



### Chairperson's message

Kia ora koutou,

There is a lot going on for the Botanical Society at the moment!

In December, the committee announced that we are supporting the purchase of a remarkable 71-hectare property of old-growth native forest in rural South Mākara with a donation of \$112,000. The purchase is underway—we will keep members updated with any progress.

In March, we launched our revamped Wellington Botanical Society website. New look but it's still got all the information you need on trips, evening meetings and other BotSoc matters. If you have any suggestions, please get in touch.

In October 2026, BotSoc will sponsor a session of the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) conference being held in Wellington. The conference's theme is '*Māhia ngā here – Collaboration for better conservation*', celebrating the power of working together. We encourage members to attend—you can learn more here: <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/nzpcn/events/2026-nzpcn-conference/>

*Ngā mihi,*

*Kate Jordan, President*

### Newsletter Editor

Chris Horne is standing down after about thirty years enjoying doing the work.

The new editor will be introduced in the next newsletter.

### What on earth?

Do you know what this photo depicts? You can find the answer at the bottom of page 17. 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.



### Articles for web site

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

[www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz](http://www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz)

Please send your article to:

Richard Herbert

e-mail [herbert.r@xtra.co.nz](mailto: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: [troggs@duck.com](mailto:troggs@duck.com) or 479 0497.

### BotSoc on Facebook

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

This is the unofficial page for Wellington Botanical Society.

### 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 20m 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=bE0zRXRWSXBBUkVoUjdPcElJNXIjUT09>.

### 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 JULY 2026**

Articles may be edited for clarity and length

## Wellington Botanical Society

<b>Address:</b>	PO Box 10 412, Wellington 6140	
<b>Web site:</b>	<a href="http://www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz">www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz</a>	
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<b>Membership Secretary:</b>	Karen & Stephen Whitton	<a href="mailto:wellingtonbotsocmembership@gmail.com">wellingtonbotsocmembership@gmail.com</a>
<b>Auditor/Reviewer:</b>	To be advised	
<b>Submissions coordinator:</b>	Vacant—volunteer sought—please contact Secretary	
<b>Bulletin editor:</b>	Eleanor Burton	04 479 0497
<b>Newsletter editor:</b>	Vacant	Contact the Chairperson to volunteer for the role.
<b>Membership:</b>	Annual membership is from 1 July to 30 June. To become a member or renew your membership please follow the instructions on our website <a href="https://wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz/join-botsoc/">https://wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz/join-botsoc/</a> .	
<b>Membership types and fees:</b>	• Ordinary \$35      • Joint/family \$40      • Country \$30      • Student \$10 Donations are optional and go towards the Society's Jubilee Award Fund. Donations are also tax deductible. Any questions about your membership status, please contact the membership secretarial team.	

## NOTICES

### New members

We welcome the following new members:

Anya Arogyaswamy, Ann Bell, Amon Carter, Billie Hughes, Krista McJarrow-Keller, George Murray, Lee Oliver, Karen Salmon, Caitlin Valins, Huia Webby, Hannah Zwartz.

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. New members can visit our website [wellington-botsoc.org.nz/join-botsoc](http://wellington-botsoc.org.nz/join-botsoc).

*Karen and Stephen Whitton, 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*

Information about attending meetings and field trips has been moved to the end of the newsletter.

### Tom Moss Student Award

We welcome Jessica Beever's generous donation of \$5000.00 for the runner up in the Tom Moss Student Award Fund for research on bryophytes.

*Paul Bell-Butler, Treasurer*

### Events

*2nd Saturday each month, except January.* Ōtari-Wilton's Bush – Plant Care. Meet: Te Marae o Tāne Visitor Centre, 160 Wilton Rd, Wilton at 9:00 a.m. Bus: No. 14 Wilton bus, Ct Pl 8.28, Molesworth St 8.36, alight Warwick St. Planting: winter months: weed clearance other months.

- *Wilbur Dovey. Landline 499 1044. Mobile 027 499 1044.*

*Ōtari centenary and NZ Plant Conservation Network conference.*

Ōtari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve will be celebrating their 100-year centenary in October 2026. This coincides with the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) biennial conference, which will be held in Wellington from 12–15 October 2026 at Te Wharewaka Function Centre. Through my role on the NZPCN Council, I'm leading the organising committee for the 2026 conference.

The conference theme is *Māhia ngā here – Collaboration for better conservation*, reflecting a strong

focus on partnerships, shared knowledge, and strengthening connections across plant conservation.

The timing aligns closely with Ōtari's centenary. On Monday 12 October, Wellington City Council will hold a formal event to commemorate 100 years to the day since Ōtari was officially opened. The wider conference programme will include workshops and a welcome event on Monday 12/10, symposia on Tuesday 13/10 and Wednesday 14/10, and field trips on Thursday 15/10. There will also be an option for conference attendees to attend the formal Ōtari 100-year centenary event.

Registrations are open, with information added to the NZPCN website: [www.nzpcn.org.nz/nzpcn/events/2026-nzpcn-conference/](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/nzpcn/events/2026-nzpcn-conference/)

I mainly wanted to share what we have underway and to keep you informed. If you are interested in being involved in any way, or would like to kōrero further about opportunities connected with the conference, I'd be very happy to talk with you.

The conference will bring together a wide range of practitioners, researchers and decision-makers from across the plant conservation and botanical community, and sponsorship offers a great opportu-

ity for the Wellington Botanical Society to support this work while gaining strong visibility among a highly relevant audience. If this is of interest, I'd encourage you to take a look, and I'm very happy to discuss options or answer any questions.

*Ngā mihi nui,*

*Megan Ireland*

*Kaihautū o te Kohinga o Ōtari | Ōtari Collection Team*

*Leader*

*Ōtari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve*

*Ngā Māra o Poneke | Wellington Gardens*

## Weekly opportunity to learn with others on Thursdays

John Barnett, a BotSoc member, offers learning-together trips on most Thursdays in different reserves and parks each week in Te Awa Kairangi (Hutt Valley), as far as Remutaka Trig to the North and Eastbourne to the south.

Email [johnbarnett@inspire.net.nz](mailto:johnbarnett@inspire.net.nz) if you'd like to be added to the BCC email invitation list giving the meeting time and place.

*Ngā mihi, John Barnett*

## PUBLICATIONS

- NZ Botanical Society. Newsletter No. 163. 3/26:**  
Financial Statement for year to 31.12.25; result of ballot re adopting new constitution; call for nominations for Allan Mere Award 2026; regional botanical societies' news; new exotic buttercup recorded; tūākura / creeping tree fern *Dicksonia lanata* subsp. *lanata* in Wellington region; identifying wood.
  - [www.nzbotanicalsociety.org.nz](http://www.nzbotanicalsociety.org.nz) Back issues in hard copy - \$8.00 each.
- Auckland Botanical Society Newsheet**
  - [akbotsocnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:akbotsocnewsletter@gmail.com)
- Canterbury Botanical Society Journal 56, 2025. ISSN 0110-5892.**
  - [newsletter@canterburybotanicalsociety.org.nz](mailto:newsletter@canterburybotanicalsociety.org.nz)
- Ōtari newsletter 3/26:** Centenary news; botanical art; the volunteers; farewell Anita Benbrook; etc.
  - [www.owbt.nz](http://www.owbt.nz)
- Trelissick Park "Gorge Gazette":** TPG minutes of 210th committee meeting 12 March 2026
  - Our latest newsletter can now be viewed from the 'Gorge Gazette' page of the website at: <https://trelissickpark.org.nz/gazettes.html>
  - Trelissick Park Group [trelissickgroup@gmail.com](mailto:trelissickgroup@gmail.com)
- Kāpiti / Mana Forest and Bird.**
  - To read our newsletter, follow this link: <https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/sites/default/files/2025-12/2025-12%20F%26B%20K-M%20Newsletter.pdf>
- Tieke. 2/26 newsletter:** ECO - Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ Inc.
  - [eco@eco.org.nz](mailto:eco@eco.org.nz)
- Wellington Glean Report:** science events in coming weeks.
  - [report@gleanreport.com](mailto:report@gleanreport.com)
- Whareroa Guardians Community Trust.**
  - [www.kapitibiodiversity.org.nz/whareroa](http://www.kapitibiodiversity.org.nz/whareroa)
- Our divaricating natives:** Gareth Winter.
  - *The Post*, 21.4.2026.
- The Secret Life of Fungi.** Jay Lichter. Allen & Unwin. \$49.99.
  - *Bookshops*.
- Aotearoa in Bloom.** Rachel Clare and Tryphena Cracknell. Harper Collins publishers. \$60.00.
  - *Bookshops*
- Environmental Defence Society conference 24 June 2026:** "Indigenous biodiversity under the new system".
  - [fiona@eds.org.nz](mailto:fiona@eds.org.nz)
- Moths and Butterflies of NZ Trust.**
  - [news@nzbutterflies.org.nz](mailto:news@nzbutterflies.org.nz); PO Box 44100, Pt Chevalier, Auckland 1246.

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Help raise funds for BotSoc's Jubilee Award Fund – bring named seedlings/cuttings for sale at each evening meeting

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## FIELD 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 2026

#### **Saturday 13 June: Field trip** **Coastal Escarpment edge, Whitireia Park, Tītahi Bay** (Note 2nd Saturday of June to coincide with low tide)

We will botanise the lower slopes of the Whitireia coastal escarpment where it is accessible and the rocky platform at Rocky Bay. You will see *Asplenium obtusatum*, *Leptinella nana*, *Veronica elliptica*, *Euphorbia glauca*, *Sonchus kirkii*, *Meliclytus obovatus* and other coastal taonga. This trip will be challenging as we will be climbing over boulders and the tracks up and down the escarpment are very steep. We may get wet feet, however the tide will be ebbing until 1.40pm. We suggest you wear good boots and consider bringing a walking pole or two and binoculars. Check with Robyn if you are uncertain about the terrain.

If the weather is too extreme to be on the escarpment, we will botanise Gillies Reserve, Rānui, Porirua off Gillies Place.

**Meet:** 9.30am at the concrete pads on Whitireia Rd, off Thornley St, Tītahi Bay

**Public transport:** 8.14am train on Kāpiti line to Porirua. Bus 220 at 8.41am at Porirua Station - alight at Thornley St. Walk up the road to the concrete pads.

**Co-leaders:** Robyn Smith 027 437 2497 and Andrew Jinks (Porirua City Council Nursery)

#### **Monday 15 June: Evening meeting** **The amazing flora of Lord Howe Island**

**Speakers:** Lara Shepherd, Science Researcher, Te Papa and Leon Perrie, Botany Curator, Te Papa.

Lord Howe Island is a small, remote, subtropical island between New Zealand and Australia. It has been recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Despite its small size it has a wide diversity of habitats. Over 40% of its vascular plant species are endemic, with the remainder largely shared with nearby landmasses, including New Zealand. We will give an introduction to Lord Howe Island and its plants. We will also provide an overview of our fern research on the island and how it contributes to understanding New Zealand ferns.

#### **Saturday 4 July: Field trip** **Northern Forest, East Harbour Regional Park, Wainuiomata**

We will climb Pūriri Track through kānuka and hard beech to the Main Ridge Track. We'll then head south as far as the junction with Rātā Ridge Track, passing black beech, kāmahī, and pockets of scrub, before returning the same way (c. 2 hours return if not botanising). The forest is reasonably diverse for flowering plants and ferns. Epiphytic orchids are common, including a few good patches of *Drymoanthus*. Other species of conservation interest include the fern *Lindsaea linearis* and the sedge *Morelotia affinis*. The clay surface makes for interesting plants in places, but can be slippery when wet.

**Meet:** 9.30 a.m. at the entrance to Pūriri Track, about 100 m north-west of the junction of Pūriri St with Wainuiomata Rd. Drivers should park in Pūriri St, taking care not to create a traffic hazard for the residents. Stop 9901 for Bus no. 170 is nearby for those taking public transport.

**Co-Leaders:** Lara Shepherd, [lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz](mailto:lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz), ph 027 363 5854; Leon Perrie, email [leon.perrie@tepapa.govt.nz](mailto:leon.perrie@tepapa.govt.nz), ph 027 419 1378.

#### **Monday 20 July: Evening meeting** **Does weed control benefit native plants in limestone ecosystems?**

**Speaker:** Dr Debra Wotton – Director and Principal Ecologist, Moa's Ark Research; Research Associate, School of Biological Sciences, University of Canterbury.

Limestone outcrops in the eastern South Island are hotspots of native plant diversity, with many endemic herbs and a disproportionately high number of threatened species. Almost half of the specialist limestone taxa in the eastern South Island are classified as Threatened or Data Deficient, and many have undergone dramatic declines in recent decades. These ecosystems are widely invaded by weeds, which are thought to be contributing to the decline of native plants. Weeds are managed at some sites, but weed control does not always benefit native biodiversity. Debra will present her research investigating whether weed control increases native dominance of vegetation, and the reproduction, survival and recruitment of threatened plant species in a limestone ecosystem. She will also highlight the special limestone plant species at her research site—Lance McCaskill Nature Reserve—the first reserve in New Zealand to be established for the purpose of protecting a native plant.

## Saturday 1 August: Field trip

Leader: Andrew Jinks

Check website for details closer to the time.

Gillies Reserve, Rānui (TBC)

## Monday 17 August: Evening meeting AGM and Druce Lecture

Mast seeding in *Aciphylla*,  
an atypical masting genus

Speaker: Emeritus Professor Dave Kelly, University of Canterbury

*Aciphylla* is a genus of about 40 species, all but two endemic to NZ. *Aciphylla* species show mast seeding (synchronous variable reproduction across years within a site). This is unexpected, because the plants are insect-pollinated, relatively short-lived, herbaceous, and dioecious, all of which are globally uncommon in masting species. Here I address some questions about their ecology, based on long-term monitoring since 1996 of flowering in permanent plots for three species (*A. aurea*, *A. scott-thomsonii*, and *A. monroi*). (1) How variable and synchronous are they (sexes within a population, populations within a species, and between species)? (2) What weather cues trigger heavy flowering? (3) How do the true (long-term) sex ratios in a population compare with what is seen in single years? (4) Do males flower more often than females? (5) How long-lived are plants? (6) How do plants respond to fire? (The Ōhau plot has now been burned twice).

## Saturday 5 September: Field trip

Leader: Andy McKay

Check website for details closer to the time.

Kāpiti coast, exact location TBC

## Monday 21 September Evening meeting

Speakers: Paul Bell-Butler and Lisa Wolf, Victoria University of Wellington

PhD student talks

**Paul**—New Zealand's bryophyte flora remains poorly understood – even basic knowledge is lacking for many liverwort species, with 23% of taxa classified as 'Data Deficient'. The genetic and biogeographic affinities of the country's non-vascular flora are also only beginning to be explored. Using a multi-gene phylogeny of the family Lophocoleaceae incorporating global sampling, we uncovered unexpected links between New Zealand species and northern hemisphere taxa, including a New Zealand endemic whose closest relatives are in northern temperate regions. Several genera were also found to be polyphyletic. Resolving these relationships improves our understanding of biodiversity in this often-overlooked group.

**Lisa**—In my PhD thesis, I investigate the symbiotic relationship between the brooding anemone *Handactis nutrix* and its brown macroalgal host *Cystophora scalaris* on the south coast of Wellington. I first examined host specificity, as well as the abundance and distribution of the anemone on macroalgal host and across different hydrodynamic environments. I then conducted a stable isotope tracer experiment that revealed the supply of inorganic nitrogen from the anemone to its macroalgal host. In my most recent experiment, supported by the Wellington Botanical Society, I investigated the physiological implications of this association for both partners.

## Membership for the year 2026–27

Annual membership is from 1 July to 30 June.

### Membership types and fees

- Ordinary \$35
- Joint/family \$40
- Country \$30
- Student \$10

Donations are optional and go towards the Society's Jubilee Fund. Donations are also tax deductible.

To become a member or renew your membership please follow the instructions on our website <https://wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz/join-botsoc/>.

Any questions about your membership status, please contact the membership secretarial team.

Thank you.

Karen & Stephen Whitton, Membership Secretarial  
team

[wellingtonbotsocmembership@gmail.com](mailto:wellingtonbotsocmembership@gmail.com)

### Newsletter by e-mail?

If you would like to receive your newsletter electronically in PDF format, please contact Memberships Secretary, [wellington-botsocmembership@gmail.com](mailto:wellington-botsocmembership@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

## QEII National Trust update

Natalie Morrison – Communications Advisor

Richard Bloomfield – Land Protection Advisor

*QEII National Trust is an independent statutory organisation and a registered charity 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 2026, QEII has a total of 5,382 registered covenants protecting 186,246 hectares throughout New Zealand. In the Wellington region there are 401 Open Space Covenants registered, protecting 6,640.6 hectares. The largest registered covenant in the Wellington region is 824 hectares, and the average size is 16.6 hectares.

### **New owners take on care of largest collection of native plants on private land**

The new owners of the QEII covenant that protects the Druce Botanical Collection in Pinehaven are enthusiastic about preserving such a special site.

Paul and Sharon Bridges say that even though they only moved in a few weeks ago, they have already fallen in love with this special environment. “Striving to return the property to its former glory, our work ethic and passion for the outdoors and NZ’s bush aligns to the Druce family’s intentions around building a home and preserving an array of plants.”

Helen Druce protected the site with an open space covenant in 2005, which likely contains more than 1,000 different species collected by renowned botanist Tony (A P) Druce from nearly 950 botanical field trips from the Surville Cliffs to Bluff’s southern coastline including a suite of threatened and rare species. This is likely the largest collection of native plants on private land in New Zealand.

Lee Barry, QEII regional representative for Wellington—Kāpiti says it was such a pleasure to meet Sharon and Paul recently in their bush paradise. “The lower areas of the covenant are in good health with rich diversity – and only hint at the treasures yet to be re-discovered higher up. I look forward to supporting Sharon and Paul to tackle a few weed issues, install some pest control, and learn more about the plant collection. The experience and involvement of the society’s members would be welcomed, I’m sure.”

“The QEII National Trust has supported and protected this approach and assisted us already and we’re truly thankful,” say Paul and Sharon. “We’re looking forward to engaging with the Trust and the Botanical Society as we are very keen to acquire an understanding of the rare plants.”



A kererū in the Druce Botanical Collection.

### **Changes to new protection at QEII National Trust**

From 1 July 2025, QEII has had to make the difficult decision to reduce the number of new covenants processed due to funding constraints. Every year, landowners around the country approach QEII with interest in protecting special sites on their land. Until we receive an increase in funding, QEII will only be able to process a limited number of new QEII covenants each year, prioritising the protection of areas with very high open space values.

We hope that this will be a temporary situation, and we are continuing to seek an increase to our baseline funding and to raise funds in other ways.

Our priority continues to be supporting landowners to care for their existing QEII-protected sites and adding to protection of highly threatened landscapes where we can.

### **Become a member of QEII**

Support 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](https://qeii.org.nz/membership)

## Percy Scenic Reserve, Petone

Seems to be becoming a bit of a theme—all the wet and windy Springs and Summers we've been having the past two or three years. This has given us a few problems with weed control in the reserve, restricting how often we have been able to spray, meaning more weeds around than I would like.

The large *Passiflora tetrandra* growing up the wall in the turning-circle area, collapsed off the wall, just when it was in full flower, mid-December. Unfortunately due to its size and weight we had to reduce its height quite drastically in order to tie it back up to the wall. I am sure it will recover well as they are pretty fast growing.

Upon returning after the Christmas break I found the *Lepidium oleraceum* we have been growing for Wellington Zoo and Ōtari-Wilton's Bush had been devastated by caterpillars and was also covered in whitefly. After a good spray with *Confidor* they have recovered well, with plenty of new growth.

Some of the plants in the new shade-houses have been getting burnt through the summer—I hope we will get a curtain installed, made of shade cloth, which was the original idea for controlling sun intensity in the new houses, as the council don't seem too keen on white-washing them. The grasses which didn't look too healthy after their stay in the propagation house—a bit too shady in there—are still not looking great—but many have produced seed. I have been collecting these with the intention of starting again with some of them.

We had a strong breeze come through on 16 February. A large *Ulmus procera* was uprooted near the waterwheel, coming down onto the bridge, damaging the handrails. A second one is leaning into a third tree, further back from the footpath. The leaning tree will also likely need to be removed. Apart from that we only had a couple of large branches come down in the southern lawn area and car park. All of the damage seems to have been confined to the lower area beside SH2.

The only propagation we have done recently is cuttings of *Brachyglottis compacta*, a threatened species found around the Castlepoint area in the Wairarapas. The cuttings were taken from plants growing near the Settlers' Museum in Petone.

Cliff Keilty  
Gardener

### Access to Percy Scenic Reserve

- From the parking area at the bottom of Dowse Drive.
- From Petone Station then pedestrian bridge over SH2 and footpath beside SH2.

## Greater Wellington Regional Council: November 2015 to March 2016

### RPMP—annual inspections, delimiting surveys and control work done

#### Alligator weed (Exclusion)

- Potential new alligator weed site in Tawa.

#### Moth plant (Eradication)

- Te Kopi—DOC had already checked it this year but we found 1 seedling.
- New moth plant sites in Norfolk Road, Carterton, 3 in Solway, and one in Lower Hutt near Queensgate Mall.

#### Senegal tea (Eradication)

- Wairarapa site checked, no plants found. Re-checked the Senegal Tea sites with Cooper's help. 3 plants found at the mouth of the drain where the digger was not able to access, plants were hand dug.
- Control at the new site in Paraparaumu resulted in 1.2 tonnes of waste.

#### Spartina (Eradication)

- Sites are all clear and no new infestation found.

#### Velvetleaf (Eradication)

- First inspection for the year: no plants found.

#### Woolly nightshade (Eradication)

- Several new sites found, one in Ngauranga.

#### Purple loosestrife (Progressive containment)

- eDNA prompted survey of areas on the Whareama resulted in no plants found.
- A site that had 1 adult flowering plant last year had 60 flowering plants this year.
- Surveys and control work around Wairarapa Moana: a lot less plants found in Wairio than last year.

#### Banana passionfruit (Site led)

- Mature BPF in Featherston—delimited. The surrounding properties haven't been inspected since 2020-2021.
- New site at Pukerua Bay—we found 300+ vines across three properties, with around 10% flowering or fruiting. Another new site at Clyde Quay Wharf. In Raumati, we discovered thousands of plants across five new sites as part of a delimit survey.

#### Climbing spindleberry (Site-led)

- Plenty of juvenile plants in Waikanae but no adults.

#### Manchurian wild rice (NIPR programme)

- Control on KCDC properties complete. Only six active sites.

#### KNE programme

- Work in several wetlands and KNE sites around the region. Notable are:

- Cape Palliser and Ruamahanga River Terrace sites where no polypodium was found this time.
- Polypodium site reported by Owen Spearpoint on a BotSoc day at Hiwinui. After being dug out, we checked it, saw no further plants and sprayed the area with bleach.
- Yellow flag iris control at Parangarahu Lakes: we collect seed heads before spraying / manual control of the plants. This year a whole trailer of heads went to the tip.
- Aerial spraying of the egeria in the Parangarahu Lakes: one area has egeria - the rest of the stream is clear. The infested area has shrunk, with less needing aerial spraying.
- Drone spraying at Pukerua Bay using a 2-metre wand to target mainly succulents and agapanthus on the spur.
- Royal fern at QEPark: no regrowth nor new plants found.
- Finding OMB mites in areas well south of the Upper Hutt release site.
- Hearing a spotless crane calling in Ōmahu wetland.
- We visited all major markets and fairs before Christmas to look for NPPA and RPMP-listed species. We found pig's ears, arum lilies, and tradescantia species being sold, and spoke with the vendors to ensure they understood the NPPA regulations.
- Check Clean Dry promotional work for Jet-boat sprints, Waka Ama races, 'Crazyman' and Karapoti Classic.
- RPMP Operational Plan Report 2024/25 published.
- Good internal discussion about overall GW Biosecurity Responses and preparedness (avian flu, foot-and mouth).
- Biocontrol: along with our usual checks on species and agents, we have two staff members going to the International Biocontrol Symposium in Rotorua, early March.
- Our Wairarapa team have put a targeted advertisement out on social media to encourage good machinery hygiene through the harvest period. Earlier in the year we also distributed posters of RPMP species to agricultural venues.

*Mark McAlpine, Kaitake-a-tīma; Team Leader  
Biosecurity – Pest Plants*

In Kaitoke staff took a river survey from Rivendell to Te Mārua with a rafting company. Not many weeds were found—mainly cypress and alder. All montbretia and ACM is on a different level.

Species controlled included bulk blackberry, gorse and tree lupin control, African club moss, agapanthus, banana passionfruit, beggars ticks, boneseed, climbing asparagus, German ivy, helichrysum, holly, horned poppy, Japanese honeysuckle, karaka, marram, OMB, pampas, periwinkle, pōhutukawa (at QEPark), succulents, Spanish heath, wild cherry, wilding pines (douglas fir and *Pinus radiata*), willow...

#### Other work

- Blackberry scrub-barring and spraying at QE Park in the McLean blocks restoration area, for a restoration group working with the park rangers.
- Foliar spray trial of herbicides on white-edged nightshade at a Wairarapa site, to determine the best option, and then spraying as much as possible with the available budget.

## Autetaranga, *Pimelea villosa*, sand daphne

Autetaranga is a fascinating plant. It fascinates me because although it looks like it is soft and flimsy, it is actually very tough and lives in some of the harshest environments in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Autetaranga lives in the coastal mid zone behind foredunes and is found throughout the country including Rēkohu / Chatham Islands. *Pimelea villosa* has a national conservation status of At Risk Declining, however in the Wellington region, we have a southern variant: *Pimelea* aff. *villosa* (AK 216133; Southern New Zealand) which has a national conservation status of Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable. (NZTCS, 2026)

In many places where I have seen it, autetaranga grows on semi-active sand dunes, struggling to keep above the sand in active sand areas but in more sheltered area it grows bushier and more shrub-like. In some sites plants are dying out to such an extent that it has become locally extinct (Bergin & Bergin, 2026). Most sites are failing to recruit new seedlings.

iNaturalist has scattered communities recorded from Mataikona to around Flat Point in the Wairarapa, one plant on the Wellington South Coast and a small community at Ōtaki Beach. Autetaranga's regional threat status is Regionally Uncommon (Enright & al, 2025). It is highly likely pre-European: autetaranga was found in most coastal dune ecosystems around the region and country and its disappearance was due to



**Taputeranga Marine Reserve**  
For any Conservation-related illegal activity,  
call the 24-hour conservation emergency helpline

**DOC HOTline**  
**0800 362 468**  
For Search & Rescue—call 111

All other enquiries to your local DOC office or visit our website [www.govt.nz](http://www.govt.nz)

Department of Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai

New Zealand Government

trampling by farmed animals, possum browse, vehicles damage in dunes and seed destruction by rodents (de Lange, 2026). Competition from weed species such as kikuyu (*Cenchrus clandestinus*), coastal wattle (*Acacia sophorae*) and pine (*Pinus radiata*) is also a factor in its decline.

Over several years, I have tried to re-introduce autetaranga to the dunes at Kaiaua Bay and Onehunga Bay in Whitireia Park, Porirua. These attempts have met with limited success as reintroducing 'missing' species is not easy as often plants that are rare in the wild are surviving at the very edge of their ideal habitat. All the dunes I have seen in the wild are very modified, lacking several species previously found in the mid-dune zone. Autetaranga planted in open sandy areas, mimicking those seen in the wild, have all disappeared. The only successful plantings have been in areas where they grow in the company of other dune species. One site in Onehunga Bay was overtaken by a very dense community of wiwi, however at Kaiaua Bay, autetaranga is thriving with wiwi / *Ficinia nodosa* and piripiri / bidibid / *Acaena pallida* and tātaraheke / sand coprosma / *Coprosma acerosa*. Perhaps they benefit from a cooler root run and/or more moisture retained under these other species. Branches of autetaranga find small light gaps between other plants and pop up and the plant is spread over six square metres. Much seed has been harvested recently from this planting and these will be grown and planted out in similar spots.

Robyn Smith

## References

- Bergin, D., & Bergin, M. (2026, March 18). *Restoration of Sand Daphne (Pimelea villosa) on Coastal Dunes*. Retrieved from Coastal Restoration Trust of New Zealand: [https://www.coastalrestorationtrust.org.nz/site/assets/files/1185/8\\_5\\_sand\\_daphne\\_restoration.pdf](https://www.coastalrestorationtrust.org.nz/site/assets/files/1185/8_5_sand_daphne_restoration.pdf)
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- Enright, P., et al. (2025). *Conservation status of indigenous vascular plants in the Wellington region*. Wellington: Greater Wellington Regional Council.
- NZTCS. (2026, March 18). *NZTCS New Zealand Threat Classification System*. Retrieved from and licensed by DOC for reuse under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence.: <https://nztcs.org.nz/assessment-search>

## Dr Carol West

We congratulate Carol, a long-term member of BotSoc, who on 16 April at the AGM of Ōtari-Wilton's Bush Trust was appointed chair of the trust.

The committee

## Grants to post-graduate students

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 done 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 (trog@duck.com) by **16 October 2026**.

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 2026.

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.

## Wellington Botanical Society Jubilee Award

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](mailto:trogs@duck.com), by 6 October 2026.

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 2026.

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.

## TRIP REPORTS

### 16–23 January 2026: Pureora Forest, Central North Island

Our group of sixteen people rented Pureora Lodge which was an ideal base for us with a choice of dormitories, showers, toilets and an excellent kitchen and dining room / common room. We thank Tom Mayo and Stephen and Karen Whitton, our leaders for their work ensuring that our summer field trip was a great success, despite a fair amount of rain.

#### 17 January 2026: Ketemaringi Trig

Our carload of me, Richard, Ellen and Lorraine headed off first and arrived at the appointed old skid site. No track being obvious, we waited for the other cars. After an hour we had botanised the skid site very thoroughly (mostly grey willow and blackberry), and stalking and photographing the little blue butterflies had got boring, so we checked the map and decided to drive to the beginning of the trig walk. We got within 3 km of the road end, and then it got too hard for my car, so we walked the rest of

the way, botanising the roadside as we went. Finds included *Geranium potentilloides*, *Lobelia angulata* (ubiquitous all week), *Thelymitra* growing epiphytically on a tree fern (I think this might be a wet place), several *Carex* spp including *Carex dissita* and *C. megalepis*.



*Notogrammitis heterophylla*. Illustration: Eleanor Burton.

By the time we reached the beginning of the track we had split up. Lorraine and I started for the trig, listing as we went. Highlights here included a very large

*Griselinia littoralis* covered in epiphytes, and nine species of *Hymenophyllum*. There were a number of species associated with very wet environments such as *Leptopteris superba*, *Hiya distans*, *Lepidosperma australe*, and many things growing as epiphytes which would normally be terrestrial. There was a lot of windfall on the track which made it hard to navigate in places. While Lorraine and I were negotiating one of these, Richard passed us and went on up to the trig. We turned back about half way up, and when we met Ellen on the way down she said had we seen Richard? Bad moment. So we went back up to the worst tree fall, waited 10 minutes and Richard came back, having got to the trig and found it disappointing.

On this version of the trip were Eleanor Burton (scribe), Lorraine Cook, Ellen Blake and Richard Herbert.

Eleanor Burton

## 18 January 2026: Pureora Maunga

In three cars we drove along the link road to the carpark. It was a wet, cool morning but the bush provided great shelter.

Suited up and heading in we were greeted by Hall's tōtara / *Podocarpus laetus* and large rimu / *Dacrydium cupressinum*. The first find that drew everyone together was big moss *Dawsonia superba*.

As we continued through the bush, we spotted *Quintinia serrata*, *Weinmannia racemosa*, raukawa (both small and large forms), and horopito. About halfway up, Amber spotted the striking blue pinkgill / *Entoloma hochstetteri*, and once we'd seen one, more seemed to appear across the forest floor.

Continuing on, we saw *Cordyline indivisa*, *Viola filicaulis* and lantern berry / *Luzuriaga parviflora*. As we ascended, the forest transformed into a true goblin forest—large tōtara trees laden with moss and filmy ferns draped along trunks and branches and dangling over the edges. The photos don't do it justice—it was awe-inspiring.

Climbing higher, we reached the subalpine zone, where we found *Halocarpus biformis*, *Thelymitra pauciflora*, *Oreobolus pectinatus*, *Pentachondra pumila* and *Olearia ilicifolia*. It was cold and windy, with little visibility due to fog and drizzle, so we had a quick lunch before retreating into the shelter of the goblin forest.

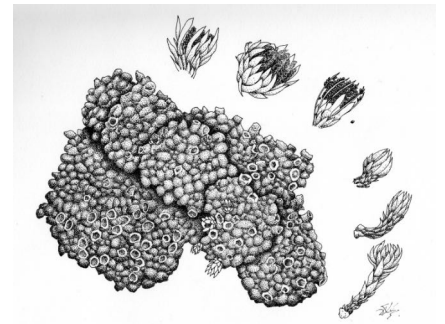
On the way, we met two women on the track who showed us the vegetable caterpillar / āwheto / *Ophiocordyceps robertsii*, complete with the dried remains of its host and the fruiting spike emerging above.

After a great day botanising, we returned down the track the way we came.

Megan Ireland

## 20 January 2026: Maroa Road QEII Covenant

Maroa Road is an 84-hectare remnant amongst pine plantations. It has 39 known *Dactylanthus taylorii* (now 41, we found 2 more).



*Dactylanthus taylorii*. Illustration: Eleanor Burton.

Megan and I had permission to collect, so collected a number of species including pokaka, *Clematis cunninghamii*, *Myrsine divaricata*, *Melicytus lanceolatus* and some *Hymenophyllum* species. We also botanised the remnant and made a list. Highlights for the day were large matai and totara, lots of *Dicksonia fibrosa*, lots of *Dactylanthus*, and a light well with a carpet of *Clematis cunninghamii* seedlings. Herbs found included *Stellaria parviflora*, *Hydrocotyle elongata* and *H. dissecta*, *Geranium potentilloides*, and *Arthropodium candidum*. There was a nice sward of *Hierochloa redolens* on the way out. Unfortunately by lunchtime it was raining fairly heavily, which probably shortened the day somewhat.

Eleanor Burton



Megan Ireland admires the tall forest on Pureora Maunga. Photo: Karen Whitton.

21 January 2026: DOC Reserve beside Scott's Rd / Highway 30



A giant tōtara in the reserve beside Scott's Road / Highway 30. Photo: Stephen Whittton.

22.1.2026: Waihāhā Hut Track

As we arrived at the carpark I was immediately drawn to an apple tree in fruit on the bank of the beautiful Waihāhā River. My hope of picking myself a snack for the walk (not really needed, considering I was still full from the excellent meal Anton Hovius had served us the previous evening) I was thwarted by the presence of a rotting cow carcass nearby. Eye-catching fruit became something of a theme for the day, as I began the walk and soon noticed the small orange fruit of *Corokia cotoneaster* beside the track.

Large amounts of *Clematis paniculata* draped over tall *Veronica* sp. as I approached an attractive swing bridge above rapids and which gave a fine

downstream view of the awa, along with ghostly lichen-covered pines. The Waihāhā Hut Track was wide and well-maintained, with an even surface and a comfortable incline. We saw many *Phyllocladus trichomanoides*. Rocky outcrops provided good stopping points to take in the views, including a veil-like waterfall pouring down a cliff. Distances along the track were marked in 1-km increments and not long after 5 km I turned back when the jammy fragrance of ripe blackberries drifted across the track, and around the bend I found farmland and a scramble of brambles. Berries and fruit were a recurring feature of the walk, with many *Gaultheria antipoda* and a gorgeous *Astelia fragrans* in fruit, and juicy *Coprosma tenuifolia* berries sparkling in the sunlight. I was struck by the jewel-like hanging of *Coriaria arborea* berries and could understand why people find them so tempting to eat. Large *Phyllocladus trichomanoides* were common, and *Kunzea robusta* was prolific and looking stunning in flower.



*Phyllocladus trichomanoides*. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

Further along, one bank held an entire wall of *Orthoceras novae-zealandiae*—many past flowering, though a few still showed their insect-like green and purple blooms. The banks also supported the mini-tree-like *Lycopodium scariosum* and I was pleased to find a particularly large *Celmisia gracilentia*. Near my turning point I saw a *Pseudopanax arboreus* with the largest leaves I have ever seen, each leaflet wider than my hand.

One highlight of the walk was seeing large *Dracophyllum strictum* arching overhead, along with

the more discreet but no less wonderful *Dracophyllum subulatum*. The rocky sections also held beautiful lichens, including *Dibaeis arcuata*, looking like fluorescent peach chewing gum brightening the fluffy beds of *Cladonia confusa*.

Amber Johnson

22 January 2026: Waihāhā tracks

Our final field trip day started from the carpark at the Waihāhā Track entrance on SH32, alongside the big, wide Waihāhā River. From there, one half of the group took the track going upstream towards Waihāhā Hut. Although no one reached the hut, the track passed through several interesting landscapes, including diverse rocky outcrops, tall tānekaha-silver beech forest, and shrubby frost flats. The rocky outcrops were surrounded by mānuka, *Toronia toru*, *Gaultheria oppositifolia*, *G. paniculata* and *G. antipoda*, *Dracophyllum strictum* and prickly mingimingi amongst white lichen, grasses, and sedges including *Morelotia affinis*. We were lucky to find *Botrychium biforme* and see the orchid *Orthoceras novae-zealandiae*, in flower along the track. Alongside the river were extensive frost flats where tall *Phyllocladus trichomanoides* gave way to stumpy *P. alpinus*, scattered amongst the dominant *Dracophyllum subulatum*. Underneath this dense, short canopy was a carpet of grasses, lichens, clubmosses and small herbs such as *Geranium brevicaulis*, *G. potentilloides* and *Acaena microphylla*. Find of the day went to Markus, our choir-singing, cathedral-managing visitor from Norway, for impressively spotting the tiny leaves of *Bulbophyllum pygmaeum* nestled in moss on a toro next to the track!

We were Lorraine, Eleanor, Richard, Markus, Barbara, Tom and Megan.

Lorraine Cook

## 7 March 2026: Skyline Walkway

At first glance, the windswept ridge which runs from Johnsonville to Karori may appear to be an unpromising location for botanical investigation. Along most of its length, it is still a working farm, even though it's accessible to the public via the Skyline Walkway. The vegetation is a mosaic of rough pasture and spiky shrubland dominated by gorse, Darwin's barberry and small-leaved native shrubs which superficially all look the same until you know what to look for. The views are glorious but is it really worth a Botanical Society field trip?

In fact, there is much more to this area than it first appears. A close look at the iNaturalist records indicates an interesting selection of plants not often seen elsewhere around Wellington City. While it is a steep walk uphill to get there, the route via Bell's Track in Ngaio offers enough of botanical interest to slow the group to a gentle pace. Crucially, though, the regenerating forest doesn't offer enough of interest to slow the group to the point we would never reach the ridge.

As well as a species list drawn largely from iNaturalist, Leon Perrie had contributed a list of plants of regional conservation concern which had been found in the area. One priority for the trip was to find as many of these as we could, and record the number and condition of the plants. Another priority was to distinguish the many small-leaved shrubs in the area.

Our group of 18 set out on a fine but breezy morning, and we were soon investigating the first of the small-leaved shrubs, *Raukawa anomalus*. Under the regenerating forest canopy, plants with trifoliate juvenile leaves were growing directly beside plants with simple adult leaves. Some of the simple leaves still had long petioles with an obvious joint, although this was

less visible in the plants growing in the open. We also saw *Melicope simplex*, another species that shows its derivation from trifoliate ancestors with a jointed petiole on the adult leaves, although these had been planted as part of the restoration of the area.

Once out of the forest, we encountered several divaricating *Coprosma* species sculpted into curious shapes by Wellington's wind. The most common was *C. propinqua*, with right-angled twigs and glossy leaves, and *C. rhamnoides*, with arching twigs bearing dull leaves of varying shapes and sizes. We also saw *C. rotundifolia*, with purplish-blotched leaves, *C. areolata*, with its distinct, dark leaf veins and *C. rigida*, with reddish-brown stems. We passed a *Pennantia corymbosa* which had both juvenile and adult leaves at a convenient height to compare, and spotted the first *Melicytus crassifolius*, a regionally uncommon species of conservation concern.



Adult (large leaves) and juvenile (small leaves) foliage of *Pennantia corymbosa*. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

One interesting feature of the ridge is the presence of both *Lophomyrtus* species as well as the hybrid. We saw some typical *L. obcordata*, but there was debate

about whether any of the plants we saw were *L. bullata*. There are certainly *L. bullata* plants in the Khandallah Park forest, ranging from healthy to almost dead, but most of the plants on the ridge were hybrids. Given the threatened status of both species, the presence of this natural hybrid in the area is a conservation conundrum.

The *Lophomyrtus* species and hybrids were all healthy, with little evidence of myrtle rust or greenhouse thrips. There were also plenty of healthy *M. crassifolius*. The same could not be said of the few *Fuchsia perscandens* seen, which had significant rust infection. There has been some debate on iNaturalist whether the rust infecting this species is *Mikro-negeria fuchsiae*, the common rust which infects *Fuchsia excorticata* or the newly described *Pucciniastrum healyi*, which was first described from the introduced *F. magellanica* in Canterbury. Perhaps both infect this regionally uncommon species?

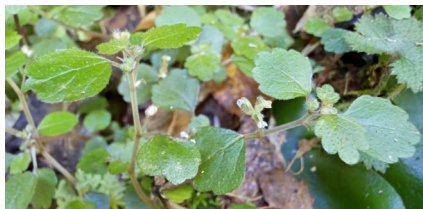
Windswept hills covered with rough pasture and clumps of spiky shrubs might not seem like a paradise for ferns. In fact, the rainfall and mist support some interesting ferns. We saw two healthy patches of the regionally uncommon *Parapolytichum microsorum* and about ten plants of the regionally endangered *Asplenium lyallii*. Other ferns we saw included *A. hookerianum* and *A. appendiculatum* subsp. *maritimum*, although we didn't see the regionally uncommon *A. appendiculatum* subsp. *appendiculatum*.



*Asplenium lyallii*. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

For those interested in tiny plants, there were also plenty to see. Bryophytes were common in the open and under the scrub, where we even saw the epiphytic *Lopidium concinnum*. A small creek was home to the rheophytes *Austrothamnium pandum* and *Fissidens rigidulus*. Sheltered beneath the dense shrub growth, we saw *Australina pusilla*, *Lepitinella squalida* and learned to separate *Hydrocotyle elongata* from the more common *H. moschata* and *H. heteromeria* by its long peduncles. In more open areas we saw *Helichrysum filicaule* and the regionally uncommon *Styphelia nesophila*. A highlight

among the herbaceous plants, though, was certainly not tiny. We saw about ten plants of the regionally vulnerable *Aciphylla squarrosa*.



*Australina pusilla*. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

We didn't travel quite far enough to reach the Tarikākā summit, where some of the uncommon plants have been previously found. Nor were we able to find some uncommon plants pre-

viously seen in other locations along the Skyline Walkway. So, there is still scope for more intensive botanical investigation of this unusual environment only a few kilometres from the centre of Wellington.

**Participants:** Melanie Newfield (leader, scribe), Leon Perrie (leader), Lara Shepherd (lead for beginners' session), John Barnett, Eleanor Burton, Michele Dickson, Andy Dobson, Richard Grasse, Kate Jordan, Emma Palmer, Simon Reeve, Sarah Rendall, Jack Welch, Carol West, Theadora Wilkins, Sophie Williams, Ben Wright, Atom Zonneville.

Melanie Newfield

## Saturday 28 March 2026: Allen's Bush, Carterton

Allen's Bush is one of the most impressive swamp forest remnants on the Wairarapa plains. It is a DOC reserve but surrounded by farmland, so permission is required to obtain access. We spent the morning following Pat along several trap-lines, stopping where the water level was too high. Highlights of these drier areas included large kahikatea and matai. We saw evidence of control of the climbing weed cathedral bells (*Cobaea scandens*) but numerous seedlings and several large vines remained. In the wetter area to the south we arrived in forest dominated by large maire tawake / swamp maire (*Syzygium maire*; Regionally Vulnerable) sporting impressive pneumatophores. Myrtle rust was noted on the leaves of some plants. In the afternoon, once we had exhausted the dryland options, some of the group chose to leave, Carol and Kate stayed on dryland and removed hundreds of karaka seedlings. A group of six intrepid botanists braved the mud to explore the wetter parts of the reserve and the adjacent Lowe's Reserve, where more swamp maire was found, as well as a drier area of tawa forest.



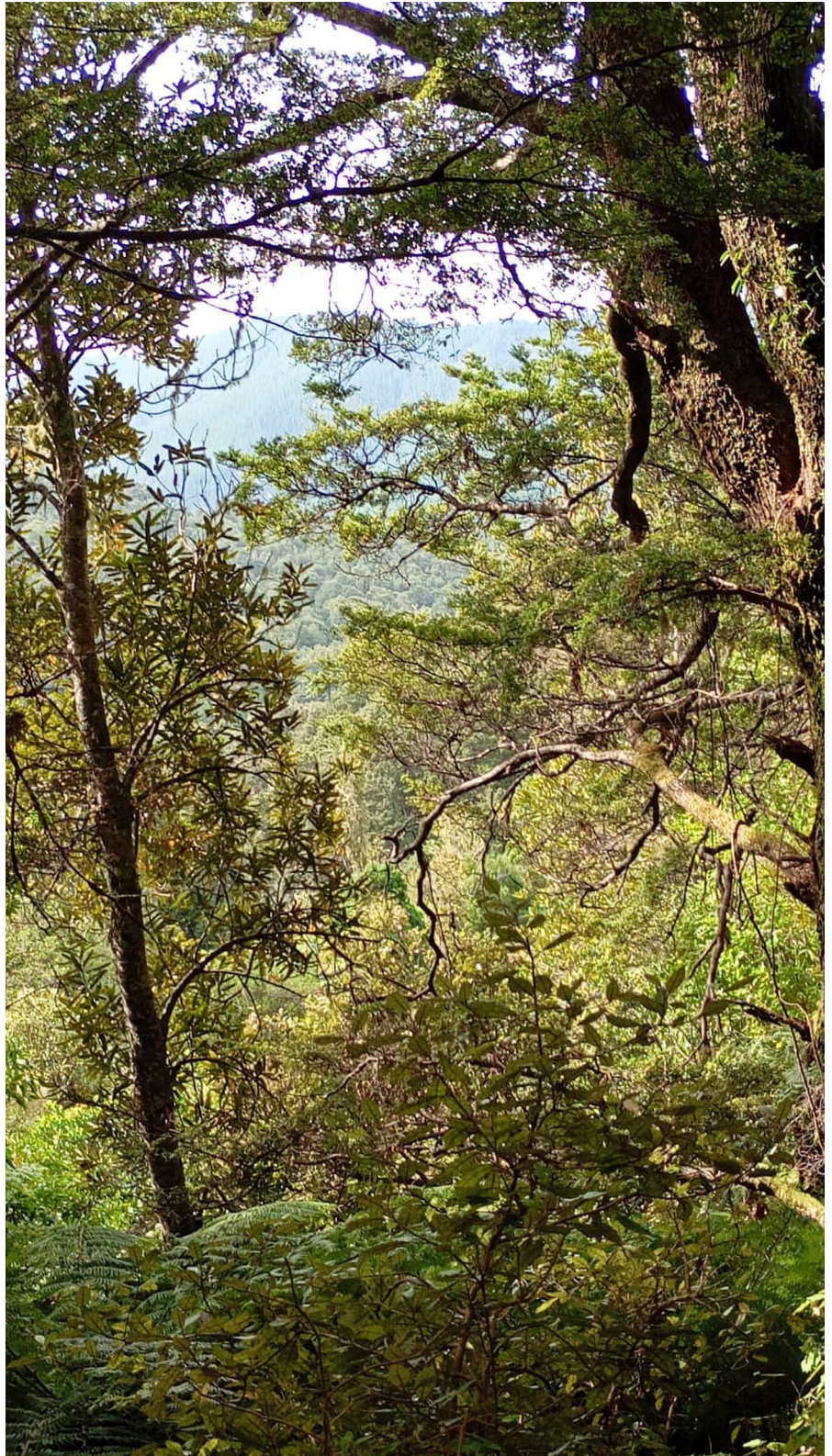
Mature maire tawake trees have a distinctive branching pattern in which branches emerge almost horizontally and then grow in a toruous manner. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.

## Sunday 29 March 2026: Rewa Bush Conservation Area

We were expertly guided by two of the Friends of Rewa Bush, Julia and Pat Ryan. This 1200-ha DOC reserve mostly covers the Waihora Stream catchment. A gravel road, maintained for the adjacent pine forestry, provides access to the ridge top on the north side of the block. At our first stop we sidled along the hillside through black beech forest on to a ridge showing evidence of deer browse. We followed this ridgeline to a local high point. A highlight in this area was numerous large maire taiki (*Mida salicifolia*; Regionally Declining), including one plant in fruit. Easter orchids (*Earina autumnalis*) were common and flowering heavily, including plants on the ground.

Our second stop was along Pioneer Road where we had a short walk down to a stream. This area had much denser undergrowth, suggesting lower browsing pressure. Very large trees in this area included a large female miro and rimu. Here we saw a single *Pittosporum divaricatum* (Regionally Critical) in fruit. We then crossed the road and explored an old track, complete with steps, bridges and labels on several of the larger trees. We finished with a quick trip to the small dam on the valley floor to see the *Olearia virgata* (Regionally Uncommon), only to find that a large tree had blown over on to it.

As we were about to leave for the day Ira noticed a huge mistletoe (*Peraxilla tetrapetala*; Regionally Critical) on the side of the road (everyone else had walked past it at least twice). It would be worth a repeat visit to the reserve during flowering season to see if any others are present. Overall, of the nineteen vascular species we added to the existing plant list four were of conservation interest (*Azorella hookeri*, *Clematis foetida*, *Diplazium australe* and *Senecio bipinnatisectus*).



Dense forest at Rewa Bush Conservation Area. Photo: Pat McLean.

**Participants:** John Barnett, Eleanor Burton, Jenny Fraser (Saturday only), Russell Hooper, Kate Jordan, Pat McLean (co-leader), Leon Perrie, Ira Ritchie, Linda Sexton, Lara Shepherd (co-leader, scribe), John van den Hoeven (Saturday only), Carol West.

# 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 Dr Lara Shepherd, [lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz](mailto:lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz), PO Box 10 412, Wellington 6140.

## 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 website, 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, email 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, Dr Lara Shepherd, [lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.nz](mailto:lara.shepherd@tepapa.govt.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.

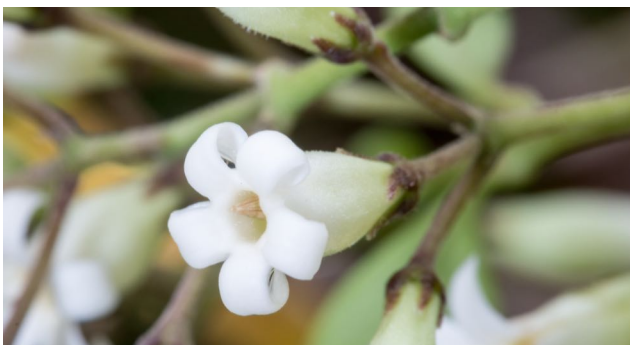
Further information [info@metlink.org.nz](mailto:info@metlink.org.nz) Metlink, 0800 801-700.

### Zoom link for meetings

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89547154619?pwd=bE0zRXRWSXBBUkVoUjdPcEljNXIjUT09>.

## 'What on earth?' revealed

A flower of / akakaikiore / NZ jasmine / *Parsonsia heterophylla*. This species may be confused with *P. capsularis* but they can be easily distinguished from each other when in flower. In *P. heterophylla* (below left), the anthers are held mostly or entirely within the throat of the flower, whereas they are distinctly exerted in *P. capsularis* (below right). Photos: Jeremy Rolfe.



# Wellington Botanical Society

## Student Conference & Workshop Attendance Grant



The Wellington Botanical Society is pleased to offer a new grant aimed at encouraging students to participate in ecological and botanical conferences and workshops. This initiative is designed to enrich and supplement students' studies and professional development in the fields of botany and ecology.

### Grant details:

- The grant is intended to assist with costs associated with attending conferences or workshops, including registration fees, travel, and accommodation.
- The focus of the event should align with the Society's objectives, i.e., botany, plant ecology, and closely related disciplines.

### Eligibility:

- Applicants must:
  - Be currently enrolled at a registered tertiary provider, or
  - Have completed their studies in the six months prior to application.
- Applicants should be based in the Lower North Island and be affiliated with an institution such as:
  - Victoria University of Wellington (Te Herenga Waka)
  - Massey University (Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa)
  - Open Polytechnic of New Zealand
  - Te Pūkenga
  - Te Whare Wananga O Awanuiarangi

### Application details:

- Applications are accepted year-round, although a maximum of five will be awarded per calendar year.
- The event for which the grant is being applied for must occur no more than six months from the date of application
- Grant amounts are:
  - \$500 for domestic events
  - \$1,000 for international events
- Grant recipients may use the funds at their discretion; however, proof of event attendance may be required.
- Only one grant will be awarded to any individual per 12-month period.

### Reporting requirement:

- Successful applicants will be asked to provide a short (300-500 word) report or reflection on their experience for inclusion in the Wellington Botanical Society Newsletter or Bulletin.