



Monitoring Has Begun!

If you have seen people on their hands and knees lately, busy under the bushes, it may have been volunteers undertaking work for the Monitoring programme that has now started at the Creek. Thanks to an enormous amount of work, especially by Alicia Warren, and to all the wonderful efforts of our volunteers, the baseline populations of rodents, hedgehogs, lizards, birds and weta can begin to be measured.

Margaret McConnell, pegging down a rodent tracking tunnel.

Photo: W. John



Dates for your Diary:

Oakley Creek Annual Clean-Up

When: Sunday 1st March, 2009, 10.00am-1.00pm.

Where: Meet by Carrington's Cafe, Unitec Campus

What to bring: Sturdy footwear, long sleeves, gloves, sunhat, sunscreen and a water bottle.

Refreshment provided. Families welcome.

Contact Wendy 09-815-3101 or David 09-379-2020 for more information

Setting out of Weta 'motels' - Monitoring & Pest Control Programme

When: Sunday 15th March, 2009, 10.00am-12-noon.

Where: Meet at the Unitec Residence Bridge (below the waterfall). Access is from Unitec Residence Entrance, Great North Road or Unitec Campus new Students' Residence.

Contact Wendy 09-815-3101 or Alicia 021-545-343 for more information.

Monitoring has begun... This work is necessary so that we can monitor, over time, the effectiveness of the planned pest control, and the restoration work that we are doing.

Ten yr old, Edwin Stanton, who helped put out rodent tracking tunnels, said, "We had to think like a rat when we chose where to put the tunnels - was there shelter but also clear ground to run quickly? It was fun."



Rat tracks

The first sets of tracks have been examined and mice, rats, lizards, possums, insects and possibly hedgehogs have all left their marks.



Hedgehog tracks?



Lizard track - with dragging tail

If you are interested in being involved we would welcome hearing from you. For more information, contact Wendy - 09-815-3101 or Alicia - 021-545-343.



Possum prints - large soft foot pads

Photos: A. Stanton

Ross Ihaka Wins Pickering Medal

Congratulations to our Committee Member, Ross Ihaka, who was recently awarded NZ's top award for technology achievements - the Royal Society's 2008 Pickering Medal. Ross developed a

package of internationally acclaimed statistical software called 'R', which has had a huge uptake by universities, industry and governments, both locally and internationally.

Scout Group Attack Weeds

At the end of November, Mt Albert St Jude's Scout Group held a working bee to clear the stream bank next to their den on New North Rd, in readiness for replanting in the autumn. Auckland Regional Council has granted funding to the Scout Group for native plants. It is planned to use these plants to stabilise the bank, provide some habitat for the resident pukeko, as well as to encourage new birds, and to shade the stream which is too warm for native fish to inhabit.



Photo: M. Marler

The weeding session was hot, hard work but the Venturers, in particular, worked with tremendous energy and enthusiasm. Local councillor, Graeme Easte, helped out, vigorously throwing the privet branches.



Photo: M. Marler

Local WaiCare co-ordinator, Melissa Marler, came to the working bee with a display and the Scouts will be monitoring the stream water quality on a regular basis.

Scouting is a worldwide youth movement which aims to support young people in their physical, mental and spiritual development, so that they may play constructive roles in society. Practical outdoor activities, service to the community and learning to be an effective team member through the patrol system are key parts of the scouting programme,

so the Group welcomes the opportunity to help in this way towards the restoration of Oakley Creek. For more information, Mt Albert St Jude's Scout Group contacts are:

Keas (Yr 1-3) - ph Kimberley 845 5016

Cubs (Yr 3-6) - ph Susan 820 4591

Scouts (Yr 6-10) - ph Richard 849 4934

Venturers (Yr 10 - 13) ph Jolyon 8185070

Major Toxic Spill Destroys Life in Oakley Creek



Photo: W John

In early December, local Gladstone Primary School children witnessed an outpouring of a highly toxic substance through a storm water drain directly into

Oakley Creek. In a matter of seconds, the water immediately downstream from the spill had caused the death of hundreds of native fish.

Major Toxic Spill...

It has been determined that the pollution was a moss and mould ammonium treatment being used on a nearby roof. The company to blame, Edwards & Hardy AK Ltd, has been fined \$2100.

The stream appears to have begun to recover but it will take years before the aquatic life is fully restored.

Wendy John, Friends of Oakley Creek, who was working with the children on site, welcomes the prosecution but is concerned that the fine is of insufficient size to be a deterrent.

At the time, it was fortunate that representatives from Metrowater and

the local WaiCare programme were also on site, so they were able to assist in the managing of the situation. An Auckland Regional Council (ARC) Senior Pollution Hotline officer said that, "...unfortunately, there is little that can be done after the event, but hope for rain to help disperse the chemicals".

Incidents such as this are a reminder that people should divert run-off away from storm water drains when they are using any kind of chemical.

Note the Pollution Hotline: ph 3773107.



Gladstone Primary School group, who witnessed the toxic spill.

Photo: W John

WEED WATCH

This section of the newsletter features details about weeds that threaten Oakley Creek. You can help by tackling these at the stream and in your garden, if present. In this issue:

Calystegia sepium Convolvulaceae - Bindweed



Photos: A. Stanton

A member of the Convolvulus family, this weed is a vigorous climber. At Te Auaunga Oakley Creek, it engulfs the newly planted seedlings, smothering them and weighing them down.

Originally from southern Europe, bindweed became established in the early 20th century. It is a perennial herb with far creeping white rhizomes, heart or arrow shaped leaves and large white or pink flowers which are borne singly. It spreads both from prolific seed production and vegetatively by extensive rhizome growth.

Control: Bindweed can be controlled by shading (with a dense canopy or weedmat) and/or by repeated frequent weeding to eventually starve remaining roots. If spraying, repeated applications will be required. At Oakley Creek, vines should be pulled out with the root if possible, otherwise broken off at the ground. When weeding, please remove the vine from around young native plants carefully to avoid damage such as breaking branches.

Oakley Creek Wordfind Challenge

A	K	A	R	A	K	G	K	P	E	N	L
T	G	C	Z	I	A	M	J	G	W	E	Y
U	D	N	U	V	R	N	D	V	A	S	B
F	B	E	U	D	E	I	O	O	T	F	C
N	O	I	T	A	R	O	T	S	E	R	E
V	A	U	Q	B	U	D	X	M	R	L	E
B	O	A	R	D	W	A	L	K	F	G	L
T	A	W	I	T	T	W	E	T	A	T	E
R	R	D	F	L	A	X	L	T	L	H	A
Y	O	E	S	B	K	N	T	M	L	Z	F
F	A	E	E	J	P	P	C	U	Z	N	O
Y	T	H	D	E	E	W	D	N	I	B	E

Find 15 hidden words, all associated with Oakley Creek - forwards, backwards or on the diagonal.

What Made These Tracks?



The solutions can be found on page 9.

Out and About – in brief

Conservation Volunteers make a difference

Thanks to Auckland City Council's Parks Volunteer Co-ordinator, David Bowden, the restoration work on Oakley Creek regularly receives much needed assistance from groups such as Conservation Volunteers NZ (CVNZ). These groups play an important role in helping us to maintain the newly planted areas along the creek.

David Bowden, Auckland City Parks Volunteer Co-ordinator (left) with CVNZ volunteers.



Photo: W. John

Visit the new cycle/walkway

A new cycle/walkway has been constructed through Underwood and Walmsley Reserves along Oakley Creek Te Auaunga - it was opened in August. This initiative, supported by the Mt Roskill Community Board, greatly improves access to the parks and provides safe commuting for families away from busy roads. Take a 'Sunday stroll' and enjoy this valuable open space.

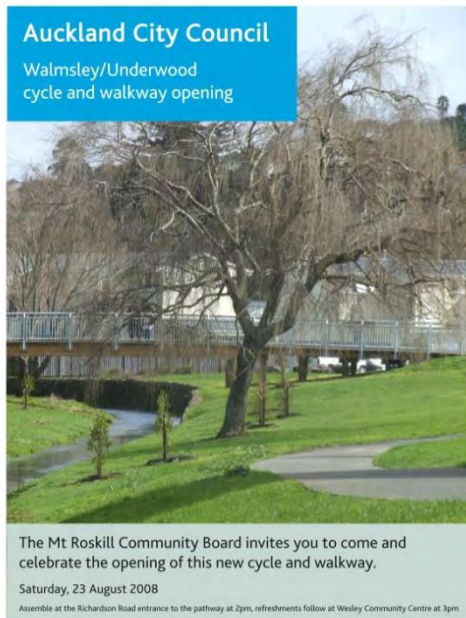


Photo: W John

Poster: Auckland City Council

Orienteers pound the paths at Te Auaunga Oakley Creek

On a lovely evening in January, the Auckland Orienteering Club met at Unitec as part of their Summer Series. It was very busy down at the stream as the orienteers searched for their route and raced to finish. Club details can be found at www.orienteeingauckland.org.nz

The search is on...

Photo: A. Stanton



Oakley Creek Wordfind Solution:

A	K	A	R	A	K	G	K	P	E	N	L
T	G	C	Z	I	A	M	J	G	W	E	Y
U	D	N	U	V	R	N	D	V	A	S	B
F	B	E	U	D	E	I	O	O	T	F	C
N	O	I	T	A	R	O	T	S	E	R	E
V	A	U	Q	B	U	D	X	M	R	L	E
B	O	A	R	D	W	A	L	K	F	G	L
T	A	W	I	T	T	W	E	T	A	T	E
R	R	D	F	L	A	X	L	T	L	H	A
Y	O	E	S	B	K	N	T	M	L	Z	F
F	A	E	E	J	P	P	C	U	Z	N	O
S	P	A	D	E	E	W	D	N	I	B	E

The hidden words were: bee, bindweed, boardwalk, bridge, duck, flax, karaka, leaf, restoration, spade, Te Auaunga, tree, tui, waterfall, weta.

What Made These Tracks?

Mice.

Next Newsletter

News, articles, contributions and comments for the next newsletter are welcome and can be sent to the editor at adrienne@stanton.net.nz.

New Members Welcome, Donations Too!

We would welcome more members (\$10.00) and/or donations towards the work we are doing to protect and restore our wonderful urban 'taonga' - Oakley Creek Te Auaunga. Contributions can be made directly into our bank account:

Friends of Oakley Creek - Kiwibank - A/c 38-9003-0978224-00 -

or cheques made out to Friends of Oakley Creek can be sent to 4/65 Woodward Road, Mt Albert, Auckland 1025.



Chairperson: Wendy John Treasurer: Alicia Warren Secretary: Norma de Langen
Committee members: Ross Ihaka, Dorothy Maddock Newsletter Editor: Adrienne Stanton

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