



Friends of Oakley Creek

Te Auaunga

November Update, 2015

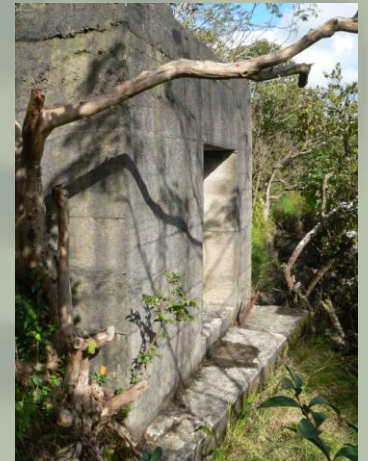
Vol. 8, Issues 3 and 4

Concrete conundrum at the Oakley Creek estuary



Friends of Oakley Creek volunteer, David Smith, recently noticed a concrete structure, which can just be seen poking through the mangroves, on the right bank of Oakley Creek at Waterview. Curious as to what it might be, we asked Peter McCurdy, who had been rowing and paddling past it for 30 years from his home at the site of the Star Mills flour mill. He had always believed it to have been associated with the quarries on Oakley Creek, possibly being an explosives store. Peter referred the question on to archaeologist Rod Clough, with whom he had discussed the building some years ago. Rod provided a report prepared by Clough and Associates, heritage consultants, who had examined the area as part of their Waterview Connection investigations for the NZTA.

Clough and Associates consider the building to have been associated with quarrying, and possibly related to the loading of material onto barges. A quarry, providing stone for roading and kerbing on the North Shore and in West Auckland, was operated in the area by Waitemata County Council, intermittently, from around 1918 to 1930 - this quarry was to the west of an older quarry which provided basalt for a number of uses, probably including the seawalls at the flour mill and, possibly, the mill dam.



The concrete structure probably dates from the mid 1920s, when it is known that new equipment was installed at the quarry: crushers (1924), a new power plant (1924) and electric transmission line and plant (1925). Excavation around the structure by the Clough and Associates team found that there was some sort of generator or engine immediately adjacent to it, along with other concrete floors, possible rail alignments and a jetty, all consistent with the loading of barges on the creek.

Wendy in Wonderland ...

Photos: D. Smith

Friends of Oakley Creek Chairperson and Project Co-ordinator, Wendy John, and Albert Eden Local Board member, Margi Watson, were treated to a tour of the Waterview Connection in August. This was a rare opportunity, at this stage, to travel under Oakley Creek, and to experience the workings of Alice, the tunnel-boring machine. Wendy said "This was an amazing experience - to see the complexity and accuracy required for bringing all of the different aspects of the project together, to ensure a successful outcome. Being in the tunnel was like being in another world. And, to think that the motorway was, originally, proposed to go above ground - taking out most of our valuable green space. An amazing achievement, with lots of hard work, by the community, over a number of years."

Albert Eden Local Board member, Margi Watson and Wendy John, glowing in the dark, under Oakley Creek. Photo: Well Connected Alliance



Dates for your diary

Bring your family and friends - and spread the word about our regular sessions on the first Sunday of each month:

Sunday, 6th December, 10.00am: Community Working Bee
Meet at Harbutt Reserve, upstream from the Cradock Street Bridge, on the floodplain area. Wear sturdy footwear.

Sunday, 13th December, 12.00 noon: End of Year Picnic, Harbutt Reserve. Bring a plate of festive food to share and help celebrate the end of another year of wonderful work to restore Oakley Creek Te Auaunga.

Sunday, 7th February, 10.00am: Community Working bee

Sunday, 6th March, 10.00am: Community Creek clean-up

Sunday, 3rd April, 10.00am: Community Working bee

Sunday, 3rd April, 12.30pm: Anniversary celebration
Please join us for the Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga 10th Anniversary celebration - picnic lunch, jazz trio and special commemorative tree planting, supported by Albert Eden Local Board.

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



This wonderful CVNZ team posed, damply, by the waterfall after a hard and wet and somewhat muddy day's work, laying out plants for the September community planting. The waterfall was much shorter, wider and noisier than usual, with the stream in full flood. Spot the park bench!

Photo: W. John

BNZ - Closed for Good



An enthusiastic team from the BNZ, on their annual Closed for Good day, joined us on Oakley Creek again this year. They did an amazing job of cutting and stacking the dead branches in one of the Remnant Mahoe Rock Forest areas. As well as providing habitat refuges for insects and lizards, this will make the area a much safer and easier one in which to work when the time comes for site preparation and planting, in 2016. Another great effort - thanks BNZ.

Photo: W. John

Opportunity offered

Friends of Oakley Creek offers an opportunity for community, business and educational groups to contribute to the protection and enhancement of our special urban oasis. If you belong to or know of a group or organisation that would like to spend a day or a few hours of fun and team building, while, at the same time, helping to restore our unique native biodiversity, please contact Wendy ph 027 232 6454 or email info@oakleycreek.org.nz

Thank you for the funding

Funding grants for Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga have recently been approved by **Foundation North** (ASB Community Trust) and the **Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS)**. The continued support from these organisations is invaluable in ensuring the success of our

SH20 / SH16 update

Waterview Shared Path

Ground investigative work is well underway for the proposed Shared Path through our catchment. This is part of the mitigation package for the SH20 Waterview Connection. It will connect the SH16 cycleway, through Unitec, Phyllis and Harbutt Reserves, then with a bridge over the rail corridor by Pak'n Save, to the new shared path through Alan Wood Reserve and on to Mt Roskill. Watch this space.



Waterview Glades planting

The contractors have recently completed the tree removal and planting along the valley in Waterview Glades. This work has been funded by the Well Connected Alliance, to further support the restoration work that we (the community) are doing on the creek. Thanks, heaps, to the WCA for their continued support. (See *Out and About ...*, below, for photos of the new plantings.)

Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre Garden Group - 10 years at Oakley Creek

Lead by horticultural therapist, Karen Mann, the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre Garden Group has been assisting with the restoration of Oakley Creek for 10 years! The group's efforts have included plant propagation, planting, plant releasing / weeding and water quality monitoring (the latter on the Wairaka Stream, just up from its convergence with Oakley Creek). The main work area, the Wairaka Wetland, was first planted in 2005-2006 and is one of our flagship sites. Thanks, Karen and the various members of the group over the years, for your amazing support.

Photos: W. John



Monitoring and pest control

Photos: W. John (unless stated otherwise)



Our volunteers have been very busy again, undertaking many monitoring and pest control activities. **Sinead Spedding** and **Margaret McConnell** have helped check all of the orange distance markers (triangles) along the creek, to ensure that all the monitoring and control stations can be easily located.

Left: The Rodent Monitoring Team (top) and Rodent Control Crew (below), all ready

Below: When the rats are away, the mice do play. This tracking card, from the most recent monitoring, shows many mouse footprints.

Photo: J. Stevenson



The **Mt Albert St Jude's Venturers** had an excellent turnout for their recent trapping training session, which was lead by ex Venturer and Rover **Stuart Phillips**. The newest Venturers had lots to learn, while everyone else had a valuable refresher. Necessary trap maintenance along their west bank trapline was also carried out, as part of the training.

The Venturers have now changed to checking their traps on a fortnightly basis. On the alternate weeks, we have a new volunteer helping on the pest control team, **Bruce Henry**. Bruce lives locally, in Waterview, and has been doing an amazing job of removing rubbish from the creek - some very old, and some not-so-old, and helping out with other monitoring and pest control tasks. Welcome to the wider Oakley Creek community, Bruce.

One of our **Cradock Street Sustainable Neighbourhood** families has started trapping on their own land near the creek, and caught a possum within the first week.



Jane Shand trained new trapping volunteer, Bruce Henry. On checking the traps set by the Venturers, they found that one possum and one rat had been caught.



Above: Serge, trap and possum. Well done, Guy, Rachel, Serge and Sunny!



The family has also taken over the water monitoring at the Cradock St Bridge site. It's wonderful to see budding young scientists, Sunny and Serge, involved.

Water monitoring explained: 3. Turbidity

Water turbidity is measured in a water clarity tube. Urbanised Auckland stream turbidity ranges between 4 - 85 NTU (nephelometric turbidity units), which equates to clarity tube readings of less than 10cm through to 70cm respectively. Catchments where earthworks are occurring can have turbidity values up to 550 NTU.

Effects of murky water:

- aquatic animals suffer from blocked gills
- habitats are silted up making them unsuitable for many animals
- fish egg hatching and larval development is interfered with
- water heats up because murky water absorbs more sunlight
- reduced light means that less photosynthesis occurs in plants, so less oxygen is produced
- animals that rely on vision to catch prey are less successful (and hungry).

Wai Care Book 3 The Field Manual 2003

Take a look ...

... at the new **Fish Fact Sheets** developed by NZ Landcare Trust. These information guides, including versions in Te Reo, cover a range of aspects. *Native fish in the city* and *Fixing your stream edges* are two of the titles with particular relevance to our Oakley Creek Te Auaunga restoration project. The fact sheets can be downloaded from <http://www.landcare.org.nz/Regional-Focus/Hamilton-Office/Hooked-On-Native-Fish/Fish-Fact-Sheets1>

Submissions sought on pest management planning

Auckland Council is seeking input on the Auckland Regional Pest Management Plan Review, working towards the formation of a 10 year plan. See <http://shapeauckland.co.nz/consultations/pest-management-in-auckland/>

Oakley Creek Te Auaunga Ecological Restoration Plan 2015-2025 3. Site Description 3.2 Fauna 3.2.1 Birds

Friends of Oakley Creek has carried out annual bird monitoring since 2008, as part of the Landcare national garden bird survey, at ten sites along the creek. A wide range of exotic and native species have been recorded during the survey - a total of 34 species.

Tui, fantail and grey warbler are now frequently seen along Oakley Creek. Kereru records have increased overall since 2010 and are now not an uncommon sight. Welcome swallow, harrier hawk, shags, kingfisher and white-faced heron are all relatively regular visitors. Pukeko, paradise shellduck and silvereye are also present.

Shining cuckoo (which is a summer migrant) is heard regularly on the creek during the summer months, and morepork / ruru (nocturnal owl) is heard regularly, in the evenings. No bellbirds have been recorded, but it is hoped that they may in the future, visit urban areas of Auckland, such as Oakley Creek, from the Hauraki Gulf Islands

A range of exotic bird species, associated with suburban gardens and parks, are seen along Oakley Creek, including blackbird, chaffinch, starling, house sparrow, common myna, song thrush, spotted dove, yellowhammer, greenfinch and goldfinch. Australian naturalised species include magpie and spur-winged plover, with the introduced eastern rosella also common.

Te Ngahere July 2015, on behalf of Auckland Council



Spring rains on September 1st caused flooding (and high turbidity!) at 'Oakley River'. The photo immediately above shows the view looking across to Management Unit 4A, while that below shows the same view, as it usually looks ...

Photos: W. John



Wildlife encounters



Above, from left: A pheasant's nest; a baby duckling; and, a baby song thrush, facing a big scary world.
Below: A baby inanga, seen by the Buchanan Rehabilitation Garden Group during their water monitoring.

Photos: top left, J. Stevenson; remainder, W. John

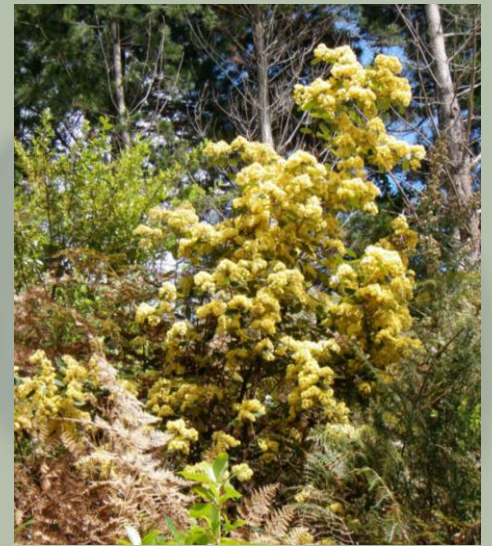


Spring growth at the creek

Right: Kumerahou in flower.

Below left and centre: These parataniwha, planted in 2014, are growing well and flowering.

Below right: Natural regeneration in action - a thicket of self-established mahoe seedlings.



Left: Fresh, new Carex geminata flower spikes.



Right: Zak, who is a regular visitor to the creek, loves playing and 'helping out'.

Photos: W. John



Take a look ...

If you are pottering about along the Oakley Creek Te Auaunga estuary and spot a crab, to identify it, take a look at the new E-guide, *Coastal Crabs* produced by NIWA. There are also E-guides describing sponge, sea squirt and echinoderm species and the guides can all be found at <http://www.niwa.co.nz/coasts-and-oceans/marine-identification-guides-and-fact-sheets>.

Te Auaunga Oakley Creek timeline - 1st draft: contributions and corrections please

- > 30,000 years ago Auckland vegetation was lush kauri - broadleaf forest.
- The eruption of Owairaka Mt Albert blocked the valley below the Owairaka Primary School site.
- Lava from the eruption of Puketapapa Mt Roskill flowed south and east, blocking the head of the valley. A broad swamp lake formed near present day Mt Roskill Grammar, which then filled with sediment, including a wind blown Rotorua - Taupo pumice layer.
- Early Maori Dense forest grew on the young volcanic soils, among scattered basalt blocks.
- The Mataatua, having travelled from Hawaiki with the other tribes, visited the Waitemata in about 950 AD, before leaving to explore to the south and settle in Whakatane. Puhi, the canoe chief's younger brother, is said to have resented being told to live on the low ground at Whakatane to guard the harbour and waka. So he and his niece, Wairaka, travelled north again, returning to Te Auaunga (the swirling waters) to replenish their food supplies. Oral history further relates that Wairaka was thirsty and stamped her foot, causing a spring, Te Wai Unuroa A Wairaka, The Long Drinking Spring Waters of Wairaka, to appear. This spring became the source of the Wairaka Stream, which now flows through Unitec into Te Auaunga. Wairaka stayed in the area and Puhi journeyed on, further north.
- Midden sites and storage pits, along with karaka trees (cultivated for their edible berries), are present day evidence of Maori occupation. There were major habitation and waka landing sites at the mouth of the Creek, up until the 1860s. Maori used the adjacent Whau River for portage, but would have resided in safer and less exposed areas, such as Te Auaunga. Visits by Māori to Te Auaunga would have been seasonal - timed for the Matariki harvest. Pou (posts) would have been erected on the beach to proclaim the group's presence and their claim to the harvest, from the surrounding bush and shore. Waka would have been dragged upstream to be hidden in the bush. The basalt rocks found along the creek would have been used as hangi stones as, unlike river stones, they do not crack open with the heat. Koura, eels, weka, flax and raupo were harvested from the valley and the peat swamp was used to dye piupiu and other clothing materials.
- The area around present day Stoddard Rd was known as the Rakataura Wetland.
- Early Europeans The valley was used for raising ducks and geese, and the creek was used as a water source for cattle. Gum diggers prospected for many years after the bush was cleared.
- 1841 Governor Hobson made a compulsory purchase of 13,000 acres from Maori, including Mt Roskill and Mt Albert, paying approximately 4d. per acre. Some of this land was then sold on to farmers.
- 1845 A flax mill was established by entrepreneur Edwin Oakley. It was powered by a waterwheel, driven by water from the creek, taken from above the waterfall.
- 1854 The Auckland Council provincial engineer asked for tenders for the construction of a timber bridge over Oakley Creek.
- 1855 Edwin Oakley surveyed Oakley Creek for use as a potential drinking water source for Auckland City, but Western Springs was chosen instead.
- 1860s A flour miller, John Thomas, operated the Star Mill near the mouth of Oakley Creek (more detail to come.)
- 1860s - 70s Thistles and gorse became problem weeds in the Mt Albert area. The dense, fast growing thistles grew as tall as horses and blocked roads, while gorse spread from planted hedges. Residents were required to clear thistles on their property / road boundaries under the 1866 Thistle Act.
- 1863 - Lunatic Asylum at the Whau (later known as Auckland Lunatic Asylum, Avondale Lunatic Asylum, Avondale Hospital, Auckland Mental Health Hospital, Oakley Hospital and Carrington Psychiatric Hospital) was built on the Oakley Farm Estate, bordering Oakley Creek, partly using bricks produced on-site by John Thomas. Farming continued on the 200 acre estate (which had poor clay and light volcanic soil) with some patients helping with the labour. Fifty milch cows, many well-bred pigs (principally Berkshires and Yorkshires), a large stock of various breeds of poultry and vegetables from the farm supplied the hospital and provided significant revenue. Part of the land was developed into an experimental sewage farm, which was judged to be a great success.
- 1873 The Star Mill (John Thomas' flour mill) burnt down in January and was re-built later in the year.

1879	The Star Mill site was bought by bootmakers, Garrett Bros., and converted into a tannery, leading to greater settlement in the Waterview area.
Late 19 th Century	The Mt Albert area had strong smelling piggeries, an unsanitary slaughterhouse, Redshaw's boiling down works and Gittos and Sons' tannery, which discharged noxious effluent into Oakley Creek. Farms near the creek were fertilised with offal, refuse and human excrement (night soil). Typhoid, bubonic plague and scarlet fever cases were reported.
Early 20 th Century	Attempts at farming small dairy herds around the Mt Roskill swamp area were unsuccessful, with the land being overtaken by blackberry and gorse. Pukeko, ducks and tadpoles thrived. Market gardens were established around Frost Rd (formerly Rugby Rd) by Chinese gardeners. A number of working quarries were set up along the banks of the creek, in the vicinity of what are now Phyllis and Harbutt Reserves, to extract bluestone metal to form the roads which were opening up further north. Public health measures began to be implemented, with piggeries closed down in Mt Albert.
1900	Typhoid outbreak.
1903	The sale of water for £150 per year, from springs in the mental hospital grounds (feeding Wairaka Stream / Oakley Creek), was approved by the government.
1905	A coal-fired pumping station (now Carrington's Pumphouse café) was built to pump the Wairaka / Oakley springs water to a reservoir on Mt Albert, to supply the Mt Albert Borough.
1912	Quarry Road was renamed as Bollard Avenue. The Garrett Bros. tannery was demolished at the Star Mill site. However, the mill's seawalls and the tannery boiler remained.
1914	A sanitary depot was established in Pt Chevalier for the disposal of all night soil from Mt Albert, Mt Eden, Epsom and Eden Terrace. The depot was later moved to Morningside.
1918 - 30	Waitemata County Council operated a quarry on 7 acres of land on the east bank at the stream mouth.
1920s	The pool below the waterfall became popular for swimming.
1922	Typhoid outbreak. Wairaka / Oakley springs had become polluted by sewage and a chlorination plant, which had just been installed, was ineffective. The springs were abandoned and Mt Albert changed to the city supply.
1930s	The creek became essential for drainage from houses and industrial areas in Mt Roskill. Adjacent pasture flooded and was unuseable after heavy rain events. Auckland and Suburban Drainage Board employed 100 men to straighten and deepen the creek to prevent any further flooding. This was depression relief work and seen as providing skills training to the men, who had been unemployed.
1932	The Winstone Estate housing subdivision, Mt Roskill, was established, after the stream course was altered.
WWII	American personnel, based at the US Naval Hospital at Avondale, enjoyed swimming below the waterfall.
Post WWII	Some carpenters had to row dinghies to work on the Lower Wesley Estate housing subdivision on Stoddard Rd, (originally called Swamp Rd) because of the creek flooding. Flood water reached the floorboards of some of the new houses. Deep frosts and fog gave the area a reputation of "a cold hole". The creek was widened in the upper catchment from upper Richardson Rd downstream to Preston Ave, which lead to faster flows and more flooding around May Rd.
1948	Major flood event.
1950 -	Most industry along the lower reaches of the creek, including quarrying, had by now closed down. The quarries were used as Council refuse tips, then later covered and converted to sports fields.
1953	Major flood event. War Memorial Park (initially May Rd Memorial Park) was formed.

- 1954-5 Mt Roskill Borough Council initiated £30,000 of flood relief works between Richardson and Sandringham Rds. Willows were removed using dynamite. The stream bed was deepened by three feet with the removal of 3000 ft³ of clay. The creek banks were sheathed in 1230 ft of basalt, blasted from the lava flow west of Dominion Rd. Culverts under May, Mt Roskill, Martyn, Dominion and Winstone Rds were doubled in size to cope with the extra runoff from roads and houses. However, Dominion Rd continued to flood regularly.
- 1956 Keith Hay Park was established. It was named after Mt Roskill Mayor, Keith W. Hay.
- 1970s Flooding problems were critical, with boat rescues from O'Donnell Ave.
- 1972 Farming operations at Carrington Psychiatric Hospital stopped. Historic dry stone walls and fences remain. Evidence also remains of the extensive dumping of rubbish 'over the bank' by the hospital, including deposits of ash and half burnt carbonettes from the hospital furnaces.
- Early - mid 1980s The Oakley Creek Walkway was constructed downstream from Harbutt Reserve, under the Auckland Regional Authority Green City programme. This was largely as the result of individuals actively campaigning local government, including environmental lobbyist Beverley Joy Price (for whom there are two commemorative plaques, located on the Walkway).
- 1989 A diversion pipeline was built under Bollard Ave.
- Stop banks were built on the northern side of Keith Hay Park, to create an upper catchment floodplain over the peat fields, to store and release flood water more slowly.
- A twin culvert was excavated under Dominion Rd and the creek bed was sealed.
- 2004 Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga was established "to have Oakley Creek - Te Auaunga and its environs restored and protected as a natural ecosystem incorporating a range of wildlife habitats and recreational amenities for present and future generations".

References:

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- Scott, D. 2006. *In old Mt Albert*. Southern Cross Books.
- The Cyclopaedia Company. December 1900. *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Auckland Provincial District]: The Auckland Lunatic Asylum*. Retrieved from <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc02Cycl-t1-body1-d1-d21-d9.html> 6 November 2015.
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Weed Watch

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

Jasminum polyanthum, Oleaceae - jasmine



These jasmine vines are growing on a willow and amongst other weedy plants at Alan Wood Reserve, showing how densely and how high they can grow.



Jasmine

Jasminum polyanthum



www.weedbusters.org.nz

Family

Oleaceae (olive) family

Where is it originally from?

West China

What does it look like?

Perennial, evergreen, climbing, almost hairless, non-woody vine with very long, round, tough, stems that root at nodes. Smooth edged leaves are arranged in opposite pairs on stems, and are divided along the midvein into usually 7 leaflets with the terminal leaflet (up to 7 x 2.5 cm) the largest. Clustered, tube-like white flowers that are pink when in bud and very fragrant are produced from January to December, but glossy black berries (5-8 mm diameter) are rarely formed.



Are there any similar species?

J. azoricum, *J. officinale*, *Pandorea pandorana*, and *Trachelospermum jasminoides* are all similar. Alternatives: Try native clematis (*Clematis paniculata*) or akakiore (*Parsonsia heterophylla*) with their masses of white flowers, or star jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*) for white flowers and a lovely scent.



Why is it weedy?

Grows rapidly over forest floor, and into the subcanopy and canopy, forms dense, long-lived masses, stems layer profusely and runners spread long distances over tough sites under buildings, rocks, and so on. Highly shade-tolerant, can flower under full canopy, and tolerates drought, damp, wind, salt, differing soil types, and damage. Extremely hard to kill. It is spread mainly by fragments dumped into the edges of natural areas.



How does it spread?

Birds readily spread seed where it is produced. Most spread is from fragments dumped in greenwaste, and common sources are gardens, roadsides, vacant land, cemeteries, and bush tracks.

What damage does it do?

Smothers and kills all plants from ground level to medium to highly canopy, and prevents the establishment of native plant seedlings. Ingress into established forest is rapid via ground or canopy.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Open and intact forest and forest margins, coastline, cliffs, shrublands, and streamsides. Can invade cold-climate forest if there is dense canopy cover.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Stump swab (all year round): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/L) or Banvine (200ml/L) or Yates Woody Weedkiller (400ml/L). Add penetrant to all mixes. Dispose of all cut stems at a refuse transfer station, or burn or bury deeply.
2. Spray (regrowth): glyphosate (150ml/15L) + penetrant (knapsack) or 1L/100L + penetrant (handspraygun) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/10L) + penetrant (knapsack) or 40g/100L + penetrant (spraygun) or Banvine (120ml/L) or Yates Woody Weedkiller (24ml/L).

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Stumps resprout very quickly, cut stems root at nodes. Many plants appear not to produce seed, however once established jasmine is hard to kill and dispose of. Always dry and burn or deeply bury all cut material.



At Harbutt Reserve, jasmine threatens to smother native plants. It is difficult to spot until it flowers in spring. Photos: A. Stanton



Upstream, above Harbutt Reserve, flows a lovely stretch of the creek.
Photo: W. John



What on earth?



Take a guess, then, to see if you are correct, check the solution at the end of the newsletter.

Photos: left and centre, W. John; right, A. Stanton

Take a look ...

Tutsan, *Hypericum androsaemum*, a problem weed at Oakley Creek and elsewhere, has a self-introduced partial biocontrol agent, the host specific rust *Melampsora hypericum*. Unfortunately, this rust provides effective control only in the South Island - Hugh Gourley, Landcare Research, has reported that there appear to be two types of tutsan and two types of rust, divided by the Cook Strait.

As part of the plant pathology study, Landcare Research scientists have examined the rust microscopically and made images available on their Systematics Collection Data website, <https://scd.landcareresearch.co.nz/Search>, as well as through www.digitalnz.org. Remarkably, one of these images (right) has been selected for use in the annual [GIF IT UP](#) competition, and been featured in the [Washington Post](#) - scroll the webpage down to see it.

Back to the more important issue of tutsan control, it is good to know that Landcare Research is currently investigating a leaf-feeding beetle and a fruit, leaf and stem-feeding moth, both from Georgia, as potential additional biocontrol agents.



Left: Tutsan rust *Melampsora hypericum urediniospores*.

Photo: Landcare Research

Below: Tutsan, growing on the bank at Oakley Creek.

Photo: A. Stanton





In mid-September, a dawn blessing was given for the **Waterview Shared Path**, which was attended by Wendy John, Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga (far left).

Blechnum parrisiae spring growth.

Powell St Sustainable Neighbourhood Group has been very busy on both sides of the creek, near their properties. Thanks to everyone!



The planting for the restoration on the south bank was sponsored by **Auckland Council Stormwater** - thank you. Plants for the north side were supplied by Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga.



Arthur, Simon and Jack, from the **CVNZ Local Team**, helped out with some serious weed clearing at the Wairaka Wetland, then cut and stacked felled and fallen branches in the privet forest - more wildlife habitat!



Above: Regular Friends of Oakley Creek volunteers, Margaret (left) and Sinead (right), assisted at the Powell St esplanade working bee. Meeting Margaret on the 'bridge' was Powell St Sustainable Neighbourhood member, Michael Adam.



Since 2009, Friends of Oakley Creek has been working closely with **Mt Roskill Intermediate** to enhance the environment along the upper part of the Oakley Creek catchment. This has included the students growing a considerable number of plants and undertaking all of the planting and maintenance of the plantings. Their restoration area is now looking fantastic. Well done Sean (in the yellow raincoat) and all the students.



Alice Rieger (WaiCare), John Stevenson (Friends of Oakley Creek) and Kristi Holland (Auckland Council RIMU - Research, Investigations and Monitoring Unit) took part in the final session of the **NIWA water monitoring experiment**, designed to compare community data with that obtained by professional staff. Watch this space for the results.



Lots of learning takes place at the creek. Classes from **MIT** (left) and **Open Polytechnic** (above) both undertook planting projects, as part of their coursework.



At the **August community planting** (left), volunteers worked hard, filling in the gap where a large pine tree had fallen and been removed.

Planting was also carried out at the **September community working bee** (below) on the floodplain, on the west side of the creek. There was a great turnout of volunteers. We extend our thanks to the **Well Connected Alliance** for sponsoring this planting.



Wendy lead a guided walk for members of the **New Zealand Biosecurity Institute** in early July.

Photos: L. Haines



In Management Unit 2, a contract team from **Te Ngahere** (above) planted a treefall gap - created when another large pine had fallen in a storm during 2014.



**CVNZ International Teams
moving mountains of
mulch**

Auckland Council recently provided 80 m³ of mulch to spread around the bush islands in Harbutt Reserve. The teams who contributed to this mountainous task were: **Emerge Aotearoa** (as part of Mental Health Awareness Week), **Conservation Volunteers international teams**, **Greenlane Christian Community** (on their 'CityServe' day) and **Friends of Oakley Creek** volunteers. Thanks to everyone, for a great team effort all round. And, the trees should flourish from the much needed nurturing. A dry and windy summer is forecast, and the mulch should help conserve the soil moisture.

Right: Greenlane Christian Community, with Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga volunteers, helped to spread the mulch at Harbutt Reserve.

The great new teardrop flag, now showing the way to our restoration events, was funded by The Lion Foundation.



Someone with a close connection with nature recently celebrated the changing of the seasons at the creek ...

Mature porokaiwhiri (pigeonwood, Hedycarya arborea) produced a bumper crop of fruit at Oakley Creek this year and were regularly visited by a pair of feeding and, hopefully, breeding kereru.





St Judes Scouts and friends hard at work – weeding on their Oakley Creek site

Weeding was the main activity undertaken by the volunteers at the **October Community working bee**.



It was picnic time at the waterfall for **Collectively Kids**, allowing everyone to enjoy the fine weather in early spring.



As noted above, **Well Connected Alliance** contracted this planting at Waterview Glades and through into Management Units 4A and 4B. Thanks to WCA for all this great work.

Cradock Street Sustainable Neighbourhood Group members, including **A Rocha** and the **Haven community**, are doing some wonderful restoration work in their area next to the creek.

Rachel Shearer and Guy Treadgold have planted



Someone's been enjoying exploring 'up the creek'...



A Harbutt Reserve kohekohe, Dysoxylum spectabile, produced lots of flowers this winter. Spectacular indeed.



Photo: A. Stanton



The **Well Connected Alliance** has planted extensively in Alan Wood Reserve after the stream re-alignment work, as part of the SH20 extension project.

Organised by Rob Black, from the Waterview community, there was a massive effort, clearing rubbish at Howlett and Waterview Reserves recently. What an amazing effort! *Heave!*



Above: Rob Black and Arthur Heighton, with some of the rubbish pulled out of the estuary.

Right: Arthur Heighton and Craig Watson with more rubbish.

Photos: M. Watson; R. Black.



At Alan Wood Reserve - from scarecrow to snaking stream - the latter is at the peaceful end of the reserve.



Photos: A. Stanton



Has Bear Grylls been visiting? Another bivouac by the creek. Photo: W. John

What on earth? - Solution



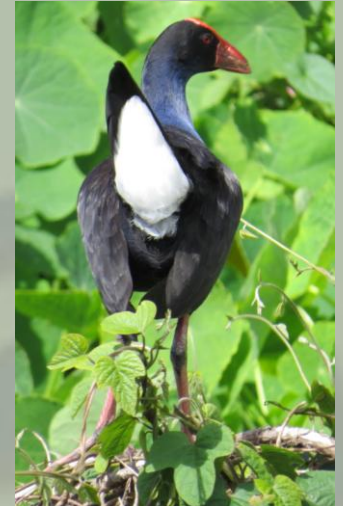
Far left: A pink coral fungus showed its beauty to us again this year.

*Left: Perhaps not quite so appealing, this stinkhorn fungus, *Aseroe rubra*, was just emerging from its 'egg' in the soil.*

Photos: W. John



Photos: A. Stanton



These finely turned ankles belong to ...

...this fine pukeko at Alan Wood Reserve...

... who then turned tail on the attention.



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

Next Newsletter Contributions and comments for the next newsletter are welcome - please send to info@oakleycreek.org.nz

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 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.



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