

Claremont Bush Scenic Reserve

South Canterbury Forest & Branch visit 19 February 2015



The first outing of the year took six members of the South Canterbury branch of Forest & Bird to Claremont Bush Scenic Reserve for a pleasant walk through this special area on the southern slopes of Mt Horrible, inland from Timaru.

Claremont Bush is a rare example of original old growth forest in part and is one of the last remnants of a podocarp-broadleaf forest in a low rainfall area on the Timaru downlands. More than 70 native plant species were recorded during a survey in September 2010. Other similar sites within the Timaru District contain around 60 native species.

During the summer of 2012 several matai seedlings were found growing along the track and these have since been protected with plastic mesh guards. Such seedlings in their juvenile form may appear insignificant, hence protection helps so they survive and eventually replace some of the old aging matai trees.

When surveyed one totara tree measured 1.40 m in diameter and matai were up to 1.15m in diameter, these are impressive sized trees for this site.

Some fantails were seen and a few bellbirds heard during our bush walk.

Thanks go to Margaret for arranging this interesting outing and to the hosts, Marijke and Kees Bakker for the use of their home for the get-together after the walk. Another couple of members joined in for tea followed by a brief meeting.

Fraser Ross

Members of the South Canterbury Branch of Forest & Bird visiting Claremont Bush for the first outing of the year: Malcolm and Margaret McPherson, Alison Grey, Isobel McKinnon and Ina Turner.



Malcolm McPherson and Fraser Ross standing beside a matai tree