

Ōtari-Wilton's Bush is the only botanic garden in New Zealand dedicated solely to native plants. This unique plant sanctuary and forest reserve consists of 100 hectares of native forest and five hectares of plant collections.

The landscape around you was once thick forest of rimu and rata towering over a canopy of tawa, hinau and kohekohe. The name means 'Place of Snares'. Forest clearance in Wellington peaked during early European colonisation. Land was cleared for farming and trees taken to build. One of the early landowners, Job Wilton, preserved seven hectares of the original forest and fenced it off. This is now known as Wilton's Bush. In 1906 the forest was gazetted as scenic reserve.

In 1926 the Ōtari Open Air Native Plant Museum was established by Dr Leonard Cockayne and J G McKenzie (Director of Parks). Their vision was to conserve the native forest, cultivate plants from all over New Zealand, teach people about native plants and advocate their use in horticulture. This remains the blueprint for Ōtari-Wilton's Bush today.



Events and venues

Learn about our events and venues online at wellingtongardens.nz or at our main entrance map boards. Guided tours are available for groups. Bookings are essential. The Leonard Cockayne Centre can be booked for meetings and events. Email bookings@wcc.govt.nz or phone 04 499 1400 for venue or booking enquires.

Visitor information

The Visitor Centre - Tāne Whakapiripiri - is open 8am-4pm daily and contains displays and seating for visiting groups.

Next to the Visitor Centre, a 75-metre Canopy Walkway soars 18 metres above the forest floor. It provides a fully accessible tree-top experience between the two garden areas.

Barbecues

Two electric barbecues are available at the Troup Picnic Area. These are free to use.

Nature Trail

A self-guided Nature Trail starts at the Visitor Centre. Pick up a brochure for the Nature Trail at the start of the Canopy Walkway.

Wheelchair access

Paths are fully accessible to wheelchairs from the Wilton Road car park to the Visitor Centre, over the Canopy Walkway to the lookout and along the Wilton Walkway to the viewing platform.

How to get there:

Take the **No 14 bus** to the corner of Wilton Road with Warwick Street or Gloucester Street, just across the road from Ōtari.

Car - the main public car park is at 150 Wilton Road. The Northern Carpark is at the bottom of Churchill Drive, off Wilton Bush Road.

Ōtari-Wilton's Bush

Native Botanic Garden and Forest Reserve



Ōtari-Wilton's Bush: 160 Wilton Road, Wellington 6012
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Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

Forest reserve areas

There are 100 hectares of forest made up of old growth and regenerating forest. Large conifers (podocarps) such as rimu, totara, miro and matai can be viewed from the Canopy Walkway or the Nature Trail. About 150 species of flowering plants, conifers and ferns can be found in the forest.

Epiphytes or perching plants sit high in the branches of mature trees. Climbing plants, including the New Zealand passionfruit, supplejack and rata occur throughout the forest.

Kohekohe, rewarewa, tawa and mahoe trees dominate the upper slopes and merge with forest remnants of old rimu and matai. In the wetter areas, tall pukatea can be seen with their buttressed roots.

On the high south-facing slopes, scrub is dominated by introduced gorse and Darwin's barberry with colonising native plants such as mahoe, mapou, tauhinu and rangiora.

Native birds include kākā, kārearea, kererū, kākāriki, tūi, piwaiwaka, kotare, riroriro and ruru.

Management of the forest involves:

- **Possum and rat control:** This is necessary to allow natural regeneration of the forest and to ensure native birds are safe.
- **Weed control:** Weeds such as old man's beard, ivy, jasmine, tradescantia, and African club moss are all under sustained control.
- **Revegetation:** Native plants, grown from seed collected locally, are planted back in specific areas each winter.

How can I support Ōtari-Wilton's Bush?

Entry is free, but you will find a donation box on the outside wall of the Information Centre. Donations go toward the Ōtari-Wilton's Bush Trust, a charitable trust that supports Wellington City Council to manage Ōtari-Wilton's Bush. Find out how you can join the Trust at www.owbt.nz.



Native botanic garden

The plant collections contain approximately 1200 species, hybrids and cultivars from the subantarctic islands in the south to Cape Reinga and offshore islands in the north.

Almost all of the plants have been raised from cuttings or seed collected from the wild. Details of each plant are documented.

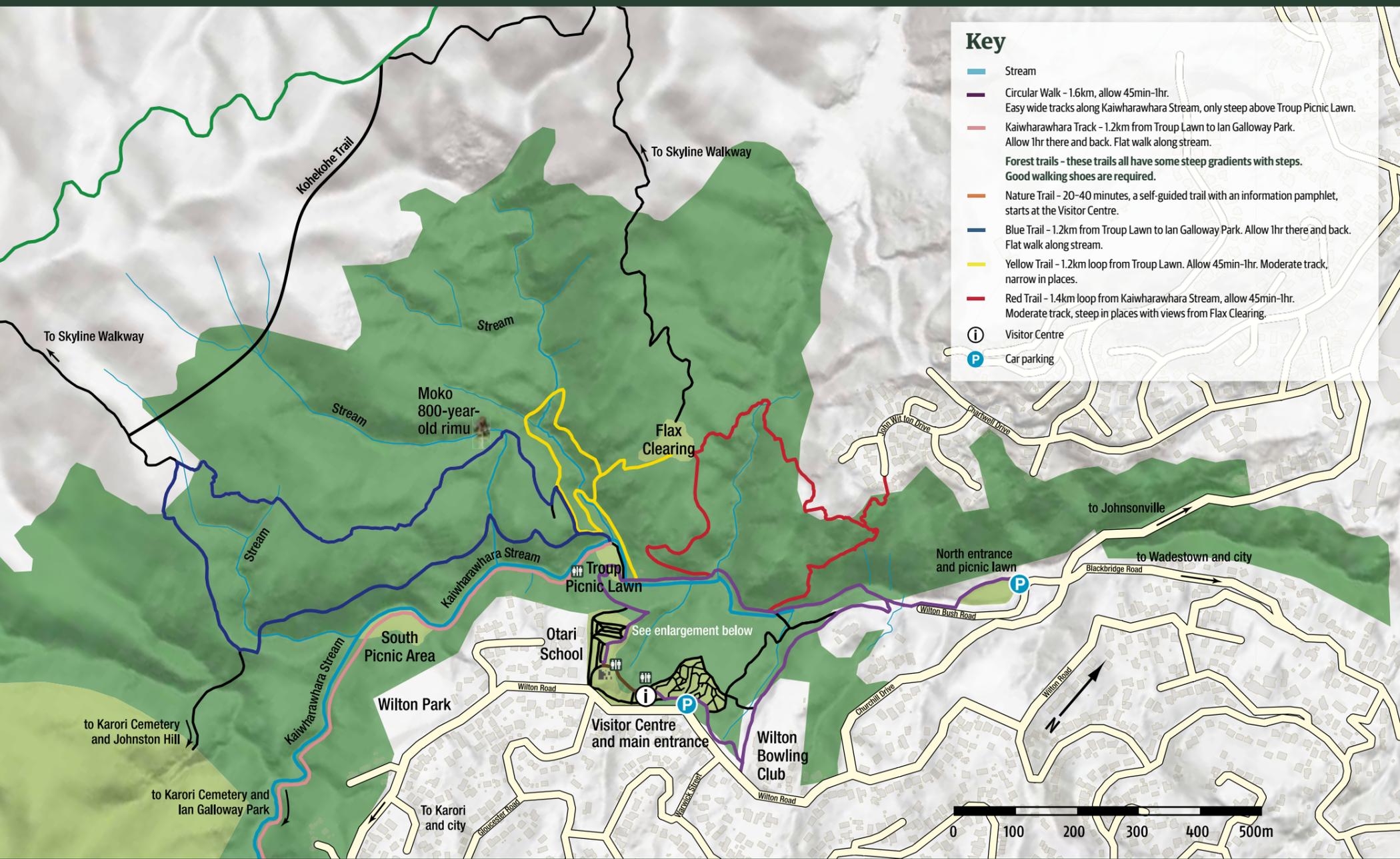
The plant collections represent and describe New Zealand's native flora for the purposes of:

- **Education:** The plant collections are labelled so visitors can learn about our amazing native plants. Many school groups visit to learn more about New Zealand's environment.
- **Conservation:** The collections contain many threatened species. Seedlings grown from these plants are planted back into the wild as part of plant conservation recovery programmes.
- **Research:** Scientists use the plant collections for research into such things as plant structure and form, economic uses of native plants and their extracts and classification and naming.
- **Horticulture:** The collections showcase landscape design and the ornamental uses of native plants.



Ōtari-Wilton's Bush

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Ōtari Native Botanic Garden enlargement

