

# Gorge Gazette

## News about Trelissick Park, the Ngaio Gorge and Streams

(Footbridges over the stream are numbered from 1 – 6 going downstream, excluding the old bridge off the side of Wightwick's Field).

### Abbreviations:

WCC Wellington City Council  
 GW Greater Wellington Regional Council  
 DoC Department of Conservation  
 VUW Victoria University of Wellington

**NOVEMBER 2011** (updated 16 November)

Heavenly kindness continues unabated - rain and sunshine in cycles. The bout of snow, then hail some weeks later, did little damage. Deadly frosts were absent. The spring flush is upon us and the weeds are loving it.

### Dogged Determination

Current battle sites in the park:

The Gorse-cleared Slope below Trelissick Crescent - We are an impatient lot. Rather lay bare with sharpened blade than wait 30 years for the natives to regenerate naturally within the gorse. The exposed ground quickly becomes a sea of gorse seedlings and the cut stumps sprout with gusto. More wielding of implements, then covering with mulch and the cut gorse. Most of the WCC's annual supply of 500 trees have gone in there. Success comes eventually - see 2009 photo of an adjacent restored site, once gorse-covered.



Down by Bridge 6 - The area on the Ngaio side of bridge 6 (on the Northern Walkway below Hanover Street) is a major track junction and staunchly resists complete restoration. Much of the grass was removed and more infill planting done on a recent Sunday working bee - numbers bolstered by six keen VUW exchange students from USA. If only a

helicopter could deposit a pile of mulch there!

Trevor and Marilyn's Spots - The slope above the stream by bridge 4 on the Ngaio side was another headache - now transformed by Trevor Mowbray and lower down by Marilyn Hester. The new plantings should thrive if we can keep at bay the grass, bindweed, climbing dock, montbretia, wandering willie, Himalayan balsam - the list goes on. Marilyn (with a good nose for troubled areas) has now moved further upstream. She is enthusiastic about native seedlings appearing unbidden.

The Railway Slope - A site that swallows man-hours. David Grace's slope across the stream from the powder magazine building ruin will need legions of infill plants next autumn to finally suppress the weeds. Meanwhile, the words are "slow and steady". David soldiers on. At the last working bee, 15 people valiantly carried mulch to put around the plantings. Some weeks previously, David was assisted by two people from Talent International on their community volunteering day.

A Fallen Willow Opportunity - About a year ago an enormous willow tree collapsed, on the slope above the stream below the Waikowhai Street entrance, a chaos of branches and collateral damage, soon to be followed by a thicket of native passion vine (*Passiflora tetrandra*) and dense re-sprouting willow. It was one of the few willow trees that escaped the WCC poisoning programme. Undeterred, George and Andrew Symmes have taken possession. After some initial WCC chain-sawing, organised by Ranger Paulo Fuiono, a semblance of order is the reward of hard labour.

As an experiment to deal with the re-sprouting, George has ring-barked the large fallen trunk and injected into drill holes a mixture of Janola and vinegar. WCC have promised to include spraying the regrowth in their Contractor's pest plant control programme this year.

## Downstream Riparian Activities

Because the Park is part of the ecological corridor from the harbour to the Outer Green Belt and up to the Karori Sanctuary (Zealandia), we always take an interest in riparian activities beyond the Park.

The Body Shop Plantings - The stream banks upstream of the Hutt Road for about 100 m (by School Road) were landscaped and planted in 2005 and 2008 as a joint project organised by Myfanwy Emeny



(WCC) and John Holmes (GW). Around 2,000 species were planted - see details, including survival comments, in Appendix. The Body Shop have a warehouse by the stream and they have subsequently had regular working bees for their staff to maintain the plantings - one of their five core values is "to protect the planet".

The Body Shop are now keen to add bird-attracting plants and some more colour. With help from Myfanwy, Peter Reimann suggested a species list (see Appendix). The Body Shop have ordered 100 from this list under WCC's Community Greening Scheme, for infill planting next year.

Mobil Oil Fuel Pipeline Clearance - At the lower end of the Kaiwharawhara valley there are some Mobil Oil Ltd fuel tanks from which fuel pipelines go along the stream bank down to the harbour wharves to supply the Interislander ferries and other ships. These pipelines go right through the above plantings. After prior consultation with WCC, The Body Shop and ourselves, Mobil employed a contractor to carry out vegetation clearance adjacent to the pipes for protection and to allow maintenance and visual inspection. Fortunately, the clearance was of the "surgical" variety - see photo above.

Stream Bank Planting by Beaurepaires - A WCC team from Otari Wilton's Bush planted 300 species on the stream bank downstream of the Hutt Road by Beaurepaires in July. Visit the carpark for a delightful surprise on the sub-station walls there.

The Estuary Report - The report by Boffa Miskell "Kaiwharawhara Stream and Estuary - Ecological Values" is complete. This was jointly funded by WCC and CentrePort under the diligent steerage of Frances Lee.

The Kaiwharawhara is one of the few remaining streams with a natural estuary mouth into the harbour and forms part of the ecological corridor to the hills above Ngaio and Karori. CentrePort, Interislander, NZ Transport Agency and KiwiRail all have commercial interests in the estuary area, including the reclamation to the north.



The report "presents a summary of the ecological values within the catchment, including the estuary, based on existing field investigations. Key issues are then identified, from which principles and recommendations for future management and enhancement of this site are presented." We hope the report will emphasise the need to allow for the ecological and recreational importance of this area in future commercial developments, including plans for the "Sanctuary to the Sea" track and the proposed "Great Harbour Way" cycle path.

## Nursery News



The appearance green shoots from planted seed always seems a miracle. One such for Peter Reimann was from toetoe collected from various places in the Park, and later from flax. Much flax has been planted this year, perhaps optimistically because of the flax "yellow leaf" disease<sup>1</sup>.

### Wharangi

Over the last 3 years our annual 500 plant supply from WCC's Berhampore nursery has included several wharangi (*Melicope ternata*). The Park is not well endowed with wharangi, with its distinctive bright green foliage, so this is a welcome addition. It belongs to the citrus family - crush a leaf for that smell. Excellent photos of the yellow-green flowers with 4 petals and shiny black seeds can be found in Reference 2.

## Climbing Asparagus



Photo by DoC



Climbing asparagus "is easily recognised by the bright green leaves and stems, which scramble or climb across the ground and into surrounding vegetation. The thin wiry stems can be up to four metres long, and are covered with many spiky leaves.

Like so many other introduced climbers, climbing asparagus is capable of smothering areas of native vegetation through its scrambling habits, and is difficult to control once established.....birds tend to eat and disperse the seeds in their droppings. In addition, any tubers remaining in the ground will often re-sprout even if the rest of the plant is removed.

Small areas of climbing asparagus can be pulled out by hand. However, to be effective, the tubers must be dug up and removed as well, otherwise they will simply re-sprout. Even after digging them up, it is likely that some fragments will remain in the ground, requiring follow-up treatment at a later date."<sup>3</sup>

Fine examples of this lurk on the slopes below Oban Street..

## References

1. Gorge Gazette. December 2010. [www.trelissickpark.org.nz](http://www.trelissickpark.org.nz).
2. J T Salmon. The Native Trees of New Zealand. A H & A W Reed Ltd.
3. <http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/threats-and-impacts/weeds/common-weeds-in-new-zealand/climbing-asparagus/>

## Contacts

Chairman & Adopt-a-Spot: Peter Reimann (04) 938 9602, [peter.reimann@paradise.net.nz](mailto:peter.reimann@paradise.net.nz)  
Working bees: Dorothy Douglass (04) 472 8558  
Wellington City Council (reporting slips and fallen trees across tracks, other problems): (04) 499 4444  
Greater Wellington pollution hotline: 0800 496 734  
Website: [www.trelissickpark.org.nz](http://www.trelissickpark.org.nz)

**Working Bees** - Check with Dorothy before coming – changes may occur

These resume February 2012 - usually 1st Sunday of the month at 1.30 PM and 2nd Tuesday at 9.30 AM. See web-site for updates.

### **The Gorge Gazette**

Compiled by Peter Reimann about every 4 months - all contributions and suggestions gratefully received.

***Come and participate in the transformation of Trelissick Park or give us your ideas – all welcome. Thanks to all who contributed.***

## **APPENDIX**

### **Bird-friendly Trees with Colour Suggested to The Body Shop**

Kowhai (*Sophora microphylla*)  
Wineberry (*Aristotelia serrata*)  
Five finger (*Pseudopanax arboreus*)  
Lemonwood (*Pittosporum eugeniodes*)  
Kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides*)  
Manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*)  
Poroporo (*Solarum laciniatum*)  
Lancewood (*Pseudopanax crassifolius*)  
Mapou (*Myrsine australis*)  
Koromiko (*Hebe stricta*)  
Tree fuchsia (*Fuchsia exorticata*) - for partial shade areas

(The above is not a comprehensive list of such species - covers those thought suitable useful additions to the site).

### **Stream-side Planting by School Road and The Body Shop**

A total of around 2,000 of the following species were planted, most in 2005, except for 200 infill in 2008:

Titoki	( <i>Alectryon excelsus</i> )	16
Oioi	( <i>Apodasmia similis</i> )	115
Sedge	( <i>Carex flagellifera</i> )	200
Sedge	( <i>Carex secta</i> )	250
Cabbage tree	( <i>Cordyline australis</i> )	131
Koromiko	( <i>Hebe stricta</i> )	?
Tororaro	( <i>Muehlenbeckia astonii</i> )	50
Ngaio	( <i>Myoporum laetum</i> )	42
Flax	( <i>Phormium cookianum</i> )	350+?
Five finger	( <i>Pseudopanax arboreus</i> )	40+?
Wineberry	( <i>Aristotelia serrata</i> )	?
Taupata	( <i>Coprosma repens</i> )	?
Toetoe	( <i>Austraderia toetoe</i> )*	?

\* Could have included *Austraderia fulvida* based on current appearance.

Survival - Very difficult to estimate numbers due to thick vegetation. It appears that most of the flax, ngaio, koromiko and taupata have survived and these are thriving. There are also many healthy-looking five finger and cabbage trees and some toetoe. Several karamu (*Coprosma robusta*) and two or three mapou (*Myrsine australis*) were not on the list, but are present. Few of the sedges could be found and none of the other species (unless they were hiding).

Membership drawn from Highland Park Progressive Association Inc., Ngaio Progressive Association Inc., Onslow Historical Society Inc., Private Landowners Group, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (Wellington Branch), Wellington Botanical Society, Wadestown Resident's Association.