

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views June, 2021

*For all walks meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae a Tane unless otherwise stated. Walks with talks first will start at the Leonard Cockayne Centre. Unless otherwise stated walks are free to Trust members & children under 15, otherwise \$6. Web site: www.owbt.nz
Please note that bookings are essential at Eventfinda <http://www.eventfinda.co.nz> if any members wish to attend any of the walks.*

Second Saturdays	Plant care is on the second Saturday of each month. 9am. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 499 1044.
Friday 25 June, 7pm	Glow worm walk. See p 6 for details. Note this walk is at 7pm. You'll need good shoes, warm clothing, and a torch. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at the Information Centre. Bookings are essential – search 'Eventfinda' for 'glow worm'. Limited to 20 people. <i>Leader: Dave Burton</i>
Sunday 27 June 2pm	Growing New Zealand native plants in your garden. This is not a new idea and there are many excellent books available on the subject. The walk in Otari will aim to see some new examples and to see these plants thriving in Wellington conditions. This will include suggestions for hedging, dry gardens, ground cover, and shade. Duration 1.5 – 2 hours. Limited to 15 people. <i>Leader : Jane Humble</i>
Various Days 6.30pm	Glow worm walks. Monday 5 July, Fridays 12 August, 10 September. See p 6 for details. You'll need good shoes, warm clothing, and a torch. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at the Information Centre. Limited to 20 people. Bookings are essential – search 'Eventfinda' for 'glow worm'. <i>Leader: Dave Burton</i>
Sunday 25 July 2pm	Planting, managing and monitoring for ecological restoration. The walk will be on the track alongside the Kaiwharawhara Stream, to the restoration project area near Ian Galloway Park and return. Duration around two hours. Limited to 20 people. <i>Leader : Dr Stephen Hartley, Director, Centre for Biodiversity and Restoration Ecology, Victoria University</i>
Sunday 29 August 2pm	Wellington's ferns. Meet at the Information Centre. Otari's fernery will be used to learn some of the fern groups in New Zealand, with a focus on some of the species common around Wellington. Please bring a magnifying glass or hand lens if you can. Magnification allows a better appreciation of some of the distinguishing features. Duration around two hours. Limited to 20 people. <i>Leader : Dr Leon Perrie, Botany Curator, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa - specialising in the taxonomy (i.e. naming) and evolution of New Zealand's ferns.</i>

Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust

Trust Board Report 2020-2021



This is the 21st annual report of the Trust and documents the challenges we have faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members have demonstrated their adaptability as COVID forced cancellations and distancing rules upon us. The uncertainties created by the pandemic have been exacerbated somewhat by the continually shifting timeframe for the Information Centre upgrade and the impact that had on the hosts and hosting roster. We have also welcomed Tim Park as the new Manager. The support of members, monthly walk leaders, seminar speakers and Otari gardens staff through these turbulent times has been greatly appreciated.

The Board's activities have included:

1. Commissioning Bee Dawson to write a history of Otari-Wilton's Bush;
2. Commencing a strategy to guide our activities;
3. Representing members' interests in the WCC annual plan process;
4. Making submissions to local and central government agencies on matters impacting Otari-Wilton's Bush;
5. Meeting with Council staff to discuss matters of common interest;
6. Continuing trapping and pest eradication around Otari and environs including adding a new trapping line and monitoring lines;
7. Arranging provision of hosts at weekends at the information centre;
8. A range of volunteer services during each week to assist with nursery and garden maintenance and lab research;
9. Supervision of revegetation maintenance and planting on a monthly basis;
10. Planning and managing the monthly walks programme, many of which were cancelled due to COVID-19;
11. Organising guiding teams for tours from local groups including during the Spring Festival;
12. Delivering the successful series of seminars on Tuesday evenings in March, losing just one to COVID-19 this year;
13. Maintaining the website and Facebook page for the Trust;
14. Committing to a plant propagation project to raise funds and provide less well-known native plants to interested people.

Planning

Several strategy workshops have been held (the first one facilitated by Tim Foote) to determine our priorities for the short-, medium- and long-term then ensure that we have annual plans in place to raise the necessary funds.

Newsletter

Once again, we thank Vera Burton for her tireless efforts in editing Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust News and Views. We encourage everyone we communicate with by email to print their own copies.

Project RAMBO

The energetic and busy RAMBO team is ably led by Jim Tait. Jim's full report of the successful rat and mustelid trapping and detection programme is attached to this report.



Hosting

The cheerful group of hosts has navigated COVID-19 and uncertainties over closure of the Visitor Centre for the interpretation upgrade and continues to be on hand to assist weekend visitors.

Guiding

A small number of garden tours has been provided for local garden groups and others. With the opening of the bubble with Australia there may be a possibility for a small number of garden groups and possibly even cruise ships to use our services later in the year.

Revegetation

Around 160 trees were planted during the winter months and the survival rate has been good. We are very grateful for the work volunteers continue to put in.

Monthly walks

COVID-19 led to the cancellation of a number of walks. However, a large group turned out on a lovely sunny afternoon in July for a walk led by Lara Shepherd, focusing on kowhai.

March seminars

COVID-19 led to the cancellation of the first seminar. We were particularly pleased to welcome tangata whenua to the talk about te pua o te rēinga, *Dactylanthus taylorii*.

Membership

A special welcome to all new members this year. The introduction of the Xero accounting system has made connection with members very much easier.

Finances

COVID-19 has slashed our income stream leading us to increase membership subscriptions.

Conclusion

In presenting this report on behalf of the Trust Board, I would like to acknowledge and thank fellow Trustees, the Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve staff, WCC managers, Trust volunteers and members for their support during this year in all activities of the Trust. Grateful thanks are extended to non-members who support the Trust's activities by giving talks and leading walks.

Carol West

Chair

Otari Report

Tena koutou katoa,

The gardens at Ōtari are looking fantastic, thanks to commitment of the team and regular volunteers. Work to refresh the Asteraceae Garden and the Wellington Coastal Garden is well underway.

Unfortunately our Team Leader Finn Michalak has taken a new job closer to his home in Paekakariki, establishing a native plant nursery in Waikanae to restore the estuary and catchment. Finn has contributed an immense amount over his thirteen years at Ōtari but we trust his passion for NZ native plants will only grow. Megan Ireland will step up as acting Team Leader while I recruit to fill the role.

We have been getting lots of great feedback from walkers about the upgraded track to Ian Galloway Park, and Jim Tait has been getting a few rats on the new line of Victor traps alongside the Kaiwharawhara Stream. We had lots of reports of the lone possum on the road - we are now seeing more roadkill kererū than possums these days.

We have been working on updating the names each of the gardens which will be displayed on our www.wellingtongardens.nz website and maps in the future. Work continues on the refresh of the Visitor Centre. We are working closely with mana whenua on developing the design, content and stories that will be told to enrich visitors experience to the gardens and forest. Preparations are underway on the exterior of the building with painting work completed recently and the relocation of the drinking fountain and map board to the deck.

Plans are in development to expand the Lions Ōtari Plant Conservation Laboratory into the adjacent flat from July. We are working on the business case and seeking funding to complete the fit out.

Ex situ conservation work is continuing with a large number of species in the lab and nursery including *Pimelea actea*, *Celmisia* 'Mangaweka', *Olearia gardneri*, *Pachycladon novae-zelandiae*, *Agathis australis* (kauri), *Metrosideros bartlettii* (ratamoehau), *Syzygium maire* (swamp maire), *Muehlenbeckia astonii* and our *Lophomyrtus*.

Karin is progressing her PhD and is delivering some of this work for DOC.

Funding has been included in the WCC Long Term Plan for development and implementation of a landscape development plan at Ōtari in the next ten years. This will focus on creating a purpose built laboratory and nursery adjacent to the forest and garden areas.

A number of activities are planned at Ōtari over Matariki (2-9 July) so make sure you book in early at www.matarikiwellington.org

Ma te wa,

Tim Park

Kaiwhakahaere Ōtari | Manager Ōtari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve

Ngā Māra o Poneke | Wellington Gardens

Papa Tākaro Hākinakina | Parks, Sport and Recreation

Mi Heke Ki Poneke | Wellington City Council

[0212479739](tel:0212479739) Tim.Park@wcc.govt.nz Wellington.govt.nz



Trust Board 2020 - 2021



The Board of Trustees for the current year is:

Chair: Carol West	9 Mamari Street Rongotai	carolwest@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 387 3396
Secretary: Wilbur Dovey	40 Warwick St., Wilton.	cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 499 1044
Treasurer: Tim Mason	54 Cashmere Ave, Khandallah.	timmason429@gmail.com	Phone: 479 0544
Bev Abbott	40 Pembroke Road, Northland	bevabbott@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 475 8468
Maggie Bayfield	67 Weld Street, Wadestown	bayfield@xtra.co.nz	Ph: 027 545 4333
Peter Buxton	3 Ngaio Road, Kelburn, 6012,	pebuxton@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 475 3848 027 4723455.
Jane Humble	16 Izard Road, Khandallah	jhumble16@gmail.com	Phone: 971 6970
Kevin O'Connor	48 Ngatoto Street, Khandallah	oconnorkevin170@gmail.com	Ph. 027 270 9787
Phil Parnell	93 Amritsar St, Khandallah.	landy@xtra.co.nz	Phone: 479 2239

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

All members should have received their membership renewal notices some weeks ago, and we thank those who have paid so willingly and promptly even in the face of a rise in subscription rate. Early payment by those yet to do so would be appreciated, and if those choosing not to renew could let us know it will save us hassling you.

Our bank has advised that it is shortly to cease taking cheques, so if anyone needs to pay us by cheque please do so no later than 15 June so we have time to get to the bank.

Tim Mason
Treasurer



Weekend Hosting at Otari-Wilton's Bush

At present there are gaps in the roster for weekend hosts at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane.

If you have two and a half hours to spare on a Saturday or Sunday, morning or afternoon and wish to become more involved with the life at Otari-Wilton's Bush we would welcome your assistance.

This is an important way in which Trust members contribute to the management of Otari.

Please contact Peter Buxton, pebuxton@xtra.co.nz
Phone H. 04 475 3848, M. 027 472 3455

Glow Worm Walks at Otari

Friday: 25 June, 7.00pm

Monday 5 July 6.30pm.

Friday 13 August 6.30pm

Friday 10 September 6.30pm.

Glow-worms are alive and well and living in Otari – they prefer a moist, vertical bank, dark and sheltered from the wind so that they can hang their sticky-thread nets and light their tails as a lure for midges. You'll need good shoes, warm clothing, and a torch. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Walk is 1 hour and 10 minutes. Meet at the Information Centre. Each walk limited to 20 people. Free to Trust members and their families *except for Monday 5 July - Matariki walk, adults \$6, children under 15 free.*

Bookings are essential – search 'Eventfinda' for 'glow worm'.

Leader: Dave Burton

Ian Stockwell

Ian retired from the board of Trustees having served on it for 10 years.

Before then he was a part of the monthly revegetation group and has remained active with them. Ian has helped out in many ways including coffee making on Open days, organising monthly walks, and catering for seminars and meetings. Living near the southern end of Otari, Ian has taken an interest in weeds surrounding the tip face revegetation site. The Trust made a submission to the recent Karori Cemetery strategic plan around weed issues and potential for transfer along Kaiwharawhara stream. Ian has also built a relationship with the Rotokare Trust in the New Plymouth area who run an eco sanctuary in Stratford. They have visited Otari on two occasions. We wish Ian all the best for the future and thank him for his efforts.

Fungal forays

Since 2008, Geoff Ridley has been leading fungal forays at Otari in April. However, these walks were so popular with the public that in 2019 we had to limit the numbers and put on an extra walk in May to cope with the interest. Last year's forays were cancelled because of COVID-19 but this year's were fully booked soon after they went online. We are very grateful to Geoff for leading these foarys.



Geoff Ridley explaining the nomenclatural history and ecology of *Leratiomyces ceres* (scarlet roundhead). Photo: Carol West, 23 May 2021.

I was curious to know why these walks are so popular and who attends them so I went along to the May foray. What I learned was that a number of attendees know a lot about fungi both here and overseas and

that they were keen to learn more from Geoff. I also learned that Geoff presents his extensive knowledge in an engaging style and had checked the area for fungi ahead of time. He regards these forays as an opportunity to not only share his knowledge but also add to the inventory of fungi present in Otari Wilton's Bush.

If you want to know what Geoff has documented at Otari over the years, check out his blogs here: <https://sporesmouldsandfungi.wordpress.com/> All fungi recorded from Otari on iNaturalist are listed in this project: <https://inaturalist.nz/projects/otari-wiltons-bush-fungi>.

Carol West



Additional photos of the walk taken by Phil Parnell.
Fungus on left is *Cyclocebe parasitica* on tawa tree.





New Members

We welcome the following new members to Otari and Wilton's Bush in recent months and thank them for their interest and support:

Rosemary and Tony Patterson of Karori

Linda Carson of Northland

Clare Gleeson of Khandallah

Sue Skene of Khandallah

Justin Nacey and family of Northland

Saskia Vervoorn and family of Khandallah

Kevin O'Connor of Khandallah

Simon Collins : A Tribute to a Conservation Champion

Otari Wilton's Bush Trust members will recall the death earlier this year, on 9 March, of **Colin Ryder** who, over a long period of time helped many conservation groups and was perhaps best known for his vigorous campaigning to eradicate pests from Mana Island, the formation of the Taputeranga Marine Reserve Trust, and the restoration of Baring Head, part of the East Harbour Regional Park, administered by the Greater Wellington Regional Council. See the NZPCN tribute : <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/nzpcn/news/kua-hinga-te-totara-i-te-waonui-a-tane-colin-ryder/>

A mere 11 days later another mighty totara of the conservation fraternity fell on 20 March 2021.

Simon Collins, Sanctuary Manager, Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust, was only 48 years old when he died of a heart attack, while cycling on the Eltham Road.

Simon visited Wellington's Otari Wilton's Bush several years ago with a large group of Rotokare volunteers. Then in November 2020 two of the Rotokare Trustees visited Otari too. They were in Wellington as the Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust had won the **2020 Department of Conservation Kahiwi Award in the established projects / initiative category**. (See QWT News and Views December 2020)

Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust

This community-led success story celebrates the ambition and determination of the community to create and sustain a pest-free sanctuary, underpinned by a constant and priority focus on quality biosecurity delivery. This project demonstrates the purpose of Predator-free goals, and provides motivation and inspiration to the whole region.

The Rotokare sanctuary is possibly the largest essentially mouse-free environment on mainland Aotearoa. A strong biosecurity history has enabled significant indigenous species reintroductions, including the return of tieke and hihi after c.150-years regional extinction, and pāteke after c.100-years regional extinction. A partnership project has established a kiwi breeding population, and has now begun translocating kiwi to other sites. The sanctuary is also a source for other species translocations.

An extensive four thousand plus hectare trapping programme, in partnership with surrounding landowners has provided major community inspiration, enabled a kiwi translocation to a nearby

site, and the return of pāteke to Taranaki. Due to pāteke predation soon after their release, a significant up-scaling of feral cat control has demonstrated the significant issue this species presents.

A comprehensive environmental education and engagement programme reaches



out region-wide, empowering the future generation of leaders with knowledge and inspiration to lead their communities to improve the prospects for indigenous biodiversity.



Left: Fiona Gordon, Deborah Clough, Simon Collins & Allan Juffermans, from Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust, at the New Zealand Biosecurity Awards, Wellington, November

2020. Photograph from the Rotokare Scenic Trust.

Background

Simon was born in Dunedin 25 February 1973 to Elizabeth and Dr Roger Collins. His father was a researcher, collector, prolific author and retired teacher of French and art history at the University of Otago. Two key themes in his writing were French artists in the Pacific and the painter Frances Hodgkins. The Collins family travelled extensively overseas and Simon, from an early age, was a fluent French speaker.

Simon had a variety of jobs in his working life but the big introduction to conservation happened in 2000 when he was working at the Penguin Place, Dunedin. In 2008 he and his wife Trish and son Tai were looking for a fresh challenge. He applied successfully for a position at the Rotokare Scenic Trust. Over the next 12 years he was to make his mark there.

Simon Collins at Rotokare

As Tricia Jamieson, a staff member at Rotokare said of Simon :

As Rotokare Sanctuary Manager, Simon had the opportunity to progress Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust's vision through his unique style of leadership. He was a strong advocate with an indefatigable drive and commitment to conservation. The Rotokare whanau was very important to Simon, he cared deeply about all the family of staff and volunteers, sensitive to everyone's moods and state of mind. There was always time for a laugh and a beer after the hard work on any project was done. Simon was a natural leader, fluent speechmaker, passionate conservationist whose eyes lit up when talking about Rotokare's part to play in regional and national conservation goals. He rarely took no for an answer, if you didn't agree with him it simply meant that he hadn't finished convincing you.

Tricia quoted Simon – *"Today, nine species have been translocated back into the sanctuary, three of which were extinct in Taranaki. The return, repopulation and then supply of native species is a multi-decade programme. Ultimately, the vision is to have the sanctuary "spewing" out wildlife naturally to the surrounding environment". He said that "This was the best possible example of what the Towards Predator-Free Taranaki vision is – and we are actually past that point within the sanctuary."*

In a recent interview, Simon stated that “*Rotokare Sanctuary is an example of the Taranaki community’s determination to succeed and eagerness to work together. And the financial support of the community, and more than 40 significant partners or fundraising streams, has been crucial*”.

Under his leadership the Trust In 2019 won the Taranaki Chamber of Commerce not-for-profit business award. During the Covid -19 lockdown 2020 Ash Muralidhar, Rotokare’s Environmental Education Officer, in collaboration with Dr Emily Roberts, the Taranaki Regional Council Educator, produced an online educational video series ‘*Backyard Biodiversity – Taiao Taiepa Ki Tua*’. The series that included online resources and learning activities was placed third in the Association of Local



Government Information Management Awards; and in a national poll won the overall ‘*People’s Choice Award*’.

In June last year 27 kiwi were translocated out of Rotokare, to the Totara forest block in Mangamingi (managed by South Taranaki Forest and Bird), and Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari in the Waikato. Eight other species have been translocated over the years, including tieke and hihi. See www.rotokare.org.nz for more information.

Simon Collins preparing Zoe (Western Brown kiwi) for the first kiwi release from Rotokare Scenic Reserve to the Totara Block, June 2020. Photograph from the Rotokare Scenic Trust.

Farewell to Simon

A service to celebrate Simon’s life was held at the May Alice Chapel in Stratford on 27th March, 2021. The chapel had no spare seating as friends, conservationists and former colleagues travelled from the length of the country, including Penguin Place, Dunedin and Whangarei, to pay their respects and acknowledge his life’s work. A guard of honour by Rotokare whanau and haka by Taranaki rangatahi also acknowledged Simon’s life and his achievements.

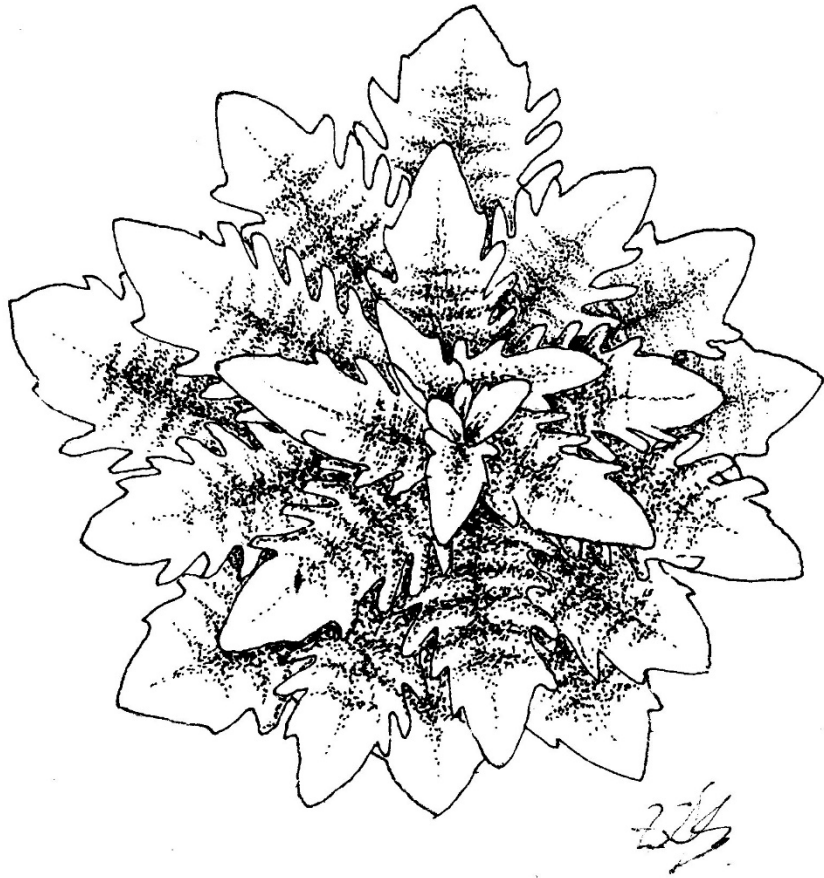
Both before and after the service, moving karakia, led by Tane Houston (Ngati Tupaia), at Rotokare helped with the passing of Simon’s spirit. In acknowledgement of the esteem that Ngati Tupaia held Simon, his wairua / spirit was instilled as kaitiaki / guardian at Rotokare.

As Tricia Jamieson aptly said *His input, insight and cheeky personality will be deeply missed by the people, communities and organisations who were fortunate to know and work with him. Simon's spirit remains strong at Rotokare and his legacy will live on’.*

I knew Simon Collins, have been a supporter of the Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust for many years; attended the memorial service and passed on condolences from Otari Wilton’s Bush Trust to the Rotokare staff and to Simon’s family.

Ian Stockwell

Sources : Rotokare Scenic Trust (Tricia Jamieson)



Plantago triandra

Small rosette herb, found in boggy places throughout the North, South, and Stewart Islands, though not the Tararuas or Mt Taranaki. Coastal areas in Taranaki and the West Coast. It is not very hard to grow in cultivation, but doesn't like drying out too much. At Otari it can be seen in the Brockie Rock Garden, but seems to prefer seeding into the paths.

The small drawing at the bottom is the seed capsule.



Membership Application/Donation form.

Please note there is also one on the website which can be completed and submitted electronically or downloaded and printed and sent by post or email.



MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

YOUR DETAILS

NAME/S

ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBERS

EMAIL ADDRESS

BILLING NAME & ADDRESS (if
different from Above)

NEW MEMBER OR RENEW

\$

INDIVIDUAL \$20

\$

DOUBLE/FAMILY \$30

\$

CORPORATE \$30

\$

NEW MEMBER

☐

DONATE

\$20

\$50

\$100

Other \$

☐

I would like a receipt for my donation

P

☐

Paid electronically to account 030518 0205713 000 (please mark your NAME and MEMBERSHIP
and/or DONATION in the fields)

☐

Cheque enclosed (Please make out to OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST)

COMMENTS