



Waikato Biodiversity Forum Newsletter November 2016 Number 52

Kia Ora/Greetings

An update on the main work undertaken over the past three months:

- Met with DOC community rangers in Whitianga re community group projects
- Attended Hamilton Gully Protection meeting -subgroup of Forum
- Attended Kauri Dieback Forum at Matai Whetu marae in Thames
- Attended the Strategic Partners Forum consultation for The Waikato Plan re biodiversity input
- Met with researcher undertaking Part 2 of Community group needs.
- Organising a meeting in Hamilton to connect people who are doing similar roles across NZ
- Organised next Forum day in Pirongia with Waipa District Council
- Updating hard copy maps of community groups
- Assessed Small Scale Community Initiative Fund applications
- Attended first meeting as a trustee of Waikato Ecological Restoration Trust
- Ran children's invertebrate activity to support the Riverlea Environment Society Inc Fun Family Day
- Presented at the Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia conference
- Attended Mokaihaha Kokako Recovery Project strategic planning meeting
- Organised meeting with other Biodiversity Regional coordinators from other areas of the North Island

Te Kowhai Community Group and the Kowhai Kids

On 6 July 46 Year 6 students from the Te Kowhai School planted their '**kowhai kids**' tree on the Te Otamanui Walkway, each with individualised name tags. This is the second planting on the walkway. The Year 6 students of 2013 planted thirty trees on the path below the War Memorial Hall in that year. Both initiatives were supervised by the Community Group and supported by Fonterra's Grassroots fund. The



planting was a fun event, with the students learning some life skills while also contributing to the growth of the walkway. It was complemented by a classroom lecture on the history of the Te Otamanui Lagoon and the walkway, including a 'virtual walk' about the construction of the project. This was created using a drone camera to film the various stages of the walkway, from swamp and stump to gravel track on this wonderful community asset. In June, the Community Group planted 200 carex grasses on the walkway just beyond the northern end of the

boardwalk. Another 2,400 native trees and shrubs were planted in July. Final work (gravelling) on the next 500 metres of the walkway will be carried out early summer. By Christmas there should be about 1.5km of path formed from the Hall, with another 600-700 metres being constructed during 2017. The final work should see the 'Hall' section of the path connected to the walkway on Coombes Road, which was opened in 2012. Funding has been gained for eight **Heritage Panels**, describing the development of the district

over the last 160 years. The panels will be erected along the 'Hall' path, along with strategically placed seats. Some of the panels or seats are being funded out of bequests from families who are or have been connected to the district. Graham McBride Photo credit Shelby Bowater

Mangaiti Gully Restoration Trust

Mangaiti Gully Restoration Trust is rolling out an exciting community based pest control programme especially designed for the urban environment. We are focusing on a reasonably large gully system covering Thomas Road in the North, Gordonton Road in the east, Wairere Drive in the south and Hukanui Road in the west in the north eastern suburbs of Hamilton City. We have laid a 50 metre grid over a map of the whole area with the objective of installing a bait station or trap in each grid square in the gully. These will be serviced by people living on the gully boundary. Any square left at the end will be serviced by our trust team. Our Trust is supplying Bromadiolone bait blocks and bait stations. All results are being monitored and recorded on the [TrapNZ](#) website. Health and safety is being managed by developing a risk assessment plan. Rex Bushell



Kauri 2000

With the support of loyal volunteers, students from several schools and sponsors, Kauri 2000 have planted 46,389 since Cliff Heraud's initial idea. This year another 2500 seedlings went into the ground all over the Coromandel Peninsula: Coromandel township, Matarangi, Kuaotunu, Tairua, Whangamata and Paeroa. A team from Bank of New Zealand, our main sponsors, started at the top of the Matarangi planting site - a very steep and slippery hill - and the volunteers continued downhill the following day. Kauri 2000 would like to acknowledge and thank the teachers, parents and helpers who make school planting days possible, and the Department of Conservation who not only support our activities but individual DOC staff get involved too. Sarah Cooper Picture of the BNZ team



Landcare Research Karareho Kino Vertebrate Pest Research Issue 28

The latest publication on vertebrate research is on the Landcare Research website. www.landcareresearch.co.nz/publications/newsletters/kararehe-kino. This publication includes articles on impacts of mice in Waikato forests, Councils use of chewcards to reduce pest monitoring costs and an assessment of the suitability of citizen science data for biodiversity reporting. The whole publication is a really good read. You can subscribe to get an alert when the publication is released by going to the above website and registering.

Whakaupoko (West Franklin) Landcare Rat Pest Control

We have taken a new approach to pest control with a community bait and trap pick up day every three months. It is proving very successful as not only a way of getting people involved in more pest control but also as a great way of creating goodwill and education within the community.



One of the innovations has been this new bait station of which we already have 150 out in the community. They are rat and mouse specific, they do not allow the rats to carry bait away and are reasonably dog proof. The cost of materials is around just \$5. We partly put them together the evening before and this is a great opportunity for a catch up and sharing of pest control information. On the day people complete the final assembly and this provides excellent time for people to chat and catch up on pest control tips etc.

DOC and now Councils are trying to discourage the use of brodifacoum as the only toxin used because of its long half life. This is a concern for private land owners because unlike commercial operators, most of us do not have access to the likes of cyanide and 1080. This leaves brodifacoum as the only option that will control both rats and possums. We are trialling these rat specific bait stations and for most of the year will use the rat specific bait Pest Off 50D, (Diphacinone). We will keep you posted on success.



The bait stations are made from .3m lengths of 100 x 25mm timber and 150 x 25mm timber with a bit of plywood on the front and back. Also, note the 11mm x 11mm mesh bent to shape to prevent rats dragging away the bait pellets. The

first photo shows the bait station open and the second closed. Contact Andrew Sinclair for more information andrew@climbingjack.com and 021 268 1904

Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society

We have had great support from volunteers with pest control on Mt Pirongia and at Okahukura in northern Pureora where protecting the kokako population there is important as a critical link between neighbouring populations and ensuring genetic robustness. The society is hopeful of reintroducing kokako to Mt Pirongia in the not too distant future. The ethical clothing company Chalky Digits have provided funding for the production of a video to attract corporate sponsorship and public support for the project. Filming should start soon and we are also keen to look at other ways to raise the proposal's profile. To avoid wastage of pest control baits, we are trialling a system for our Pirongia operation this year. Volunteers record the level of bait take in each station on their respective lines and refill if only there is significant take. The data will be mapped and should show where pest hotspots are. Feedback from our volunteers has been positive so far. Clare St Pierre



Waikato Rivercare

Waikato RiverCare Inc. has completed another successful planting season. This has been our largest yet, with a total of 58,375 plants planted throughout 10 different projects. Despite some challenges due to



heavy rain, the team from Te Whangai Trust, including their nursery staff, delivery drivers, planting team and nursery management, all did a wonderful job supplying great quality plants and planting them without issues or incidents. The planting of Waikato RiverCare Inc.'s largest project to date was also completed this season. Taupiri Ki Waenganui, which covers 5.63ha, had 12,523 plants planted at the site in September. Another highlight

of the season was having over 80 volunteers help us out on three different projects. The volunteers included corporate, primary school, high school, and tangata whenua groups who all did an incredible job planting approximately 4,500 plants. We would like to thank of our partners and volunteers for helping us to complete such a fantastic planting programme this year. Natasha Murrhiy-Paulussen

Volunteers achieve Great work on Great Mercury Island

I was fortunate enough to join Department of Conservation staff as a volunteer on predator free,



Ahuahu/Great Mercury Island. A weed survey involves walking a straight line grid search through scrubby bush keeping your eyes peeled, for the demon moth plant. This required a reasonable level of fitness and towards the end of the day my mind began to dwell on enjoying the showers back at our accommodation. During the first day in the bush my level of anxiety was steadily rising as all the others seemed to be spotting the hard-to-see small moth plants until, finally success and I was able

give out the call "WEED! With our help, the team achieved more than they set out to do and our contribution was greatly appreciated. Of course, it wasn't all hard work and there was some down time - we got to enjoy the scenery, some swimming, dolphin watching and even a bit of fishing. For the week, I was with the DOC team, I witnessed a culture of support and inclusiveness which made my trip very enjoyable indeed. Thanks to all those involved. Brian Green

Icon site gets community boost - Cathedral Cove Pest and weed initiative.

On the 27th October 2016, an intrepid group of ten Haheins met with three DOC staff (Alaine, Nick and Danielle) at the Cathedral Cove carpark. Our mission if we dared to accept it was to help map out a trap line to begin the process of eradicating mammalian pests and noxious plants from the 4ha area around the



track. After being briefed by Alaine on the set up and safety issues of the traps we headed off and had a very satisfying day setting up the line with many a laugh along the way as we came to grips with wrestling the Waddington arm. Now at day 10 we can boast 3 dead ship rats and 10 possums. Yay!! News has spread through the village and most people have been very supportive of our efforts and a few more recruits

have come on board. A roster has been established and an online spreadsheet started to record results. Over the next few weeks we hope to consolidate our systems and to commence on the noxious plant eradication as well. Marg.

Moira Cursey Waikato Biodiversity Forum coordinator