

# Ōtari-Wilton's Bush

10 May 2025

Guide: Kathy Ombler

Participants: Ross Anderson, Jenny Bradley, Phil Brown, Chris Crowe,  
Liz Crowe, Jane Lenting, Geraldine Oliver, Hilary Ryan, John Rhodes,  
Mark Walthall

*Masterton and South Wairarapa Tramping Clubs*

Ōtari-Wiltons Bush is a six-star garden of international significance. It includes New Zealand's only botanic garden dedicated solely to native plants, and 100 hectares of mature native forest more than 100 years into regeneration, along with seven hectares of original podocarp/northern rātā forest. A legacy of vision and foresight, from botanists (in particular Dr Leonard Cockayne), farmers (Job Wilton), gardeners, curators, conservationists and community volunteers, has helped make this the special place it is today.

We explored Ōtari's collections and some of the 12 kilometres of forest trails. Our three-hour circuit took us high above Ōtari-Wilton's Bush to the Skyline Ridge, with views of Wellington Harbour, Cook Strait and the Tararua Ranges.

Our guide was Kathy Ombler, a keen tramper and outdoor writer who has been a volunteer trapper in Ōtari for more than ten years, and is a trustee of the Ōtari-Wilton's Bush Trust. Kathy talked about Ōtari's rich heritage and introduced us to some of the rarest native plants, oldest trees, diversity of forests and amazing birdlife that make up Ōtari-Wilton's Bush.



















































