

Gorge Gazette - December 2024

News about Trelissick Park, the Ngaio Gorge and streams



Abbreviations:

WCC	Wellington City Council	GW	Greater Wellington Regional Council
DoC	Department of Conservation	GG	Gorge Gazette
TPG	Trelissick Park Group	WW	Wellington Water
S to S	Kia Mouriora te Kaiwharawhara Sanctuary to Sea	OMB	Old man's beard

Membership drawn from Highland Park Progressive Association Inc., Ngaio Crofton Downs Residents' Association Inc., Onslow Historical Society Inc., Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society Inc. (Wellington Branch), Wellington Botanical Society Inc., Wadestown Residents' Association.

Celebrating Frances Lee's land donation

The generosity of a Ngaio benefactor, Frances Lee, was recognised on 3 December at a small gathering of WCC staff, TPG members and Ngaio residents.

Earlier this year, Frances purchased a 0.25Ha parcel of land near the corner of Trelissick Crescent and Ngaio Gorge Road. She then gifted the land to WCC, and it has since been added to the park. (See map on p.3 of the July GG). The land is steep with a deep ravine and includes an old pukatea and a mature matai which provides seed for bush regeneration projects around the city. 'I certainly didn't want to see the bush removed from this piece of land and for townhouses to be built there,' said Frances. 'Having the land added to Trelissick Park is a wonderful outcome for everyone, and for the birds,' she said. Frances formed the Trelissick Park Group in 1991.

WCC staff thanked Frances for her foresight, generosity and passion for Wellington's native bush. Neighbours are very grateful that the piece of land has been saved from development and given legal protection as public Scenic Reserve under the Reserves Act. TPG assured Frances that the land will receive the benefit of working bees, weeding and planting into the future.

[Photos: Anne Tuffin]

Welcome to our new website maintainer!

Catherine van Hale, a long-term supporter at working bees, is taking over from Bill Hester.

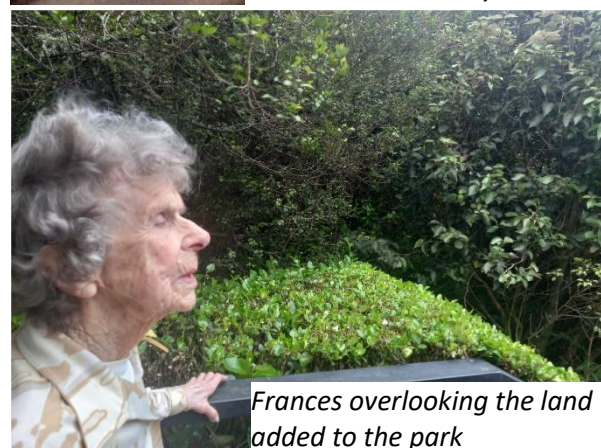
The burgeoning website: what a story! It started near the beginning of the century. Deidre Burke says, 'I discussed with the committee the benefits of the group having a website to assist with communications. It was agreed that this was a good idea. I set to work developing the framework of the website and Lindsay Bonnett provided technical support, which was invaluable. Big learning curve for me and I'm so delighted that the essential framework has stood the test of time.'

Since around 2009/10 it has been in Bill's capable hands, supported by Deidre. Bill added many sections e.g. history, predators, plants, weeds, tracks, maps, older meeting minutes and all Gorge Gazettes.

Enjoy comparing <https://trelissickpark.org.nz/> with [Wayback Machine \(archive.org\)](https://www.archive.org/)



Frances Lee with WCC's Shona McCahan and Sherilyn Hinton



Frances overlooking the land added to the park



WCC Park Ranger Adam Groenewegen and TPG's Angus Napier planting at the boundary of the gifted land

A smooth passage

Behold! Fleetness of foot and agility no longer. Thanks, WCC's Tim Harkness and contractor.

A new weapon

WCC's Illona Keenan has arranged for GW to place three pots of tradescantia infected with yellow leaf spot fungus in the park below Hanover Street and three more below Oban Street. Spores from the fungus are supposed to disperse naturally on air currents. Bated breath, but Illona says not to expect elimination.

For more, see [Tradescantia Yellow Spot Fungus \(landcareresearch.co.nz\)](http://landcareresearch.co.nz).



On the Forest Remnant Track below Ngaio Gorge Road



Photo: Manaaki Whenua



Photo: copied from Te Papa blog link

The tree of love

A charming misnomer for a succulent herb *Aichryson laxum* that arrived from the Canary Islands.

Jonathan Anderson is monitoring some in the park above the lower Ngaio Gorge Road entrance vehicle track and on a stone wall near the entrance from the upper Ngaio Gorge Road carpark.

See: blog.te.papa.govt.nz the-tree-of-love-another-biosecurity-failure

Park users and working bee volunteers: remove and dispose in landfill rubbish bags.

FMG in the park 27 November



Photos: Melissa Ballantyne of FMG

What miracles youthful vigour achieves! Areas below the Waikowhai Street entrance down to Bridge 4 are vastly improved.



They are at it again!

Marilyn Hester reported that someone dumped garden rubbish into the park at four or five spots along Trelissick Crescent - including ivy, old man's beard, spider plant and agapanthus. Some of those (especially the living agapanthus clumps) were dumped well down steep slopes - time consuming and potentially dangerous to access and remove.

Mark Youmans valiantly clambered down to retrieve the noxious weeds.

Read all about Marilyn's thickly vegetated 'wall' to deter the rubbish dumpers on p.3 of the April 2022 GG (via our website).

The gouge diversion enhanced

Last year new drainage from the railway line washed out the Northern Walkway/Te Araroa Trail below Hanover Street (see p.1 of the July 2023 GG). WCC's Tim Harkness organised a new handrail for the very steep set of steps.

Predator control update

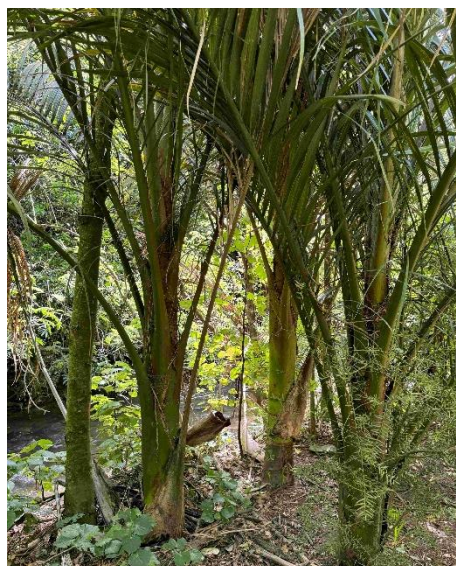
Further to p.1 of the July GG, we now have:

- Bait stations (brodifacoum): Steve Mackles, Andy McIver and Jim Nicholson
- DOC200s: Warrick Fowlie and Richard Grasse
- Tunnel (Victor) traps near the debris trap - Shelley Kininmonth (under Briony Ellis of Predator Free Khandallah)
- 14 A24 traps below Oban Street: Andrew Cutler
- Bill Hester is backup, and overall coordinator with WCC and Regional Council.

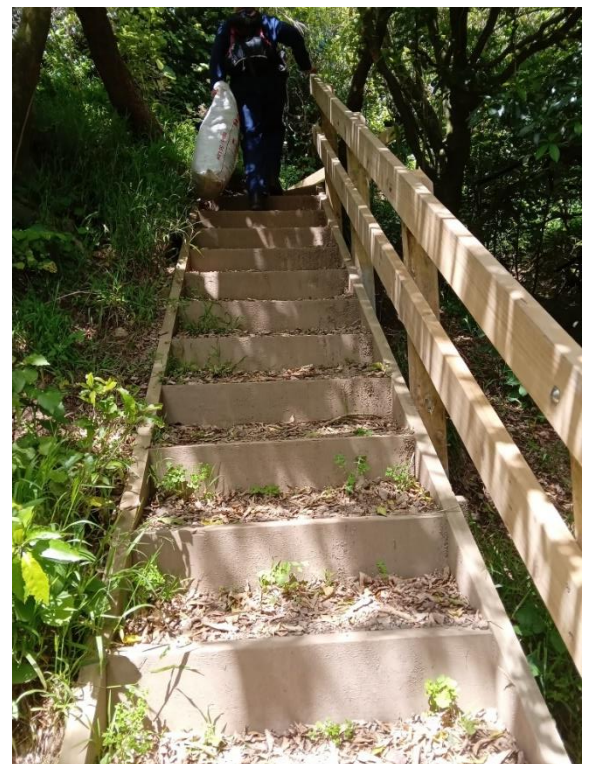
Mouri stone for the new building at Zealandia

Terese McLeod, Lead Ranger - Bicultural Engagement at Zealandia, advises that a mouri stone to celebrate and assure a positive future for the new *Tanglewood House* has been selected. It was sourced in mid-October from Kaiwharawhara Stream at the lower end of the park, after gaining approvals from WCC, iwi and GW.

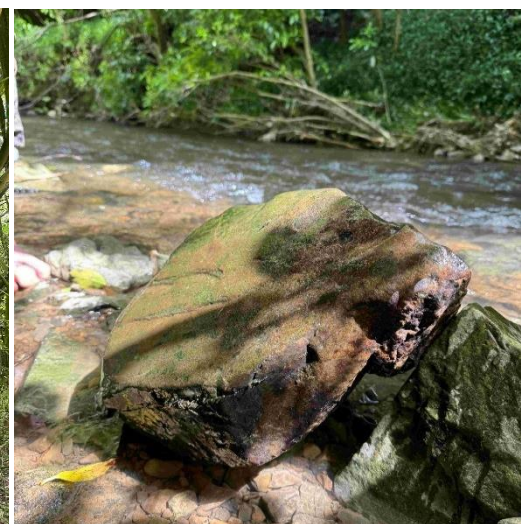
Nīkau palms close to the stone selected. Ironic because nīkau palms feature in the new building design with two large live nīkau palms gifted to Zealandia by WCC.



Retrieved garden rubbish



The new handrail at the gouge diversion



The mouri stone selected – to be named.

Inanga spawning update – Nate Rigler (S to S)

In October, Kia Mouriora te Kaiwharawhara | Sanctuary to Sea, with support from Conservation Volunteers New Zealand, Te Rito Gardens, The Living Room, and McMud Earthworks, installed four experimental planter baskets made from repurposed shopping trolleys. The baskets were fastened along the channelised wall that runs along the true left bank of the Kaiwharawhara estuary [below Spotlight]. The design of these baskets uses cost-effective natural materials to retain moisture necessary for native plants to grow. These plants provide more habitat suitable for inanga spawning which is important because the Kaiwharawhara has Wellington city's only non-piped estuary connected to the harbour. This means this estuary is one of the few remaining places where inanga can reproduce. Next time you're in the area, have a look and see the new work!

[Photos: Ellis Nimick from Morphem Environmental Ltd.]

More on the evil weed

WCC's Illona Keenan has written a hierarchy of sites for chemical control of tradescantia. It covers site selection, methodology and precautions. She says, 'it requires three treatments a year for multiple years, which means it is expensive' and it 'is unlikely to be completely controlled'. Read Illona's hierarchy from our website 'Weeds' page via the link under 'Tradescantia'.

Current areas receiving chemical control:

- Below Trelissick Crescent opposite #51
- Above north side of vehicle track from below entrance 5 to just beyond bridge 7.

Kaitiaki O Ngahere to the rescue

Jonathan Anderson produced a prioritized list of possible sites* for weed control by WCC's contractor Kaitiaki O Ngahere. A park walk-through with WCC's Illona Keenan, Gabriel Schlotjes from Kaitiaki, with TPG's Jonathan and Angus Napier followed, to target as many as possible.

A range of sites was agreed, including several additional OMB sites identified by Angus at the lower end of the park. The largest job will be



We have also updated our recommendations for manual control. **Note the essential additions:**

Check the cleared area to ensure all stem fragments/roots just below the surface are removed.

Revisit the area annually, extending to every 2 - 3 years for a decade or more to remove any regrowth.

jasmine on the new land recently added to the park, near the corner of Trelissick Crescent and Ngaio Gorge Road. The jasmine is advancing along the ground on a broad front from the neighbouring property. Jonathan says Kaitiaki's intervention will be timely as it's just beginning to climb into the trees.

*jasmine (1), elaeagnus (1), OMB (3), honeysuckle (9), Canary Islands ivy (?1), Japanese knotweed (1), banana passionfruit (2), mile a minute (1).

Conflicted interests



Frances Lee used to walk the impeccable 'Kiwi' (2002 photo)

In recent Gorge Gazettes we expressed concerns about off-leash dogs:

- developing 'runways' down stream banks and erosion of streamside tracks
- korerū deaths (?)
- the need to protect kiwi if they spread to the park.

We asked for ideas/comments.

The geriatric leaks - again

The sewer pipe crossing Kaiwharawhara Stream about 80 metres down from bridge 6 was reported as leaking from both ends in February 2022. Last October Angus Napier reported more leakage. Silence. Nate Rigler and Terese McLeod of S to S, supported by TPG's Anne Tuffin, followed this up. The prospect of Taranaki Whānui declaring a rāhui on the awa until resolution galvanised the fix.

WW say the crossing was installed in 1913.

The bushy bandwagon

TPG's submission on District Plan Stream 11 'Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity' was summarised on p.2 of the September GG. Tree removal from infill housing and multi-unit subdivision in the catchment is not to be countenanced.

The WCC assessor's response was less than enthusiastic, given the biodiversity provisions already in the District Plan.

Breaking news

WCC's Tim Harkness advises that Bridge 2 has been fixed. You can now walk next to your companion or dog.

Dog owners love the park as a wilderness where their dogs can run free and enjoy the streams. They tell us that there are very few similar areas in the city for off-leash dogs to enjoy such freedom.

How can we manage these conflicting interests?

Suggestions so far include:

- erecting informative signs that educate dog owners about the issues
- setting-up a dog-owners' project to raise funds and to actively retain and back-fill where erosion is encroaching on the tracks
- restricting commercial dog-walkers from using the park
- encouraging dog owners to have their dogs go through kiwi aversion training
- encouraging owners of exuberant, stream-loving dogs to keep their dogs on-leash where the stream banks are soft or crumbly
- making some parts of the park on-leash.

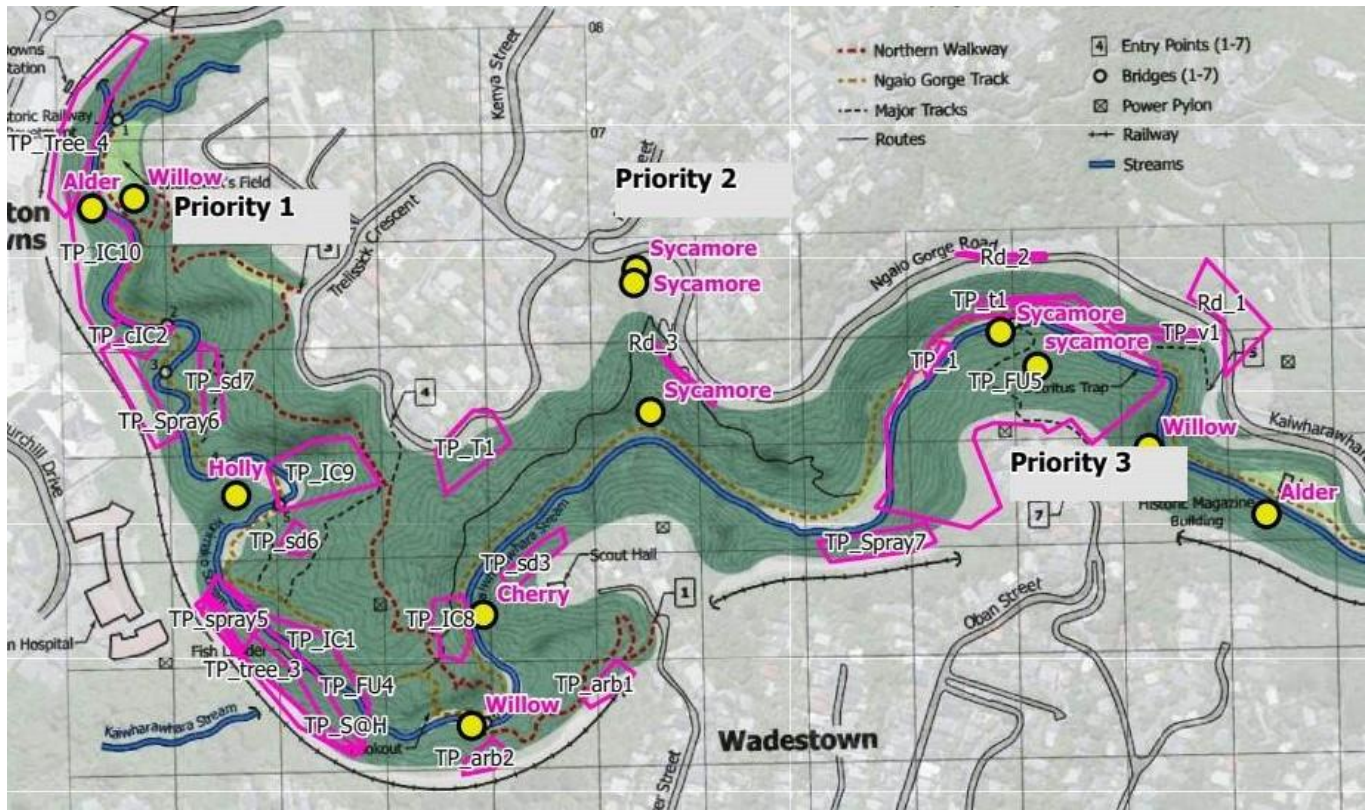
We want to hear what you think. Please send your practical suggestions for managing these issues to treliissickgroup@gmail.com.



The 2022 leak at the north bank

So, another tactic. TPG receives from WCC monthly lists of resource consent applications. These should allow us to seek advice on mitigations for removal of tree cover for applicable infill housing and multi-unit subdivision developments - and to advocate if necessary.

Proposed WCC funded weed control 2024-25



Recovering from 1 December working bee clearing 57 Kaiwharawhara Road outside the Living Room. L-R: Svend Hansen, Stella Thorpe, Katie Benson, Anne Tuffin, Peter Gates, Peter Reimann, Keith Moretta, Angus Napier.

Photo: Anne Holmstead

Contacts

trellisickgroup@gmail.com

[Trelissick Park Group website](#)

[Trelissick Park Group | Facebook](#)

WCC: (04) 499 4444 or [WCC Fix-It](#)

GW pollution hotline: 0800 496 734