

Christchurch Botanic Gardens

Walking guide



Welcome to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens

In a loop of the Avon River, bordered on three sides by the green expanse of Hagley Park, are the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. With more than one and a half million recorded visits each year, the Gardens are one of the city's most visited public facilities.

The Gardens are at the heart of Christchurch's reputation as the Garden City. A temperate climate supports many thousands of plants, gathered from around the world and across New Zealand since 1863.

You will see exotic trees here that are some of the largest, the tallest or the oldest of their kind in this country. You will see spectacular colour and form, intriguing artworks, and memorial plantings that celebrate local and international history. Introduced species will remind you of faraway places, and native plants will take you to the bush, the mountains and the wetlands of New Zealand, Aotearoa. And all of this is just 15 minutes from the city centre.

Contents

Christchurch Botanic Gardens

Seasonal highlights	4
■ Museum gates to the Central Rose Garden.....	6
■ The conservatories.....	12
■ Gardens Café to the Water Garden	18
■ New Zealand Gardens	22
Christchurch Botanic Gardens map.....	26
■ Rock and Heather Gardens to the Archery Lawn	28

Hagley Park

■ Hagley Park river walk.....	33
■ Daffodil Woodland to Harman's Grove.....	37
The story of Hagley Park	43

Other features

The Gardens' heritage.....	47
Birds of the Gardens	49
Managing the Gardens.....	51

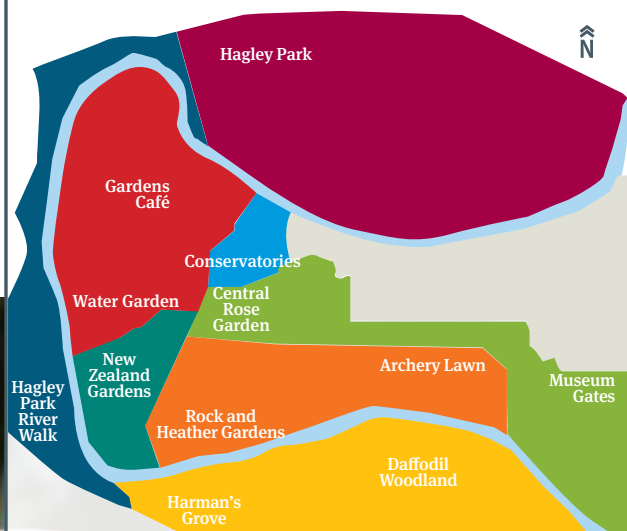
ISBN 978-877313-59-2

January 2011

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How to use this guide

This guide has eight colour coded sections. Each section has a map and suggested walking route. Use the map on page 26 and 27 to help you choose where to start.



Seasonal highlights

	March	April
Annual bedding	■	
Herbaceous Border	■	■
Hydrangeas	■	■
Roses	■	
Begonias	■	
Cyclamen		■
Autumn leaf display	■	■

	June	July
Cyclamen	■	
Orchid species	■	■
Magnolias		■
Camellias		■
Annual bedding		■

	September	October
Magnolias	■	■
Camellias	■	
Annual bedding	■	■
Rhododendrons	■	■
Bulbs	■	
Blossoms	■	
Bearded irises		■
Azaleas		■
Roses		■
Hostas		■

	December	January
Herbaceous Border	■	■
Roses	■	■
Dahlias		■
Begonias		■
Hydrangeas		■
Annual bedding	■	■
Hostas	■	■

■ Remains through whole month

May



*What's on
this Autumn*

August



*What's on
this Winter*

November



*What's on
this Spring*

February



*What's on
this Summer*

Variable

Museum gates to the Central Rose Garden



The Armstrong Lawn

© Neil Macbeth



Starting out

John Armstrong, one of the early curators of the Gardens, is commemorated at the Armstrong Lawn.

Today, where horsedrawn carts once collected gravel from pits in this area, formal bedding displays bloom through spring and summer. Tulips, polyanthus and Iceland poppies bring post-winter colour. Plants like petunia, begonia and salvia are tended through the hot dry months and into March.

▲ The Peacock Fountain was imported from England and first installed in the Gardens in the early 1900s, thanks to a bequest from distinguished local businessman, the Honorable John Peacock.

▲ The Tudor-style Curator's House, built in 1920, is now used for fine dining and education. In its garden, nasturtiums and herbs grow alongside heirloom and gourmet vegetables. Gardeners come here to learn about companion planting, composting and crop rotation.

© Neil Macbeth



© Neil Macbeth



William Sefton Moorhouse, superintendent of Canterbury Province in the 1850s and '60s

Trees of Armstrong and Archery Lawns

© Botanic Gardens



Armstrong Lawn's specimen trees include the purple beech (A) (*Fagus sylvatica* var. *purpurea*), planted in 1919. Native to Europe, its smooth light-grey bark was once used to make paper. Its timber is used for flooring and furniture.

© Botanic Gardens



The prehistoric-looking monkey puzzle (B) (*Araucaria araucana*) is a South American giant. This living fossil is from the same family as the kauri and has survived millions of years of climatic change in its native Chile.

© Botanic Gardens



Opposite the Herbaceous Border, on the Archery Lawn, are more of the Gardens' specimen trees.

© Botanic Gardens



The cork oak (C) (*Quercus suber*) is an evergreen from Southern Europe and North Africa. This tree has not been harvested, but bark is collected from commercial cork trees every eight to ten years.

The Wellingtonias (D) (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) can grow up to 90 metres high, with bark more than half a metre thick. These six trees were just seeds when imported from their native California in 1873.

The Herbaceous Border

© Neil Macbeth



© Neil Macbeth



Colour and form

Herbaceous plants are soft-stemmed, without woody thickening. The curator of the border arranges shapes, colours and textures to create a continuous display of flowering perennials through summer and early autumn. As autumn moves into winter, seedheads and skeletons present interesting silhouettes against a background of mature trees and shrubs.

Borders like this are common in English country gardens. The Gardens' border is in two parts, divided by an ornamental sundial presented by Canterbury Superintendent William Rolleston in 1873. The sandy soils at the eastern end are perfect for plants from hot dry climates, and for the bearded iris cultivars which flower in October/November. Colourful European and North American plants including phlox, aster and geranium dominate the moist western end. In the shadiest areas, hostas are a feature.

© Neil Macbeth



Trees of the Central Lawn and surrounds

© Botanic Gardens



E

Take time to find the specimen trees in this part of the Gardens.

The Atlas cedar (E) (*Cedrus atlantica*) forms forests at altitudes of over 1200 metres in the mountains of Morocco and Algeria.

This century-old Westfelton yew (F) (*Taxus baccata* 'Dovastoniana') is one of very few in New Zealand over a century old.

New Zealanders have commonly planted the Monterey cypress, or macrocarpa (G) (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) for windbreak hedging and timber.

The Dawn redwood (H) (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) was thought to be extinct until a botanist discovered the genus growing wild in central China in 1941.

© Botanic Gardens



F

© Botanic Gardens



G



H

© Botanic Gardens

The Central Rose Garden

Hearts turned upwards

When the first rose garden was established here in 1909, it was considered the largest and finest in Australasia. The rectangular rosarium had 132 beds and almost 2500 rose bushes.

© Botanic Gardens



The rose garden was redeveloped in the mid-1930s, with four paths converging at a mirror pool in the middle of a circular design. Twenty years later a memorial sundial replaced the pool. Now, 104 beds support a profusion of climbing, standard and Hybrid Tea modern garden roses.

In winter the roses are pruned and in summer they are regularly deheaded. A combination of careful hybrid selection, hygiene and nutrition ensures a magnificent display from the height of pre-Christmas early flowering to the second flush of blooms in January.

Between January and April, many-coloured dahlias create an added attraction on the south-east fringe of the Rose Garden. Approximately 90% of this collection comes from New Zealand breeders.

© Botanic Gardens



© Neil Macbeth



The conservatories



Open daily from
10.15am to 4.00pm

Fern House

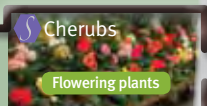
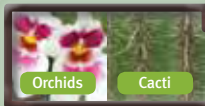


Gilpin House

Garrick House

Townend House

Foweraker House



Fragrant Garden



Cunningham House

Central Rose Garden

Conservatories are special indoor environments for plant collections. The Gardens' six conservatories are home to hundreds of plants at any one time. Displays change with the seasons.

Funds bequested by Gardens' enthusiast Charles Cuninghame led to the opening of Cuninghame House in 1923.

The original Townend House opened in 1914, thanks to funds from the estate of Annie Townend, the second owner of Mona Vale. The present Townend House opened its doors to the public in 1955.

Garrick House is named after Henry Garrick, who donated an extensive collection of cacti and succulents to the Gardens. Gilpin House acknowledges Huia Gilpin, a former director of Council's Parks and Recreation division. Both of these conservatories opened in 1960.

Bequests from Mary Rothney Orr and James Foster were used to develop the Fern House, which opened in 1955.

Jean Foweraker gifted many plants to the Gardens. Foweraker House, opened in 1967, is named in her memory.



© Botanic Gardens

Townend House

Cunningham House

Originally called the Winter Garden, Cunningham House is listed by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust as a significant building.

Walking into this conservatory is like walking into a tropical rainforest. At floor level, dozens of species thrive in low light conditions. The steel framework, like trees in a natural forest, allows epiphytes to climb out of the damp dark places and form a canopy. Higher again, plants that love the light grow on the upper level. When trees die, new plants take advantage of the light open spaces that are left behind.

In autumn, Gardens staff begin heating the conservatory to produce ideal conditions for the collections – plants such as *Dieffenbachia*, *Peperomia*, *Philodendron* and *Begonia*. Through the cold Canterbury winter these tropical species bask in warmth created by hot water piped from the boiler room.

Look for the bananas growing high up amongst the broadleaved trees and plants.



© Neil Macbeth



© Botanic Gardens

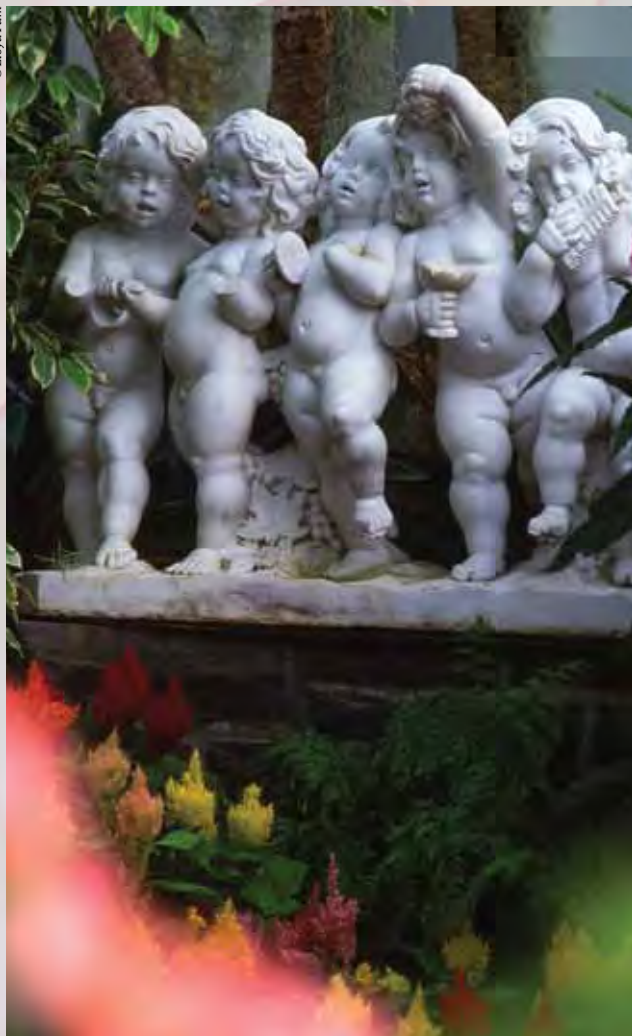
Townend House

Townend House gardeners furnish this conservatory year-round. Keeping the conservatory in full bloom requires thorough planning, and careful control of both temperature and ventilation.

About 25 different collections of cool greenhouse flowering plants are displayed here annually. The thousands of plants, including *Coleus*, *Cyclamen*, *Primula* and *Streptocarpus*, are raised in the Gardens nursery before being transferred to Townend House.

The stunning begonias – some of them hybrids raised by Gardens staff – are a colourful highlight from mid-January until the end of March. Begonia tubers are kept once flowering is over; most other plants are composted.

© Lloyd Park



Townend's statues include several indulgent cherubs

Garrick House

The Garrick House landscape mural, painted by signwriter Gordon Gee, stretches across desert and into the distance like a slice of south-western America or South Africa. Many of the Gardens' 500-plus species of cacti are on display here, growing amongst red volcanic rocks brought from Banks Peninsula.



© Neil Macbeth

Gilpin House

Next-door, Gilpin House is kept at a temperature of about 19° Celsius, and at a high level of humidity. These conditions support the tropical orchids, bromeliads and carnivorous plants on show. Staff change the display regularly to highlight plants of interest as they flower.



© Neil Macbeth

Fern House

A gentle stream creates the right environment for moisture-loving plants in the Fern House. New Zealand's iconic silver fern (*Cyathea dealbata*) lives here, amongst a collection of ferns that would be difficult to grow outside in Christchurch. Hairy-trunked punga (tree ferns) and a large *Marattia salicina* stand over lower-growing species such as *Asplenium*, *Blechnum* and *Pteris*. In this pocket of damp shady bush, many mosses and liverworts thrive.



Chionodoxa sp.

Foweraker House

The cool environment of Foweraker House supports a collection of indigenous and exotic alpine plants. A display including dwarf shrubs provides the backdrop for the other exhibits, which change with the seasons. *Fritillaria*, *Narcissus* and *Tulipa* may be seen in the spring, *Celmisia* and *Helichrysum* in summer, and a range of *Cyclamen*, *Narcissus* and *Oxalis* from autumn onwards.

Gardens Café to the Water Garden



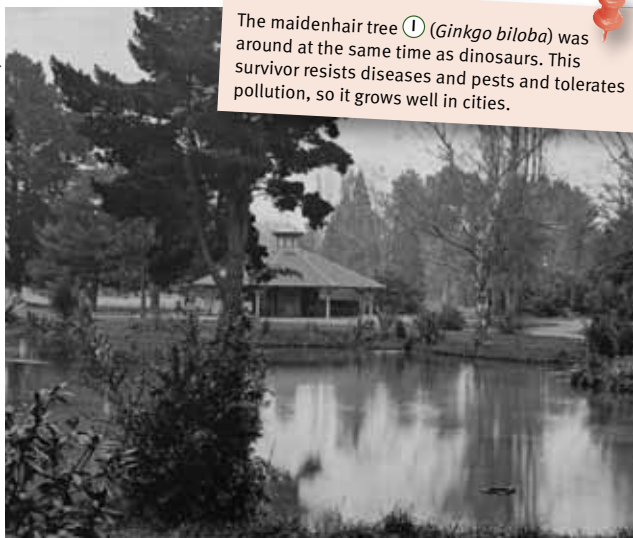
The Gardens Café and Playground

Gathering places

The café and children's playground have been popular with locals since the early 1900s.

Many birds make their homes in the trees around the edge of Kiosk Lake.

© Christchurch City Libraries



The maidenhair tree ① (*Ginkgo biloba*) was around at the same time as dinosaurs. This survivor resists diseases and pests and tolerates pollution, so it grows well in cities.

Tea Kiosk c1930s

The Climatological Station and the Magnetic Observatory

Earth forces

▲ The Climatological Station has provided daily readings for well over a century. Gardens staff record the information at 9am each day. Cloud cover, visibility, wind direction, rainfall and other details are forwarded to the national Meteorological Service.

▲ The 1940s wooden building beside the Climatological Station is a remnant of the Magnetic Observatory set up here in 1901. Explorers such as Robert Scott and Ernest Shackleton calibrated their instruments here before heading south to Antarctica.

© Neil Macbeth



The Azalea and Magnolia Garden

A spring spectacle

Under canopies of mature oaks (*Quercus robur*) and silver birch trees (*Betula pendula*), the azaleas flower for about a month from mid-October. Deciduous *Rhododendron mollis* are the main species here. Their spring show is enhanced by the sculptured flowers of the magnolias, in bloom slightly earlier, and the magnificent cone-shaped flowers of the horse chestnut trees (*Aesculus* spp).



© Neil Macbeth

◆ Sculptor Stuart Griffiths used slabs of chlorite schist and concrete to create *An Inside Outlook*. The monumental stone windowframe harks back to Europe's grand 18th-century follies – ornamental ruins constructed by country gentry to highlight sections of landscape.

Rhododendron



© Neil Macbeth

Magnolia

The Water Garden

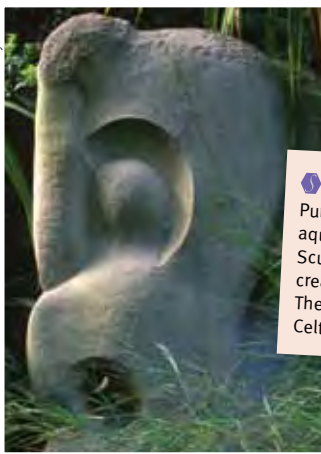
Reflections

Gravel and sand were removed from this area by the cartload in the early 1900s and used to construct paths around the growing city. The pits left behind were developed into a cluster of ponds.

The ponds' silty mud floors are perfect for growing water lilies (*Nymphaea*) and are seldom cleaned or disturbed.

Many of the water garden plants are herbaceous perennials that die down in winter, such as the bright blue Siberian iris (*Iris siberica*) and the marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*). West of the main pond is a yucca collection.

© Lloyd Park



The single jet of water from Te Puna Ora Spring flows year-round from an aquifer about 120 metres below ground. Sculptors Riki Manuel and Douglas Woods created the carvings around the spring. Their work celebrates both Māori and Celtic heritage.

© Neil Macbeth



New Zealand Gardens



The flora of Aotearoa

New Zealand's own

Fossils, tree remains, stumps, charcoal and pollen records show that forests covered about three-quarters of New Zealand before people arrived. After Māori came to these islands around 1280AD, and Europeans in the late 1700s, much of the bush was cleared. Now forests cover only about 20 per cent of the land.

Podocarps and beeches make up this country's two main forest types. The podocarps – a large family of conifers that includes trees like kahikatea and mataī – have an open growth habit which allows an understorey of flowering broadleaved species. Beech forest has a dense canopy, creating less variety and a more open forest floor.

Other key New Zealand plant groups include scrub and tussocklands, alpine and wetland communities and estuarine associations where fresh water meets the sea.

The New Zealand Garden on the present site began just before 1920. The collection around the lake includes fine examples of many unique species.

About the time the first turf was turned for the New Zealand Garden, Leonard Cockayne gained official support to carry out extensive botanical surveys. His book, *The Vegetation of New Zealand* (1921), was a standard reference for decades.



Leonard Cockayne

© Christchurch City Libraries

In 1938, the New Zealand Garden was extended to allow space for alpine plants and hebe and *Leptospermum* beds. This new area was named the Cockayne Memorial Garden, in honour of the botanist who contributed so much to the understanding of our native flora.

© Neil Macbeth

The New Zealand Garden

Uniquely native

Use the map on page 22 to discover some of our favourite notable plants. The first two are part of a newly created iconic plant collection.

Rimu/red pine ① (*Dacrydium cupressinum*)

Rimu is the most widely distributed of New Zealand's podocarps, the forest giants whose lineage goes back to ancient Gondwana. A handsome pine with delicate drooping foliage, rimu has rich timber that has long been favoured for fine furniture.

Silver tree fern/ponga ② (*Cyathea dealbata*)

New Zealand's national symbol is one of about 200 fern species in Aotearoa. Māori ate the fern fronds and used their silvery-white undersides as track markers in the bush. They built storage houses and lined kumara pits with the trunks.

Tree fuchsia/kōtukutuku ③ (*Fuchsia excorticata*)

A colourful feature in New Zealand's mainly green forest, the tree fuchsia is one of this country's few deciduous natives. With a heavy gnarled trunk and pale-brown papery bark, this is the largest fuchsia species in the world.

Cabbage tree/tī kōuka ④ (*Cordyline australis*)

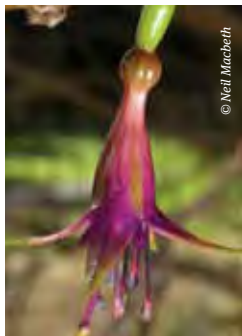
The cabbage tree is significant in the Māori landscape, marking trails, camping sites, river crossings and burial grounds. Its leaves were used to make sandals and short cloaks. Its sap was an important trading resource. Typically a wetland plant, the cabbage tree is thought to be the largest member of the lily family in the world.

Beech/tawhai ⑤ (*Nothofagus spp*)

Beech trees form much of this country's forest cover, from sea level to the bushline. Found across New Zealand, except in the far north, mid-Westland and on Stewart Island, the five different species provide crucial protection against erosion in steep poor soils.

Flax/harakeke ⑥ (*Phormium tenax*)

Flax flowers are a favourite of nectar-seeking birds. Common in the lowlands, flax has strong fibrous leaves that Māori traditionally used for weaving shoes and clothes, snares, sails and containers. The art of weaving is an integral part of Māori culture.



Tree fuchsia/kōtukutuku



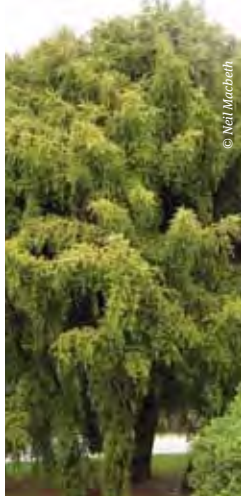
Cabbage tree/tī kōuka



Beech/tawhai



© Neil Macbeth



© Neil Macbeth



© Neil Macbeth

Kōwhai

Tōtara

Kākābeak/kōwhai ngutukākā

Stars of the Cockayne Memorial Garden

Kōwhai ⑦ (*Sophora microphylla*)

Frequently referred to as New Zealand's national flower, the kōwhai is a showy native. Kōwhai (the Māori word for 'yellow') is a member of the pea family.

Lancewood/horoeka ⑧ (*Pseudopanax crassifolius*)

Like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, the young lancewood changes form completely as it matures. The single-stemmed juvenile with narrow spear-like leaves becomes an adult with much broader leaves and a rounded crown. Pigeons/kererū feed on lancewood's dark purple fruits in autumn and winter.

Hebe ⑨ (*Hebe spp*)

Hebes are New Zealand's largest group of plants. They are prolific in the landscape and are popular with gardeners. They tend to breed together, and hundreds of hebe cultivars and hybrids have been created worldwide.

Kākābeak/kōwhai ngutukākā ⑩ (*Clianthus maximus*)

In spring, the kākābeak produces clusters of stunning scarlet flowers. This sprawling shrub has been a garden ornamental for more than a century. It is now one of the rarest natives in the wild.

Mānuka/Tea tree ⑪ (*Leptospermum scoparium*)

Mānuka is among the first natives to bloom in spring, with prolific pink or white flowers. Sometimes called the nurse plant, it colonises disturbed open ground and allows other plants to regenerate. Māori used mānuka as a healing agent. Its medicinal and culinary values, notably through its honey, give it significant economic worth.

Tōtara ⑫ (*Podocarpus totara*)

A forest giant that grows up to 40 metres high, the tōtara is one of the largest podocarps. Māori favoured its strong light timber for canoe building. Colonists appreciated its durability and used it for railway sleepers, telegraph poles and fence posts.

Christchurch Botanic Gardens





Lake Albert

Avon River

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Canterbury Museum

Herbaceous Border

Iris Garden

Maple Border

Archery Lawn

Peacock Fountain

River Walk Border

Avon River

Daffodil Woodland

Armstrong Lawn

Woodland Garden

Murray Aynsley Lawn

Curator's House Restaurant

Heritage Rose Garden

Vegetable Garden

Rock and Heather Gardens to the Archery Lawn



New Zealand Gardens

15 - 30
minute
walk



Beswick's Walk

Heather Garden

Rock Garden

Central Rose
Garden

Woodland
Bridge

K

Peace Bell

First
Tree
Lawn

Maple Border

L

Archery
Lawn

Herbaceous
Border

River-Walk
Border

M

Regret

N

Evelyn Couzins
Memorial

Pine Mound

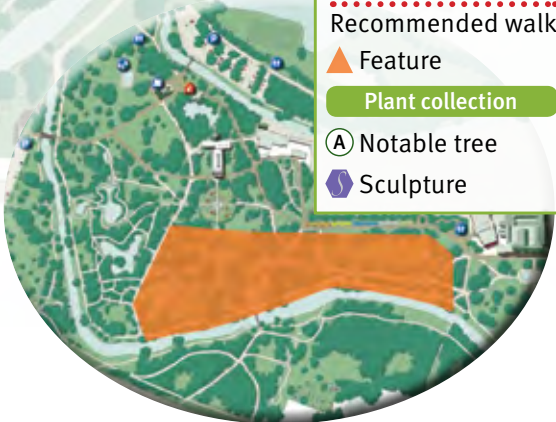
..... Recommended walk

▲ Feature

Plant collection

Ⓐ Notable tree

Ⓜ Sculpture



The Rock and Heather Gardens

Close to the sun

The Rock Garden's terraced south-facing slopes are ideal for growing many alpine plants. Most of the plants here are exotic (the native subalpine species are part of the New Zealand collection). More alpine species grow in the controlled environment of Foweraker House.

On the other side of the path, the Heather Garden faces the sunny north. Many species of heath (*Erica*) and heather (*Calluna*) grow here, in raised beds which allow maximum sunlight and drainage.

Crocus

© Botanic Gardens



In 1917, when the original rock garden was developed, gardeners planted an avenue of limes (*Tilia europaea*). These statuesque arching trees create a breathtaking autumn vista. The path was named Beswick's Walk after a former mayor of Christchurch.

The alpine ash ① (*Eucalyptus delegatensis*) is a mountain species from Australia. It sheds its bark in long ribbons. This specimen is the largest tree in the Gardens, and the largest of its species in New Zealand.

© Neil Macbeth



First Tree Lawn

In the beginning

▲ The World Peace Bell Association gifted New Zealand's World Peace Bell to Christchurch, where it was installed in the Gardens in 2006. There are fewer than 25 of these bells around the globe. Made of coins and medals from more than 100 countries, each bell recognises nations committed to world peace.

Between the Peace Bell and the Herbaceous Border is a grove of Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*). There are hundreds of cultivars of this small deciduous tree, which has long been associated with the high art of oriental gardens. Beneath the acers, winter roses (*Helleborus*) and dense plantings of hydrangeas create an attractive woodland.

Enoch Barker, the first Government gardener for the Domain, planted an English oak (K) (*Quercus robur*) on 9 July 1863. Gums and willows had been planted earlier but this oak is regarded as the foundation tree of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. It commemorates the marriage of England's Prince Albert Edward to Princess Alexandra of Denmark, and stands on what is now known as First Tree Lawn.



© Neil Macbeth



© Neil Macbeth

The Archery Lawn

Sport and Sunday strolls

The Archery Lawn area was one of the first parts of the Government Domain to be levelled and sown as a lawn. From 1873 until the early 1900s, it was a gathering place for sporting codes like archery and croquet.

The linden, or small-leaved lime **(L)** (*Tilia cordata*) is a European native. Its pale wood has been a favourite with carvers for centuries. This is the largest known specimen in New Zealand.

Mature kauri **(M)** (*Agathis australis*) now exist only in small pockets, mainly in the North Island. This specimen was planted by the Prince of Wales in 1920. Kauri can grow up to 60 metres high and seven metres wide. In the early 19th century these straight-limbed giants were milled and exported for ship masts and spars.

© Botanic Gardens



The Riverwalk Border, south of the Archery Lawn, contains a temperate Asian collection of trees and shrubs, most of them from China, Japan and the Himalayas.

(S) Sculptor Sam Mahon's *Regret*, a spidery tower intended to reflect "the messy reality of human life", stands at the eastern end of the Archery Lawn.

© Neil Macbeth



The Pine Mound

High and dry

The Pine Mound trees are more than a century old. The sandhill that they grow on marks the extent of an ancient coastline, and gives the trees the height that makes them a visual feature of the Gardens.

Because of its dry aspect, the Pine Mound creates a microclimate that supports various half-hardy plants, many of them South African.

The old sand dune beside the Evelyn Couzins memorial provides a fine location for a group of maritime or cluster pines (N) (*Pinus pinaster*). These pines are native to the western Mediterranean region.

Next to the Pine Mound, groundcover plants make the most of this predominantly dry site. Native renga renga lilies (*Arthropodium cirratum*), prostrate grevilleas, other drought-tolerant perennials and spring-flowering crocuses present a variety of forms.



© Neil Macbeth



Prostrate grevillea

© Neil Macbeth



© Neil Macbeth

▲ This stone gateway commemorates Evelyn Couzins, Mayoress of Christchurch from 1941-45

Hagley Park river walk



- Recommended walk
- ▲ Feature
- Plant collection
- Ⓐ Notable tree
- Ⓢ Sculpture

The Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk

Celebrating change

The Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk opened in 1990 to commemorate a pioneer who fought hard to achieve the right for New Zealand women to vote.

Kate Sheppard arrived in Canterbury from Scotland in 1869. An intelligent political organiser, she had radical views for her time. In 1893, her suffrage campaign succeeded. New Zealand women became the first in the world to gain the right to vote in Parliamentary elections.



© Canterbury Museum

The white camellia became a lasting symbol of women's suffrage and achievement in this country. Canterbury women's groups gifted 100 camellias to the Gardens in 1990, and these formed the beginnings of the Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk. In 1993, a new variety of white camellia, named Kate Sheppard, was created to mark the 100th anniversary of the successful campaign.



© Botanic Gardens



Settlers Corner

Settlers Corner

Putting down roots

▲ In December 1850, the first ships carrying British settlers arrived in Canterbury. Many of the colonists built huts along the Avon River in what is now North Hagley Park. This cluster of huts became known as Settlers Corner.

The new arrivals used some European elements in their temporary homes. Weatherboard fronts, hinged doors and framed glass windows were sheltered under Māori whare-style 'V' roofs. The roofs were thatched with native flax (*Phormium tenax*) and ran from central ridgelines to the ground, earning the simple structures the name 'V huts'.

▲ The settlers used a natural spring close to their homes, known today as Pilgrims Well. A stone memorial encloses this spring on the north bank of the Avon. The memorial commemorates the 80th anniversary of the arrival of the first ships.



V huts




The Pinetum

Cones and needles

An arboretum is a collection of trees for research, education and display. A pinetum is an arboretum of pine trees or related conifers. Planting in the Gardens' pinetum started before World War II and the collection has matured into a fine expanse of conifers, including many species and cultivars of cedar, cypress, fir, larch, juniper and spruce.

Conifers have immense ecological importance. They are dominant plants across wide tracts of land in many parts of the world. As timber and paper producers, their economic value is high.

In 1992, His Holiness the fourteenth Dalai Lama planted a Bhutan pine  (Pinus wallichiana) in this part of the Gardens.



Daffodil Woodland to Harman's Grove



Riccarton Ave

Settlers Corner

Harman's Grove

▲ Bandsmen's Memorial Rotunda

 20 - 30 minute walk

Woodland Garden

▲ Canterbury Acclimatisation Society Plaque

Heritage Rose Garden

Murray Aynsley Lawn

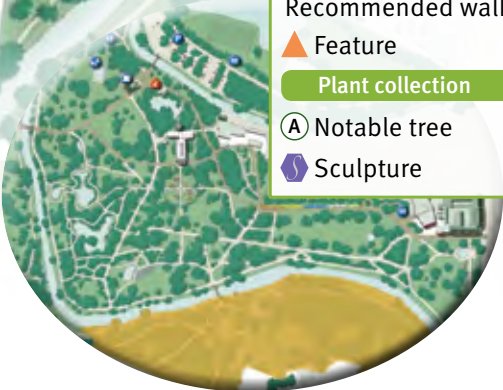
 The Wrestlers

Daffodil Woodland

 Taking Flight

Christchurch Hospital

-  Recommended walk
-  Feature
-  Plant collection
-  Notable tree
-  Sculpture



The Daffodil Woodland

Growing fish and flowers

Early colonists set aside grounds in Hagley Park to test how plants and animals from around the world would adapt to New Zealand conditions.

The Canterbury Acclimatisation Society developed several fish breeding ponds. In the 1860s, trout ova arrived from Tasmania and salmon ova came from England. Within 15 years, all of the streams and lakes in Canterbury were stocked.

Hundreds of thrushes, blackbirds, linnets, skylarks and other familiar English birds acclimatised here to the Canterbury environment. Pheasants, doves, Canadian geese, partridges and redpolls, rooks, finches and emus were imported. The Society built aviaries, and enclosures for animals that were either purchased or gifted to them: silk worms, deer, ferrets, kangaroos, a tortoise, monkeys and a Californian bear. The collection became known as 'The Zoo' and the public came to view the unusual birds and animals.

In 1928 the Acclimatisation Society relocated. The land where it had been based became part of Hagley Park again, and eventually became part of the Gardens. It was named the Woodland.



© Canterbury Museum

© Neil Macbeth



Hundreds of deciduous trees like oak and ash were planted in this area in the early 1900s. When James McPherson, the first New Zealand-born curator of the Gardens, took over in 1933, he recognised that the pasture-like grassland under these trees was ideal for

naturalising daffodils and other bulbs.

Locals initially donated more than 16,000 bulbs. Today staff and volunteers continue to replenish the collection for this significant spring highlight.

When the season finishes, each bulb reabsorbs plant nutrients from its stems and leaves. What looks like an unmown lawn is essential food for next year's flowering. During this time, pink campion, *Sparaxis* and cow parsley flower.

© Botanic Gardens



© Lloyd Park



Local sculptor Llewellyn Summers created the terrazzo figures by the river - *The Wrestlers* - in 1990.

The Canterbury Branch of the Institute of Foundrymen gifted the bronze drinking fountain to the city in 1993. The fountain, called *Taking Flight*, was designed by artist Phil Price to show movement in time.





© Neil Macbeth

The Heritage Rose Garden

Living antiques

This collection began in 1952 and includes rose species, hybrids and varieties commonly cultivated in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries.

In 1979, the World Federation of Rose Societies adopted a simple classification for roses. Heritage roses are defined as those established before 1867.

Heritage roses display interesting form, strong perfumes and a mass of colourful hips in the autumn. They have much higher pest and disease tolerance than modern roses. Staff prune these old garden plants to maintain their shape and support flowering stems. Slow-release fertilizer is applied in September and January.



© Neil Macbeth

The Woodland Garden

Beside the creek

In spring, primulas create a mass of early colour alongside a small stream, Addington Brook, which flows through South Hagley Park to the Avon River.

Primulas are mostly hardy perennial herbs and are natives of Europe and temperate Asia, Indonesia and North America.

Candelabra primulas grow well here and *Primula japonica* seeds profusely.

Alongside the primulas, other woodland plants like *Bergenia*, hosta and iris thrive. Various tree species provide shade.

▲ Behind an artesian-fed drinking fountain to the north of the primulas, there is a small plaque commemorating the Canterbury Acclimatisation Society's use of this area.

© Neil Macbeth



© Lloyd Park



Candelabra primulas

The Bandsmen's Memorial Rotunda

Music and more in the woods

▲ The rotunda is a popular venue for a range of musical entertainment, from brass bands to string quartets. Couples use this landmark for wedding ceremonies and photographs, and it provides a stage for outdoor theatre.

Nearby Harman's Grove – two hectares named after a member of the early Christchurch Domains Board – has many fine specimens of European trees such as oak, ash and sycamore, stately individuals much admired for their cool shade in summer and their attractive autumn colours.



© Neil Macbeth

The rotunda opened in 1926 in memory of Canterbury bandsmen killed in World War I. It has a Grade II listing with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

South of Harman's Grove are two impressive rows of trees. The inner is hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and the outer is Yoshino cherry (*Prunus x yedoensis*). The cherries create a spectacle along Riccarton Avenue in spring, when they are covered in white blossoms.



© Botanic Gardens

Hagley Park



Hagley Park heritage

Reserved forever

Around the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, Hagley Park stretches north and south, an urban open space of almost 165 hectares.

When European settlers arrived in 1850, the area which is now Hagley Park was scrubby grassland and shingle, criss-crossed by creeks feeding the swampy Avon River. The colonists intended their new city to have green spaces. It wasn't long before they were clearing and planting, developing what was to be "reserved forever as a public park, and open for the recreation and enjoyment of the public."

The settlers named Hagley Park after the English country seat of Lord Lyttelton, chairman of the Canterbury Association which established the Church of England settlement of Christchurch.

In the 1860s a section of Hagley Park was chosen as the site for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.



© Botanic Gardens



© Botanic Gardens

Sport and recreation in Hagley Park

Active Enjoyment

In 1852, in the tussock and scrub of Hagley Park, the single and married men of Christchurch faced off in the settlement's first cricket match.

Today, the park is a focal point for sport. North and south, there are many places to relax and watch school and club events.

Kilometres of cycling and walking tracks loop around and through the park, and exercise stations border the paths.

© Neil Macbeth



New Zealand International Exhibition 1906-07

Lakes Victoria and Albert

Royal waters

In 1897 the people of Christchurch marked the Queen of England's 60th anniversary by excavating a lake from the naturally occurring swamp in North Hagley Park and naming it in the Queen's honour. Lake Victoria was stocked with perch and became a favourite spot for sailing model yachts.

The lake was a centerpiece of the 1906-07 New Zealand International Exhibition. The Government of the day chose Christchurch to host this massive trade and tourism event, which covered more than a quarter of Hagley Park.

More than one million visitors came to the exhibition to see the many industrial and commercial wares on display, and to enjoy recreation attractions like the overhead gondola and the giant boat ramp into Lake Victoria.

The description of Christchurch as the 'Garden City' started at this time.

In 1916, an area close to Lake Victoria was excavated for soil to improve the border on Rolleston Avenue. The excavated area became Albert Lake, named in memory of Victoria's husband.

Today, this location is the site of New Zealand's premier floral event, the Ellerslie Flower Show.





© Neil Macbeth

The Park's trees and flowers

Hagley highlights

Early Canterbury settlers found the expanse that is now Hagley Park “unprepossessing in appearance”. They soon began planting the many trees that have grown to make the park the green heart of Christchurch city. There are now more than 3000 trees in Hagley Park.

The first formally recorded planting in Hagley Park was an avenue of Oriental plane trees (*Platanus orientalis*), established in North Hagley in 1870. This large deciduous tree grows well in warm summers and provides welcome shade beneath its wide crown.

Maritime pines (*Pinus pinaster*) stand tall in the face of the Canterbury nor'wester.

In spring, Yoshino cherries (*Prunus x yedoensis*) blossom in a mass of white along Harper Avenue, at the top of North Hagley Park. These were planted for Arbor Day in 1936. Across the road in Little Hagley, carpets of bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) bloom where Māori traders camped in the early days of the settlement. In South Hagley, under deciduous European trees, spring daffodils flower en masse around the many sports fields.



© Botanic Gardens

Oriental plane trees

The Gardens' heritage

Old paths and new

Swamp, shingle beds and sand dunes met the first European settlers of this city.

Māori had valued the resource-rich wetlands, the estuary and the coastline for centuries. They camped at mahinga kai (food-gathering places) along tracks running between pā (settlements) to the north and south. The site that became Christchurch was commonly known to Tangata Whenua as Otautahi (the place of the Rangatira (chief) Tautahi).

The tussock and flax, grasses and raupō of this area were foreign to Northern Hemisphere immigrants arriving in the 1850s. The settlers brought the gardening traditions of their homelands with them. They set aside areas of public land from the start. In 1855, the Canterbury Provincial Council took control of the reserves which were to become Hagley Park and the Government Domain – now the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.



© Jenny Rendall

Seeds and settlement

In 1859, Yorkshireman Enoch Barker came to Christchurch as Government Gardener. He established a nursery and planted avenues of trees around Hagley Park. His early work revolved around supplying gravel from the reserves to help build the city's roads.

Most of the early curators had trained on English and Scottish estates and were steeped in Victorian and Edwardian gardening fashions. But it wasn't long before plant imports were arriving from around the world – initially from Tasmania and eventually from countries such as India, Nepal and China – and native New Zealand seeds were being sent to botanical societies in return.

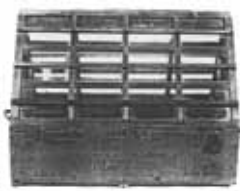
The 1870s and 1880s were key years in the development of the Gardens. The young settlement had put down roots. Scotsman John Armstrong was curator, and he and his son Joseph created much of the shape of today's botanical landscape. They had a keen interest in the local flora, but they also introduced and acclimatised more than 4000 plant species, many of which arrived by sailing ship in wooden Wardian cases.

Funding the Gardens was a challenge for the Christchurch Domains Board, established in 1872. Over the years, grazing fees and revenue from sales of hay, firewood and shingle supplemented the Board's income, as did regular garden fetes.

In 1946 the Domains Board disbanded and control of the Gardens passed to Christchurch City Council.



Enoch Barker



Wardian case



Looking towards the original Curator's House



Bellbird



Female blackbird

Bush birds in the Gardens

The Gardens and the wider area of Hagley Park provide a central city refuge for up to forty species of introduced and native birds.

The kererū/native pigeon is a solid bird with glossy green upper body, mauve back and white breast. Able to digest larger fruits and broadcast the seed, the pigeon has a key role in native forest renewal. Its thudding wingbeats are often heard well before it is seen.

Other native bush-dwellers are the sleek olive green bellbird/korimako, more often heard than seen, and the acrobatic fantail/pīwakawaka which flits about in search of insects. Flocks of silvereyes/tauhou – naturalised Australian migrants – twitter and feed together. Tiny grey warblers/riroriro are also common, restlessly seeking insects and singing a high-pitched wavering song.

The most common bush birds - blackbird, thrush, starling and house sparrow - were introduced in the 1860s.

The black and white Australian magpie is a frequent and assertive guest. Fiercely territorial, the magpie will drive other species away.

Feral (rock) pigeons are common in cities around the world, where they perch on buildings as substitutes for their natural cliff habitat. Flocks of these introduced birds nest high in the Gardens' trees.



Fantail



Male blackbird



Native pigeon

Wetland birds in the Gardens

The Gardens' most common introduced wetland bird is the mallard duck, brought to New Zealand for hunting in the 1860s. Mallards and native grey ducks have interbred to such an extent that they are almost indistinguishable in urban parks.

The native paradise shelduck/pūtangitangi/pūtakitaki competes with mallards for nesting and feeding opportunities. Twice the size of mallards, shelducks are noisy defenders of their territory, honking like geese when threatened.

New Zealand's smallest and only diving duck, the scaup/pāpango, is the most common native duck on Christchurch waterways. The glossy black male has yellow markings around the eyes. The female is brownish-black.

During spring, little shags/koau nest in the trees above Kiosk Lake. Sooty black as juveniles and varying degrees of black with white chests as adults, the shags return to the same roosts every year to rear their young.

Red-billed/akiaki, black-billed/tarapunga and the more aggressive black-backed/karoro gulls frequent the Gardens' ponds. The black-backed gull is the largest of its species in New Zealand and preys on many smaller birds.

© Lloyd Park



Putangitangi/pūtakitaki, koau and karoro are identified as Taonga Species in Schedule 97 of the Ngāi Tahu Claim Settlement Act 1998.

Little shag

© Neil Macbeth



Female paradise shelduck



Male scaup



Male mallard

© Neil Macbeth

© Neil Macbeth



Managing the Gardens

In the footsteps of our forebears

Botanic gardens are “institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of scientific research, conservation, display and education”.

Christchurch City Council manages the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park. The Gardens team includes the curators of the various garden sections, trainees and visitor staff. Their activities are guided by a ten-year management plan. Community consultation on this plan ensures that the Gardens reflect the wishes of city residents and the aspirations of the early settlers, who understood the importance of plants and green spaces.

Ngāi Tūāhuriri, based north of Christchurch at Tuahiwi, is the Māori tribal authority (Manawhenua) with guardianship (Kaitiakitanga) over this part of the city. Ngāi Tūāhuriri has a strong interest in waterways protection and enhancement. The Gardens provide a place to strengthen the values associated with the Ngāi Tahu relationship to plants and animals (Mahinga Kai).

In 1989, the Friends of Christchurch Botanic Gardens registered as an organisation. The Friends work to promote, support and protect the Gardens by leading daily walking tours between spring and autumn, guiding special interest groups, raising plants in the Friends’ glasshouse and assisting financially.

To find out more ...

www.ccc.govt.nz/christchurchbotanicgardens



The grounds

Open daily from 7am

Gates close

- November–February 9pm
- March 8.30pm
- April–September 6.30pm
- October 8.30pm

The Conservatories

Open daily from 10.00am to 4.00pm

Visitor Centre and Ilex Cafe

Open daily

June–August 9.00am to 4.00pm

September– May 9.00am to 5.00pm

