

# Trelissick Park Adopt a Spot Summary

Highland Park Progressive Association  
Trelissick Park Group



Ministry for the Environment  
Sustainable Management Fund 3074

Kate Mackenzie  
June 2007



Ministry for the  
**Environment**  
*Manatū Mō Te Taiao*

**Sustainable Management Fund**

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## Acknowledgements

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This project would not have been possible without the support and encouragement I received from staff at both Greater Wellington Regional Council and Wellington City Council. You have a great community here so keep up the hard work.

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## Introduction

In July 2006 when I was employed to coordinate the Adopt a Spot Project, I took a few weeks to become familiar with the processes functioning in Trelissick Park. The aim of this report is to summarise the work I have carried out, the processes involved, and the roles of various agencies in the Trelissick Park Adopt a Spot Project.

## Supporting Groups

There are a number of groups in the local community that support the Adopt a Spot Project in Trelissick Park – in fact the members of these groups make up the Trelissick Park Group (TPG) which meet regularly to discuss the management of the Park, and environmental issues in the catchment. The TPG manage the Adopt a Spot Project and it is through them that funding was secured from the Sustainable Management Fund.

The Highland Park Progressive Association (HPPA) is one of these groups. It is an incorporated society and has acted as the funding group for the Adopt a Spot Project.

The Wellington City Council (WCC) owns the land, and manages Trelissick Park through their Parks and Gardens business unit. They maintain the tracks, mow the grass and carry out other tasks. They also remove weeds from the Park and carry out spraying. WCC supply plants through Berhampore Nursery, and the community nursery at Otari Wiltons Bush. WCC also manage the weed control and planting of a few revegetation sites in Trelissick Park, which the TPG care for after planting.

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) support the TPG through their community environment restoration programme, Take Care. TPG receives the funding jointly with Otari Wiltons Bush Trust. GW also provides some financial assistance for weed control in Trelissick Park as the lower Kaiwharawhara Catchment is listed as a Key Native Ecosystem (KNE).

## Options for Volunteers

The Trelissick Park Group has been working on revegetating Trelissick Park since 1991. They run two programmes to ensure that any volunteers who are interested in carrying out work in the Park are able to. The more formal arrangement is that the volunteer working group meet twice a month (once on a Tuesday, and once on a Sunday) to carry out work in the Park. This team of volunteers usually concentrates on large areas in the Park which have had significant weed control carried out by either WCC or GW, or have been planted by WCC. They plant the site and carry out plant care for four or five seasons afterwards, or until the site is self managing.

An Adopt a Spot scheme has been operating for a number of years and allows individuals who are not able to regularly attend working bees to carry out work in their own time. Spotees are allocated a patch of bush and encouraged to carry out manual weed control, planting, and plant care of their spot. This is a long term relationship with a small patch of bush – a spot can take four to five years to become self managing.

## Recruitment Process

When I joined the team at Trelissick Park there were approximately a dozen individuals already attached to a 'spot'. By the time I leave the programme there will be 30 sites being cared for 17 of which were not attended when I began.

I have carried out a number of advertising campaigns over the last 12 months. I created posters for around the community and at each entrance to the Park. I created a flyer and an information sheet, both of which were used at school fairs and handed out to interested individuals.

I have had at least three articles in local newspapers outlining the scheme and how people can be involved, and I had a half page article in the Dominion Post. This more popular newspaper gave credibility to the project and directly attracted at least three spottees.

General public awareness of the project has increased dramatically resulting in a positive increase in use of the Park, and appreciation of those working in the Park.

I have also put together a powerpoint presentation outlining the opportunities for volunteers to get involved. I have presented this to the Wellington Activity Centre and to a Rotary Club as well as a couple of other community groups.

The Trelissick Park Group website has been updated to include details about the Adopt a Spot Scheme, and a page has been created on the national Wotzon website.

## Matching Spots

Once an individual contacted me I set a date to meet them in the Park at whichever entrance they use most often. From here we walked along the track discussing the project and what spots were being worked on. If the spottee had a site in mind, we headed straight there, otherwise I pointed out possibilities until we reached the furthest point they were happy to walk to carrying plants and tools. Often a site was agreed upon quickly. I would identify what weeds needed to be removed and how to do this. We worked out boundaries together based on surrounding vegetation, the ambitions of the spottee, and other Adopt a Spot sites. I usually took a photograph and recorded the spottees contact details. I gave the new spottee a copy of the Department of Conservation publication 'Plant Me Instead' and some information about how we do things in the Park, including health and safety precautions, weed control, planting procedures and some tips learnt by other spottees -see Appendix One.

## Contacts

Frances Lee, the Secretary of the TPG holds a list of 'spottees', and other working bee volunteers. In the past, Frances liaised with spottees under the Adopt a Spot Scheme, and arranged the supply of plants. This list is also used to contact regular working bee volunteers to remind them of upcoming events.

I now hold a list of approximately 120 individuals who are interested in knowing about events and developments in Trelissick Park. These individuals have received email newsletters and invitations to events at the Park. This list also includes suppliers and council contacts.

A list of spottees is also available outlining where they work and how many trees they have been supplied with for the 2007 planting season. This is detailed below.



## 1. Claire and Malcolm McDonald

This couple look after the verge of Trelissick Crescent near the main firebreak entrance. They have been given approximately 26 trees this year. Their main concern has been removal of Tradescantia. It is a challenge to keep the edge of the Park looking tidy while at the same time finding somewhere to pile the Tradescantia. They have had very good success rates with planting in this area. They have been involved for a number of years.

## 2. John Duggan

John also looks after most of the rest of the verge of Trelissick Crescent and the beginning of the track from the minor entrance. John has been working here for a number of years. John received 20 plants this season.

## 3. Lorraine Phillips

I have not been able to make contact with Lorraine Phillips in the time I have been involved with the Park. I understand she works near the Trelissick Crescent entrance – along the start of the minor track. Lorraine was not given any plants this season.

## 4. Julia and Tim Ryan



December 2006



June 2007

Julia and Tim adopted the 'fire site' half way down the track to Wightwicks Field. They have been given 150 trees which they will plant with the assistance of friends and family. This area is mostly gorse with some large tree skeletons left by the fire. Natural regrowth is great, but gorse and Boneseed are well established. This will need a concerted effort over a number of years. Julia's father was an original member of the Trelissick Park Group in the past and an article in the local paper prompted her to contact me in December 2006.

## 5. Helen Fawthorpe

Helen and her daughter Rosie have adopted the fenced off area to the east of Wightwick's Field (downstream). This area is private land, but has been planted by the working group in the past. Tradescantia was about 2 feet deep and this has mostly been brought under control. Two patches of pampas in this spot have been poisoned, but still need follow up work. This year they were given approximately 33 trees. Helen will plant this site

June 2007



this year, but is keen to move away from private land – she intends to care for the area between the track and the stream from the intersection of the track, running up towards Wightwicks Field. Helen contacted me in December 2006 after seeing signs at the entrance to the Park and reading about the Project in the local paper.

## 6. Trevor Lloyd

Trevor works along the verge of Waikowhai Street. He has been given approximately 40 trees this year. Trevor has been involved for a number of years and is happy carrying on and moving sites as they finish. Trevor is also working down into the Park along the left of the minor track down from the Waikowhai Street steps.

## 7. Joanna Braithwaite and Jennifer Boyd

These neighbours work right down next to the stream below the Waikowhai Street entrance. They both have been working in the Park for a number of years, but are no longer able to make such a strong commitment of time. They asked not to receive any trees this year, however promised to continue caring for the trees they planted last year.

## 8. Mark Collinge and Sylvia Dixon



December 2006



June 2007

This couple have adopted a spot directly upstream from the two elephant bridge. This was knee deep in Tradescantia and Mark and Sylvia have done a fantastic job of picking up all the Tradescantia and carrying it out to the Waikowhai street entrance. There is pretty good canopy cover at the site so they have been given about 25 trees which will tolerate shade and wet feet. They contacted me in December 2006 after reading about the project in the local paper.

## 9. Penny Deans and Jamie Galwith

Jamie is working towards his Duke of Edinburgh Award. This activity goes towards his service section. Penny and Jamie are working across the stream from Wightwicks Field. Their spot is to the right after crossing the small bridge. Penny approached me in March 2007 after reading the article in the Dominion Post. They have received 40 trees.



## 10. Noel Winsloe

June 2007

Noel adopted the verge of Wightwick's Field between the track and the stream. He is planting a small number of large trees to create a barrier of large native species including Rimu, Kahikatea, and Kowhai. Noel received 15 trees this year. Noel expressed his interest after I spoke at a Rotary Club meeting in March 2007.



Noels spot March 2007



TTC spot June 2007

## 11. Tararua Tramping Club

This hardy group are caring for a spot just downstream of the first bridge – on the true right of the stream. They have about 80 trees to plant this year. TTC have previously cared for a large block below the fourth bridge. That area is now self managing so they have taken over this new site. Brenda Neil is the contact person for the group. They aim to plant low growing vegetation to ensure the view of the steep banks is still available.

## 11. Stuart Mackenzie

Stuart and his partner are working half way between the first bridge and the second. Further down the track from the TTC spot, but separated from them by a stand of Mahoe. Stuart will also be maintaining the large open grassy spot upstream from the first bridge. Stuart's spot is mostly Tradescantia and German Ivy with some Ongaonga and Blackberry to deal with. Stuart aims to plant 20 trees this year. He contacted me in June 2007 after seeing the article in the Dominion Post.



## 12. Trevor Mowbray

Trevor is working on a spot directly up the track from the second bridge. Some of this spot was planted by Ngaio Primary School students in 2006. This area is swamped in Nightshade, Tradescantia and German Ivy. Fallen logs are hidden under the tangle of weeds. Trevor is working on this site with his grandson. The hill slopes directly upwards onto railway land behind Trevor's spot, but the slope is mostly covered in well established Mahoe and Five Finger. Trevor had previously worked caring for spots further upstream including the area below the two elephant bridge which was planted by the Ngaio Progressive Association (NPA) and the Waikowhai Street entrance.



Trevor's spot April 2007



June 2007

### 13. Susan Weekes

Susan is heavily involved with scouts in Ngaio. I approached Susan in January and she adopted a spot with her three sons. They care for a patch running between the track and the stream about half way between the second and third bridges. The work involved is mostly removing vines and Tradescantia. Susan has about 30 trees this season.

### 14. Winnie Duggan

Winnie works with the Ngaio Brownies on a site just upstream from the third bridge. The brownies have been down to the site on at least 2 occasions. Winnie was allocated 10 trees but these were delivered with her husband's supply so they may not end up at this spot. Winnie and John have both been involved with the Park for a number of years, and have also planted at other spots further up the shortcut to the minor Trelissick Crescent entrance.



June 2007

### 15. Jack Stanton



August 2006



June 2007

Jack was one of my first recruits. He approached me in August 2006 after reading an article in the local paper and seeing my signs at the entrances to the Park. Jack works up on railways land just over the third bridge. This site is steep and exposed but has great seedlings naturally

regenerating. Jack is busy clearing climbers and Tradescantia to ensure natural seedlings get the best opportunity. Jack has 50 trees to put in this year.

### 16. Nicki Sayers

Nicki approached me in November after receiving an advertising email I sent to my hockey club. Nicki walks through the Park regularly so has taken a spot right in the middle of the Park, just downstream from the fourth bridge. This was previously cared for by the TTC, but some spots needed major weed control and replanting. Nicki has taken 20 plants for this season.

### 17. Scott Hughes

Scott contacted me in February 2007 after reading an article in the local paper. Scott is working on a spot half way up the overgrown track leading up to the minor entrance along Trelissick Crescent. This spot involves mostly clearing gorse to release natural seedlings and allow regeneration. Scott did not require trees this season.

### 18. Dan McLean

Dan approached me in May 2007 after reading the article in the Dominion Post. Dan has taken on a challenging site just upstream from the Hanover St Bridge on the true right of the stream. This site has a mess of creepers and thick ground cover of blackberry. Dan has 30 trees to plant this season.



Dan's spot June 2007



Deidre's spot June 2007

### 19. Deidre Burke

Deidre works with students from Onslow College to care for the Hanover St entrance and the beginning of the track there. This year Deidre has been clearing Tradescantia from the banks and will plant a range of species which cope well in the undergrowth and under the canopy. Deidre is a member of the TPG and represents the Private Landowners Group.

### 20. Diane Lewis and Lynette Rowe

These neighbours approached me in May after reading the article in the Dominion Post. They are working on the spot just downstream of the Hanover St Bridge on the true left. They and their extended families plan to plant about 40 plants this season. This has well established canopy in some spaces but needs work removing Tradescantia and Montbretia. Riparian planting is also required.



June 2007

## 21. Richard Croad



October 2006



June 2007

Richard cares for a site just down stream from Lynette and Diane. Their spots are separated by a grove of Mahoe. Richard held a number of our trees at his place over the summer, and he still has about 40 trees to plant this year – his spot is wet and riparian. Richard contacted me in October 2006.

## 22. John Ritchie

John has been working in the Park for a number of years. His spot is upstream from the gabions, along the edge between the road/ track and the stream. John was given 30 plants this



year.

John's spot August 2006



The White's spot July 2006

## 23. John and Robin White

This couple are caring for some of the grassy flood plain downstream from the debris arrestor. This area can get very wet and is prone to flooding. As such only riparian species and grasses are being planted here. I have had no contact with John and Robin since I began, but they received 15 trees.

## 24. Vernon Mackenzie

Vernon has been supplying the group with carpet squares for a number of years. He has recently adopted the riparian area near the lower entrance to the Park. Vernon received 70 plants this season.

## 25. Edie Mathers



Edie cares for the lower entrance to the Park – raking stones away from the road and weeding what she can reach. Edie comes down to the Park with her neighbour David Hurst. They received no plants this season.

John's Edie's spot

### Others

There are other people involved with the Park who are not listed above as they either do not work regularly on the same spot, or they work regularly on a number of spots. This includes Marilyn Hester and Carolyn Theiler who often work at various sites around the Park and have been doing so for a number of years. These two ladies propagate their own trees and plant them wherever they are needed around the Park. Over the summer and autumn months they are busy carrying out weed control as they are both Grow Safe certified. They usually work together and provide support to the working group where needed.

Peter Reimann, the chairman of TPG works in the Park as a WCC Volunteer Ranger. Peter works at any sites in the Park which need his attention, but focuses mainly on a few of his own spots. This includes releasing around trees planted by WCC or TPG.

Frances Lee, the secretary of TPG is becoming less physically involved with the Park. Frances still regularly walks in the Park, and carries out plant maintenance, particularly caring for the Northern Rata throughout the Park. Frances also attends and arranges regular working group working bees. Dorothy Douglass contacts volunteers to remind them of upcoming working bees.

TPG meet twice a month to work on various large sites in the Park. They usually have a turn out of 4- 12 people.

Ngaio Primary School were involved with planting at either end of each of the new bridges. They visited the Park in August 2006, and are currently arranging another trip to the Park for 2007. Trees were supplied by Greater Wellington.

There are two main sites in the Park which were set aside to be planted by Take Care – Greater Wellington's community environmental restoration programme, and corporate volunteer scheme. These two plots are to be closely monitored by the Global Volunteer Network to measure which plants grow best in the lower Kaiwharawhara Catchment. Most of these two sites have now been planted, and GW will plant the remaining area this year. The TPG could potentially use the rest of the funding to set up nursery facilities for the Adopt a Spot scheme.

HSBC have joined WCC on a few occasions to plant and care for plants around the magazine site. There are usually two or three volunteers who turn up when they are invited to an event.

MfE carried out a corporate volunteer day in the Park this year and achieved a huge amount of work in the day they were here.

ANZ National have carried out a few corporate volunteer days in the Park, along with a few other companies.

Ngaio Progressive Association (NPA) provide both community volunteers to plant trees on its spots, and have donated two seats to be established in Trelissick Park.

## Ongoing Coordination

I have recruited Harry Barton to carry on with coordinating the Adopt a Spot scheme, on a voluntary basis. A friend of his is a spotee and Harry is keen to gain project management experience by doing this. I fully appreciate the responsibility that Harry has accepted, and Harry is not expected to continue all of the tasks I have carried out. The success of this project has resulted in increased support from WCC and GW. The community has responded well to be asked to help care for Trelissick Park, and I expect this commitment to continue into the future.

## Conclusion

A huge amount of work is being carried out by volunteers in Trelissick Park. The Sustainable Management Fund grant has helped the community to build up their resources and for the Adopt a Spot scheme to continue at a higher level of activity into the future. The public profile of the scheme has risen so people are more aware of what is happening in the Park and what opportunities are available. The public are more aware of their responsibilities to care for their local environment.

The Adopt a Spot Project has provided the scheme with the boost it needed, but without future funding for the coordinator role it will not be possible to continue this level of support. Having a voluntary coordinator, Harry Barton, continue in this position will make a big difference, but it is up to the TPG to ensure the spottees feel they are part of a community. People need to feel they are part of something bigger. There is great support from participants of Project Kaiwharawhara, WCC and GW. Communication between TPG, the coordinator and the Councils is a key ingredient to continuing with what we have achieved so far. It is now up to the TPG to ensure volunteers are provided for, and have the resources they need, but strong relationships have been forged with GW and WCC.

Good luck with the future of the project. I look forward to hearing positive things about all that you have achieved together.

Thanks for the opportunity to work within such a great community and environment!

## Recommendations

To ensure the Adopt a Spot scheme can continue to run smoothly I make the following recommendations:

- Place an order for seedling or plants for the 2008 planting season from WCC or a suitable alternative nursery.
- Apply for funding to gather any resources needed to run a functional community nursery to ensure ongoing supply of plants to spotees.
- Secure funding for compiling and publishing an ongoing community newsletter to maintain the knowledge and involvement of the community. -
- Keep advertising and talking to local reporters. This builds the profile of the project and keeps people interested.
- Maintain the current contact list and build on this at any opportunity. Keep it up to date and functional.
- Continue liaison with WCC and GW. Both Councils can provide ongoing support to the project.
- Members of TPG continue to encourage and foster spotees. Make information and learning resources available on the website – give them something in return for their hard work. Ask people what they want to make the job easier.
- TPG liaise with the councils to prepare training or educational sessions for spotees and new members.

## Appendix One

### Welcome to Trelissick Park

Now you have chosen your spot, there are a few things you need to know:

The objective of the Adopt a Spot scheme is to restore Trelissick Park to a natural wilderness, providing a safe habitat for native flora and fauna and also a freely accessible place to visit and enjoy. Your role as a 'spottee' involves weed eradication, plant care, rubbish collection, reporting of damage in the Park, planting locally sourced native trees and subsequently caring for them to more effectively achieve this objective.

You are welcome to manage your spot yourself to help us achieve this goal, or I can assist you over the first few months. Please contact me, the Adopt a Spot co-ordinator, with your ideas before starting and then keep in contact as to how your Spot is progressing. I can help organise a one-off volunteers blitz, find more plants if you need them, or organise Wellington City Council (WCC) to do some weed control or help with rubbish. Let me know if you would like to share your site with others, or would prefer to work on it alone.

#### Weed Control:

Weed control in Trelissick Park is predominantly carried out by (WCC) or Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW). The Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group (TPNGWG) also hold regular working bees, which include weed control. You as a member of the public are not able to use sprays of any sort in Trelissick Park. You are able to use hand tools such as loppers, grubbers or spades to tackle the weeds on your spot. TPNGWG have Growsafe certified volunteers who can help you with controlling wattle, briar rose, buddleia, privet, cotoneaster, darwins barberry, evergreen buckthorn, willow, honeysuckle, jasmine, spindle tree, sycamores etc.. Please contact me if you have more questions, or would like help to eradicate a certain weed from your spot.

Note: Gorse can work well as a nursery species. To do this cut a track or clearing and plant your tree under the shelter of the gorse. As your tree matures it will shade out, and eventually kill off the gorse. You may need to release around the tree as it grows, but it saves cutting down all of the gorse!

#### Riparian planting

Planting close to the stream requires different species of plants to allow for flood conditions, to protect against erosion, and to provide habitat for fish to spawn. Within the flood zone plant only long leafed plants such as flax, toetoe, cabbage trees, grasses and sedges. These plants will not break, or be pulled out by high flood waters if firmly planted. Cabbage trees also have a substantial root system which will help to hold the banks together. Remember that the stream will move over time as part of a natural process. Avoid planting on shingle beaches as these are nice for kids to play on, and plants may get washed away or buried in debris in the next flood, or when the stream next changes its path.

#### Reporting of damage in the Park.

If you come across any damage to the Park such as washed out tracks, fallen trees, or large amounts of rubbish please contact Wellington City Council on 499 4444.

If you have any questions about your site, or another site you think needs attention please contact me, Kate Mackenzie:

Phone 021 136 0812, or email [trelissickpark@seaforth.co.nz](mailto:trelissickpark@seaforth.co.nz)

Revegetation species \* = frost tender (see note below)

Focus on establishing the 5 key revegetation species:

- Wineberry/ Makomako (*Aristotelia serrata*)
- Pittosporums (*P. eugenioides* and *P. tenuifolium*)
- Karamu (*Coprosma robusta*)
- Mahoe (*Meliccytus ramiflorus*)\*
- Cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*)

Other good revegetation species are:

- Five Finger (*Pseudopanax arboreus*\*)
- Akeake (*Dodonaea viscosa*\*)
- Manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*)
- Akiraho (*Olearia paniculata*\*)
- Flax (*Phormium tenax*)
- Ngaio (*Myoporum laetum*\*)
- Kawakawa (*Macropiper excelsum*) [in shade only]
- Lowland ribbonwood
- Toetoe (*Cortaderia toetoe*)
- Mapou (*Myrsine australis*\*)
- Broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*\*)
- Kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides*)
- Koromiko (*Hebe stricta* var *stricta*)

Avoid planting Karaka (*Corynocarpus laevigatus*) – a prolific seeder which becomes dominant, Karo (*Pittosporum crassifolium*) – outside natural distribution, and Pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*) – outside natural distribution and hybridises with Northern rata (*Metrosideros robusta*).

Planting

Prepare your site carefully before you begin. Ensure the site is free from weeds, and think about who will be using the site for what purpose. Do the majority of your planting in the wetter months of late autumn or winter so the trees can be well established before spring. Use plants that are at least 300 mm (1 ft) high, otherwise the weeds will overcome them. Plant in clumps rather than rows. Often it looks better if a few of the same species are planted together.

Plant trees close together – about 500 mm (1 ½ ft) apart to shade out and overcome the weeds. The hole size should be twice that of the plant's root ball. On removal from the plastic bag, remember to tease out the roots. Make sure the plant is well watered before planting. Backfill with topsoil and firmly pack the plant into the ground, ensuring the potted soil is even with the ground level and that the stem is not buried. Some slow release fertiliser in the bottom of the hole helps.

Water the plant if necessary, and if there is a supply available, place a partly split carpet square upside-down around the tree, taking care to lift up the small central triangle for the trunk to stop the carpet ring-barking the tree. Carpet helps to keep the moisture in and suppress the weeds. On steep slopes the carpet should be anchored with wire pegs or rocks to stop the carpet sliding and bending the plant over. Windy sites and unanchored carpet can also damage the plants. Bark mulch is a useful alternative.

Remember to take photos of your site too, so you can monitor which plants grow well in the Park, and so you can show others what a great job you have done!

Plant Maintenance

Maintenance for about 2 - 3 years after planting is essential to ensure survival. This largely consists of weeding around each plant (releasing). Watering may be needed during prolonged dry spells. Stakes can be useful to mark plant locations amongst the weeds.

Frosty areas

Flat areas on the bottom of the valley can get quite frosty over the winter months. Be careful to plant frost tender trees in warmer areas. You can see how high the frost reaches by looking at the tradescantia (wandering willy). This abundant weed is very frost tender and turns black up to the level of the frost.

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## Health and Safety

Working as a volunteer does not exclude you from following New Zealand Health and Safety best practices. Since 2003 OSH has put the emphasis on making sure everyone is aware of their own responsibilities. This is basically common sense and being aware of Hazards both to yourself and others. Below are a few key issues to think about when volunteering in Trelissick Park. This also keeps us in line with WCC policy as we are working on WCC land.

- Use only hand tools in the Park – no chainsaws etc.
- Don't overload bags of weeds etc – aim for about 15 – 20kg so you (or others) are able to carry them out.
- Look after yourself when working in the Park - wear sunscreen and protective clothing when necessary. Drink plenty of water.
- Take regular breaks if bending or kneeling.
- Be careful when working on steep slopes, or near the stream. Especially watch for erosion or unstable banks.
- Don't push the limits when working by yourself – get someone to come and help you.
- Tell family, a friend or neighbours when you are working in the Park.
- If you are unsure about your safety in any situation, Don't go there!
- Leave the site and track clear of any hazards.
- If you come across any hazardous situations please let me, or WCC 499 4444 know so we can do something about it.

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## Spotee Perspective

# Practical Guidelines for Adopt-a-Spotties

## Our Aim

To restore and preserve the natural environments indigenous to Trelissick Park, Ngaio Gorge.

## Some Work Principles

- A. Have fun.
- B. Rejoice in your achievements. Visitors to the Park will certainly appreciate your results.
- C. Accept that you will make mistakes. You're learning a new way to garden.
- D. Expand and apply your knowledge of the native flora and fauna. Join the Working Group on weed-busting sessions to learn to distinguish unwanted exotics from indigenous plants.
- E. Know your physical/time limits and let them rule.
- F. Keep an eye on the big picture. Create a Spot, which will be self-sustaining, then adopt a new one.

Generally, work toward establishing a canopy with first-growth trees, which will shade-out unwanted exotics. Then, plant specimen trees amongst the recovering bush. Native trees grow best with companionship. Facilitate natural regeneration from seeds by keeping the underbrush clear of choking exotics.

The bush is ever-changing. The most effective restoration is natural regeneration.

## Some Weeding Tips

- A. Be specific which weeds you pull. Pulling every blade of grass only exposes the soil to wind and sun, which evaporates the moisture from around the tree roots.

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Suggestion: Pull weeds from around the base of the tree. If there is no danger of the weeds re-growing when in contact with the soil, spread them back under the tree and over the exposed ground as mulch. Alternatively, the weeds can be bagged or suspended off the ground in the elbow of a tree branch.

B. Do not use weed-eaters or mowers, unless specifically requested by the co-ordinator. Lopping weeds off close to the ground only encourages their branching and deep rooting. Vines, in particular, must be eradicated by recommended methods. (See Appendix) The bush canopy will eventually shade-out gorse, but not vines. Weed-eaters and mowers also destroy regenerating native seedlings.

Suggestion: Use manual methods to weed. Grubbers, hand weeders and your hands, wearing gloves with good grips, are your best weeding tools.

If you need to poison the weeds on your Spot, Working Group volunteers authorised to apply Vigilant will be happy to assist. All spraying is done by the Wellington City Council Parks & Gardens staff.

C. Some exotics can provide shelter for young trees. You may be advised to leave a shelter belt of gorse on your section, or let the grasses grow tall in the negative spaces of your Spot, to protect the seedlings from winds and prolonged exposure to the sun. Eventually, the native canopy will shade-out the exotics.

Vines and tradescantia are more difficult to manage, though, because they can thrive in the shade and grow along the ground until they find a tree to climb. Once established in the canopy, vines smother the trees they inhabit.

D. As a Spottie, you may be able to manage most weed infestation on your site with manual eradication. However, you may also want the help of someone authorised to use Vigilant poison to stop re-growth. Do not get discouraged by persistent weed growth. This is an on-going problem for everyone working in the Park. Just do what you can manually and get help from authorised-others to apply the poisons.

E. Help yourself to WCC mulch or carpet squares to use on your spot, if they are available and have been recommended for your situation.

## Appendix

Following are some suggestions for eradicating common exotics capable of destroying the existing bush and preventing natural regeneration.

Blackberry: Grub out the ball and all the roots. Hang the vine in the elbow of a tree or off the ground. The vine is capable of re-rooting, if it comes in contact with the soil while still fresh. If

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you cannot dig out the entire plant, Vigilant poison applied to the freshly cut roots may stop re-growth.

**Gorse:** Pull or dig out the young plants. Freshly cut stumps need to be treated with Vigilant to prevent re-growth. Some native plants, like five-finger and mahoe, can keep ahead of gorse growth and shade-out the weed before it gets re-established. So, the secret to eradicating gorse without using poison, is to re-plant soon after clearing.

Alternatively to clearing your site completely of gorse, you may prefer to cut pathways through your site and plant on the vegetation boundary. The mature gorse bushes then continue to contribute nitrogen to the soil and provide a wind and sun break to protect regenerating seedlings. The native trees will eventually shade out the gorse. Discuss your options with the coordinator.

**Tradescantia:** Use a rake, your hands, or a hand weeder to claw the tradescantia toward you ensuring you get every fragment. Bag the weed, because any piece left on the ground will re-root. A wire hand weeder works well to loosen small infestations from the soil.

**Willows and Sycamores:** Dig or pull out young plants, taking all the roots. (Alternatively, authorised people will cut and poison the trunks with Vigilant for you). Do not leave branches lying on the ground; they re-root if come in contact with the soil.

**Vines:**

**Ivy:** Dig out all the plant fragments and roots. Alternatively, the roots can be cut and treated with Vigilant by an authorised person.

**Bindweed:** Dig out ensuring all root material is removed. The plant can re-grow from stem fragments. Poisons can be applied to leaves on the growing end of the vine, but these take several weeks to kill the roots. Discuss any poison options with the Spot coordinator.

**Japanese Honeysuckle:** For small infestations, you may be able to dig out all the roots and plant fragments, but the stems break easily, and poisoning the cut roots, (below the nodule/vine intersection), may be the most reliable method of eradication. Spraying the foliage helps, too.

**Climbing Asparagus:** Dig out the plant and be sure you get the crown. The tubers formed on the roots will not grow.

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