Wellington Botanical Society
Te Rōpū Manāki i Ngā Tamariki a Tāne, o Te Whanganui a Tara

NEWSLETTER
April 2025

Previous issue: December 2024

ISSN 1171-9982 (Print) ISSN 2815-9896 (Online)

From the President

One of the main aims of BotSoc is education and we've certainly done a lot of learning this year already!

A small and enthusiastic group headed off to summer camp at St Arnaud and learnt a lot about the flora of Nelson Lakes National Park and the wider area, including some cool alpine plants. At our February field trip, Andy McKay (Kāpiti Coast District Council) and Rhys Mills (Ngā Manu Nature Reserve) told us about efforts to maintain and restore tirauriki / *Korthalsella salicornioides* in Waikanae, in particular at the Kaiwaru Wetlands. The March trip to Karori's Johnston Hill Reserve was an excellent opportunity to learn about ferns with more than 40 species on the plant list!

Our first two talks of the year provided 'big picture' lessons, with Chris Cosslett, Wellington Natural Heritage Trust, providing an overview of 25 years looking after Long Gully Bush and John Leathwick questioning whether New Zealand's targeting of four introduced predators is the best tactic. Both talks were recorded and can be watched on Zoom.

That's a lot of learning for a quarter of the year! And we've plenty more coming – see the programme later in this newsletter.

We congratulate Shannel Courtney who was honoured with the King's Service Medal in the New Year's Honours. Shannel is a long-time member of the Nelson Botanical Society and Wellington Botanical Society. He has worked in the Department of Conservation's Nelson office for many years where he has specialised in the native flora of our high country

Kate Jordan, President

Articles for web site

We welcome articles for consideration for inclusion on our web site:

www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz

Please send your article to:

Richard Herbert

e-mail herbert.r@xtra.co.nz

Writing for the Bulletin

Do you have a botanical observation, anecdote, or insight that you could share with others in BotSoc? If so, please consider contributing it to the Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin. There is still plenty of space in the next issue. For more details and assistance, contact Eleanor Burton at: trogs@duck.com or 479 0497.

BotSoc on Facebook

https://www.facebook.com/groups/322939557873243/

This is the unofficial page for Wellington Botanical Society.

What on earth?

Do you know what this photo depicts? You can find the answer at the bottom of page 4. Give yourself an extra pat on the back if you could identify both the feature and the species. It will likely be easier for people viewing it in colour—perhaps this is an extra incentive to subscribe to the digital PDF version of the newsletter instead of the printed version.

Meetings

BotSoc meetings are usually held at 7.30 p.m., third Monday each month at Victoria University, WN – Lecture Theatre MYLT101, ground floor, Murphy Building, west side Kelburn Parade. Enter building 20 m down Kelburn Pde from pedestrian overbridge. No meetings December and January.

Meetings are in person and usually available on Zoom at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89547154619?pwd=bE0zRXRWSXBBUkVoUjdPcElJNXlJUT09.

Field trips

Day trips to locations in the Wellington region are usually held on the first Saturday of each month.

Extended excursions are usually held at New Year, and sometimes Easter and the first weekend in December.

DEADLINE FOR COPY FOR NEXT ISSUE – 20 September 2025

Articles may be edited for clarity and length

Wellington Botanical Society

Address:	PO Box 10 412, Wellington 6140	
Web site:	www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz	
President:	Kate Jordan	wellingtonbotsocpresident@gmail.com
Vice-Presidents:	Sunita Singh	sunitasingh@actrix.co.nz (also Programme Organiser)
	Eleanor Burton	
Secretary:	Laura Girvan West	wellingtonbotsocsecretary@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Paul Bell-Butler	wellingtonbotsoctreasurer@gmail.com
Membership Secretary:	Karen & Stephen Whitton	wellingtonbotsocmembership@gmail.com
Auditor/Reviewer:	To be advised	
Submissions coordinator:	Vacant—volunteer sought—please contact Secretary	
Bulletin editor:	Eleanor Burton	479 0497
Newsletter editor:	Chris Horne	475 7025
Annual subscription:	ordinary $35; country $30; student $10; joint / group / family $40.	

Send your subscription to our bank account 020536 0017812 00.
Particulars: Name
Code: Membership type
Reference: amount of included donation
New subscribers: Please complete form at the back of this newsletter.

ATTENDING FIELD TRIPS AND MEETINGS

Ideas please

We welcome your ideas about:

- places to visit on field trips, and potential leaders of those field trips.
- topics and speakers for evening meetings

Please send your ideas to Sunita Singh, PO Box 10 412, Wellington 6140, ph 387 9955.

Field trips—single day

A field trip, usually lasting 4–5 hours, is an opportunity to learn how to identify native plants and adventive plants (weeds). During the trip, experienced participants record the species seen. After it, a new or updated plant list will be produced for the site. This list will be published on the NZ Plant Conservation Network web site, and copies sent to trip participants, landowners and managers.

If you intend to join a field trip, PLEASE phone or e-mail the leader at least TWO DAYS beforehand, so that he / she can tell you of any changes and / or particular requirements. If you cannot ring or e-mail in advance, you are welcome to join on the day. If you e-mail your intention, the leader will send you a copy of the draft plant list, so that you can print it out to bring with you. If you do not have a printer, tell the leader. At the meeting place, the trip leader will ask you to write on the registration form your name, e-mail address (so that you can receive the updated plant list), and a phone number for the leader to ring your next-of-kin in an emergency.

Booking on field trips: Give the leader/s your cell-phone number so that we can contact you if you are running late.

What bring—clothing

Choose from the following items, according to the weather forecast, and your personal needs: sun hat, woollen or polyprop beanie or balaclava, waterproof / windproof raincoat (parka) and over-trousers, long-sleeved cotton shirt*, singlet*, thermal or woollen top, woollen jersey or fleece jacket, nylon shorts or trousers*, polyprop long-johns, underclothes, thick socks, boots or walking shoes, gloves / mittens.

*Note: In wet, cold weather, do not wear cotton shirts, singlets, t-shirts and trousers.

What to bring—gear and food

Day pack with lunch, biscuits or scroggin, hot or cold drink, spare clothing, personal first-aid kit, notebook, pen, pencil, mobile phone, wallet. Optional: walking pole, clipboard, map or park brochure, camera, binoculars, hand lens, sunblock, sunglasses, insect repellent, whistle, toilet paper.

Field trips—overnight

Field trips usually last two days; at Easter, three days. We may be based at a campground with or without cabins, or a rented house, or a private bach. The field trip may last 4–7 hours each day.

Overnight trip gear and food

Add to the day-trip gear, food and drink listed above: breakfast, fresh fruit, torch, spare bulb and batteries, candle, mug, plate, knife, fork, spoon, small towel, soap, tooth brush.

If accommodation is not provided for, bring tent, fly, poles and pegs, groundsheet, sleeping mat, sleeping bag, sleeping-bag liner and stuff bag. Optional: matches in waterproof container, water purification tablets, pocket knife, large plastic survival bag to line pack, gaiters. Note: dinners may be 'pot-luck'—ask the leader to suggest what your contribution might be.

Summer camps

These field trips last 7–10 days. Full details will appear in the newsletter.

Postponing field trips

The committee has decided to postpone field trips affected by bad weather or other reasons, rather than to cancel them. Generally, they will be postponed until the following Saturday. However, this will not always be possible. You must register with the trip leader and provide your phone number. If the trip is postponed you can then be contacted and told about rescheduling arrangements.

Health and safety

The leader will bring BotSoc's comprehensive first-aid kit, a topographic map, a mobile phone, and give a health and safety briefing.

The leader will describe the route, and approximate times for lunch, tea breaks and the end of the trip.

Bring your own first-aid kit. If you have an allergy or medical condition, bring your own anti-histamines and medications, tell the leader of any problems you may have, and how to deal with them.

Before the trip, if you have any doubts about your ability to keep up with the party, discuss this with the trip leader, who has the right to restrict attendance.

If you decide to leave a trip early, you must tell the leader, and be confident that you know your way back to the start. Enter your name on the 'register' under a windscreen wiper on the leader's car, or other agreed place, to record your safe return.

Fitness and experience

Our field trips are mostly on established tracks, and at a leisurely pace, but vary considerably in the level of fitness and tramping experience required. Although our main focus is botanical, our programme sometimes offers trips which, in the pursuit of our botanical aims, are more strenuous than others. Although leaders take care to minimise risks, you participate at your own risk.

Transport

When the use of public transport is practical, details will appear in the newsletter.

We encourage the pooling of cars for trips. If you need a lift, tell the trip leader.

Passengers: Pay your driver your share of the running costs. We suggest 10c per km / passenger. If a trip uses the inter-island ferry, pay your share of the ferry fare. If you change cars mid-trip, leave a written note for your driver, under a windscreen wiper on her or his car, and check that your new driver adds you to her or his list.

Drivers: Ensure that you know the route to the start of the trip, and that you have a written list of your passengers. Zero the odometer at the start, and agree on a return time. Check from your list that all your passengers are in the car. Collect contributions towards transport costs.

Trip leaders

Draft a trip report for the newsletter, including a list of participants, then send it to the editor.

When leading a field trip into a regional park please tell the park ranger beforehand.

Other matters

After your first BotSoc field trip, tell the leader if you think there is information newcomers would appreciate seeing about future trips, in the newsletter, on the web site, or on Wellington Glean Report.

If you would like to offer to lead a field trip, or be a deputy leader on a field trip, contact our programme organiser, Sunita Singh, sunita@actrix.co.nz

Meetings

Public transport to meetings

The following bus services stop on Kelburn Parade near Victoria University's Murphy Building Lecture Theatre M101:

TO MEETINGS

No. 18 Karori: 6.45 p.m. from Darlington Rd, Miramar, 7.17 p.m. @ VUW Stop B.

No. 18 Miramar: 6.51 p.m. from Allington Rd, Karori, 7.03 p.m. @ VUW Stop A.

No. 21 Courtenay Place: 7.02 p.m. from Karori Mall – Beauchamp St, Karori, 7.14 p.m. @ VUW Stop A.

No. 21 Wrights Hill: 7.00 p.m. from Courtenay Place – Stop B, 7.08 p.m. @ VUW.

No. 4 Mairangi: Strathmore Park 6.30 p.m., Courtenay Place 7.02, 7.22 p.m. @ VUW. Stop B.

No. 4 Strathmore Park: 6.50 p.m. from Norwich St, Wilton, 7.05 p.m. @ VUW. Stop A.

Cable Car: 00, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 minutes past the hour from Lambton Quay terminus to Salamanca Station. Ten-minutes walk up Kelburn Pde to Murphy Building lecture theatre M101 at VUW.

FROM MEETINGS

No. 4 Strathmore Park: VUW Stop A 8.45 p.m., 9.15 p.m. or 9.45 p.m.

No. 4 Mairangi: VUW Stop B 8.57 p.m. or 9.27 p.m.

No. 21 Courtenay Place: VUW Stop A 9.14 p.m. or 10.14 p.m.

No. 21 Wrights Hill: V.U.W. Stop B 9.38 p.m. or 10.38 p.m.

Cable Car: No service after 8 p.m.

Further information info@metlink.org.nz Metlink, 0800 801-700.

Zoom link for meetings

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89547154619?pwd=bE0zRXRWSXBBUkVoUjdPcElJNXlJUT09.

NOTICES

New members

We welcome Rewi Elliot, Amy MacDonald, Paul & Ann McNamara and look forward to meeting you at our evening meetings and field trips.

We are keen to welcome more people to the delights of botany via BotSoc. If you know someone who might enjoy our field trips, newsletters, bulletin and informative meetings, please encourage them to join. Give them our web site address www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz, then tell them that there is a membership application form at the back of our newsletter.

Karen and Stephen Witton, Membership Secretariat

Letters to the editor

We would welcome your comments on any aspect of BotSoc's activities:

- places you would like to visit on field trips
- topics you would like to have covered in evening meetings
- topics you would like covered in BotSoc's Bulletin and Newsletter
- other matters of concern or interest to you.

Thank you, The committee

Conference

12–14 May. Environmental Defence Society conference, Auckland.

- *fiona@eds.org.nz*

Help raise funds for BotSoc's Jubilee Award Fund

–

bring named seedlings/cuttings for sale at each evening meeting

Newsletter by e-mail?

If you would like to receive your newsletter electronically in PDF format, please contact Memberships Secretary, wellingtonbotsocmembership@gmail.com. The PDF newsletter includes hyperlinks to e-mail and website addresses, and colour images instead of the black-and-white images in the print version.

Ngā mihi, Laura Girvan West, Secretary

PUBLICATIONS

1. **What's Up DOC? Newsletter.**
   - *What's Up DOC*
2. **Greater Wellington Regional Councill fortnightly newsletter:** From Chair, Daran Ponter - *Tō Tātou Rohe.*
   - *comms@gw.govt.nz*
3. **Trilepidea 249 3/25:** NZ Plant Conservation Network's e-newsletter. File size: 3.56 MB.
   - *https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/site/assets/files/0/83/219/trilepidea_march_2025_final.pdf*
4. **Auckland Botanical Society 4/25 Newssheet:** Botanical Art World-wide: Auckland 29/5 – 29/6 then to Wellington; ABS Health & Safety Guide on ABS website; books for sale.
   - *akbotsocnewsletter@gmail.com*
5. **Botanical Society of Otago. No. 104, 3/25:** *Pentachondra pumila*; meetings; field trips; John Barkla awarded 2024 Loder Cup; bryophytes; thematic assessment of mushroom fungi; species lists for mosses, liverworts & hornworts in Otago; John Child Bryophyte Workshop 2024, etc.
   - *bso@otago.ac.nz*
6. **Kāpiti-Mana Forest and Bird:** March newsletter.
   - *https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/sites/default/files/2025-03/2025-03%20F%26B%20K-M%20Newsletter.pdf*
7. **Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society – Forest & Bird magazine**
   - *https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/sites/default/files/2025-03/2025-03%20F%26B%20K-M%20Newsletter.pdf*
8. **Canopy:** Native Forest Restoration Trust. Seeking funds to buy Hutiwai Forest; orchids in William Upton Hewitt Reserve; pest control in Opoutama; etc.
   - *admin@nfrt.org.nz*

'What on earth?' revealed

Stellate (star-shaped) hairs on the surface of the filmy fern *Hymenophyllum frankliniae*. This fern is widespread in wet forests, most commonly as an epiphyte or on rotting logs, stumps and wet ground.

Photos: Jeremy Rolfe.



TRIPS & EVENING MEETINGS

The following programme IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. If you wish to go on a field trip, PLEASE help with planning by giving the leader 2 days' notice before a day trip, MORE notice before weekend trips, and SEVERAL WEEKS' notice before the New Year's trip.

Non-members are welcome to come to our meetings and to join us on our field trips.

JUNE–SEPTEMBER 2025

Saturday 7 June: Field trip **Redwood Bush heights and beyond**

The trip begins with a loop through hillside kohekohe-tawa forest with a healthy understorey and big pūkatea in the gullies. It rises through māhoe-māpou forest to a ridge overlooking Churton Park. From the high point, there is the option to return to the road, with total walking of 1–2 hours (botanising extra). Or, for the adventurous, there is a second loop where the exploring is arguably better than the botany and there are views over Ōhariu Valley to Mākara wind farm and the South Island beyond. The second loop is an extra 1–2 hours walking. The tracks of both loops are uneven, steep, and muddy in places, poorly marked and exposed at their high points. Bring food, drink, appropriate footwear and clothing, and a fully-charged mobile phone for emergency contact. The recent book *Redwood Bush Tawa* by Gil Roper is a fulsome account of the area. **Maps:** Street map & NZTopo50-BQ31 Wellington. **Meet:** 9.30 a.m. at Redwood Bush entrance next to 10 Peterhouse St, Tawa. If driving, it may be easier to park above the one-way parts of Peterhouse St. **Train:** 9.14 train on Kāpiti Line from W'gton Station to Takapu Rd Station. Contact trip leaders if you need a ride from Takapu Rd Station. **Leaders:** Leon Perrie, 027 419 1378/ leon.perrie@tepapa.govt.nz; Lara Shepherd lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz.

Monday 16 June: Evening meeting **Trees on tap?**
Biology and conservation of the parasitic plant *Dactylanthus taylorii*

Speaker: Avi Holzapfel, Operations Manager, DOC's Hauraki District, Coromandel. Avi will summarise our current understanding of the biology and ecology of dactylanthus (Pua o te reinga/*Dactylanthus taylorii*), New Zealand's only native fully parasitic flowering plant. Growing underground as a perennial tuber attached to the root of native host trees and shrubs, its nectar-rich inflorescences break through the forest floor, where they are pollinated by a ground-foraging endemic bat. Browsing of inflorescences by introduced mammals is limiting the species' recruitment and has led to its disappearance over 96% of its pre-human distribution range. The talk will cover the biology and ecology of dactylanthus and the efforts taken to protect the species, including recent translocations to Ōtari Native Botanic Garden and Zealandia. Avi will present recent research on the establishment of populations, and stunning time-lapse images that confirm that dactylanthus should be regarded not as a rare oddity, but an ecosystem driver and a critical element within the forest food web.

Saturday 5 July: Field trip **Porirua Scenic Reserve: Te Ara Utiwai**

Opened in 2018, the walking/cycling track of Te Ara Utiwai winds up the hillside of Porirua Scenic Reserve. It passes through areas of mature tawa-kohekohe forest and regenerating māhoe-māpou, with native plantings on the lower slopes. The track is easy, there is plenty to see in the forest, and it may only be the speedy who complete the 6 km distance and 300 m climb to the lookout near "The Hub". We'll return the way we came. **Maps:** Street map & NZTopo50-BP31 Porirua. **Train:** 8.44 train on Kāpiti Line from W'gton Station to Porirua Station. Contact trip leaders if you need a ride from Porirua Station. **Meet:** 9.30 a.m. at the public carpark off Raiha St., just north-east of Camp Elsdon. The car-park is small but there is plenty of parking in Raiha St. If catching the train, contact the trip leaders if you require a ride from Porirua Station. **Leaders:** Leon Perrie 027 419 1378/ leon.perrie@tepapa.govt.nz; Lara Shepherd lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz.

Saturday 12 July: Field trip **Workbee, Te Mārua Bush, Upper Hutt**

In partnership with Greater Wellington, BotSoc has been committed since 1989 to do weed control and revegetation in this important mataī / tōtara / black maire remnant in Kaitoke Regional Park. Our biennial workbees must continue so that we keep ahead of re-invasion by weeds, particularly around the plantings, so ***please*** come to help with this important work. Bring weeding gear: gloves, kneeler and your favourite weeding tools, e.g., trowel, hand fork, grubber, loppers, pruning saw. There may also be some planting. **Meet**: 9.30 a.m. at Te Mārua Bush. (250 m north of Te Mārua Store and then left off SH2 for 50 m on Twin Lakes Rd, Kaitoke Reg. Pk. **Train**: 8.05 a.m. Hutt Line train W'gton Station to Upper Hutt Station, then no. 112 Te Mārua bus to first stop in Te Mārua Rd—ring the leader to arrange to be met at the bus stop. **Maps**: NZTopo50-BP32 Paraparaumu; street map. **Leaders**: Glennis Sheppard 526 7450; Sue Millar 526 7440.

Monday July 21: Evening meeting **Contemporary Botanical Illustration**

Speaker: Jane Humble, Wellington BotSoc member. In modern times, with so many excellent means of image reproduction available, the ancient tradition of botanical art not only survives but has become increasingly popular. Training in botanical art is very specific and the execution of this school of art is very time-consuming. Contemporary artists use traditional methods and materials at the same time having access to well-standardised modern pigments and equipment. There is a wide spectrum of styles included in 'Botanical Art' and at the more scientific extreme it is known as 'Botanical Illustration' and must display all of the plant's identifying features. It is the enduring importance of Botanical Illustration that I will be talking about.

Saturday 2 August: Field trip **Centennial Park, Miramar**

Botanise along the extensive network of tracks in this fascinating reserve of regenerating, semi-coastal native forest; some plantings. See kiekie - a marker of what Dr Geoff Park classed as a 'primary forest remnant'. **Maps**: street map; NZTopo50-BQ31 Wellington. **Bus**: No. 2 Miramar: Karori Pk, 9.10; Sup. Ct. / Lambton Quay 9.28, Ct. Pl. 9.38, Kilbirnie Stop A 9.49a.m. **Meet**: 10.06 a.m. at bus terminus, Darlington Rd. **Car drivers**: please wait at bus terminus to take bus users to north end of Darlington Rd – park entrance. **Leaders**: Eleanor Burton 021 0588 324/ esmeraldadoris93@gmail.com; AnneTuffin 027 457 6234/anne.tuffin@gmail.com.

Monday 18 August: Evening meeting **Monday 18 August AGM; Tony Druce Memorial Lecture *Craspedia*, Tony Druce's legacy**

Speakers: Ilse Breitwieser, Research Associate – Botanist; Rob Smissen, Senior Researcher – Botanist. Allan Herbarium, Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, Lincoln. Call them billy-buttons, drumstick flower, billy balls, sun balls in Australia or woollyheads and puatea in New Zealand or with their scientific name *Craspedia* (Gnaphalieae, Compositae / Asteraceae), these everlasting daisies are conspicuous members of many plant communities in New Zealand and Australia but remain an outstanding taxonomic challenge. In 1961, based on a small number of available herbarium specimens, HH Allan's *Flora of New Zealand volume 1* recorded just 6 species in New Zealand. However, the 1992 and 1993 checklists of Tony Druce, who made extensive field observations and collected numerous herbarium specimens, distinguished more than 45 undescribed entities that might or might not warrant taxonomic recognition. Morphological variation in New Zealand *Craspedia* is complex, making the definition and circumscription of species problematic. At least in part, this difficulty is the legacy of an extremely rapid and recent diversification of the genus in New Zealand—a scenario that produces challenges for genetic as well as morphological approaches to delimiting species. In this presentation we will review Tony Druce's work on *Craspedia* in New Zealand and present some of our research results about its taxonomy and evolution. Much work remains, but we anticipate our extensive morphological study of plants in the field, in cultivation and in the herbarium as well as our new genetic markers will help us provide an improved classification of *Craspedia* in New Zealand and give us better insight into how their diversity has evolved.

Saturday 6 September: Field trip **Innes Bush, Wainuiomata**

Botanise a 38-hectare area of covenanted native bush, one of the largest private areas of protected conservation land close to Wellington. See 80-year-old regenerating bush, with large rimu and beech trees that were spared from historic felling. Also kāmahi on the higher areas and relict rimu, tōtara, miro and large black beech with a preponderance of kiekie / *Freycinetia banksii* on the wet gully floor and lower contours. **Meet**: 9.30 a.m. at 353 Moores Valley Rd. **Travel** via Wainuiomata Rd to intersection with Main Rd, next to Moores Valley Rd turn-off, then to end of road to no. 353. **Maps**: NZTopo50-BQ32 Lower Hutt & street map. **Train**: 8.35 a.m. train on Hutt Line from W'gton Station to Waterloo Stn—ask one of leaders to meet you on east side of station. **Co-leaders**: Laura Girvan-West 021 583 934/ wellingtonbotsocsecretary@gmail.com; Paul Bell-Butler 021 126 9088/ paul.bellbutler@vuw.ac.nz.

Forest bathing

Auckland BotSocer Maureen Young's letter to the editor of *New Zealand Listener* 1–7 February ... *JOY IN THE WILDERNESS* ... could result in welcome boosts in the number of people interested in joining Aotearoa's several botanical societies.

Wellington BotSoc members will be doing on every field trip what Maureen says in her letter the Japanese call "forest bathing".

Kāpiti Environment Fund

Applications for the Kāpiti Community Environment Fund are now open.

Volunteer community groups and rōpū kaitiaki can apply for funding to support environmental projects. Visit https://www.gw.govt.nz/your-region/funding-and-awards/kapiti-community-environment-fund/ or click on the box below.

↗Learn more

Wellington Botanical Society Jubilee Award – applications sought

The Wellington Botanical Society invites applications for an Award of up to $2,600 to encourage and assist applicants to increase knowledge of New Zealand's indigenous flora, and to commemorate the Society's Jubilee in 1989.

Purpose of the award

The Award is open to anyone working in New Zealand. It may be granted for: fieldwork; artistic endeavour; publication; research; propagation or cultivation of NZ native plants for educational purposes and/or other studies which promote the better understanding of NZ's indigenous flora and vegetation. The interpretation of these conditions will be flexible, except that the main criterion will be the furtherance of knowledge or promotion of the intrinsic value of NZ's indigenous flora and vegetation. The Award may be used to defray costs such as travel, accommodation, materials, or publication.

Applications for the Award

Applications should be made by e-mail to trogs@duck.com, by 6 October 2025.

There is no prescribed application form, but the following must be provided:

- the applicant's name, postal address, telephone number and e-mail address
- any relevant position held
- a summary statement of the applicant's accomplishments in the field of botany – no more than one page
- an outline and timetable for the proposed project for which the Award is sought
- a proposed budget for the project

Selection

The Award will be made to one or more applicants selected by a subcommittee nominated by the general committee of Wellington Botanical Society. Award(s) will be made and applicants informed of the results by 15 October 2025.

Successful applicants will be required to provide, at an agreed time, a short report on what they have achieved, and an account of their expenditure of Award funds. The names of the Award recipients, the value of the Award(s), and a synopsis of the project(s) will be published in the Annual Report of Wellington Botanical Society.

Student Grants 2025

Each year the Wellington Botanical Society provides small grants to assist post-graduate students in the VUW School of Biological Sciences.

These grants can be used for travel, materials and other costs related to research projects undertaken as part of the course of study. Grants to any one student will normally be not more than $1200.

Applications should be made to Eleanor Burton (trogs@duck.com) by **30 September 2025**.

Applications should be brief and to the point. (Say two A4 pages).

They should state

- Your name and email address
- Your current education qualifications
- The course of study being undertaken
- The nature and aim of the research project
- The name of your supervisor for this project
- The budget for this project
- The expenses that the grant is proposed to cover

You will be advised of the results of your application by 15 October 2024.

Names of successful applicants will be published in the Society's newsletter.

It is a condition of the grant that you make a short presentation to the Society on your project and/or provide a one page summary of the nature and results of the project to be included in the Society's newsletter or bulletin.

The small print.

1. Grants will normally be to post-graduate students. Consideration may be given to applications by undergraduates where the supervisor considers that there is a special case to be made because the nature of the project is similar to that undertaken by graduate students.
2. Priority will be given to projects involving native New Zealand vascular plants and cryptogams. Consideration may be given to those projects involving other vegetation. With the anticipated competition and limited funds it is unlikely that applications for projects involving algae, fungi, or coral would be successful.
3. The primary purpose of the grant is to cover field expenses – transport and accommodation but not rations. Financial assistance towards the cost of chemicals and chemical and DNA analysis will be entertained. The Society is reluctant to fund capital items but will consider applications for these.
4. Applications for grants made after the closing date may be entertained if the Society has not already allocated the funds available for the Student Grant. Priority will be given to applications received before the close-off date.
5. The funds available are limited and priority will be given to those applications and those expenditures that agree with the main criteria set out above and are most in line with the aims of the Wellington Botanical Society.

Call for Applications for 2025/26 Scholarship

Applications are invited for the Waikato Botanical Society Student Scholarship. The scholarship is open to any student studying for any degree or diploma with a research component in any tertiary institution in Aotearoa New Zealand. The scholarship allocation awarded will be up to $2,000.

Priority will be given to research projects which most align with two key aims of the Waikato Botanical Society. Which are:

- To encourage the study of botany, particularly that of New Zealand and the WaikatoRegion.
- To encourage the conservation of indigenous flora of New Zealand and the Waikato Region.

Closing date for applications: **Friday 27 June 2025**

A copy of the Application Form and the Rules of the award may be downloaded from the WaikatoBotanical Society website.

Contact for enquiries: Waikato Botanical Society Secretary secretarybotsocwaikato@gmail.com

Linda Watson

QEII National Trust update

Natalie Morrison – Communications Advisor
Anna-Kate Goodall – Land Protection Advisor
Trevor Thompson – Regional Representative Wairarapa
Becky Harris – Team Leader Land Protection

QEII National Trust is an independent charitable trust that partners with private landowners to protect natural and cultural heritage sites on their land. Landowners retain ownership of their property and special areas are protected with legally binding agreements called covenants, which remain on the land title forever.

As of March 2025, QEII has a total of 5,345 registered covenants protecting 188,454 hectares throughout New Zealand. In the Wellington region there are 391 Open Space Covenants registered, protecting 6,591 hectares. The largest registered covenant in the Wellington region is 824 hectares and the average size is 17 hectares.

Managing rare plants in the Wairarapa region

Wairarapa is home to a number of Aotearoa's nationally rare plants and a good number of regionally rare plants. QEII regional representative **Trevor Thompson** takes us through a selection of rare plants he has been active in managing across the region:

***Olearia gardneri* (Threatened – Nationally Endangered)**
In 2014, roughly 400 tree daisy / *O. gardneri* plants were discovered in a QEII covenant, New Zealand's largest population of the plant. Four new insurance populations have since been set up in QEII covenants along with further plantings in the covenant they had been found in. There are now estimated to be about 1,000 plants in the country, with more at the nursery ready for planting. Fifty plants have been supplied to Hawke's Bay to re-establish the species there.

***Brachyglottis pentacopa* (Threatened – Nationally Critical)**
Approximately 70 plants of this small tree are found on a single hill on the Wairarapa coast, a part of a significantly-sized QEII covenant. Seed has been collected, and a small ungulate exclusion fence has been built to protect plantings from goats. As of December 2024, about 60 new plants are surviving within this protected area and about 10 more are protected by individual guards. Another 180 or so plants are at the nursery ready for planting, with more to come from seed collected the previous year. While one attempt to set up an insurance population has been made, this was unsuccessful. This is a priority action as an event such as a fire could be devastating should it occur in this fire-prone area. Much effort has been given to learning the secrets of successful planting and management of this plant and we continue to learn more.

White mistletoe *Tupeia antarctica* (Regionally Declining)
Tupeia antarctica is declining fast in all the unmanaged wild populations in Wairarapa with most of the plants now found in insurance populations. Black maire (*Nestegis cunninghamii)* is no longer as viable as a host, with other species now better suited. Numbers are declining in the wild because of zero recruitment and hosts dying of old age along with an out-of-control possum population over most of Wairarapa. Approximately 100 plants are in insurance areas and barely double that figure in wild populations, widely scattered.

Yellow mistletoe *Alepis flavida* (At Risk – Declining)
Alepis flavida is likely the Wellington region's rarest plant at a current total of seven plants all in two insurance populations. The original wild population has now likely gone, with climate change a big factor in this. While good seed is very viable with the right methods, seed over the last two years has gone rotten on the plant before ripening, possibly due to excessive summer rain, lack of sun, and months of heavy overcast conditions. The seed this year has been abundant and hopefully will be able to successfully ripen and used to increase numbers significantly.
Other regionally rare species such as *Corokia cotoneaster* and kohekohe (*Didymocheton spectabilis*) are also making a comeback in numbers in Wairarapa thanks to propagation, nursery care and planting within protected areas.

Become a member of QEII

Learn more about QEII's work by joining a passionate group of over 5,000 members. An individual membership is just $30. You get two copies of QEII's Open Space magazine a year, plus other perks. Join online and help to encourage conservation on private land: qeii.org.nz/membership**.**

Ōtari update

After the coolest January in almost a decade, February has really turned it on and March delivered a reprieve. This year has been very good for seed production with plants throughout the forest, including many coprosma species, tawa, miro and hīnau producing big seed crops.

The bridge near our northern carpark is now complete and open to the public.

This summer we have done a large amount of tree work in the Fernery, 38 Degrees Garden, Black Beech Forest and other parts of the collection. A few hanging branches have been removed in the forest to keep it as safe as possible for our visitors. The tawa behind the sign/shelter by the main carpark has been reduced as some of the high branches were dying back. We are lucky that the WCC arborists love coming to Ōtari. Trees have also been assessed by contract arborists who initially identified some priorities for management.

Over summer the team has again been doing hand pollination of *Celmisia* "Mangaweka" and rātā moehau / *Metrosideros bartlettii*, to out-cross the few individuals in cultivation to support the conservation efforts of these species. Zealandia invited us to check their kōhurangi / *Brachyglottis kirkii* plants which are looking great. This species was wiped out from the Wellington Peninsula by possums, and it is now doing well in nest epiphytes in the forest at Ōtari, where it is was planted several years ago after being propagated from regionally sourced plants.

Brachyglottis kirkii, southern Tararua Range. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

Our Pā Harakeke has been quite busy and the harakeke are looking great. Some weavers have harvested material for Te Matatini kaihaka this year. The more the bushes are harvested, the better they look! Lots of experienced weavers have been inducted lately and we have hosted several tertiary institutions, including some new ones teaching in the textiles and fashion business.

The Forest Weeders are going very well and the forest is looking better than ever as a result of their determined efforts. Also, we are grateful for the regular Thursday Garden Weeders who help us keep the gardens looking great and our morning quiz score up. The Trust nursery is looking very good … there is an amazing diversity of plants being produced by volunteers. Recently a stoat was caught on camera at the Flax Clearing, and people have been asking if we put out traps to catch it! We are very fortunate to have the longest running, best practice trapping network in Wellington at Ōtari, which is designed to capture stoats which have large home ranges. This is part of a wider network across WCC Reserves maintained by scores of volunteers, while adjacent rural areas have a network of traps maintained by Capital Kiwi and their team. Since the stoat was caught on video, a number of young stoats have been caught in the wider area.

This summer, Eleanor Burton was able to go to Rakiura (Stewart Island) and Megan Ireland managed to collect some interesting plants while on the Wellington BotSoc trip to Nelson Lakes. David Sole retired in January, and we have a new manager, Bec Ramsay, who has previously worked in a management role for WCC Parks, Sport and Recreation. Dave is on leave at the moment and we have a temp to help us keep up with the weeding in the nursery and garden. Over summer our apprentice was Lucy and recently Cloud has joined us for the next few months. We have a busy time coming with some interns, both local and international, coming to us for work experience.

Make sure you check out the impressive line-up of speakers this year for the Autumn seminars and the comprehensive and diverse Autumn Guided Walks programme. These walks will likely book out quickly. Finally Linda Lee, of Ōtari Raranga Weavers, is running weaving workshops on the weekends so if you have been curious about weaving, give it a go!

Mā te wā.

Tim Park
Kaiwhakahaere Ōtari
Manager, Ōtari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve

Percy Scenic Reserve news—Summer '25

We are still waiting for the climate-control/refrigeration units to be installed for the new climate-controlled glasshouses. Everything else has been completed for them, benches installed, etc. Once this has been done, we can start moving plants into them. These plants are currently squashed in to the other three houses with the other plants … not a lot of space!

Our pest control in the houses is going well now … still no sign of the mealy-bug we used to be plagued with. We have sprayed twice in the last year … the first spray seemed to pretty much wipe them out … the second, six months later, got the few that did come back. We used to be spraying constantly. A great result.

We did not manage to get away on our seed/plant material collection trip this year. But as we had already applied for and got our collection permit from DOC, for the Rainbow Ski Field in the Nelson region, my colleague John van den Hoeven took some annual leave and went on his own. He travelled down on 7 March, returning on 10 March. It rained quite heavily on the Saturday, so he didn't get out collecting, but he did get out on Sunday 9 March. He managed to find seed from seven species including *Neomyrtus pedunculata* and *Aciphylla colensoi*. He also collected cuttings material and small divisions from twenty-six other species. These included *Haastia pulvinaris* var. *minor*, *Celmisia lateralis* var. *villosa* and *Ourisia simpsonii*, with ten or more species being new to the collection.

A selection of plants propagated at Percy Scenic Reserve.

Our propagation efforts with *Myosotis petiolata* are going well—three divisions from the original seven plants we received from DOC Hawke's Bay flowered, and fifteen from the nursery in Hawkes Bay who are also propagating plants. This is the first time any have flowered in cultivation. We managed to grow about sixty plants last year, while they managed to grow two hundred—a great effort. Our first batch of seventy cuttings died for some reason. I don't know how Ōtari-Wilton's Bush staff are doing with their endeavours in the project. We have recently taken about four hundred new cuttings … hopefully they will root. We have managed to get more cuttings this round as we have more stock material to work with.

Cliff Keilty
Gardener
Percy Scenic Reserve, Petone

Book Review

Szabo, M. (2024). Wild Wellington Ngā Taonga Taiao: A guide to the wildlife and wild places of Te Upoko-o-te-Ika. Te Papa Press.

Review by Paul Bell-Butler

The latest natural history offering from Te Papa Press is a guidebook for the environmentally minded tourist (or local!) to Wellington's metropolitan areas (i.e. west of the Remutaka and Tararua Ranges). While it is primarily about the animals and particularly about the birds one can see around Te-Upoko-o-te-Ika, botanical points of interest are definitely included and so it will definitely be of interest to the generalists among us.

The book is divided into four main sections: Wellington City, the South Coast, the Hutt Valley, and Porirua/Kāpiti Coast. Each section begins with a simple but helpful map and a kōrero about the area's human history; mythological, indigenous, and European. Thirty Wellington wild areas are treated in detail in the book, split roughly evenly among the sections. The sections are helpfully coloured on the page edges to easily divide the book. About four to eight pages are devoted to detailing each site, the text accompanied by numerous photographs and a short box at the end with recommendations on getting there via public transport (most welcome!).

As far as the sites themselves, I imagine they will mostly be familiar to Wellington Botanical Society members. I've lived in Wellington for only about three years, and of the 30 suggested excursions there were only five I'd not done before. Most of those were the inaccessible (Matiu, Wainuiomata Water Catchment) or aquatic (Nicholson and Cook Canyon) but there was one I could remedy, so I took the book on a hike up to Mt. Tarikākā (Mt. Kaukau).

While, as mentioned earlier, the book is not plant-focussed, there are at least a few paragraphs for each site describing the vegetation in general (e.g. forest types, common tree species) and particular species that might be in flower or of interest (e.g. orchid species, *Metrosideros fulgens* flowers, stinging nettles). Something I found a little challenging in these descriptions is the insistence on using common names, even when they become ambiguous or are not commonly used, at least in New Zealand. I had to look a few up or go by context to recognise them. The orchid genera *Caladenia*, *Corybas*, and *Pterostylis* are occasionally mentioned with full names, but few others. A directory of common → scientific names would have been welcome.

Overall I think this is a lovely book that showcases some excellent natural gems of Wellington which visitors and perhaps some locals would appreciate a glimpse into. The flexibound jacket is durable but without the weight of a hardback, the style and layout are easy-to-follow, and the photos are clear and highly detailed. I think it would be greatly appreciated by some of our newer members and perhaps provide a handy gift for those looking to get their friends and loved ones out exploring their backyards a little more.

Alligator weed

Over recent years alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*) has appeared at several sites in Lower Hutt and Wellington. One of these sites was on Marsden Street, Lower Hutt, where the houses have been removed for flood protection as part of the Riverlink Project. Because this site is where they plan to put the new stop bank, we could not just deal with this site with our usual control methods. So, Jim Mitford-Taylor, one of our Biosecurity Officers, worked with Riverlink on the best long-term control method (eradication). In the end this meant using diggers to remove all the material in the infested site (up to 1.5m depth) and take it to Porirua's Spicer Landfill for special containment (deep burial) with over 100 tonnes of material being disposed of. Jim worked with Riverlink, contractors and MPI to make sure all necessary measures (hygiene) and permissions were in place so that we would not spread this nasty weed. So far, no alligator weed has been found on the site, 3 months post control.

Alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*).

Diggers were used to remove all traces of alligator weed from the Marsden Street site.

Greater Wellington is now running a campaign "Spot the invaders" on social media to target new infestations of our Regional Pest Management species. Also, posters have gone

up in several nurseries around the region promoting this campaign. You can view this campaign at www.gw.govt.nz/pest-and-weed-central where if you report to us a new infestation of alligator weed, Chilean needle grass, nassella tussock, moth plant, Senegal tea, spartina, velvetleaf, woolly nightshade, purple loosestrife, blue passionflower, climbing spindleberry and eelgrass in our region you will receive a $20 voucher to spend on native plants from a local nursery. So, keep your eyes peeled while travelling our region and report any potential new infestations.

Greater Wellington is controlling the invasive fern common polypodium, *Polypodium vulgare*, in the Key Native Ecosystem Cape Palliser Mātakiakiakupe. It's currently treated as a site-led species and is being targeted to conserve significant habitat for rare and threatened native species. Over the last year reports of polypodium shows it is spreading further North across our region with reports around Greytown and Hinakura. The species is highly adapted to many environments occupying coastal rocky escarpments, damp tree trunks and mānuka forest floors. We will review this species for inclusion in the Regional Pest Management Plan at the next review, due to be completed by July 2029 at the latest.

Polypodium vulgare. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

Our pest animal team have been working with Waka Kotahi – NZ Transport Agency regarding a regional predator pathway management plan for pests along Transmission Gully Motorway (SH1 network) with eight mustelids caught so far including three ferrets.

We have increased our Pūkaha buffer predator-control servicing to fortnightly between February and April with the first service completed with 29 ferrets, 11 pest cats and 3 weasels recorded. This will help protect Pūkaha along with the work our neighbouring regional council - "Horizons" – is doing in the area.

Last year GWRC joined the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Partnership and worked with TOS to include Wellington in the Incident Response Plan. GW staff have had baseline training in marine biosecurity incident response, enforcement, organism recognition, vessel inspections and awareness activities provided as part of TOS membership.

To reduce the risk of a marine pest incursion, we intend to

- Develop rules under RMA requiring clean hulls
- Gather intelligence through marine authorities and industries (e.g. AIS)
- Include requirements for hull cleanliness in marina berth agreements and enforce compliance
- Run awareness programmes for boat owners and marina managers
- Conduct surveillance of recreational vessels at marinas, service facilities and moorings
- Support development of adequate facilities for hull maintenance.
- Participate in inter-regional cooperation programmes (e.g. TOS)
- Sponsor research and monitoring

We intend to amend our Regional Pest Management Programme to include marine biosecurity provisions and pest-exclusion programmes (e.g., *Sabella* and *Caulerpa*), and will implement a Small-Scale Surveillance and Management Programme at key locations with high incursion risk.

Mark McAlpine
Greater Wellington Regional Council

Update on the 1948 field trip

Dr Greta Stevenson (married name Cone) published a series of papers on the native mushrooms of New Zealand in the early 1960s. These papers were based on fungi collected from the Wellington region when she lived here in the 1940s and early 1950s. She moved to England in 1959 where she completed her work and wrote the papers. All of her collections were deposited in the Kew Garden Herbarium.

In December a box of Greta's collections was returned to New Zealand from Kew and are being deposited in the New Zealand Fugarium - Te Kohinga Hekaheka o Aotearoa at Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research in Auckland. As part of the deposition process, all of the information on the individual collection packets is being databased. Being a Wellington resident, I was asked where "Hutt Ferneries" was as it was given as the location on ten packets. A search on the internet found nothing, so I asked about the collection date and all ten were from 5 June 1948.

I knew Greta had been active in the Wellington Botanical Society in the 1940s and I understand she had even been president. So, I looked up the Society Bulletin from 1948 and there was an article "Hutt Fernery / Jubilee Park June 5th. 1948 by I.M. Morice but, unfortunately, the participants are not listed

Morice wrote "Leaving the magnificent view of harbour and valley we turned back to the bush where the fungus lovers found much of interest; a scarlet puff ball, little chrome yellow toadstools, the "elbow-bending" fungus, and the bird's nest fungus, some specimens with the lid still on, and others with the lid off showing the spore-bearing bodies lying like miniature eggs in a nest."

It is exciting that these collections have been returned to New Zealand after an absence of 65 years but it's even more exciting to be able to connect them to a real event in the published record of the Society.

Reference

Morice, I.M. 1948. Hutt Fernery / Jubilee Park June 5th 1948. *Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin 19*: 9.

TRIP REPORTS

18–26 January 2025: Summer camp – Nelson Lake National Park

19.1.2025: Pinchgut Track, Robert Ridge to Mt Robert Skifield, Paddy's Track

We made an early start to give us plenty of time on the top. The Pinchgut Track alternated between beech forest with not much diversity, and open areas of pasture grasses with interesting native species on the banks above the track. We saw three species of *Gaultheria* here, numerous *Wahlenbergia albomarginata*, *Leucopogon colensoi*, *L. fraseri*. As we got nearer the top alpine species started to appear under the beech, e.g., *Celmisia spectabilis*, *Olearia lacunosa*, *Astelia nervosa*. Once out on the top we saw a lot of *Chionochloa australis* / carpet grass with *Celmisia sessiliflora*, *Craspedia uniflora*, *Gentianella* spp., *Brachyglottis lagopus,* etc. We saw *Celmisia incana* agg. in the more open places, and *Veronica tetragona* (one of the whipcord hebes) flowering magnificently. In the bare rock areas we saw *Montia* and *Notothlaspi australe* in seed. There were a few *Aciphylla aurea*, and patches of *Phyllachne colensoi,* often with *Celmisia laricifolia* growing in them. As we continued up the ridge we saw *Lobelia angulata*, *Aciphylla montana* and *Lycopodium fastigiatum*.

Poa kirkii from Mount Robert. Illustration: Eleanor Burton.

Once over the top of the ridge, overlooking Mt Robert Ski-field, we saw *Haastia sinclairii*. On the way back down we found another rocky area with *Lignocarpa carnosula*, *Leucogenes grandiflora* and *Celmisia semicordata*. Some of us went back via Paddy's Track and found *Discaria toumatou* / matagouri. It was also a good day for bird observations. We saw korimako / bellbird, tūī, tītīpounamu / rifleman, mōhua / yellowhead, pīwakawaka / fantail, kākā, pīpīpī / brown creeper and toutouwai / South Island robin.

Participants: John Barnett, Eleanor Burton (scribe), Michele Dickson, Jenny Fraser, Julia Fraser, Ken Fraser, Laura Girvan-West, Richard Herbert, Richard Littauer, Megan Ireland, Tom Mayo, Pascale Michel, Owen Spearpoint.

20.01.25: Rainbow Ski-field 1548m

On Day 2 of Summer Camp we drove to Rainbow Ski area in a three-car convoy. Our thanks to the local DOC office for allowing vehicle access. We parked two of our vehicles at the facilities buildings, but the 4-wheel drive vehicle was able to continue further up the gravel track, almost to the top of the ridge. The rest of us ambled our way up the 200 m climb to the top, exploring alpine herb-fields and stream-edges.

We explored a short distance along the ridge, dropping down on either side to look at pockets of scree and vegetation, searching for penwipers, edelweiss and other species in the rock gardens. From there various groups broke away: one group headed down to botanise a lake edge … some drove further down exploring gullies from the road edge … another went on to peak-bag Mt McRae (1878m), while others occupied themselves searching unsuccessfully for speargrass weevils, and another even taking a quick dip in a lake.

Non-botanical highlights were the panoramic views of the Travers and Raglan Ranges from the ridge-top, the insect life, including the plethora of multi-coloured alpine grasshoppers, and the pīhoihoi / pipit.

One of many alpine grasshoppers.

Botanical highlights included: *Aciphylla* spp. *Haastia pulvinaris*, *H. sinclairii*, *Kelleria dieffenbachii*, *Leucogenes grandiceps*, *Myosotis traversii*, *Notothlaspi rosulatum* and six species of *Veronica* including *V. cheesemanii* subsp. *cheesemanii* in flower.

Veronica cheesemanii subsp. *cheesemanii*.

Laura Girvan-West

21.01.2025: Peat bog and kettle holes

Peat Bog

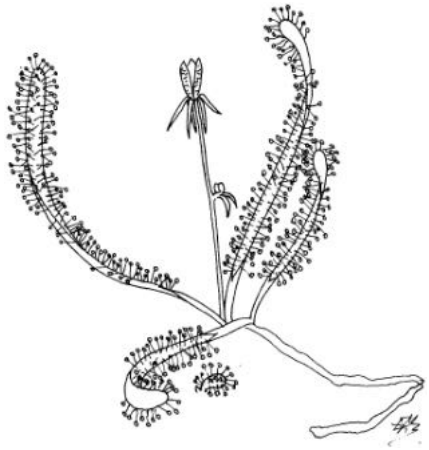
BotSoccers botanising the bog. Photo: Pascale Michel.

Our third day treated us with blue shy, sunshine and a generous 21°C. The 13 of us headed in the morning for Korere-Tophouse road in Saint Arnaud, where we were greeted by Adrian and Neepa Briggs, owners of the property we were visiting, and Tom Stein (QEII representative). Tom accompanied us for the day, guiding us

for the twenty-minute walk through beech forest to reach our area of interest: a rain-fed montane umbrageous peat bog protected under QEII covenant.

The forest on the way to and surrounding the bog was dominated by *Lophozonia menzesii*, *Fuscospora ciffortioides* and the occasional *F. fusca*

The cover of *Sphagnum* in the bog was extensive and varied in depth and moisture from a 30 cm layer of spongy materials to a fine surface cover of dry plant. The sphagnum bog profile could be explained by a short period of *Sphagnum* harvesting in the 1990s. *Halocarus bidwillii, Androstoma empetrifolia*, *Empodisma minus,* and *Dracophyllum palustre,* dominated the vegetation in and on the margins of the bog. The delicate *Drosera spatulata*, *Celmisia alpinus* and *Oreobolus pectinatus* were sparse in the *sphagnum* cover, with another sundew *Drosera arcturii* more abundant. The blue or pink flowers of the orchid *Thelymitra cyanea* and white of the *Adenochilus gracilis* added sparkles of colours to the landscape.



Drosera arcturi. Illustration: Eleanor Burton.

The forest surrounding the margin of the bog was dominated by *Phyloclades alpina*, *Halocarpus bidwillii*, *Halocarpus biforme*, *Fuscospora cliffortidiodes*. Amongst these trees the mistletoe *Alepis flavida* was still displaying a few of its yellow flowers.

Alepis flavida flower. Photo: Pascale Michel.

There were obvious and fresh signs of deer presence, such as browsing on *Dracophyllum filifolium* and multiple well developed deer trails criss-crossing the bog.

St Arnaud kettle holes

After the visit to the QE2 bog we all regrouped at our accommodation and 8 of us were keen to botanist the nearby kettle holes for the remainder of the afternoon. The St Arnaud kettle holes are shallow depressions in the ground formed by glacial action that fill in with several cm of water but are often seasonally dry. They are a feature of a glaciated landscapes hosting unique ephemeral wetland turf communities.

Tadpole pond was located 200 m up a road from the West Bay jetty and was about 10–20 m diameter. The centre consisted of recently-dried cracked mud, surrounded by the aquatic plants *Myriophyllum propinquum* and *M. triphyllum*, now exposed, flowering and drying.

On the margins of what would have once been a wet pond, *Lobelia fatiscens* and *Gratiola concinna* were seen flowering [Photo credit Owen Spearpoint]. The strikingly red stems of the small rush *Juncus pusillus* was common, while the buttercup *Ranunculus amphitrichus* was more sparse. The spike sedge *Eleocharis acuta* was also present in places.

Further under the shade of the beech trees, mosses such as *Polytrichum commune* formed large carpets. A brown whistling tree frog (*Litoria ewingii)* was observed, estivating under a rock in the margin of the depression.

Gratiola concinna. Photo: Owen Spearpoint.

The second kettle hole was located 50m from the bridge over the Buller River on Mount Robert Road. The centre of the depression was more densely vegetated than at Tadpole Hole, being mostly covered by *Eleocharis acuta* and *Juncus pusilllus,* suggesting lower water levels during wet periods. *Myriophyllum propinquum* was present. Other species recorded include *Lobelia angulata, L. fatiscens, Ranunculus amphitrichus, Gonocarpus micranthus, Hydroctyle sulcata*. This site was more weedy than the previous, with large plants of *Hypericum sp., Ranunculus repens* and *Lotus pedunculatus.* The margin consisted mostly of a dry *sphagnum* cover.

Tadpole pond plant list

Whistling/brown tree frog
Eleocharis acuta
Gratiola concinna
Myriophyllum propinquum
Myriophyllum triphyllum
Lobelia fatiscens
Ranunculus amphitrichus
Juncus pusillus

Kettle hole number two plant list

Lobelia angulata
Lobelia fatiscens
Ranunculus amphitrichus
Juncus pusillus
Hypericum sp. (grey plant, exotic?)
Myriophyllum propinquum
Gonocarpus micranthus
Hydroctyle sulcata
Ranunculus repens
Eleocharis acuta

Owen Spearpoint

22.01.25: Red Hills Track Ultramafic belt

On the fourth day of our trip to Nelson lakes, we headed to the Red Hills track, leading up to Red Hills Hut. We met in the car-park on what was going to turn into a beautifully sunny day. While we were waiting, we listened to the wasps buzzing in the beech trees and spotted large *Peraxilla colensoi* in the canopy.

The track started through the beech trees for around 20-30 minuets before opening up into larger 4×4 track which climbed gradually through thinning scrub of *Dracophyllum longifolium, Leucopogon fasciculatus, Leptospermum scoparium* and *Exocarpos bidwillii*. The hīkoi to Red Hills Hut took 2–2.5 hours, with the vegetation becoming sparser until we reached the hut, highlighting the change in underlying geology.

Near the hut we found a little wetland

containing *Schoenus pauciflorus* and some flowering *Gentianella tenuifolia,* etc. Here we also met a few people doing the Te Araroa Trail. After smoko we took an old grass track behind the hut, heading up to the tussocks beyond while botanising on our way up and enjoying the view.

Some of the group headed to the plateau and tarns beyond, where they discovered *Thelymitra* sp. and *Brachyglottis lagopus*. In a small cluster of beech trees we saw *Celmisia semicordata*, *Gingidia montana* and *Prasophyllum* sp. After a great day botanising, we headed back down the track the way we came.

Megan Ireland

24.01.25: Rainbow Rd, junction to ski-field access

With the weather coming in, we decided to spend the morning a little closer to base and the cars. We headed down Rainbow Road towards the ski field. When the junction turns right towards the ski field, we headed straight on the 4×4 track that leads towards Hanmer. This provided a great opportunity for some of us to brush up on our beech tree id skills as we had red, black and silver beech together.

Scattered throughout the area was swaths of *Gastrodia* sp. However, we found the highlight was on the floodplain beside the Wairau River. Here we stumbled (thankfully not literally) across *Discaria toumatou* / matagouri. While this may not be as exciting for our South Island neighbours as it was for Wellingtonians, seeing the mature plants along with the recruiting seedlings was a highlight.

Kānuka forests occupied most of the property, with some grassland and a stream running through the western edge.

From the car-park at the end of a driveway, the group followed the owners a few hundred metres back up the drive and into the bush to see the property's crown jewel: a *Pittosporum patulum*. This was a very healthy, adult "pitpat" (https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/259507091). About 5 metres tall, it was very well leafed out, and Eleanor found some berries near the top. The "pitpat" stood alone - we didn't find any more on the property, although there were quite a few similar-looking trees which took careful study to rule out.

After viewing the "pitpat" in all of its iambic glory, we split into groups of twos or threes. I immediately went down into a gully to see the stream crossing the property, looking for ferns along the walls and hoping that the water would lead to another "pitpat"—no luck. There were a large variety of ferns in the gully and throughout the property—sixteen species, including nine species of *Blechnum*.

After that, under a spreading Nothofagus canopy with a lot of dead wood underneath, the second great find of the day was discovered: a single *Melicytus flexuosus* (https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/259505945)*. This was much admired. There were other interesting plants nearby—for instance, *Lophomyrtus obcordata* (https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/259505945) and *Chaerophyllum colensoi*, but these were likely planted, while the origin of the *Melicytus* was as odd as the "pitpat".

The owner showed a small group of us a few more interesting, solitary plants on the property, both of which he had fenced in chicken wire to ensure that they were secure from possible pests. One was a large and beautiful *Celmisia semicordata* (https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/259505542). The other was a single *Aciphylla aurea* (https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/259505535). Neither of these were new to the trip, as we had seen several on the mountain tops (Rainbow was fairly bursting with aciphyllas), but they were odd seeming healthy and isolated in this lowland area which had formerly been browsed.

The owner then walked some of us around the perimeter, where the effects of rooting pigs were clear where they had previously got in. Some lizards were noted but not identified. We then botanised our way through the mānuka forests, noting up to seven different species of orchid.

On the whole, the property was still returning to native bush, with many adventive plants. As far as invasive trees, in the back of the property, there were some very blown over *Pinus radiata*, which had been planted initially as a harvest crop, but which couldn't root well in the clay soils. Also present on the neighboring property were sycamore / *Acer pseudoplatanus*, and some samaras made their way across the fence, but there were no seedlings found on the Covenant. While searching for those, we uncovered a few invasive brambles which will do enough damage on their own if not controlled, as well as some silver birch / *Betula pendula*.

Overall it was a delightful time, and a lovely covenant. The "pitpat" and the *Melicytus* were, of course, the stars.

Richard Littgauer

1 February 2025: Kaiwaru Wetlands, Waikanae Park

This wetland area of remnant native vegetation lies in the Kaiwaru Wetland area on the north side of Kaiwaru Trig. The reserve is managed as a significant natural area within Waikanae Park by Kāpiti Coast District Council.

Andy McKay, Team Leader – Environment and Ecological Services at Kāpiti Coast District Council and co-leader of the field trip, led us north to the site from the Waikanae Park carpark at the Wrestling Club, over an old sand dune where we stopped for a view of the wetland. From this vantage point he talked about the history of the wetlands and pointed out the number of dead trees in the lowest-lying part—one specimen of rimu and many mature kānuka and mānuka trees. This is the result of changes that have been happening to the hydrology of the site over the last few years, partly as the result of climate change and also the building of the Kāpiti Expressway.

Mānuka and kānuka at the site are host to tirauriki / *Korthalsella salicornioides*, a plant of national conservation concern and of high conservation priority within the Wellington conservancy. Apart from a small population on Kāpiti Island, this is one of only two known sites of tirauriki on the Kāpiti Coast (an area where it was formerly widespread, apparently). Andy noted that regeneration of this remnant, and of *K. salicornioides*, is occurring in places but extensive areas have been overtaken by blackberry and inkweed and other areas are grazed by horses.

The species list we used was prepared by Pat Enright in February 2024. Everyone in the group had a copy of the list of species to make it easy for the holder to put a tick against a plant identified.

When we arrived at the wetland we were joined by Rhys Mills, Reserve

Supervisor at Ngā Manu Reserve. He helped us identify *K. salicornioides* on some lower branches of a mānuka and told us about the efforts being made to collect seed from this site and propagate it at Ngā Manu.

Many of us spent time learning the botanical differences between sedges, rushes and grasses under the patient tutelage of Leon Perrie. Among the significant additions to the list were poroporo / *Solanum aviculare*, globe cottonleaf / *Euchiton sphaericus* and *Gamochaeta*.

We also saw many dead poroporo on the edges of the reserve which appear to have been sprayed by neighbours who may consider it a weed. We all hoped that a community group will form to help the Council with regeneration of the site.

A few of us took the time after our botanising to walk into Russell Reserve, across Ngarara Rd from Waikanae Park, to admire a very large *Streblus banksii* / tūrepo / large-leafed milk tree, growing near the Scout Hall on the bank of an old course of the Waikanae River.

Leon Perrie points out the differences between grasses, rushes and sedges.

Participants : John Barnett, Pene Burton Bell, Gavin Dench, Michelle Dickson, Jenny Fraser, Sarah Goldberg, Chris Horne (kaumatua), Kate Jordan, Simon Kennett, Pip Kirkham, Tom Mayo, Andy McKay (co-leader), Rhys Mills (guest), Scott Nodder, Viola Palmer, Mick Parsons, Leon Perrie, Lynne Silcock, Sunita Singh, Anne Tuffin (co-leader), Julia Wilson-Davey and Ben Wright.

1 March 2025: Johnston Hill Scenic Reserve, Karori, Wellington

Johnston Hill Scenic Reserve opened as a scenic reserve in 1942, when it was one of the few remaining bits of native bush near the central city. Chris Horne told us that Greater Wellington Regional Council began a pest-control operation from 2001 onwards. A sign of the continuing success of pest control was kohekohe / *Didymocheton spectabilis* seedlings abundant in the understorey.

We walked the track clockwise, with some groups breaking off to explore a creek bed with many bryophytes and others taking the track to the top of Johnston Hill. John Barnett took a group of beginners / intermediates for the first part of the day.

Highlights from the trip included:

- Lots of ramarama / *Lophomyrtus bullata* without myrtle rust
- Many *Trichomanes elongatum*, which was an addition to the plant list
- *Metrosideros fulgens* growing like trees
- Adding four filmy ferns to the plant list
- An amazing candelabra tawa / *Beilschmiedia tawa* (see photo)
- Big kererū full of tawa fruit
- A large specimen of toro / *Myrsine salicina*

Participants: Kate Jordan (co-leader), John Barnett (co-leader), Paul Bell-Butler, Eleanor Burton, Barry Dent, Michele Dickson, Sue Freitag, Richard Grasse, Finn Harvey, Chris Horne, Pip Kirkham, Kim Livingstone, Andy MacDonald, Melanie Newfield, Mick Parsons, Leon Perrie, Simon Reeve, Dave Reynolds, Lara Shepherd, Julia Stace, John Van de Hoeven, Carol West.

The multi-branched 'candelabra' tawa.

6 April 2025: Te Rātā Bush forest remnant, Wairarapa.

We had a very pleasant evening with good food, company and hospitality at Sunita's and Gavin's bach at Ocean Beach. Our party of eleven gathered in Pirinoa. From there we headed to Te Rātā Bush, a 1.9 hectare QE2 Open Space Covenant where we were met by Barrie. The day was a warm, calm and sunny—a pleasant autumnal day to be botanising the alluvial podocarp broadleaved swamp forest remnant. After giving us some background history of the property, the original homestead of a large sheep station and forest remnant, Barrie guided us to the start of the loop route through the forest about 10.30 a.m. The bush remnant is on a river flood-plain, surrounded by dairy farmland. It contains a natural spring which emerges within the remnant, then flows out across the farmland. The remnant also used to receive water during flooding and from the surrounding floodplain. The remnant does not appear to have been logged, with the main emergent and canopy species being large kahikatea / *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*, pukatea / *Laurelia novae-zelandiae*, tawa / *Beilschmiedia tawa*, mataī / *Prumnopitys taxifolia* / and swamp maire / *Syzygium maire*. The remnant is entirely within the river floodplain and is the WF8 kahikatea, pukatea type forest, a regionally critically endangered forest type with 1% remaining. The covenant has been fenced for many decades and has a vibrant understorey with little ungulate browse.

Most of us traversed the route through the forest in an anticlockwise circuit while a few chose a clockwise exploration. Being a very old homestead with extensive gardens that made the homestead reasonably self-sufficient there were a few weed species of concern around the margins of the remnant, *Cotoneaster franchetii, Tradescantia fluminensis* / wandering Jew, *Pinus radiata* / Monterey pine, *Elaeagnus ×reflexa* / elaeagnus, *Nephrolepis cordifolia* / tuber sword fern, *Pteris cretica* / Cretan brake and *Plectranthus ciliata* / plectranthus. Further in from and on the margins there were several plants of *Passiflora tarminiana* / banana passionfruit. The forest remnant's understorey was mainly devoid of exotic species and dominated by the seedlings, shrubs and saplings of *Piper excelsum* / kawakawa, *Coprosma areolata*, *Myrsine australis* / māpou), *Rhopalostylis sapida* / nīkau, *Geniostoma ligustrifolium* var. *ligustrifolium* / hangehange, *Melicytus ramiflorus* / māhoe, *Pseudopanax arboreus* / five-finger. A beautiful example of *Metrosideros colensoi* / white climbing rātā along with numerous *Ripogonum scandens* / supplejack / kareao. The ground-cover ferns *Blechnum filiforme* / climbing hard fern, *Parapolystichum glabellum* / smooth shield fern, *Hypolepis ambigua*, *Blechnum chambersii* / lance fern, *Diplazium australe, Lecanopteris pustulata* subsp. *pustulatum* / hound's tongue fern and the sedge *Carex uncinata* / hookgrass. There was a noticeable lack of bryophytes and filmy ferns on the ground or tree buttresses. Numerous mosquitos added to the excitement of the botanising.

Noticeable and a testament to the value of the fencing were the carpets of seedlings. Concerning was the number of seedling, saplings and mature trees of *Corynocarpus laevigatus* / karaka. There were numerous seedlings to 1 metre high of *Alectryon excelsus* subsp. *excelsus* / tītoki and *Beilschmiedia tawa* / tawa. By 1pm most gathered back at the house and admired the garden while having lunch. A highlight of the botanising was finding at least half a dozen mature adults as well as seedlings and saplings of swamp maire / *Syzygium maire*. A very big thank you to the host for allowing us to botanise the Te Rātā remnant.

Participants: Owen Spearpoint - leader and scribe, John Barnett, Eleanor Burton, Lorraine Cook, Gavin Dench, Pat Mclean, Amy Macdonald, Pascale Michel, Mick Parsons, Sunita Singh, John van den Hoeven.

First flowering of thirty-year-old nīkau

This nīkau flowered for the first time in February after being grown from seed at Highbury, Wellington.

Photo: Darea Sherratt.

BOTANICAL ART WORLDWIDE 2025
NEW ZEALAND

Botanical Art Worldwide 2025

Our Plants - Past, Present and Future
O Tātou Tipu o Mua - o Nāianei me te Āpōpō

'Linking People to Plants through Botanical Art'

Botanical Drawing: Emma Scheltema

EXHIBITION DATES & VENUES

AUCKLAND BOTANIC GARDENS
29th March - 29th June 2025

WELLINGTON BOTANIC GARDENS
1st August - 30th September 2025

ASHBURTON ART GALLERY
18th October - 7th December 2025

more information here:
https://www.botanicalartnz.org/baww25-new-zealand

Botanical Art Society of New Zealand Inc · Friends Auckland Botanic Gardens · ashburton museum Ashburton Gallery · Wellington Gardens · Absolutely Positively Wellington City Council · John Leech Framing Workshop est. 1895 · 50 Years Gordon Harris Fine Art & Graphic Store

Wellington Botanical Society

Te Ropū Manaki i Ngā Tamariki a Tāne, o Te Whanganui a Tara

New Membership application

I wish to join the Wellington Botanical Society ☐

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

The membership year is from 1 July to 30 June. Dues received after 1 May will be credited to the following year.

Ordinary membership	$35.00		
Country (out of Wellington area)	$30.00		
Group/family	$40.00		
Student	$10.00		$ _____
Donation to the Jubilee Award Fund			$ _____ (Optional)
(Donations to Wellington Botanical Society Inc. qualify for a New Zealand tax rebate)		Total paid	$ _____

Please make payment to: **Wellington Botanical Society Inc.**

Bank Account:	**02 0536 0017812 00**
Particulars:	*Name*
Code:	*Membership type*
Reference:	*amount of any included donation*

Authority to hold your name, address and phone number with the Society.

The Society holds the name, address, email and contact phone numbers of all current and life members to use for communication, and mailing of bulletins etc. Under the Privacy Act the circulation of names on such lists requires the approval of the individual members.

The list will not be used for marketing, soliciting or political purposes.

I agree to my name and contact details being held on the membership list whilst I am a current paid up member. I understand that if my details are requested for use within the Wellington Botanical Society I will be notified. I understand that this list is to be used only by members of the committee.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please **e-mail** this completed form to the Memberships Secretary at wellingtonbotsocmembership@gmail.com or post to Wellington Botanical Society Inc:

Memberships Secretary c/o Wellington Botanical Society Inc., PO Box 10 412, Wellington 6140

www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz