy Newsletter Winter 2019 (reports by Dell Hood, NFRT Trustee, Sharen Graham, Southern Reserves Manager, and Bruce Clarkson). This Trust was established in 1980, to help restore, regenerate and protect New Zealand’s native forest and wetland. The Trust now owns 7000 hectares of forest and wetland in the North and South Islands. www.nfrrt.org.nz



Any Otari Wilton’s Bush Trust members who wish to visit the Mahood Lowe Reserve, when they are next in Taranaki, should note the following details:

LOCATION

Upper Alfred Rd, Kaimiro, North Taranaki Google Maps link:

<https://tinyurl.com/y7meuy7g>

[720 Alfred Rd, Kaimiro is as far as Alfred Road goes on Google Maps.

The reserve will be signposted from here.]

From the north: Follow State Highway 3, then 3A to Inglewood. At Inglewood, turn right onto State Highway 3. Travel for 2km towards Egmont Village before turning left onto Lepper Road Upper. At the end of Lepper Road Upper, turn left onto Egmont Road and first right onto Peters Road. At the end of Peters Road, turn left onto Alfred Road. Continue on Alfred Road until you see signposts for the reserve.

From the south: Follow State Highway 3 to Inglewood. At Inglewood, turn left onto State Highway 3. Travel for 2km towards Egmont Village before turning left onto Lepper Road Upper. At the end of Lepper Road Upper, turn left onto Egmont Road and first right onto Peters Road. At the end of Peters Road, turn left onto Alfred Road. Continue on Alfred Road until you see signposts for the reserve.

From New Plymouth: Follow State Highway 3 to Egmont Village. At Egmont Village, turn right onto Egmont Road for 5.5km before turning right onto Peters Road. At the end of Peters Road, turn left onto Alfred Road. Continue on Alfred Road until you see signposts for the reserve.

Professor Bruce Clarkson is the University of Waikato's Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Director of the Environmental Research institute. He is recognised as one of New Zealand's



foremost authorities on ecological restoration. He currently leads an MBIE funded research programme People, Cities and Nature: restoring indigenous nature in urban environments. In 2006 he was awarded the Loder Cup, New Zealand's premier conservation award and in 2016 he received the RSNZ Charles Fleming Award for environmental achievement. Professor Clarkson is a board member of the Australasian chapter of the [International Society for Ecological Restoration](#), on the Governance Group for the Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities National Science Challenge and is ambassador for the [New Zealand's Biological Heritage National Science Challenge](#).

Profile and photograph, University of Waikato.

Ian Stockwell

Carex wakatipu

This *Carex* is a mostly montane to alpine species found throughout the South Island except Fiordland, and scarce in Westland. It is a very variable species; this drawing is from a plant collected from the Remarkables, currently growing in the nursery, which will presently be planted into the alpine rock garden.



OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

(Supporting Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve)

Membership Application Form

We are delighted to welcome new supporters and there are a number of ways you can help us to preserve this internationally significant native botanic garden and bush reserve for future generations. 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. Please fill out the form below.

YOUR DETAILS		MEMBERSHIP	\$
Name(s):		Student/Unwaged \$5	\$
Address:		Individual \$10	\$
PHONE Number(s):		Double/Family \$15	\$
Email Address:		Corporate \$30	\$
* Donation			
Billing name & address: (if different from above)		Total Payment:	\$

<input type="checkbox"/> Cheque enclosed (Please make out to Otari Wilton's Bush Trust Please post to: The Treasurer, Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust, 160 Wilton Road, Wilton, Wellington 6012	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid electronically (please mark DONATION & your NAME in reference. Westpac account # 030518 0205713 000
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*The Trust is registered as a Charitable organisation and donations over \$5.00 qualify for a tax rebate to individual taxpayers. (annual limits apply). Unfortunately we are unable to process payments by Credit Card.

☐ I would like a receipt for my donation.

• VOLUNTEER

We have over 100 volunteers who are active regularly at Otari. It's up to you how much time you commit – and you can choose how you would like to get involved from a range of activities, from hosting and guiding tours to working in the Otari nursery, pest control and forest restoration. Please contact Secretary Wilbur Dovey cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz