

Trelissick Park adopt-a-spot news

Kia Ora volunteers,

February has been a very busy month in Trelissick Park. We have had a lot going on behind the scenes, and a lot happening on the ground too! Thanks again for all your hard work this month. Come and see us at the Wadestown fair on 10th March if you want to catch up, or if you want to introduce friends to what we are doing in the park.

Wellington City Council has some left over mulch – which they have offered to us. Please use the mulch from the bottom of the slope at the main Trelissick crescent entrance. Also, there are still piles of mulch near the lower entrance off Ngaio Gorge Rd. This can be used to put around plants nearby. Remember to make a 'doughnut' around the trees to avoid burning the soft stems of the native trees.

As we have had members joining over time some of you may not have received all of our newsletters – and may not know about some of the target weeds, or favoured plants in Trelissick Park. Please let me know if you would like backdated copies of the newsletter, or if you would like a copy of 'Plant me Instead' the DoC weed publication. Monthly newsletters began in October 2006.

I am currently working on a tally of how many plants are required this planting season. If you have a site in the park, please send me an email indicating how many trees you would like to plant this year, and a brief description of your site (i.e. canopy cover, or open riparian site). Remember on open sites you need to plant about 3 trees per square metre. For sheltered spots with canopy cover you probably only need 1 tree per square metre. If you are unsure about your site let me know and I can give you a basic indication.

Thanks to all those who are looking after seedlings for the group. We have managed to find foster homes for all the baby seedlings at the moment. Remember you are welcome to rescue seedlings from the park, or your own back gardens and grow them on to be planted out when they are strong enough. If you are interested in collecting seed and propagating it at home, this is also a great option.

The Mountain Biking policy by WCC is currently being reviewed. Please fill out your own copy of the form online if you wish to make comments about the use of various tracks in the Wellington region. Visit www.wcc.govt.nz and follow the links on the left of the page – Have your Say, Public Input. A walking policy will soon be begun as well.

Once again if you have any questions about what is going on in Trelissick Park, please don't hesitate to contact me! It was great to see earlier this month that a pollution incident resulted in a high number of calls to Greater Wellingtons pollution response team. This is your park, your stream, and your environment so help us to keep it healthy!

Plant of the month

Tree Fuchsia/ Kotukutuku

Semi deciduous fast growing tree with red fuchsia flowers, loose papery bark, and wide spreading growth. Prefers moist sheltered sites. Berries are small cylindrical fruits with up to 30 seeds inside. The fruit is edible, and can be made into a tasty Jam. The plant is identifiable by its tough gnarly trunk clothed in a fibrous stringy bark that gives this quick growing small tree a character of strength and endurance that does not suggest its actual youth. There are plenty of great examples at Karori Wildlife Sanctuary and a few in the lower half of the park. The Tree Fuchsia is also known as possum ice cream as it is a favourite food of this nasty pest. The fact that tree fuchsia is growing in Trelissick Park is thanks to GW and their great pest control.



Weed of the month

Elderberry



A deciduous shrub or small tree growing near the stream and in other sheltered or recently disturbed areas. Leaves are smelly, and have finely serrated edges with an oval shape. Small flowers are produced in dense flat clusters followed by bunches of shiny black berry like fruit, very like our native wineberry or makomako. Elderberry can be made into wine or jelly. Birds enjoy the berries, which unfortunately spreads this weed! Elderberry

invades disturbed forests and shrub lands and quickly excludes native species. Elderberry can be controlled by cutting and painting with vigilant. Small seedlings can be completely pulled out and should be suspended in a nearby tree as they can reshoot. If elderberry is a major problem at your spot please let me know and I will ask someone to come and help destroy it.