

# Gorge Gazette

News about Trelissick Park, the Ngaio Gorge and Streams



## Abbreviations:

WCC Wellington City Council

TPG Trelissick Park Group

GW Greater Wellington Regional Council

DOC Department of Conservation

Website [www.trelissickpark.org.nz](http://www.trelissickpark.org.nz) (includes past Gorge Gazettes and Park map)

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

## FEBRUARY 2021

### An Avian Invasion – Eva Durrant

They came in from the north and east forming a flock of over 50 in the centre of Trelissick Park shaking the tree branches into constant movement. This wasn't a flock of small birds but one of our largest, the kererū. I did not know we had 50 kererū in the area but they put on quite a show recently in one of their annual flocking events.

[Eva and Barry Durrant's house overlooks the lower Kaiwharawhara valley and they delight in witnessing the increasing bird life].

### Why?

Tawa and karaka trees, probably. They grow everywhere in the lower Kaiwharawhara valley.



Good enough to eat?

### Why Also?

The wonderful bird life now in Wellington no doubt mainly comes from the Zealandia 'halo effect' and ardent predator control groups throughout the suburbs.

Everything about predators, predator control and TPG volunteer efforts is on our website, maintained by Bill Hester, see <http://trelissickpark.org.nz/predators.htm>. This includes reports, guidelines, maps, illustrations, a night video of some rats in action and the surprising results of a study of animal intruders using motion-activated cameras. A mine of information.

Wellington is also a uniquely 'bushy' city with its parks and reserves, green belts, bush corridors, and backyard trees. How lucky we are to live in such a paradise! The birds think so too. But inexorable urban development is a worry.

### At the Coalface

New Seats with Commanding Views – WCC replaced the old bench below the Trelissick Crescent entrance opposite #19. It is in memory of Captain Peter Attwood, who used to regularly walk his dog in the Park. Barry Durrant installed a seat next to the Hanover Street entrance, made by Peter Radcliffe.

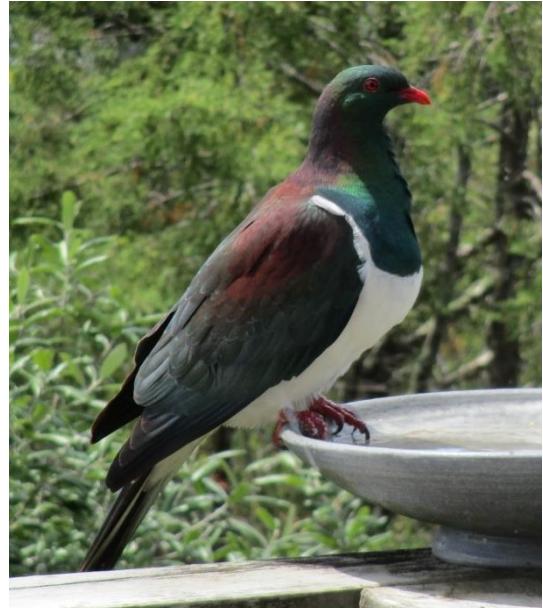


Photo: Bill Hester

DOC says that 'since the extinction of the moa, the kererū and parea are now the only bird species that are big enough to swallow large fruit, such as those of karaka, miro, tawa and taraire, and disperse the seed over long distances.'

Peter Reimann's tawa tree above Heke Reserve nearby is laden with more seed than ever seen before. The ice-cream container in the photo, 1/3 full, is only a small sample. They are now planted in a seed tray, optimistically.

KiwiRail's New Ferry Terminal at Kaiwharawhara – KiwiRail are canvassing views of interested parties, including TPG, who are keen to enhance the estuary (part of the ecological corridor).

New Park Map – See our website home page. WCC updated John Foden's original map to show the new track from Oban Street and the new Kaiwharawhara Stream bridge #7.

Northern Walkway Upgrade – This year WCC are working on the section below Hanover Street down to the stream.

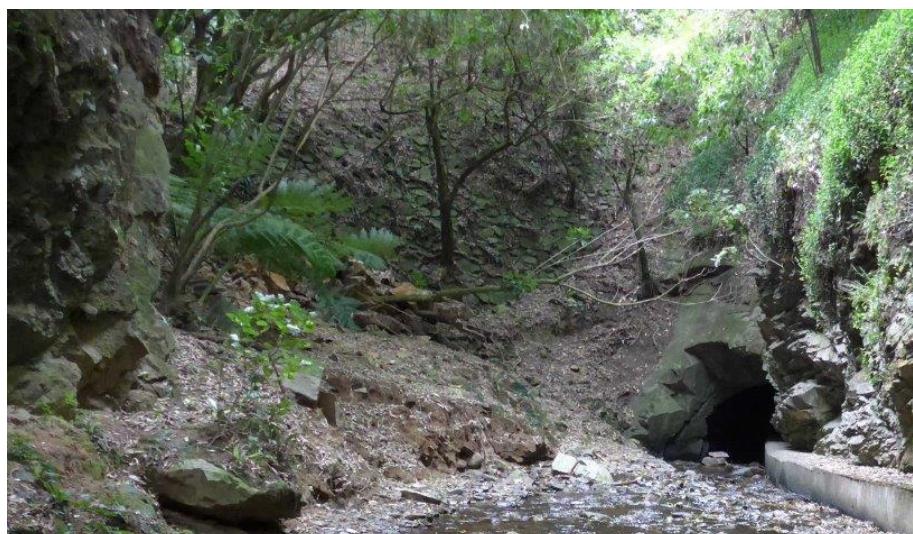
Summer Releasing – With alternating bouts of sunshine and rain, the weeds are most enthusiastic. Treasury, Conservation Volunteers, St Benedict's School, SPCA staff and our working bee volunteers came to the rescue. The Wellington Interfaith Council and Sathya Sai Service Organisation cleared around their 51 trees to commemorate the victims of the mosque shooting. Tim McIvor has taken on the eastern half of the Trellissick Crescent verge. Lea and Hugh Robertson cleared some tradescantia from the slope above the debris trap. Anne Tuffin and Joan Waldvogel continue their work on the slopes below Hanover Street. Finn Illsley-Kemp has a spot downstream of bridge #7.

Fish Ramp at Kaiwharawhara tunnel exit – Slip debris is being cleared by Jim Gifkins.

Weed-eating and Debris Trap Clearance – By Peter Reimann and Warrick Fowlie respectively.

Scroll through our Facebook page for photos.

## A Bit of a Puzzle



The photos show the Kaiwharawhara Stream tunnel entrance and lower part of the embankment below the Johnsonville railway line, taken from Churchill Reserve. Before the railway was built in the 1880s, the stream would have flowed to the left of the tunnel.

The engineers must have been faced with three options to get the railway, 30 – 40 metres aloft, across the stream:

1. Build a bridge (a major and expensive structure).
2. Construct a long culvert (in brick) over the stream, then build an embankment above (but the stream bed is subject to erosion, flooding and change).
3. Tunnel through the adjacent rock to divert the stream, then build an embankment over the original stream bed.

Option 3 was the obvious choice. There was also plenty of tunnelling expertise at hand, given the tunnels built on the line up to Johnsonville.

Does anyone have any history of this area?



*Note the old stone lining to reinforce the side of the embankment.*  
Photo: Lynne Pomare

## Marilyn's Enemy

*Cyperus eragrostis*, (umbrella sedge) no less. 'Adventive' in botanist's parlance. Marilyn Hester has eliminated it while working around the Trellissick Crescent verge, and (with permission) from among the landscaping grasses in front of the Ngaio Union Church.

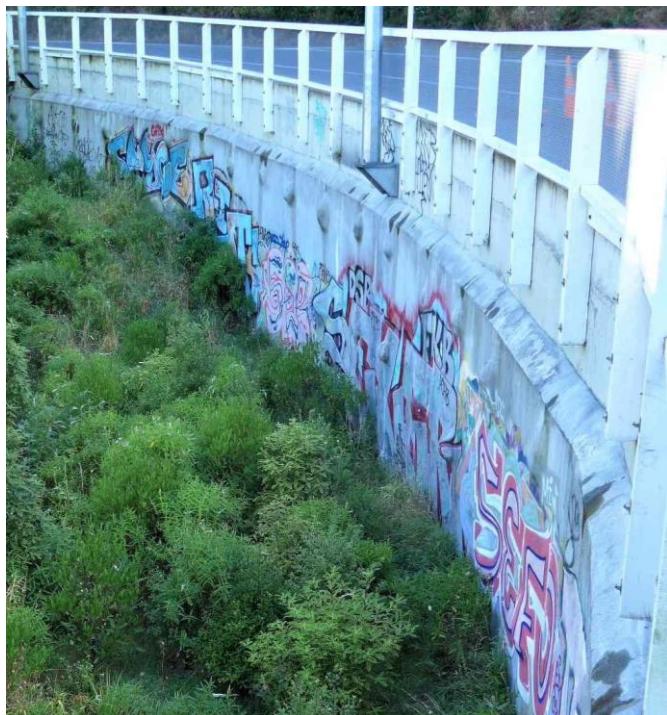
She says that being a sedge, it thrives in riparian conditions and is invasive. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of this plant along flat areas beside the Korimako Stream.



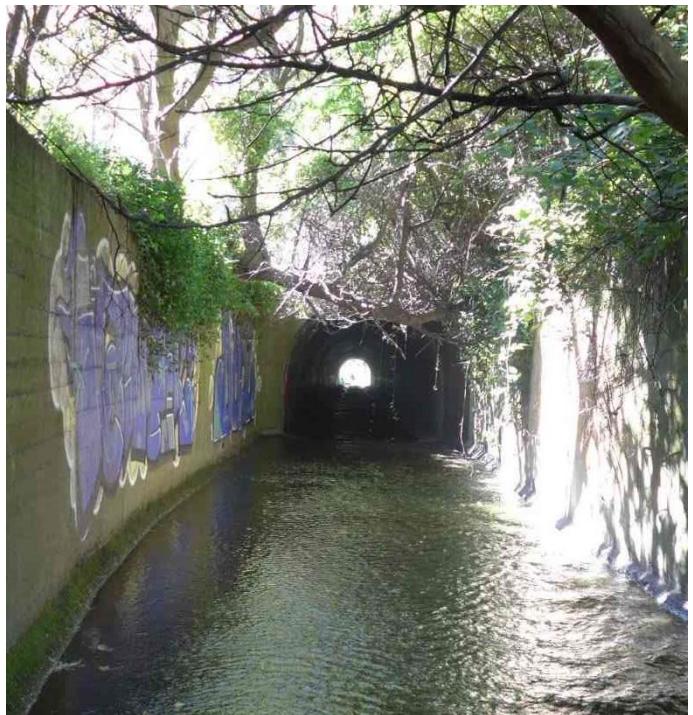
Photo: watershednursery.com

## Modern Art

For the connoisseur, the lower Kaiwharawhara valley is unrivalled. Here are two fine examples:



Midway up Ngaio Gorge Road – soon to be concealed by the planting.



It is worth walking through the tunnel (below the oil tanks) to view more wall adornment.

## Working Bees

See website 'Projects' page for dates, locations and health and safety information.

## Contacts

Peter Reimann

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WCC (reporting problems)

(04) 499 4444 or

<https://forms.wellington.govt.nz/s3/Council-Fix-It-Contact-form>

GW pollution hotline

0800 496 734

**Thanks to all our volunteers, supporters and staff from WCC and GW.**

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.