

Biodiversity in the Ashburton District

April 2012 Feature: Staveley Camp Bush



Staveley Camp Bush (or “Sawmill Road Bush”) is a native forest remnant of beech, broad-leaf and podocarp trees which is thought to be the largest surviving example of the forest which covered this part of the Canterbury Plains in 1850.

The bush borders the Staveley Camp Site and Bowyers Stream. As well as the native plants and trees, the forest remnant attracts a number of native birds, such as bellbirds, kereru, fantails and grey warblers.

Plants and trees present in the bush include:

- Wineberry
- Marble-leaf
- Broadleaf
- Kohuhu
- Lancewood
- Comprosmia
- Mountain and Black Beech
- Lawyer

At last count, there were 11 native tree species, 20 native shrub species, five native vines, 13 native herbs, 14 native ferns and 1 native lycopod. There are also a number of introduced species that have naturalised into the bush area. The Staveley Camp Site attracts visitors from all around the world, and is a natural asset for the Ashburton District. The main challenge for protecting this important area is to keep the weeds at bay – the Biodiversity Working Group is currently working with locals to create a plan for managing these weeds into the future, to ensure this important piece of native bush stays healthy and strong for future generations to enjoy.