

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views June, 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, 4991044.
Sunday 23 June 2pm	"Otari's ferns - everything you wanted to know" Part 2. <i>Leon Perrie</i> will take an easy 2 hour walk in the fernery.
Friday July 12 & 26 6.30pm	Glow worm Walks. Take a look at night life in the native forest, down to the Kaiwharawhara stream. See page 4. <i>Dave Burton</i>
Sunday 28 July 2pm	What use are native plants? A one and half hour, easy walk looking at different plants to find out what they can be used for. <i>Chris Moore</i>
Sunday 26 August 2pm	The Treasure Trail. This is an easy walk looking at the interesting features and stories of the New Zealand forest along the upper level at Otari. 1.5 hours <i>Leader: John Dawson</i>

Chairman's Message

Kia Ora,

Another two fine autumn days over last weekend had record numbers turning out at Otari-Wilton's Bush. Spotted on Saturday was Livingstone the explorer and a large gorilla at a kid's party along with film crews and karate attired budding film stars!



Then on Sunday a record turn out of fungi walkers enjoying the foray and some strange fruiting bodies (that is fungi not people).

All this when some of the staff were enjoying the NZPCN conference in Auckland and keeping up to date with all the news in the New Zealand Network of Plant Conservation.

Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust is a member of this organisation and please look at their new website www.nzpcn.org.nz which has an extensive information set on native flora.

This month we held a successful Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Rewi and his team put together the final touches to the Treasure Trail. New brochures highlight the various posts on this flat easy one hour walk around the Taonga (treasures) of Otari-Wilton's Bush.

This trail was designed by our Chief Guide Dr John Dawson and complements nicely the Nature Trail which goes into the valley and brings you out at the Cockayne Lookout.

The Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust has provided the funding together with Winstanley Trust and Terawhiti Charitable Trust. Our thanks to you all and please use it to show off to your visitors to Wellington. It is a great asset for Otari-Wilton's Bush.

The plant acquisition trip to Southland and Stewart Island took place last month and those who attended the AGM would have seen the many places that Finn Michalak was able to get to and the important contacts he made.

In March we held another successful seminar series with great topics, speakers and attendances. Our thanks to Margaret Crimp for excellent organisation and Otari-Wilton's Bush staff for setting up rooms etc. The Trust also submitted a response to the Council's annual plan which included our support for the reconfiguring of Curator's cottage. It seemed to meet with agreement so look forward to the final plan.

Thanks to all the volunteers who work hard to make Otari-Wilton's Bush a continuing success and I know your efforts are appreciated by the staff and Council alike.

Phil Parnell
Chair Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust

Otari Report

Kia ora koutou,

After a very nice Wellington summer the rain finally came, which means we can get planting from now on and slim down our burgeoning nursery. The plant collecting we have been achieving has paid off with many new species entering the gardens this year. In April Finn Michalak, one of our collection curators visited Southland and Stewart Island to collect plants and talk to Southland people about how we might help each other in plant conservation. With a grant from the Trust, Finn had a very successful trip bringing back over 100 species, a large number of which are new accessions to the gardens here.



I have just returned from a New Zealand Plant Conservation Network conference over the past four days, along with helping teach a propagation course at Auckland Botanic Garden prior to the conference. The field trip around Auckland's urban forest was certainly an experience when we were looking at pohutukawa, karo and karaka in their natural habitat, and not as weeds on the Wellington coastline. We came back with several new plants – including a 3m high white maire! Talking to many of the participants I was happy to see that Otari certainly has a good reputation around the country, and those that hadn't visited Otari were eager to make the trip.

Shortly I will be travelling to Kew Gardens in London for eight weeks during July and August. I have been accepted to study at Kew for a Diploma in Botanic Garden Management. This is a fantastic opportunity to learn at one of the worlds top botanic gardens, and make contact with other professionals in the field. The participants from the course are from far flung corners of the globe including Canada, Tanzania and Latvia! I must really thank the Trust Board who have contributed to funding some of the trip. Phil has also passed on a couple of contacts he made when in Kew last. No doubt it will be a very busy few weeks for me.

Great to see a few of you at the Trust's annual general meeting in May; it certainly seemed a positive and buoyant affair. As I mentioned at the meeting this is no doubt much to do with the positive working relationship we share with the Trust Board; happily, the same group have carried over to this years Board.

Look out for the new *Treasure Trail* when you next visit Otari. Complementing the *Nature Trail*, the new trail leads you through the gardens to look at some of Dr John Dawson's favourite plant 'treasures'.

Kind regards,

Rewi Elliot

Curator/Manager

Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve

Email: rewi.elliott@wcc.govt.nz

Trust Board 2012 - 2013

The current Trust Board was elected unopposed.



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 3263		
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 9388207. 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

Otari Awards 2013

The recipients were:

Enfys Graham

Enfys was a volunteer on Tuesdays for many years, working in the nursery. She travelled by public transport from her home in Eastbourne and back again. For the last couple of years she has been coming from the Kapiti coast, again using public transport – a truly dedicated volunteer.

Enfys retired early this year but she is missed.



Gail Andrews

Gail has been a volunteer host for a number of years and can always be relied upon to turn up.

Gail is also responsible for the card and book sales. Every week she does a stock take to see what has sold. She also orders more supplies.

In the summer she was there with the cards to sell for every cruise ship tour which came through on a week day.

Jocelyn Hoskin

Jocelyn was a volunteer host for a number of years and still does duties when needed. She has been the Trust Treasurer for six years a position which entails many hours of work.

In the summer Jocelyn also helped with the tours of cruise ship passengers.

RAMBO 2007-2013

Background

Since rats and mustelids were introduced to New Zealand, they have spread to every corner of the country and have decimated native bird and other fauna populations. As a response, trapping programmes have been introduced at Key Native Ecosystems (KNE) where birds have the potential to breed and thrive.

In 2007, the Balance of Life Trust (BOLT) donated 60 traps (instant-kill DOC200s in small wooden boxes) to Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust and a small team of volunteers began trapping. The trap zone spread from Wilton Road up to the skyline and from Blackbridge Road as far as Karori Cemetery. Advice on setting up the trapping programme was generously given from the Department of Conservation. RAMBO stands for Rat and Mustelid Blitzing at Otari.

Summary of trapping results

Traps	56 employed
Volunteers	12 on average per annum
Rats caught	226
Mustelids caught (stoats and weasels)	40
Hedgehogs caught	55
Wild cats (aka colony cats)	3
Birds, skinks, geckos, weta, etc <i>not</i> killed by the pests listed above	countless

Most people are now well aware that rats eat birds' eggs and even young chicks, while stoats will have a go at almost any native animal they encounter. Greater Wellington Regional Council began monitoring rat and mustelid numbers in Otari-Wilton's Bush in 2007. Their research shows that the numbers of these species have significantly reduced.



Hedgehogs do particular damage to our native invertebrates, so it is good to be reducing their number at Otari as well.

The wild cats are an anomaly. In 2007, there was a man living in Crofton Downs who "adopted" cats from the SPCA and released them at the horse paddock next to Otari. Some of these cats starved, some were shot by Greater Wellington Regional Council, and three (all in terrible condition) were caught in traps.

The RAMBO programme comprises five separate trapping lines, each utilising between 6 and 15 traps. In late 2012, it was found that parts of some of the traps were rusting. Over the last two months, all traps have been checked and 12 have been repaired or replaced with new traps.

Trapping results have been recorded since 2007 and recently one of the trappers, Jim Tait, has been analysing the data. He has made some interesting observations. Most of the mustelids have been caught along the skyline ridge. Most of the rats have been caught near Kaiwharawhara Stream. A few traps have not caught anything, while one has caught 20 rats, and another 11 stoats. As a result of Jim's research, we have moved a few of the traps around and installed two extra traps beside Kaiwharawhara Stream.

Future plans

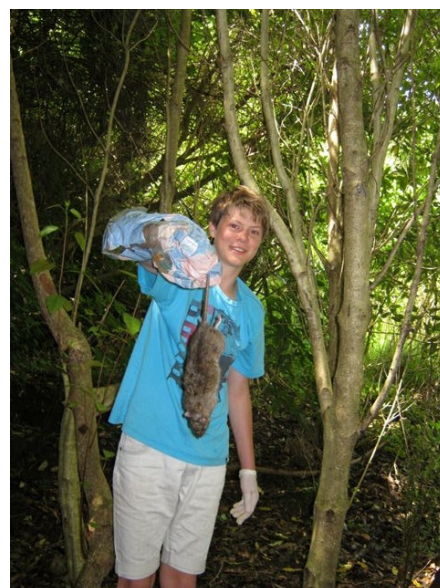
RAMBO co-ordinator Jonathan Kennett is taking all the broken traps back to the factory, where most of them can be repaired for a minimal cost. This will put RAMBO in a good position for being able to replace rusting traps in future.

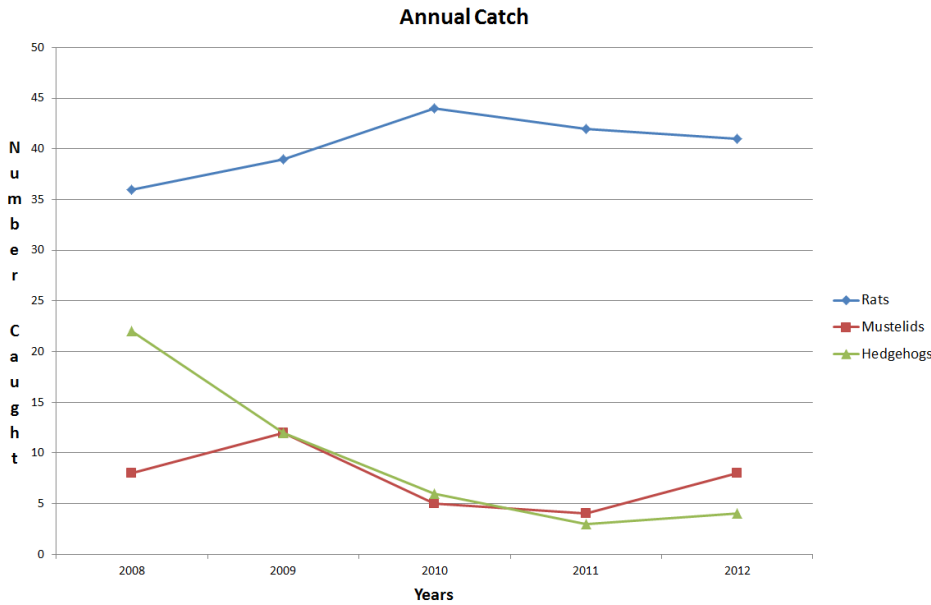
There is potential to increase the effectiveness of the trapping programme at Otari by installing more traps or by checking the existing traps more often. It may be useful to target specific areas, such as the base of trees known to have nesting birds in them.

Jonathan Kennett

	Rats	Mustelids	Hedgehogs	Cats	Rabbits
2007 (3 rd & 4 th Quarters)	23	2	1		1
2008	36	8	22	2	
2009	39	12	12	1	
2010	44	5	6		
2011	42	4	3		
2012	41	8	4		
2013 (1st Quarter)	11	2	5		1
Totals	233	41	53	3	2

Not wanting to scare anyone, but.... here is a photo of the largest rat caught at Otari by the youngest in the trapping team, Dan Falloon





Otari's Ferns with Leon Perrie

Leon's fern link

This blog post might be of interest to those who came to the talk/walk Leon gave in March at Otari.

<http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2013/04/15/how-to-learn-ferns/>

It reinforces what we saw and talked about. Note: there is another fern walk in June.



Orari's Ferns: *Top right:* Sori on the underside of *Todea barbara*. *Left:* Leon Perrie
Lower left: Gail Andrews & Leon *Right:* Margaret Crimp & others. *Photos:* Jane Humble



Fungal Foray

Around fifty people came to Otari for another excellent fungal foray on a fine dry day. Our special thanks to Dr Geoff Ridley and Alison Stringer and Shannan Mortimer, the three mycologists who ran the walk. A number of different nationalities created interest when mushrooms that occur elsewhere were found. Being a month later this year helped after the drought and we found the best display of mushrooms in the beech trees near the Cockayne lawn seen yet. Everyone enjoyed themselves and found yet another way the use the incredible resource that is Otari-Wilton's Bush. Great to see a few kids as well. Thanks also to Otari trust hosts on duty who were coping well with all the extra people.

Phil Parnell



Here is a link to a blog from Dr Geoff Ridley which identifies a number of the species found.

<http://sporesmouldsanbushdfungi.wordpress.com/2013/05/25/otari-wiltons--fungal-foray-2013/>



Above: Upper and underside views *Clitocybe nebularis*.
Left by Eleanor Burton, right by Ryan Gordon.

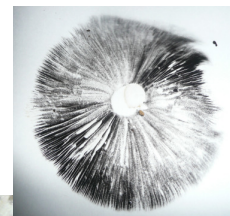


Fungal Foray

Geoff Ridley below right holding *Lacramaria lacrymabunda*. with, centre right, the spore print from it.
Left centre: *Coperinellus disseminatus* & left below: *Amanita nothofagi*, photos by Phil Parnell.

Below centre: *Agrocybe parasitica*.

Photo Eleanor Burton





Tecomanthe speciosa

This is a large and vigorous climber from the Three Kings Islands. It is known in the wild from a single plant. Cuttings were taken, as the plant was being eaten by the goats on the island. Fortunately they took, as when they went back to eradicate the goats the original plant had died. It has also been possible to propagate *Tecomanthe* from seed, and it is now often seen in cultivation where its main requirements are a lot of space and something to climb. The flowers are stunning, though often hidden in the foliage. This has been a very good flowering season.

Tecomanthe can be seen at Otari growing on the deck near the information centre.

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:

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.