

Gorge Gazette

A newsletter to all those who care for the Ngaio Gorge

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Published by the Trelissick Park-Ngaio Gorge Working Group

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What's it all about?

It's all about having a beautiful piece of wilderness right within Wellington City. It's all about having that freely available to all who wish to use it responsibly. It's all about having a balance between wild things and human modification – a balance which is acceptable to both the wild things and the humans.

Stream clean-up day

In April the Working Group organised a stream clean-up day one Saturday morning. Eleven people got into the water and pulled out old pipes, brick, plastic, metal objects and all manner of stuff.

Another opportunity after the winter.

Saturday 6 December has been set for another stream clean-up and there will again be notification in the local papers.

Winter planting help

Over 5600 trees are to be planted this winter. Many helpers will be needed. The dates have not yet been set but they will be advertised in the local papers delivered in the suburbs bordering the Gorge, and in *City Voice*.

Trees not rubbish

The Trelissick Crescent road edge will be cleared and planted to help prevent garden rubbish and other muck being dumped over the verge, often at nights when no-one is about. This area has long been a worry. It will get prime attention this year.

Stream edge planting

Species such as flax, cabbage trees and wineberry will be planted along the stream banks bordering the grassy flats just below the lower gorge. Stream bank vegetation needs to provide cover for stream life but not kill light getting to the stream.

Filling gaps

A lot of planting has been done over the last few years on the west facing slope leading from Trelissick Crescent to Wightwicks Field. This year regrowing gorse, blackberry and broom will be cleared and gaps planted with natives such as red matipo and coprosmas.

Vision

*Oh what a vision they did behold,
Those saints and angels and people bold
To walk and sit beneath a tree*

All down the creek from source to sea. (Anon.)

Idealistic as it may seem, the ultimate vision of the Working Group is to have walking and recreational access from one end of the Kaiwharawhara/Korimako to the other. This would need willingness and co-operation from all the land owners.

Biological corridor

And this idea of access fits with the concept of the biological corridor that the stream and its bush provide. Attractive is the idea of flora and fauna in an integrated line from the harbour to the hills.

Lower Kaiwharawhara

The lower Kaiwharawhara is struggling at present to avoid becoming a prisoner of neglect and abuse. Below the plastics factory and above the tunnel by the oil tank the banks are in bad shape, exotic foliage has enclosed the stream and the bed has become silted, dull, flat; of little use to fish, fowl, or other aquatic life.

If you'd like to:

* **Be on the mailing list** for this newsletter, please ring Gwentyth Wright.

* **Become a volunteer** (planting, releasing, stream and track clearing etc) please ring Barry Allen

* **Adopt a Spot** (for details see page 2 column 1) please ring Barry Allen

All phone numbers are on the back page.

If you get no answer, just ring another member.

Action

The Working Group has been beavering away talking to a landowner, parts of the WCC, DOC and the Regional Council in an effort to get this section of the lower Kaiwharawhara cleaned up. The main landowner is also planning changes to his use of the land. More about all this later.

The mouth

The mouth of the Kaiwharawhara is a worry. Will it get lost or spoiled in port and other development? The Working Group is talking with other interested groups about this to preserve it both as a recreation place alongside Point Kaiwharawhara and to as a good entry to the stream for fish.

Five year plan

The Working Group at the request of WCC is developing a five year plan for Trelissick Park. This plan will cover planting, track development and everything to do with the Park's management.

This newsletter or any part of it may be copied or quoted provided proper acknowledgement is made.

Adopt a Spot – an opportunity

A person, couple, family, group, organisation, or a group of friends, adopts a piece of track, a length of stream, part of a bank etc. Are you interested? If so please contact Margaret Maynard the Adopt a Spot organiser – or anyone on the working Group.

Adopt a Spot – thanks!

The Working Group offers its thanks to “spottees”. We hope it’s fun for you as well as hard work. We want it to be. Please phone Margaret Maynard if you want to change swap or modify your spot or pass it on to someone else.

Protecting a public asset

On this page are key emergency phone numbers. Please do use them when necessary. Several times in recent months incidents have occurred that could have done with immediate reporting. Members of the public, a wee bit uncertain and in some cases more than a trifle scared, waited too long before reporting.

Pollution

If there is anything wrong with one of the streams it should be reported just as soon as possible. The only way to stop people putting harmful substance in the water is to catch them in the act. Often it’s not done wilfully, but in ignorance.

In the gutter

What is poured or washed into a home storm-water drain or into a gutter on the street, in any suburbs such as Wilton, Wadestown, Chartwell, Crofton Downs and Ngaio runs into the Korimako/Kaiwharawhara system. Many residents don’t realise this but that’s what happens. A lot of chemicals used around home, business or car are deleterious to stream life. The Working Group is very keen to publicise the dangers of this pollution. Please raise an alarm whenever you think that’s necessary.

A tale

Pollution isn’t the only problem in the Gorge. Here’s a delicate wee story from just a few weeks ago.

Two ‘Friends of the Gorge’ were walking along the track between the Northern Walkway bridge and the end of the service road. They met a couple of people and stopped to chat.

“Hey,” the couple said, “down the stream a bit are some trees waiting to be planted. They’re near some bushes just close to the bend in the road. If you go and have a look you’ll be able to pick out some for yourselves. We’ve chosen a few and we’re coming back to get them later.”

Exactly what the ‘Friends’ said in reply is not recorded, but we don’t think that the couple arranging to stock their garden went ahead with their plans!

How many Gorge users think as that couple did? Hopefully, only a tiny minority. But theft of trees has occurred from time to time. Once, many

trees were uprooted and stolen the day after they’d been planted. So if you see anything suspicious, please report it.

The sycamores

The sycamore project is so far only partly successful. The experiment is to get rid of invasive sycamores without using any poison which might run off or leach out into the stream. On a number of old trees it has

been successful but not on young trees. The ring barking has now been re-inforced and new shoots have been removed. More later.

A final reminder

If you want to know more about tree planting etc. please phone Barry Allen. He’s the volunteers’ organiser. Or ring Gary James, the planting organiser. Their numbers are listed below.

Emergency phone numbers

If you discover vandalism, pollution, theft, or anything like that, *please act straight away* – from a cell phone if you carry one, or as soon as you get to the nearest phone of any sort. Your intervention could be crucial.

Numbers: Police Urgent 111
Central 472-300
Johnsonville 478-3583
City Works 499-4444
Pollution Response WRC 384-5707

Note: All the above numbers are 24 hour, although after hours Johnsonville Police is switched through to Central.

For any stream or harbour pollution go straight to Wellington Regional Council Pollution Response.

Working Group

The Ngaio Gorge-Trelissick Park Working Group is made up of the following representatives:

John McInnes (Chairman)	Wellington Fish and Game Council	479-5710
Frances Lee (Secretary)	Ngaio Progressive Association	479-2600
Barry Allen	Highland Park Progressive Association	473-0541
Gary James	Well. Branch Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society	476-4292
Sarah Irwin	WCC Social & Cultural Commissioning	801-3633
Judy Siers	Onslow Historical Society	479-6896
Olaf John	Wellington Botanical Society	479-7605
Gwenyth Wright	Private Landowners’ Group	472-5527
Richard Northmore (Dep. Chair.)	Wadestown Residents’ Association	473-6476

Please phone as necessary.