



Contributing to Predator Free New Zealand: Rodent control

The Lizard Management Area is the habitat established below Unitec to receive the copper skins which were translocated from the SH20 extension works in Alan Wood Reserve. In order to protect this habitat, rodent control has been regularly undertaken by Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga volunteers, with bait provided by the Well Connected Alliance for the first three years. The amount of bait taken each season has been recorded and this provides an indication of the relative size of the rodent population in this area through time, as illustrated.

Two trends have been observed: the bait take is highest in autumn and the amount of bait taken each autumn is increasing each year. Note that the type of bait used has varied through time, with differing brands of both 1st and 2nd generation toxins. Details are available on request.

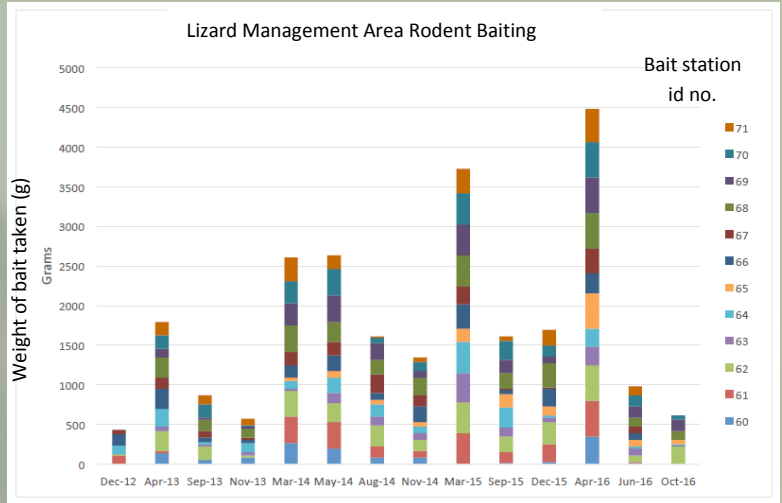
In a separate programme, volunteers also undertake rodent control more widely along the Oakley Creek Walkway, from Harbutt Reserve downstream.

Rat species info needed

At the recent NZ Ecological Society Conference, John Innes, Landcare Research Manaaki Whenua scientist, has asked for more data to be recorded by trappers about which species of rat has been caught. This information is needed to learn more about their population dynamics in different habitats, under differing predator and trapping pressures. The differences between the two European species are summarised as follows:

Ship rat <i>Rattus rattus</i>	Norway rat <i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
- tail longer than the body	- tail is thick and shorter than the body
- big ears, which can cover eye if bent forward	- small ears
- small rat, around 140 g	- big rat, may be > 420 g
- nocturnal	- diurnal
- climb well, arboreal	- like water
- go anywhere	- prefer runways to follow
- like peanut butter bait	- may prefer protein baits

Everyone can help by entering any trapped rat species data from their garden as observations at naturewatch.org.nz/.



The rodent control team keep careful records of bait quantities taken from the bait stations.

Photos: W. John



Rodent monitoring teams set out tracking cards in tunnels with peanut butter lures, leave them overnight, then retrieve them for checking to see whose footprints may be present.

Did you know?

... that Norway rats can dive down 1.5 m to feast on native freshwater mussels?



Dates for your diary

Bring your family and friends and spread the word about:

Fridays, 9.00 – 12.00 am: Summertime Weeding Sessions.
Meet at the Unitec plant nursery.

Sunday 5th Feb, 10.00 – 12 am: Community Working Bee,
caring for our native plantings.

Sunday 5th Mar, 10.00 – 12 am: Annual Clean the Stream,
removing rubbish from Oakley Creek streambanks and waterway.

Early March: Guided Invertebrate Walk with Grace Hall and David Court - date to be confirmed soon.

See www.oakleycreek.org.nz or contact Wendy John, email: info@oakleycreek.org.nz or phone: 815 3101 or 027 232 6454.

Underwood Walmsley project has begun

Due for completion in May 2019, a major stormwater project, which includes re-naturalising Oakley Creek Te Auaunga Awa through Underwood and Walmsley Reserves, has now begun.



The following is a summary from the project:

The concrete channel will be removed to create a more natural path for the stream to flow through the reserves along with wetland areas. This will enhance water quality and improve eco-systems.

Te Auaunga Awa project includes the following improvements to the Walmsley and Underwood Reserves:

- flood mitigation works and naturalisation of Te Auaunga Awa (stream), including increasing its length from 1.3km to 1.5km
- two new pedestrian bridges, new cycle ways and footpaths (including a bridge to Owairaka Park)
- play areas and beginners BMX track
- education zone (including outdoor classrooms and a community fale)
- native tree planting and a fruit tree orchard
- art integration.

In addition to a number of physical improvements to the stream and reserves, the project is delivering a number of social benefits



*A pukeko leads its chicks along the Oakley Creek streambank.
Photo: W. John*

Committee news

We would like to welcome our new treasurer, Sarah Woodfield. Sarah has helped with native restoration for several years with the Haven and Cradock St Sustainable Neighbourhood, and A rocha. Thanks Sarah! And we would like to thank again out-going Treasurer, Jane - all the very best from us.

Newsletter editor needed - for the next edition onwards, we need someone to put together our newsletter. Please contact Wendy if you would like to volunteer in this way. Training and help with content is available, if wanted. Newsletter editing can make a useful addition to your resumé and keeps your brain active 😊

Correction: Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS) Te Tahua Mā Ngā Whakahaere i Ngā Hapori

In the last issue, COGS was mistakenly attributed to Auckland Council - it is in fact a funding facility administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua. COGS provides grants to non-profit community organisations delivering community-based social services. The grants support organisation running costs, projects and events. Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga greatly appreciates the support provided by these grants.

for the Wesley community including:

- a native plant nursery social enterprise to provide native plants for the project, along with learning, work readiness and employment opportunities for the local community.
- youth employment initiative, supporting local young people to complete a certificate in construction multi-skills at Unitec and Global Lighthouse are providing mentoring. It is anticipated that a number of these young people will then complete apprenticeships as part of the project's construction phase.

Prior to the project commencing, Dorothy Maddock and Wendy John measured baseline water quality data in Underwood Reserve. While scientists will have undertaken monitoring, we felt it was important to do it from a community perspective, so that this can be continued in the future, hopefully by one of the local schools, to observe changes to the water quality and stream life, once the project has been completed, with the addition of approximately 120,000 native plants to the area.

Weed watch ...



Tradescantia



Climbing asparagus



Sun, rain ... weeds!

Please help to keep these 'nasties' out of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga and out of your garden - to prevent their further spread. If you see any of these weeds when you are visiting the stream, take a moment to pull them out - every little bit of weeding will help.

Photos: Moth plant seed, W. John; others, A. Stanton



Blue morning glory



Bindweed, 'convulvulus'



Woolly nightshade

Photos: below W. John; remainder, A. Stanton



Moth plant

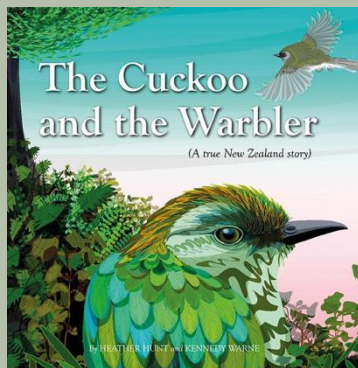


Eric Armishaw Boardwalk

It is good news that in the Oakley Creek Walkway's neighbouring park across the interchange, Eric Armishaw Reserve, a new boardwalk, shared path and native plantings have been completed.

A riroriro grey warbler's nest in Eric Armishaw Reserve. Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga member, Kennedy Warne refers to this as the 'Picasso or Lady Gaga of nest building' - amazing, and so cosy.

Photo: W. John



pottonandburton/the-cuckoo-and-the-warbler

thechildrensbookshop-cuckoo-and-the-warbler

nzbirdsonline/shining-cuckoo/song

This story, by Heather Hume and Kennedy Warne, about the pihiwharau and the riroriro was brought to life with the recent launch at the Dorothy Butler Bookshop. The book was, partially, inspired by the Welcome Back Shining Cuckoo celebration on Oakley Creek Te Auaunga back in 2012, and the launch was timed to coincide with the return of the pihiwharau shining cuckoo, from across the sea to Aotearoa. And, the pihiwharau is now back on the creek - so listen out for it. If you are not familiar with the sound here's a link (left) - and click on the sounds on the right hand side of the page.

Archaeological sites around the waterfall

With Oakley Creek being an official significant archaeological site, we are required to have an archaeologist assess each of our proposed planting sites prior to planting each year.

Depending on the sites, this may result in the archaeologist needing to be on site for particular plantings. This was the case for the planting on the east side of the creek, just above the waterfall. So, archaeologist, Brent Druskovich, joined us on the day, to monitor the work, educate volunteers on the archaeology of the area, and about the sorts of things to look out for when planting. He also lent a helping hand with the planting.



Right: Archaeologist, Brent Druskovich. Photo: W. John

Plates 15 and 16, Figure 5: from Oakley Creek Management Plan: Appendix D (2009).

The other evidence of R11/2209 are the cuts in the bedrock above and below the falls. These include steps above and below the falls, posthole cuts across the top of the falls and a channel cut into the western side of the top of the falls to divert water around the side of the dam.



Plate 15. Steps on western bank below the waterfall.

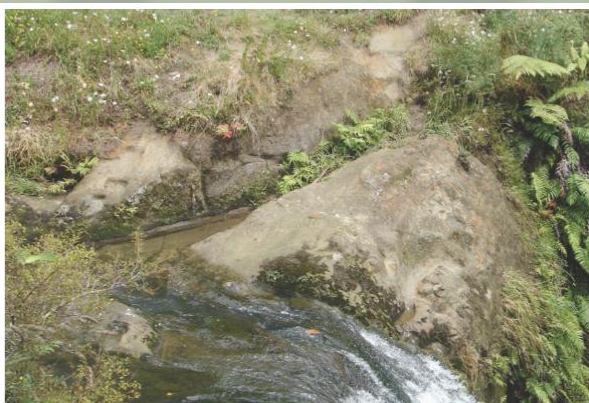


Plate 16. Western bank of waterfall with cut channel in bedrock visible with fern growing within it.



Figure 5. Archaeological site locations, in the vicinity of the waterfall and walkway access between Unitec and Great South Road.

Nursery help wanted

Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga grows around 2000 native plants each year, for planting along the stream. If you are interested in helping with this on a regular basis, please contact Wendy John - info@oakleycreek.org.nz or ph 027 232 6454.

Illegal fishing evidence

Did you know that fishing is illegal in our urban streams? Just recently, two nets, of different types, were seen on the creek. One was down in the tidal reaches of the creek, while the other one was in the lower Walkway area. If you spot a net in any urban stream, please contact Auckland Council, ph 301 0101.

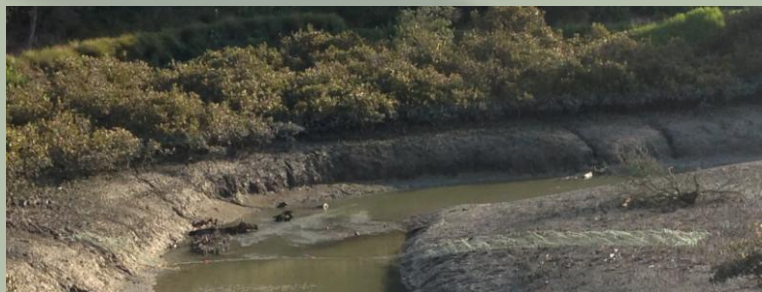


Photo: W. John

Have you read?

In *Three Cities: Seeking Hope in the Anthropocene*, (a BWB Text - short books on big subjects from NZ writers), Rod Oram describes the state of play in Beijing, London and Chicago and interviews their leading thinkers, because 'if ten billion people are going to live well on this planet in 2050, we have to fundamentally change the way we do things'.

Lower biodiversity means less productivity in forests

A recent paper, published in *Science*, describes a [Global Forest Biodiversity Initiative \(GFBI\)](#) study, which has found that continued biodiversity loss would accelerate a decline in forest productivity worldwide. Field-based forest inventory data covering more than 30 million trees of 8,737 species from 777,126 permanent sample plots spanning the world's forest types across 44 countries, including New Zealand, were analysed. It was found that when the number of tree species increases, so does the amount of wood that the forest produces.

The researchers have calculated that, globally, biodiversity maintains an estimated USD\$500 billion per year of forest productivity. Although only representing a small percentage of the total value of biodiversity, this value is more than double the estimated cost of effectively protecting and managing all terrestrial ecosystems of global conservation importance. See [landcareresearch/new-zealand-scientist-dr-susan-wiser-contributes-to-global-study](#) for more details.



Castor oil plant *Ricinus communis* - poisonous and a pest ...

Photo: A. Stanton

Community recycling planned

A new Central Community Recycling Centre, where the community will be able to repair and make over broken items, is in the early stages of design and development for a site in Great North Rd. If you are interested in contributing to this process, contact centralcrc@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

Resource Management Act (RMA) Assessment

[Evaluating the Environmental Outcomes of the RMA](#) is a report, launched in September, which arose from a partnership between the Environmental Defence Society and Infrastructure New Zealand, Employers and Manufacturers Association (Northern) and the Property Council. The report brought together existing and original data and concludes that the RMA was not delivering for the environment in many areas, largely as a result of weak implementation.

Waterview Shared Path news

- Work on the Soljak Place Bridge was delayed for a while, by workers having encountered a 5m deep boulder field at the site.

- A boardwalk is to be constructed between Harbutt and Phyllis Reserves as part of the shared path at this location and a retaining wall will also be built.



Albert Eden Local Board member Margi Watson and project landscape architect, Al Rigby, with the colour palette for the three bridges along the route. The three colours at the top were chosen, after much deliberation by representatives from iwi and the Waterview Connection Community Liaison Group. Photos: W. John

- Works are well underway on the Alford Street Bridge, with the installation of the two piers for the new bridge and first cross beams.



This early construction stage photo shows a large structure in the foreground (east side of the creek) which is to prevent an old slip from moving and destabilising the eastern pier, in the future.

[deepsouthchallenge](#) [te-hiku-o-te-ika-climate-challenge](#)

[lucky dip](#)

[ALAN](#)

[grow wild UK](#)

[citizen science in USA](#)

[lucky dip](#)

[heron tattoos?!](#)

[whitebait connection](#)

[Auckland biodiversity](#)

Take a look ...

intriguing, inspiring internet
for summertime browsing ...

[Forest Bridge](#)

[Canopy Meg](#)

[seed based
restoration](#)

[Zip!](#)

[wild-things](#)

[Motu Manawa Pollen Is](#)

[BioBlitz Go!](#)

[citizen science in
Australia](#)

[Scotland = heather covered
glens and moors, yes?](#)

[celebrating
restoration success](#)

[lucky dip](#)

[lucky dip](#)

[Orca wow - scroll
down to video](#)

[waikawau-bay-
wetland](#)

Out and about ...

Photos: W. John, unless otherwise stated



Auckland Council undertook an **Oakley Creek Spatial Plan** site walk in September, with Margi Watson, Albert Eden Local Board, and Wendy John, Friends of Oakley Creek, to confirm future works. From left: Joby Barham (Auckland Council Parks Manager), Bruce Tupp (Auckland Council Project Manager), Margi Watson (Albert Eden Local Board), Jennifer Parlane (Auckland Council Landscape Architect), Glenda Fryer (Auckland Council Councillor) and Jessie Allpress (Auckland Council Senior Social Researcher).



A celebratory breakfast (left) was enjoyed after a dawn blessing by iwi for the **Te Auaunaga Awa: Underwood and Walmsley Reserves upgrade project**.

Dorothy Maddock and Wendy John carried out water monitoring in October in Underwood Reserve, to serve as a baseline community record of the state of the stream before the project began.



The Open Day and project launch at Walmsley Reserve, organised by **Roskill Together**, was a great event, bringing a wide range of people from the local community. We had a display there and Jagjeeta Kaur showed the tiny stream life from the nearby creek to visitors, while Paul Woodard (Afashionado) with his fresh water fish display, shared what should be there and perhaps may be in the future.

MU11 & MU12 ACSW Planting – Team in Action

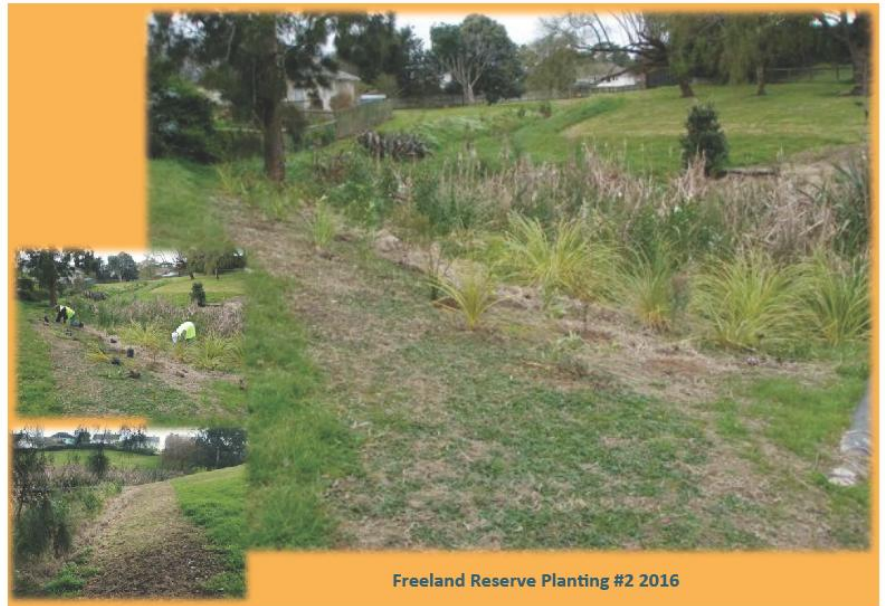


Ground conditions were ideal for the **community planting** (left) of both sides of the creek, up near the rail corridor. Thanks to the **Auckland Council Healthy Waters** (ex Stormwater) team for resourcing this planting, and the volunteers, including some of our Powell Street Sustainable Neighbourhood group, for a great effort of getting the plants in the ground.

Thanks go to the **Puketapapa Local Board** for supplying the plants to fill in the gap left from the original planting earlier in the year at **Freeland Reserve** (below), and regular volunteers Arthur Heighton and Margaret McConnell for helping with this planting.



Apslundh team gearing up for specimen tree planting in Harbutt Reserve.



Freeland Reserve Planting #2 2016



Mt Albert St Jude's Scouts harvested some of the weed bamboo by the creek near Powell St to use for their gateway arch at their recent national Jamboree camp, held near Blenheim, and other projects.





BNZ volunteers planted the floodplain up from Harbutt Reserve on their 'Closed for Good' day - many thanks for a great effort and continuing to support our project.



MIT Horticultural students (left) completed the infill planting in the lower creek.

This CVNZ and AUT team (right) planted the floodplain above the waterfall with Brent Druskovich - see earlier article above.



Above: This amazing mural was done by the children of **Owairaka Primary School** (in collaboration with the Well Connected Alliance) a number of years back, and has been in place on one of the noise walls along Hendon Avenue.



Left: Kowhai flowers in Harbutt Reserve.



The Conservation Volunteers NZ local team volunteered in the nursery, in September, weeding and potting on seedlings.





A Rocha & Cradock Street Sustainable Neighbourhood Working Bee

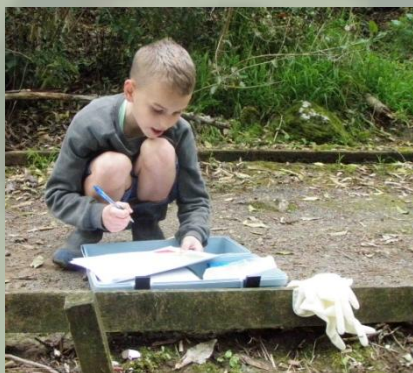
Owairaka Primary School students and staff (below) enjoyed a spring walk along the creek.



Local volunteer, **Bruce Henry**, who spends a good amount of time hauling rubbish out of the creek (when he's not helping with the trapping) found this bicycle. It has, obviously, been 'lost' for quite some time ... Thanks for your ongoing, great work, Bruce!



Unitec lend a helping hand to clean up the creek – with support from Sustainable Coastlines



Budding young scientists **Serge** and friend **Lucy** helped with the regular water monitoring at Cradock Street Bridge.



Spotty stonefly larvae - which are not often seen at the creek.



CVNZ local team completed the mulching in Waterview Glades - thanks to the Well Connected Alliance for providing the mulch



Left: Kawakawa female inflorescence.



Right: A fantail's nest.



The final **Community Planting** of the year took place in Waterview Glades with another 500 native plants going into the ground. Thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who leant a hand.



Right: Leaf veined slug, grazing over some lichen. (It is not really as big as Sinead @ !)



Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga committee Secretary and regular volunteer, **Sinead Spedding** (right) helped with the annual weta monitoring.



With the warmer weather having arrived, we are now holding weekly summer **weeding sessions** on Friday mornings, to ensure the young native plants have a good chance of flourishing.

Left: David, Yoshi, Margaret, Arthur and Chloe have been volunteering in these regular sessions.



'Wrapping Up' - after the **Community Working Bee** in Harbutt Reserve (right).



The **Unitec Nga Kaitiaki roopu** is a guardian group that was established to protect Te Wai Unuroa a Wairaka (the Wairaka Spring), Wairaka Stream, the pa harakeke and the environment around campus and Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga is a member. The roopu recently held an open day for the Unitec staff. This included a display showing the 'before & after' planting of the puna, and Wendy John took a small group up along the stream to talk about the ecology and biodiversity (above). Other activities on the day included a presentation on the mythology, early history and mana whenua connections to the area, followed by a hikoi from the wharenui up to the spring, as well as activities around the harakeke and weaving.



Toe toe flower...



Powell Street Esplanade Reserve Picnic Area 2017

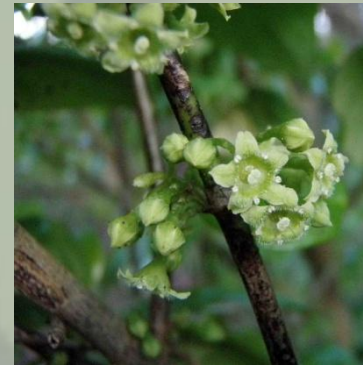


Above: *Paesia scaberula*, lace fern, ring fern, or scented fern, recently seen growing on the creek, up along the rail corridor.

Paesia: After the Portuguese Duke fernando Dias Paes lele, commander in South America in the 17th Century *scaberula*: a little roughened; from the Latin *scaber*, leaves (NZ Plant Conservation Network).



The wind weeded another large willow during the recent storm. Apparently, it made quite a noise and woke the neighbours. But, fortunately, it did not reach their house on the other side of the creek and did not fall on any young native plants.



Hangehange flowers.

Thank you to our sponsors



We gratefully acknowledge the support of Foundation North, The Trusts Community Foundation, The Lion Foundation and Auckland Council, Albert-Eden, Puketapapa and Whau Local Boards and the Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS).

New Members Welcome, Donations Too!

We 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. Donations over \$5.00 are tax deductible.

Contributions and gift plant orders can be made directly: 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.

Next Newsletter: Contributions and comments for the next newsletter are welcome - email info@oakleycreek.org.nz

Chairperson: Wendy John Treasurer: Sarah Woodfield Secretary: Sinead Spedding
Committee: Leslie Haines, Adrienne Stanton, John Stevenson.

Volunteers needed - if you share our passion for the creek, we are looking for new committee members.

Newsletter Editor: Adrienne Stanton



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