

Trelissick Park adopt-a-spot news

Kia Ora volunteers,

I have been on leave for much of April, but that doesn't mean things have stopped happening! It was great to see all the changes in the park over the last few weeks, as well as things happening in cyberspace.

Our web page is now receiving regular maintenance, so will always have up to date information. We have also managed to get a new page online with information about weeds you can target in Trelissick Park. Please visit www.trelissickpark.org.nz/weeds.htm. The website will also include this monthly newsletter, and a summary from the regular Trelissick Park working group meeting.

Please do your best to remove a few weeds every time you visit the park – these don't have to be from your spot! Pluck out a handful of Montbretia while the dog enjoys the river, or while you catch your breath at the top of the hill! Every little bit helps.

Fly and plant is a website launched by a long time supporter of Trelissick Park. Gottfried Theiler and Chris Watson came up with the idea for a webpage for air travelers who think globally and act locally. Travelers can donate towards their local reforestation projects to help offset the carbon emissions of their air travel and to enhance biodiversity. Trelissick Park is lucky enough to be listed as one of the local projects to receive funding from Fly and Plant. Visit www.flyandplant.com for more information. This funding will be used to purchase plants.

The annual Wellington region 'Restoration Day' is coming up on 12th May at Tauherenikau Racecourse near Featherston. This year the theme is very applicable to Trelissick Park 'restoring lowland forest'. It will be a great opportunity to learn new skills and to catch up with many other people involved with restoration projects around the region. It is a free event, with lunch provided, but spaces are limited so please register as soon as possible. I will be there with Greater Wellington, but I am happy to catch up with you, or provide you with more information about the seminars. Please let me know if you require a registration form.

The Tararua Tramping Club has been working in Trelissick Park for a number of years now. The site they were working on last year is pretty well established now, so they have begun another site. They have chosen a site next to reveg site 1 (look for the yellow marker post), and have begun clearing weeds and dead vegetation, ready to begin planting as soon as the weather closes in.

Plant of the month

Poroporo

Solanum aviculare and *S. laciniatum*



A small native nightshade, which looks a lot more tropical than most natives. It also grows throughout most of Australia, where it is known as Kangaroo Apple. Related to the tomato and the potato, the Poroporo has orange fruit, the same shape as tamirillos, but much smaller. The plant is quick growing with large sparse foliage, openly branches, and purple to white trumpet shaped flowers. Any green plant matter, including the fruit is poisonous, although the very ripe bright orange fruit can be eaten, but is acidic and leaves the mouth dry. Poroporo is often commercially grown and the unripe fruit is harvested for use in steroids. It was traditionally used as a medication and contraception by Maori. Juice from the leaves, mixed with soot was rubbed into the wounds made by tattooing instruments. Sap was used to size waka before painting with red ochre. Leaves were used in a hangi to ensure meat was flavoursome. English settlers stewed the berries and made them into pies and jam. Poroporo is easily grown from fresh seed and semi-hardwood cuttings. It is tolerant of heavy shade and full sun, and dry or wet soils but not frost.

Weed of the month

German Ivy

Senecio mikanioides

German ivy is a scrambling vine with glossy, soft ivy-shaped leaves and yellow daisy like flowers. If German ivy is left it will quickly establish and become a very aggressive weed, strangling larger trees. Commonly found in riparian areas, it is spread by seed, and through the transportation of stems.



It will grow well in open damp sites. We have found a few infestations in the park already, and want to stop this before it gets too far. If the infestation is small enough you may be able to dig it out. Use a garden fork to loosen the dirt and pull the plant free, making sure you get all root and plant fragments. Dispose of plant material by putting it in a rubbish sack and carrying it to an entrance of the park. If it is larger than this, start by cutting the stems at ground level to slow the plant down.