

Gorge Gazette

News about Trelissick Park, the Ngaio Gorge and Streams

(Footbridges over the stream are numbered from 1 – 6 going downstream.)

Abbreviations:

WCC	Wellington City Council	WRA	Wadestown Residents' Association
GW	Greater Wellington Regional Council	VUW	Victoria University
HPPA	Highland Park Progressive Association	DOC	Department of Conservation
TPG	Trelissick Park Group	F & B	Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society
NCDRA	Ngaio Crofton Downs Residents' Association	GG	Gorge Gazette

Website www.trelissickpark.org.nz (includes past Gorge Gazettes and Park map)

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TrelissickParkGroup>

JUNE 2018

More than we Thought

The question was: "is there a plant list for the Park?" Thinking that all self-respecting parks should have one, we embarked. Now we have 188 native plants and 92 weeds listed via links on the 'Plants' and 'Weeds' pages of our website. Trelissick Park is a 'Mecca' for weeds, so more wait to be captured, no doubt. Our botanical luminaries provided historical lists and updates - acknowledged at the bottom of each list.

No more Trouble at the Verge?

WCC's contractor, Kaitiaki o Ngahere Ltd, sprayed the tradescantia¹ below the Trelissick Crescent verge. This exposed a fascinating array of rubbish. Some bottles could be contenders for the 'Antiques Roadshow'. Warrick Fowlie, adept at clambering around steep slopes, piled this into heaps for removal by cradle and rope. Conservation Volunteers and locals set to. WCC had it all trucked away within hours.



After that, we planted toetoe and mingimingi close together along the brink between both Park entrances. These will grow to form a dense barrier to thwart the serial dumpers of rubbish and garden waste.

A Fervent wish for Flies and Carrion-Birds

The dreaded rabbits are around. The grass slope below Trelissick Crescent is favoured. But they also penetrate deep into the forest, where we found freshly planted karamu completely chewed overnight. GW have released the RHDV1 K5 virus at around 30 sites in the Wellington region. It might spread via flies and carrion-birds². It won't kill all the rabbits but is another means of control.

The Rodent Situation

Between March and May our traps caught 24 rodents - more than usual. Most were rats, but the self-resetting A24s may have caught some mice. A few bait stations had all the block bait eaten on monthly visits by Bill Hester's team. Was this increase because of the balmy summer?

A Novel Karaka Elimination Method



Warrick Fowlie's efforts were augmented recently by an errant truck - photo by Barry Durrant. It was going to the sewer system and the accident happened on the steep slope above the debris trap. The driver emerged unscathed.

Now we are left with a clear patch to clothe with natives.

Another Climate-Change Approach

We have to plant only endemic species in the Park. However, climate change is already occurring and likely to continue. Should we not be looking at what species could survive more extreme conditions? It would be sad for the Park eventually to look like the surface of Mars.

A study for someone?

Attraction Continues Undiminished

The Park is pretty popular with groups these days:

- On several visits, young people came from diverse countries, hosted by Conservation Volunteers NZ, achieving miracles all over the Park.
- Met Service organised fine weather, planted some natives and built enormous tradescantia heaps on the slopes above Bridge 4.
- Lyall Bay Girl Guides, planted grasses near the eel sign, then went fishing for bugs in the stream. They entertained us with a catchy song at lunch time.
- Ngaio Brownies (Girl Guides) went nocturnal and scoured tradescantia in a bushy patch beside Wightwick's Field. A mayhem of excitement and flashing torches. Inspection next morning: surprisingly good work!

Photos are on our Facebook page. More groups are 'in the pipeline'.

'Spots' are Seldom Straightforward

Kelvin Hastie's spot on the slope north of the Waikowhai Street entrance is endowed with a bath-sized pond, eroded by a stormwater outlet. The stormwater brings rubbish and floods the site. Oh well... Now around 100 infill native plants are in the ground (some planted last year). Next century, rimu, rewarewa, kohekohe, titoki and totara will dominate - if climate change allows.

One of the McKendry family's two riparian areas below Waikowhai Street also gets flooded, but both are flourishing, thanks to their ongoing care.

Another survival story is Tim McIvor's entrance from lower Ngaio Gorge Road, where wind and drying sun are relentless and the soil is terrible.

The Sathya Sai Service Organisation often come to their eroding strip upstream from the debris trap. To our chagrin, we found that toetoe and cabbage tree, planted to protect the stream bank were no match for the raging water during heavy rain.

At 57 Kaiwharawhara Road (next to The Living Room shop), Warrick Fowlie has a never-ending job stemming Australian wattle, wafting across from the railway land - along with other interlopers.

Dugal Thomson and Peter Reimann have a spot on railway land opposite Wightwick's Field. Here, the problem is burgeoning tradescantia, despite previous spraying. We will have to enlist the help of a group or working bee.

Sylvia Dixon's 'spot' is larger. She is ranging up and down the Korimako valley picking out tradescantia to add to our heaps.

Jonathan Anderson is going to plant totara, matai, kahikatea, pukatea, miro and rimu in the Kaiwharawhara valley opposite where the Forest Remnant track comes out.

Fungus to the Rescue?

Landcare Research has released a tradescantia yellow leaf spot fungus in the Rotorua area - bated breath...³

Riparian Planting - not always the Answer



Here is an example of what happens in an urban catchment even to cabbage tree - one of the best bank-holding species. It is beside the Korimako Stream, soon to succumb. It's tempting to tie it to the slope behind.

Our last missile on fast stormwater run-off was in the September 2017 Gorge Gazette (see our website). The video on our Facebook page under 'Community' 15/11/16 shows the stream in spate nearby.

What lies under Ian Galloway Park



Did you know that there are stalactites and villages of glow-worms in the tunnel under Ian Galloway Park? - photo by Warrick Fowlie. One emerges into backyards below Curtis Street. The residents and dog would need placating before the tunnel becomes a tourist attraction. Ian Galloway Park was once a landfill, so are the stalactites a leachate by-product?

Update - Track into the Park from Oban Street

TPG/HPPA/WRA had a recent productive meeting with WCC about the survey that WCC's research team are working on. That survey was to go out (widely publicised) in late May after our review of the draft document. We are trying to get another update.

Otherwise...

Too much to mention - for details, read the minutes of our meeting of 22 May on our website.

Ending on a Higher Note

Kohekohe, pukatea and tawa from Richard Grasse in Peter Reimann's nursery are flourishing.

References

1. Tradescantia = wandering willie (*Tradescantia fluminensis*)
2. <http://www.gwrc.govt.nz/regional-council-launches-assault-on-feral-rabbits/>
3. <https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/about/news/media-releases/new-tradescantia-biocontrol-agent-released-in-rotorua>

Contacts

Peter Reimann (04) 938 9602, nz.peterreimann@gmail.com

WCC (reporting problems): (04) 499 4444, GW pollution hotline: 0800 496 734

Working Bees

See web-site 'Projects' page.

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