

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	F & B	Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society
GW	Greater Wellington Regional Council	OHS	Onslow Historical Society
VUW	Victoria University of Wellington	GG	Gorge Gazette

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

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

OCTOBER 2018

A Bit of Crowing

Ashleigh Romanos of the Body Shop sent these photos of Kaiwharawhara Stream at the back of its warehouse, comparing 2006 with 2018. The riparian planting was one of the first under 'Project Kaiwharawhara', conceived by GW's John Holmes in 2002. Body Shop staff regularly tend the plantings.



TPG, mindful of the ecological corridor, put in an oar a couple of times. Ashleigh says that last year they partnered with Million Metres Streams Project (<https://millionmetres.org.nz/>) and through the sale of their body butters, donated 2,530 native trees to various projects across New Zealand.

And - a Bit of Snowing

This is what the future holds for Trelissick Park, we hope. Orleans Reserve, is a hidden gem beyond Makererua Street in Ngaio. Kohekohe decided to 'mast' in the forests of Wellington this year. The spray of flowers issues from the trunk - unusual, because this is more of a tropical phenomenon². We have planted some in Trelissick Park and many more are coming on, from seeds collected by Richard Grasse^{3,4}.



Always more Room

Next century, rimu, mataī, miro, tōtara, kahikatea, pukatea, kaikomako, tawa, rewarewa, northern rātā and hīnau will once more grace our valleys. WCC were particularly beneficent this year. Jonathan Anderson planted many of these canopy species beside Kaiwharawhara Stream. More northern rātā came from Conservation Volunteers. Richard Grasse provided some climbing passionfruit and rare large-leaved milk trees from F & B's nursery. Other species are still going to ground - a total of 920 so far.

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40 becomes 4

Where would we be without history? All of ours was revealed in 2013 in the 'Onslow Historian'⁵. Bill Hester, bent on updating the 'history' page of our website, caught Peter Reimann in a word-smithing mood. The upshot is 40 pages of the original text for the Onslow Historian condensed to 4 pages and updated to 2018. Go to the top of the home page of our website and click on 'Group History'. For the full story to 2013, the 'Onslow Historian' can be purchased or viewed on Sunday afternoons at the OHS premises at 98 Khandallah Road.

Not another Survey!

But this one is vital. WCC have just launched a residents' and users' survey to gauge feedback from those who would be impacted by, use, or are interested in a new access to Trelissick Park from Wadestown. This is from Oban Street, using a right-of-way between two houses. This would lead to a track down to a new footbridge across Kaiwharawhara Stream.

For more than three decades, local community groups have advocated for this access, which expands walking opportunities from surrounding suburbs and within the Park. The footbridge would open up new areas for pest control and native bush restoration.

WCC approval of the proposal is the next step, subject to the outcome of the survey.

So far, there are very few WCC resources committed to the proposal, but Park supporters are determined to make this happen. We have pledged to fund the footbridge from community donations.

A WCC decision is due before Christmas. For more information and history, go to the document on the 'Current Issues' page of www.trelissickpark.org.nz. This also addresses the issues raised in responses to a 2016 survey. We strongly urge you to participate in the survey. The following link will remain open until 29 October. Please go to <https://wellington.govt.nz/have-your-say/consultations>.

What's Happening at #57?

Our planting at 57 Kaiwharawhara Rd⁶ is burgeoning (photo at right). On the flat area down from the Living Room shop the rengarenga took umbrage at the ghastly stony ground, but WCC's mulch was a saviour.



A Spotlight on our Waters

The Trials of SHMAK - VUW Masters researcher Katherine de Silva and Liz Gibson of Mountains to Sea Wellington⁷ are recruiting community groups to trial the NIWA Stream Health Monitoring Assessment Kit (SHMAK) in the Kaiwharawhara catchment, in collaboration with Zealanda's Sanctuary to Sea project. Some from TPG expressed interest. Please let us know if you would like to participate in this citizen science project. Further details are in the Appendix.

Trace Metal Sampling - Dan Sinclair from the VUW School of Geography Environment and Earth Sciences and his students have been sampling water from Korimako Stream and Silverstream. This third-year research project examines variability in dissolved trace metals (with a specific interest in high flow events). He hopes to have the analysis and reporting complete by mid/late October, with presentations to follow.

Pining for Mandatory WSUD - Water sensitive urban design is "a work very much in progress", according to the WCC Guideline. During a recent talk by Morphum Environmental at the last Zealanda 'Sanctuary to Sea' meeting we learned that it is mandatory in Melbourne. In Wellington it is only a "guideline". For much more on WSUD, including the WCC Guideline and Melbourne information, search the net under 'water sensitive urban design wsud'.

Our streams are suffering from stormwater pollution, sedimentation and fast run-off from hard surfaces in the catchments. Come on, Wellington: we should be a leader not a laggard!

How Bad are our Weeds?

The National Pest Plant Accord provides information on 135 pest plants which could "seriously damage the New Zealand economy and environment" - see <https://mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/long-term-pest-management/national-pest-plant-accord>. Which ones are among the 92 weeds listed our website and is there enough control? What about treasured garden exotics that escape to become weeds?

Decoration for our Forests

Climbing asparagus (*Asparagus scandens*) grows up host plants to smother the forest floor and understorey (photo by Weedbusters). It is shade-tolerant and spread by birds and by its tubers. Witness this creeping disaster within the lower forested hills east of Lower Hutt. Seedlings are springing up in the original forest remnant of our Park. Keep your eyes peeled. They can be excavated out if very small. It's impossible to pull out larger ones, due to extensive rooting, so they need chemicals.

The slope below Oban Street is infested. WCC's Illona Keenan has employed New Zealand Biosecurity Ltd to tackle this - a big job.



Straight from the Horse's Mouth

Trelissick Park is no stranger to the Khandallah Cubs, but they wanted it straight from the horse's mouth. How on earth does a geriatric gent keep such a lively bunch enthralled for 30 minutes? Q and A on warfare and invasions in the Park? Proceedings teetered on the brink of chaos at times, but they impressively covered most of the ground. They are planning to pick up rubbish in the Park later in the year.

More of a 'Gem' than we Thought

WCC plant and weed experts Anita Benbrook, Jonathan Anderson and Illona Keenan had a Park walk-through with Richard Grasse and Peter Reimann. In his spare time, Jonathan collects seeds for WCC and cuts out enveloping branches from around canopy species, so knows the Park intimately. We emerged much wiser and also impressed by finding the kauri and mature toro, kamahi, maire, mataī, hīnau, milk trees and natural kōwhai. We learned about giving our newly planted northern rātā and rimu more light.

Human Restoration

In our frenetic world, there is nothing like working in the bush. A veritable 'united nations' from Conservation Volunteers visited several times. Employees from BNZ, AMP, Xero and Vocus enjoyed their outings. Scouts invaded the slopes below Wadestown to rake wandering willie into enormous heaps. The McKendrys tended their streamside spots below Waikowhai Street. The delightful tamariki from Te Puna Reo have just planted more grasses at the eel sign near the debris trap. The entrances at lower and upper Ngaio Gorge Road are much improved, thanks to Tim McIvor and Warrick Fowlie. Joan Waldvogel worked at the Hanover Street entrance. Traces of Warrick Fowlie's karaka slaughter are to be seen all over the Park. Bi-monthly working bees continue. All is revealed on Facebook.

Thanks also to WCC Park Ranger Tim Harkness for his great help over the last three years. He has moved to a new position as Trails & Reserves Specialist in the WCC Assets & Projects team.

APPENDIX

More on the SHMAK Trials - The trials concern use of the SHMAK to measure water quality, invertebrates, periphyton and physical habitat. New technology now make it useful for a wider range of groups, including students, community restoration groups and farmers. These will feed into an online database and cell phone app. for analysis by researchers, councils, and management groups. Eventually it should be possible to view the data geo-spatially to look at other parts of the catchment and region.

References

1. GG June 2018
2. John Dawson, Rob Lucas. Nature Guide to the New Zealand Forest. Random House 2007
3. GG September 2017
4. GG June 2013
5. The Onslow Historian. 'History of Trelissick Park Group 1991-2013' (2 volumes). The Porirua Print Company.
6. GG June 2017
7. www.mountainstoseawellington.org

Contacts

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

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.