

## Chairperson's Annual Report 2012

Tena koutou katoa.

2011-2012 has been as busy – or, if not, busier than the previous year. It has been an exciting year of building on the successes of the previous years. Funding from the Ministry for the Environment, the World Wildlife Fund for Nature and the ASB Community Trust has enabled us to continue to support a part-time project manager. This has allowed us to further grow and expand the project.

The 2011 planting season saw 6937 plants go into the ground – up from 4795 the previous year. This brings us to an overall total of plants along Oakley Creek since the project started in late 2004 to 41,265. Plantings were undertaken on our regular monthly Sundays, with the support of the local community; as well as other plantings with the participation of a number of organisations and educational institutions from the wider community including:

- Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre
- Gladstone Primary School
- Waterview Primary School
- Mt Roskill Intermediate
- Mt Roskill Grammar
- Collectively Kids Early Childhood Centre
- St Judes Scouts
- Auckland A Rocha & Kodesh Christian Community
- Conservation Volunteers – Local & International Teams
- Cadbury's
- And Waikowhai Intermediate

We continue to hold regular, monthly working bees / weeding sessions over the summer months, and organised another successful community clean-up, in conjunction with David Bowden, Auckland Council - again including taking out what seems to be a never ending supply of old tyres and supermarket trolleys.

Under the continued guidance and expertise of committee member, Alicia Warren, we are now into the fourth year of our monitoring and pest control programme, with rat and possum numbers well down – but much work still to do to reduce the mice and hedgehogs. And, we are in the process of reviewing and fine-tuning the programme, so that we can improve on and maximise our effectiveness. This programme adds another dimension to our restoration project and gives the community the opportunity to be involved in a range of different activities, to learn different skills.

We continue to work in close collaboration with Wai Care to educate school students and the community on the importance of protecting our stream; and welcome the added value they bring for students on school visits to the creek. The Oakley Creek Wai Care groups have carried out monitoring of the water quality and invertebrate

populations, on a regular basis. These include the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre 'garden group, Eileen Witt at the St Judes Scouts site, Jeff Lang at Cradock Street Bridge – and Jagjeeta Kaur started monitoring at the Unitec bridge.

The numbers of eco-sourced native plants being propagated for planting along the creek have increased, thanks to the efforts of the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre team, Mt Roskill Intermediate science students and committee member, Dorothy Maddock.

The upgrade of the waterfall was able to be completed, and was officially 'opened' with a blessing by local iwi and celebration. Our thanks go to the old Eden/ Albert and Avondale Community Boards, and the Albert Eden Local Board for providing the funding for this. And, again with SLIPs funding from the Albert Eden Local Board the initial stages of weed of control in the 'Remnant Mahoe Rock Forest' area in Phyllis & Harbutt Reserves commenced.

We have continued to collaborate with the different contractors including – Te Ngahere, Envirotech and City Parks, which is crucial to ensure we are all working together to the same end.

The efforts of teams from Conservation Volunteers (CV) have been a great help in keeping up with work that needs doing – including planting and weed control. And we had Corrections Department teams working one day a week over the summer months, to help keep the weeds at bay in a number of areas.

We have continued with our outreach, to further raise awareness of the creek and its importance through a variety of avenues, including our excellent newsletter produced by committee member Adrienne Stanton. We had displays at events such as the Unitec Volunteer Day, and the annual Wai Care Expo – at which we received the 'awareness and advocacy - telling your story' award. We organised another successful guided tour of the creek in Auckland City's Heritage Festival in September 2010, and two guided walks in the summer, as part of the EcoMatters 'Ecofest'. And we have taken every opportunity to publicise our activities through the local media, and on various websites, including the ARC Eco-Events and Triangle Television.

With regards to the State Highway 20 / Waterview Connection through the catchment, with the hearings behind us, we are now fully involved in the Community Liaison Groups and consultation on various aspects of the project. This has included some interesting discussions and debates around stack locations, open space etc. However, a plus for Oakley Creek, has been the establishment of a new Lizard Management Area (LMA) and the relocation of 150 native Copper Skinks from Hendon / Alan Wood Parks down to the Oakley Creek Walkway Reserve.

Further to funding from the MfE, WWF and ASB, we received funding from the Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS), the Portage Licensing Trust, the Lion Foundation and Lottery Grants. My thanks to Helen Mellisop for all of the wonderful work she has put into fundraising. Funding, resourcing and support came from the Auckland Council and Albert Eden Local Board including for site preparation, weed control, plants and for our monitoring and pest control programme. Our 'gift a tree' fundraiser also contributed to more plants for the creek.

Much time and energy has gone into the co-ordination of activities, networking, outreach, liaison with other stakeholders and interested parties e.g. Auckland Council, Local Boards, and Unitec; into responding to enquiries and expressions of

interest from a wide variety of community organisations and individuals – including the Kodesh Christian Community, Auckland A Rocha, Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi and Open Polytechnic; and into supporting students – undertaking a variety of assignments and research projects. We also submitted on the Auckland Council and Local Board Long-Term Plans.

So, all in all, 2011-2012 has been another busy and productive year on the creek; and it has been wonderful to be a part of this.

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to the following, but not exclusive list of people and organisations for their wonderful support and encouragement:

- David Bowden, Auckland Council Parks Volunteer and Biodiversity Co-ordinator
- Taryn Pearce & Kath Read, our local Wai Care co-ordinators
- Karen Mann and her team, from the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre
- Sean Carroll and the students from Mt Roskill Intermediate
- St Judes Scouts venturers, for their contribution to the reduction of pests along the creek
- John Dwyer, Lynne Andrew, Rowena Gilchrist, John Maskell, Ron Lang & Jane Shand – for their continued contribution to the monitoring and pest control
- Te Ngahere for their work on site preparation and weed control, and for contributing another planting
- Unitec – for the use of Oakridge House for our meetings, the nursery space and for sponsoring the port-a-loo for the Corrections Teams
- Manukau Institute of Technology – for the use of some of their resources and facilities at the Unitec campus
- The ‘weedbusters’ team – Jean Barton, Keith Ayton and David Smith
- Some of our regular volunteers – including Margaret McConnell, Toby Ross, John Stevenson and the wider community for their support, enthusiasm and efforts to assist in growing our vision for Oakley Creek.

And, I would like to say a special thank you to all of our Committee Members – Adrienne Stanton, Alicia Warren, Dorothy Maddock, Heather Docherty, Helen Mellsop, Richard Nightingale, Ross Ihaka, and our treasurer, Jane Shand, for the great work they have done – and continue to do.

And, as always, there is still lots of work to be done, including encouraging more community support and involvement, and continuing to advocate for the creek - and we hope you will continue to be involved and support the project in the coming year.

Nga mihi nui,  
Wendy John,  
Chairperson  
18<sup>th</sup> June, 2012