

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH - BUSH, BIRDS AND BARBEQUES!

1. CAN YOU FIND A SILVER FERN? THESE ARE ONLY FOUND IN NEW ZEALAND. THE LEAVES ARE SILVERY UNDERNEATH, AND ARE A SYMBOL FOR THE ALL BLACKS! TRY TO SAY THE SCIENTIFIC NAME: CYATHEA DEALBATA.
2. WALK THE NATURE TRAIL - A PATH THAT TEACHES YOU ALL ABOUT NEW ZEALAND'S FOREST. FIND A PAMPHLET AT THE INFORMATION CENTRE.
3. EVER WALKED ACROSS THE TREETOPS? WELL NOW YOU CAN! NEXT TO THE INFORMATION CENTRE IS THE CANOPY WALKWAY, 19 METERS ABOVE THE GROUND - YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE SO MANY THINGS! HANG-OUT WITH THE BIRDS AND SEE THEM FEEDING FROM FLOWERS AND FRUIT, AS WELL AS LOTS OF INSECTS AND EVEN SOME LIZARDS.
4. LOOKOUT! KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR BIRDS LIKE TUI AND KERERU. THEY ARE OFTEN HANGING OUT IN THE TREES OR ARE FLYING AROUND THE CANOPY WALKWAY. KERERU ARE A LARGE PIGEON AND MAKE A SWOOPING NOISE WITH THEIR WINGS WHEN FLYING. TUI ARE SMALLER WITH BLACK FEATHERS, EXCEPT FOR A TUFT OF WHITE FEATHERS ON THEIR THROATS.
5. CHECK OUT THE FIERCE LANCEWOOD FOREST, NEXT TO THE HEBE COLLECTION. THESE WACKY PLANTS LOOK LIKE UMBRELLAS, THEY GROW STRAIGHT LIKE A SPEAR FOR MANY YEARS AND HAVE TOUGH, WOODY LEAVES, WITH HOOKS ALONG THE SIDES. SCIENTISTS THINK THAT LANCEWOODS MIGHT HAVE STARTED GROWING LIKE THIS TO STOP MOA EATING THEIR LEAVES.
6. FIRST IN FIRST SERVED! FEED YOUR HUNGRY EXPLORERS AT THE TROUP PICNIC LAWN AT OUR TWO PUSH-BUTTON ELECTRIC BARBEQUES. THEY'RE FREE TO USE - BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO BRING YOUR OWN SAUSAGES.
7. IT'S EEL SPOTTING TIME! WE HAVE SEVERAL RESIDENT EELS IN THE KAIWHARAWHARA STREAM. CAN YOU SEE ANY? DURING THE DAY THEY'RE SECRETIVE, HIDING UNDER LOGS AND BOULDERS OR UNDER RIVERBANKS - SO LOOK CLOSE!
8. LOOK UP! VISIT THE 800-YEAR-OLD RIMU TREE ON THE BLUE TRAIL - IT'S THE OLDEST IN WELLINGTON CITY AND STANDS 33 METRES TALL! HOW MANY TIMES TALLER THAN YOU IS THAT? ON THE WAY YOU MIGHT SEE A FANTAIL. FANTAILS FOLLOW PEOPLE WALKING IN THE BUSH BECAUSE THEIR FEET KICK UP LEAVES, THEN FANTAILS EAT THE INSECTS THAT WERE HIDING UNDERNEATH - YUUUUUUUM! OR YUCK?
9. PRACTISE ROLY-POLYS AT THE FLAX CLEARING. THE FLAX CLEARING IS A TOP-SECRET LAWN AREA THAT YOU CAN FIND BY WALKING UP THE YELLOW TRAIL OR RED TRAIL. IF YOU STAND ON TIPPY-TOES YOU CAN SEE THE OCEAN.
10. WANT TO WATCH A WETA SLEEPING? ALONG THE NATURE TRAIL ARE SEVERAL WOODEN WETA BOXES. BUT STAY SUPER-QUIET OR YOU MIGHT WAKE THEM UP! YOU NEED SHARP WETA-FINDING EYES TO SPOT THEM. (THEY ARE QUITE SHY AND USUALLY ONLY COME OUT AT NIGHT.)

