

Chairperson's Annual Report 2013

Tena koutou katoa.

2012-2013 has been another busy and productive year, with lots happening, and the project growing from strength to strength. Continued funding from the Ministry for the Environment, the World Wildlife Fund for Nature and the ASB Community Trust has been crucial for ensuring the sustainability of the project.

In the 2012 planting season 5620 plants went into the ground. This brings us to an overall total of plants along Oakley Creek since the project started in late 2004 to 46,885. Plantings were undertaken on our regular monthly Sundays, with the support of the local community; as well as other plantings with participation of a number of community organisations and educational institutions from the wider community including:

- Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre
- Gladstone Primary School
- Mt Roskill Intermediate
- Collectively Kids Early Childhood Centre
- St Judes Scouts
- Auckland A Rocha & Kodesh Christian Community
- Conservation Volunteers – Local & International Teams
- Open Polytechnic
- Cadburys
- St Peters College
- BNZ
- Chorus
- Open Polytechnic
- And more

And, it was great to be involved in the first planting on the Wairaka Stream, in Unitec, as part of the wider vision of restoring this key tributary of Oakley Creek.

We continued to hold regular, monthly working bees over the summer months, and organised another successful community clean-up, in conjunction with Auckland Council – an activity that always attracts lots of people.

We are now into the fifth year of our monitoring and pest control programme, with rat and possum numbers well down – but there is much work to do to ensure they numbers stay down, and reduce the mice and hedgehog populations. Alicia Warren guided us through a review of the rodent and possum control to enable us to improve on and maximise the effectiveness of our efforts. 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.

And, monitoring, by the Well Connected Alliance, of the lizards in the Lizard Management Area resulted in us seeing a baby Copper Skink, which was exciting.

This year saw the start of a new 'adventure', and something we would be keen to see happening – inanga spawning on Oakley Creek. [Our guest speaker will talk further about this.]

We continue to work alongside Wai Care to educate school students and the community on the importance of protecting our stream; and welcome the added value they bring, particularly for young people who contribute to the restoration of the creek – including Gladstone Primary School students and Collectively Kids Early Childhood Education Centre children. The Oakley Creek Wai Care groups continue to carry out regular monitoring of the water quality and invertebrate populations. 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 at the Unitec Bridge.

We continue to grow eco-sourced native plants in our nursery, for planting along the creek, thanks to the efforts of the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre team, Mt Roskill Intermediate science students, Conservation Volunteers and long-time member, Dorothy Maddock. And, we acknowledge the work that Dorothy is doing to maintain an area in Alan Wood Reserve.

We organised two special events last year – *Welcome Back Shining Cuckoo*, thanks to Kennedy Warne and his band of 'merry musicians'; and the photographic event – *Capture the Creek*. A special thanks to Adrienne Stanton, for all the great work she did to make these events happen, and to Heather for the amazing Grey Warbler nest she made for the event.

We have continued to collaborate with the different contractors including – Te Ngahere, Envirotech, City Parks and consultants Morphem Environmental, 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, again, we had Corrections Department teams working one day a week over the summer months, to help keep the weeds at bay.

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 annual Wai Care Expo. We organised another successful guided tour of the creek in Auckland City's Heritage Festival in September 2012, and two guided walks in the summer, as part of the EcoMatters EcoWest Festival earlier this year.

With regards to the State Highway 20 / Waterview Connection we continue to be involved in the Community Liaison Group and are involved in ongoing consultation on various aspects of the project. [Heather will report on this in more detail.] And, with the upgrade of State Highway 16, along the western causeway, we are involved in the CLG for this project, to a lesser degree, as well.

Further to funding from the MfE, WWF and ASB, we received funding from the

Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS), Environmental Resources Management (ERM), the Lion Foundation and Lottery Grants. My thanks to Helen Mellsop for all of the wonderful work she has put into fundraising.

Funding, resourcing and support also 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. And, again with funding from the Albert Eden Local Board, work has continued weed in the 'Remnant Mahoe Rock Forest'. And, we will be carrying out our first 'rock forest' planting on 7th July. [See brief report from Te Ngahere, at bottom of this report.]

And, the Puketapapa Local Board is working hard to restore sections of the creek in their ward. This included the Molley Green Reserve wetland restoration project up near the headwaters of our catchment.

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, Unitec and the Auckland Tree Council; 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 and Open Polytechnic; and into supporting students – undertaking a variety of assignments and research projects.

We submitted on the Auckland Council Unitary Plan, the Resource Management Amendment Act, the Waterview Precinct Plan and the Powell Street Development.

So, all in all, 2012-2013 has been another busy and productive year on the creek.

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
- John Dwyer, John Maskell, Ron Lang, Jane Shand and Alicia Warren – for their continued contribution to the monitoring and pest control
- Kath Read, our local Wai Care co-ordinator
- 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, and the 'scouts' for continuing to restore a section of the creek adjacent to their 'den'
- Te Ngahere for their work on site preparation and weed control, and for contributing to yet another planting
- Unitec – for the nursery space and for sponsoring the port-a-loo for the Corrections Teams over the summer months
- 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, David Smith, for the great work they do on removing some of our nastier weeds
- Bruce Edwards, Auckland Council, for organising tree removal and extra weed control

- Brent Druskovich, our 'resident archaeologist'
- The Well Connected Alliance – for plants, and we are working with them to plan for planting an extensive area along the creek in Waterview Glades, over the next few years.
- Some of our key regular volunteers – including Margaret McConnell, Toby Ross – who has moved on to Massey University (after two years of volunteering on a weekly basis), John Stevenson, Hidea & Yuri Motodane; 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, Heather Docherty, Helen Mellsop, Ross Ihaka, Nigel Mather 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.

Wendy John
Chairperson
17.6.2013
