



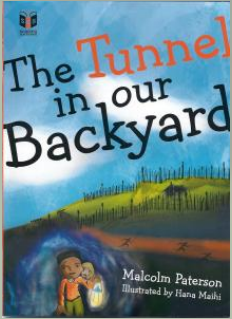
Friends of Oakley Creek

Te Auaunga

September Update, 2016

Vol.9, Issue 3

New children's book features Oakley Creek Te Auaunga!



'... we have to plant some trees at Te Auaunga - Oakley Creek. There's a planting day and I promised to lend a hand.' So says Tui's mum, before the whānau set off to explore their new Mt Albert neighbourhood. *The Tunnel in Our Backyard*, by Malcolm Paterson, is a wonderful new pukapuka, written to inspire people to visit, interact with and care for our local heritage.

We particularly like Nanny's wisdom - see if you can find her advice within this newsletter - the solution is on the last page.



Peter McCurdy, Margi Watson and Wendy John enjoyed the special book launch, which was held in a lava tunnel in Mt Eden. *Photo: R. Black*

Flying higher ...



The results of the latest bird monitoring along the creek have been analysed. The numbers of the various species sighted were up and down - they are dependent on the weather conditions and the availability of appropriate food each year. However, overall, the numbers tend to be on the upward trend. For example, tui sightings have increased from 9 in 2008 to 18 in both 2015 and 2016; and silver eye from 12 in 2008 to 27 in 2015 and 21 in 2016. Thanks to all of the volunteers who helped with this year's annual bird survey.



Some birds are in very limited areas and don't feature in the survey! These chooks were 'helping' at our August community planting, near Powell St. They also provide spray-free Tradescantia control... *Photos: W. John*

Spectacular mid-winter flooding ...

The stream became a raging torrent on 29th June and the water flowed wide over the floodplains. Some people were seen kayaking down the waterfall!

Photos: W. John

Thank you!

Great news! We have just heard that we have been successful with grants approved from The Trusts Community Foundation and Auckland Council's Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS). We have also received news of a donation from Auckland Airport. This is a wonderful endorsement of the work undertaken by Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga and our planned work programme. A big thank you to these organisations and to all our volunteers who make the restoration possible!



Dates for your diary

Bring your family and friends and spread the word about:

Saturday 1st Oct, 9:00 – 12:00 am: A Rocha / Cradock Street Sustainable Neighbourhood Community Working Bee at Cradock St Bridge, Harbutt Reserve.

Sunday 2nd Oct, 10.00 – 12.00 am: Community Working Bee
Waterview Glades – Great North Rd, south side of Alford Bridge construction site. Please wear sturdy footwear.

Saturday 15th, Sunday 16th Oct, 9.00am: Rodent Monitoring
Sunday 29th Oct, 10:30 am: Te Auaunga Awa – Underwood and Walmsley Reserves Project Launch to be held at Walmsley Reserve, Sandringham Rd.

Sunday 6th Nov, 10.00 – 12.00 am: Community Working Bee

Saturdays 12th, 17th & 24th Nov, 9:00 am: Rodent Control

Sunday 4th Dec, 10.00 – 12.00 am: Community Working Bee

Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th Dec, 9:00 am: Rodent Monitoring

Sunday 11th Dec, 12:00 – 3:00 pm: End of year celebration picnic
at Harbutt Reserve.

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

AGM Report

Held on 20th June, the following people were elected unanimously at the Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga AGM: Chairperson - Wendy John, Secretary - Sinead Spedding, Treasurer - Jane Shand (to October) and Sarah Woodfield (October-March), and Committee members - Adrienne Stanton, John Stevenson and Leslie Haines. To access and read the Chairperson's 2015/16 report, go to <http://oakleycreek.org.nz/resources/annual-reports/>

Wendy gave a special 'thank you' to Helen Mellsop, who retired from the committee, for all of the great work she has done as a committee member and fundraiser over the years since inception, and presented her with flowers and the gift of a photo taken at the 10th Anniversary celebration.

Rau Hoskins, Director, design TRIBE Architects, gave a presentation on the creative design of the Alford St Bridge as part of the Waterview Shared Path. He spoke about how the bridge was not just an engineering solution to connect people to place. General discussion afterwards explored submission processes in a wider context and experiences of project consultation outcomes.

Progress upstream at Puketāpapa

The [Te Auaunga Awa - Oakley Creek Upper Catchment Strategy](#) has been finalised, along with the [Upper Te Auaunga Awa - Oakley Creek Restoration Plan](#). A celebration was held with a planting of kahikatea at Molley Green Reserve. Work under the Plan is already under way with the first activity - a community planting in Freeland Reserve in June. Thanks, heaps, to the Puketāpapa Local Board for initiating and driving this initiative.

Photo: C. Wilton



Harry Doig (Puketāpapa Local Board Deputy Chair) and Jill Pierce (ex Puketāpapa Local Board Senior Advisor) (above) are the champions behind the new strategy.

The wonderful Ariki Girl Guides from Epsom (far left) and Waikowhai Scouts (below) helped with the planting at Freeland Reserve.

Contributing to the event, fish expert, Paul Woodard (left), brought his freshwater fish display along - many thanks!

Photos: W. John



Oakley Creek in the news ...

1. Te Wahanui article: [Volunteers bring Oakley Creek back to life](#)
2. Three virtual field trips as part of a series about the SH20 extension project: [Transforming Oakley Creek](#), [Bridging communities with the Hendon Footbridge: Te Whitinga - The Crossing](#) and [Designs by Nature](#).
3. Puketāpapa Local Board member and Mt Roskill Labour Candidate, Michael Wood interviewed Wendy on PlaNetFM radio: [Interview with Wendy John](#)



Google Earth update - spot the difference



Google Maps have updated their aerial shots. Check out the difference in Management Unit 3A with the Lizard Management Area in the centre - from 2010 (top) and 2016.

Pollution incident update

With regard to this pollution (left), described in our March newsletter, the Auckland Council Pollution Incident Investigator reports:



We traced the contaminant discharging to a factory in the area. They were unaware that there was a cross connection with their lines and that their discharge was heading into the creek. The discharge itself was a combination of metals - iron, zinc, and magnesium, which is why it had that distinctive dark red colour. This discharge also seemed to be very high in pH. The factory in question has since acted on the abatement notices ... and [has] done some alterations to their site.

A reminder to ensure you have the **Auckland Council Pollution Hotline** number in your mobile - **09 377 3107**.

And pollution prevention ...

At a Unitec building project site, Friends of Oakley Creek have worked to ensure appropriate silt control actions are being taken:

- weekly monitoring of the silt traps and swales within the site - with all the additional rain we have had recently this has been a challenge to keep sediment out - Argon are working to improve this;
- a wheel wash to address the sediment carried from the site via truck movements in and out;
- hay bales and sediment control material to be used in the kerb and channel outside of the site boundary.

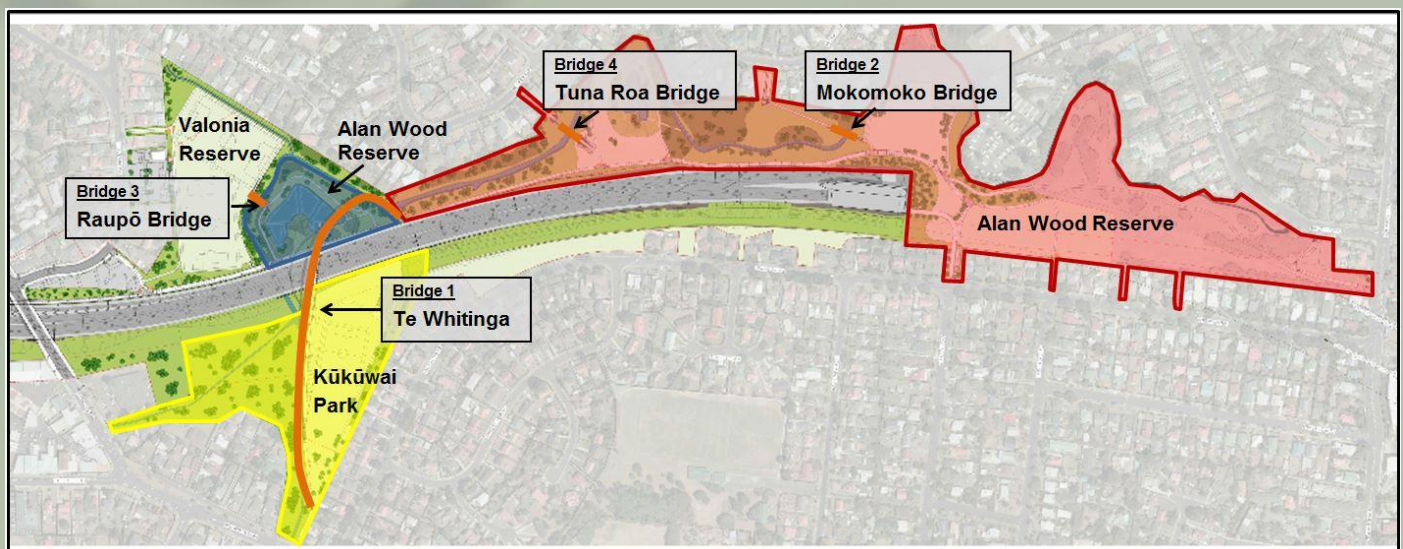
Take a look ...

... at Predatorfree NZ/going on a backyard safari to see ways to discover the wildlife in your garden

... at [Landcare Research Manaaki Whenua Policy Brief 13: Protecting urban forest](#) with particular reference to Auckland.

Alan Wood naming decisions announced

Auckland Council has decided on new names for the parks and bridges in the Alan Wood corridor, as set out in the map below. The Albert-Eden and Whau Local Boards have made the decisions on these names following public consultation.





Fare well Graffiti Geoff

One of our Graffiti Busters, Geoff, has left our midst for semi-retirement. Thanks so much, Geoff, for all of the great work you have done (with Len), dealing with the graffiti along Oakley Creek for the past ten years. Best wishes for the future. *Photo: W. John*

Looking ahead ...



These are two of the planned community planting areas for 2017, sponsored by the Albert Eden Local Board. *Photo: W. John*

Oakley Creek Riparian Restoration Project: Contamination

Phyllis Street Reserve is listed as a Closed Landfill in the Auckland Council Closed Landfill Asset Management Plan and Harbutt Reserve is known as an historic landfill. These sites are recorded on Council records as containing weak/filled ground, as are other locations within the project area (refer to Maps 2a, 2b & 2c in Appendix G). Waste fill has the potential to contain elevated levels of contamination. Auckland Council Licensing & Compliance group consider waste fill to be on the Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL).

Some of the Management Unit's are located either within or directly adjacent to land that has historically been used for refuse tips. Remedial works have been undertaken on Phyllis Street Reserve between 1999 and 2002, which included clay capping and storm water management improvements. Despite remedial efforts, there may be an ongoing potential for risk to human health and the environment associated with leachate and landfill gas generation from closed landfills.

Further, Auckland Council Closed Landfill and Contaminated Land team have advised that the extent of landfill within Harbutt Reserve has not been well investigated (especially around the river banks).

- excerpt from *Oakley Creek Riparian Restoration Project For Auckland Council - Local & Sport Parks Resource Consent Application & Assessment of Environmental Effects* 4Sight Consulting, May 2016

ATEED help out



Michael, Lester and Chris in the nursery.

Volunteers from Auckland Tourism, Events & Economic Development had a wet morning outside then took a nursery 'break'. They helped pot up some native seedlings to grow on for next year's Oakley Creek plantings.

Amazing lichen, fascinating fungi

Last year, Dan Blanchon led a guided walk along the Oakley Creek Walkway, teaching us about lichen - his favourite bush bling. We learnt about how each lichen type is made up of a fungal and an algal association - a community sandwich of two species - plus lots more of interest as reported in our newsletter ([July 2015 Update Vol 8 Issue 2](#)). Now, it has been discovered that another fungus is also part of each lichen and the details are clearly explained in this article, [yeast-emerges-as-hidden-third-partner-in-lichen-symbiosis](#).

This significant and amazing breakthrough shows that there are still very fundamental discoveries to be made in the world around us. Another example is that in New Zealand, there are an estimated 15,000 species of fungi still to be discovered, described and named. With these things in mind, we should all keep recording our natural history observations, wherever we are, including at Oakley Creek Te Auaunga, and naturewatch.org.nz/ is a good place to share them.



Lichen on a kahikatea branch.

Photo: A. Stanton

A pink coral fungus by the gabion wall produces these fruiting bodies regularly each year.

Photo: W. John



Michael's first, ever, plant!

Photos: W. John



Reminiscing ...

Rex Wahrlich, long time (perhaps longest?) resident of Waterview, has kindly shared some of his memories of Oakley Creek in times past. He remembers when:

- there were bats at Oakley Creek;
- he had to run away from the bull in the top paddock at Waterview Glades;
- there were no rocks across the stream below the waterfall pool; and
- there was a dam further downstream below the waterfall, so the stream was much wider there than today.

Oakley Creek mahoe rock forest - how it was first described

While the vast bulk of the vegetation in these two sectors is not of particularly high botanical conservation value, consisting in the main of exotic and weedy vegetation restricted to the riparian margins of Oakley Creek, there is a single exception to this, being a tiny thicket (around 700m²) of remnant rock forest situated at Harbutt Reserve, growing on a basalt boulder tumble immediately above the west bank of Oakley Creek (see Figure 3E). Rock forest is a very rare vegetation type in Auckland, which is (in general) normally comprised of mahoe and/or karaka, mangeao and titoki.

The remnant at Harbutt Reserve contains some 50 or so mahoe, together with an abundance of emergent exotic trees and a very weedy ground cover. The mahoe range in height between 6-9m, with the majority (>60%) being between 10-20cm dbh (with the largest (single-stemmed) specimen measuring 28cm dbh). Given the maturity of the mahoe trees here it is likely that they are naturally occurring and represent a vestige of the historic rock forests of Auckland. Hence, despite the exotic emergent trees present here (and the conspicuous presence of exotic trees in the canopy), this small remnant is considered to be Valued Vegetation.

- excerpt from *Western Ring Route - Waterview Connection: Assessment of Terrestrial Vegetation Effects* July 2010.

Note: the area that was identified in this document is just one of six such areas of valued vegetation along Oakley Creek Te Auaunga.

Mt Roskill Primary School planting

Ex-Mt Roskill Intermediate School science teacher, Sean Carroll, has moved on from the Intermediate, where he has done some amazing work over the years, working with the students to grow native plants and plant up the north-west border of the school grounds, adjacent to Oakley Creek.

However, he has not moved very far - across campus to Mt Roskill Primary - and he is carrying on the great work of planting natives in the upper Oakley Creek Catchment. Thanks to Sean and thanks to the students for their mid-winter planting effort!

Photo: S. Carroll



Above: Infill planted Oakley Creek rock forest, between the old multi-stemmed mahoe trees.
Photo: A. Stanton



Left: This baby mangero was planted in Remnant Mahoe Rock Forest Area E in 2015 and it is thriving.
Photo: W. John

Below: Arborists, Treesafe, recently spent some time tidying up dead, fallen trees and creating 'habitat stacks' for the local fauna in the bush upstream of Harbutt Reserve.
Photo: W. John



Above: Nikau in the rain.
Right: Ngaio tree trunk.

Photos: W. John



Take a look ...

Here's a link to a book written by Mike Joy (published in 2015) - it is available for download or purchase:

waterqualitynz.info/squandre-the-degradation-of-new-zealands-freshwaters/ and also see [facebook.com/freshwater4life/](https://www.facebook.com/freshwater4life/)

Right: Tonkin and Taylor ecologists, Megan Young and Duncan Law, undertake monthly fish monitoring in Oakley Creek, as required by the consent conditions for the Waterview Connection SH20.
Photo: W. John



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:

Roldana petasitis, Asteraceae – Velvet groundsel



Velvet groundsel at Oakley Creek Te Auaunga: a large shrub in flower, leaf arrangement, leaf underside, flower buds, flower close-up detail and seed heads.

Photos: A. Stanton



Velvet Groundsel

Roldana petasitis



www.weedbusters.org.nz

Where is it originally from?

Mexico

What does it look like?

Forms a large, much-branched shrub to 2.5 m high and wide. Large, soft leaves are rounded in shape with slightly undulating edges and 10-20 cm in diameter. Both the upper and lower surfaces are covered in short hairs, giving them a velvety texture. Large clusters of small, yellow, daisy-like flowers, with a brownish-yellow centre, appear from July to November, followed by fluffy seed heads.

Why is it weedy?

As plants mature, they form dense cover. It layers, that is, stems take root where they touch the ground, forming new plants, developing into a dense thicket.

How does it spread?

Spread via windborne seed and dumped garden waste to localised wild areas near towns and into forest margins. Stems take root where they touch the ground, forming new plants.

What damage does it do?

Spreads easily, forms new plants from stems, and shades out and suppresses native species and other desirable plants.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Forest margins, bush remnants, wetlands.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Pull up small plants when not in seed. 2. Cut larger plants back to ground level and paint stumps with picloram gel. Dispose of all plant material at a refuse transfer station.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Check after six months for reseedling. Replant the area with dense cover to shade out germinating seedlings.

Right: Seed head detail.

Photo: Weedbusters.org.nz

Below: Velvet groundsel seedlings.

Photo: N. Henderson, WeedFree Trust



Dirty Dozen weeds

Can you guess which weeds DOC has designated as their dirty dozen worst? Take a look at their [war-on-weeds](#) webpage to check your answers.

Artflow



Photos: W. John

Waterview Shared Path

Great progress is being made on the Alford Bridge, with the building platform completed on the west side, as shown in this [timelapse video](#). The Walkway path remains closed.



This is how concrete comes in for construction of the bridge foundations. Photos: W. John

Above: Sheared off by birds or the wind, this pigeonwood fruit has fallen into a sheltered microsite which looks ideal for seedling establishment, if the fruit can finish ripening off the parent tree. Photos: A. Stanton

Wildlife encounters



A damselfly at Harbutt Reserve.

Photo: A. Stanton

Spot the difference ...



MU8 Phyllis Reserve Above RMRF Area B - 2014-2016



MU9 RO11 #3 2010-2016 Harbutt Reserve



This freshwater shrimp was caught during water monitoring with Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre clients, on the Wairaka Stream, at the Wairaka Wetland, just up from the convergence with Oakley Creek and is shown in a spoon.

Photo: W. John

Te Auaunga

Te Auaunga is a significant awa in the west of the Tāmaki Isthmus, flowing from between Te Tātua a Riukiuta (Three Kings Mountain) and Puketāpapa (Mount Roskill) in the south, to Te Wai-o-te-Matā in the north west. Te Auaunga means swirling waters or whirlpool. The awa is a site of great cultural significance to Māori, who are connected to the waterway. Its waters weave together a vast cultural landscape of diverse sites including mahinga kai, pā taua, papakāinga, wāhi nohoanga and wāhi tapu.

Prior to the despoliation and urbanisation of its catchment, Te Auaunga was a very different river than it is today. Traditional kōrero recall that it was navigable for several miles inland, allowing access to the papakāinga and pā taua of the interior. It is said that Te Auaunga was also important as a food and material resource, with stocks of tuna and īnanga supplying the nearby papakāinga and further afield. Moreover, the awa provided habitat for native plants, birds and fish, building and weaving materials such as raupō and harakeke, and rongoā and dyes. The tūpuna forebears were experts at the sustainable use of the resources of this awa. There are numerous cultural heritage sites along the banks of Te Auaunga that are testament to these stories.

Te Wai-inu-roa-a-Rakataura (the long drink of Rakataura - Rakataura also known as Hape), (Te Puke Tāpapakanga-aHape - at Ihumātao) was a collection of wetlands that lay within the catchment of Te Auaunga. They are likely to have been prized for their fish as well as water-fowl, building materials, and rongoa and as a freshwater spring of high quality. Te Wai-inu-roa-a-Rakataura wetland was also a wāhi tapu that had several sites of spiritual significance within it.

Iwi believe that each waterway carries its own mauri. Mauri is crucial for Māori. A water body with a healthy mauri will sustain healthy ecosystems, support cultural uses and mahinga kai (gardens), and be a source of pride and identity to mana whenua.

The protection of natural resources remains one of the most important responsibilities of respective iwi as kaitiaki. However, modifications to waterways and their catchment areas, land confiscation, de-population, and other consequences of colonisation have severely limited the ability to exercise their kaitiakitanga over these taonga. Tūpuna were unable to reclaim their ancestral lands and waters but Māori connection with them did not cease. Māori continue as tangata whenua and kaitiaki of these places which remain an integral part of their identity and a vital part of their story as a people.

- excerpt from [Te-Auaunga-Awa-Oakley-Creek-Upper-Catchment-Strategy-2016-2019](#) Puketāpapa Local Board Auckland Council



From top: Both this woody cased caddisfly and the fingernail clam were found during water monitoring at Unitec Bridge, while the damselfly larva was seen during monitoring near the Cradock St Bridge, by Serge and Rachel.

Photos: W. John

Out and about ...

Photos: W. John, unless otherwise stated



The Te Ngahere crew planted the northern floodplain with native sedges.



Margaret McConnell mulched the edge of the planting at the south-east corner of Management Unit 3A. Spraying had been done and mulch very kindly provided by the Unitec gardeners, **Envirotech**. Thanks, Margaret, for a great effort ... and great to see her sensible attitude to health and safety - wearing a mask to prevent airborne infection from any dangerous micro-organisms in the mulch.

Regular volunteers, Arthur Heighton, Margaret McConnell and Dorothy Maddock, cleared wattle to prepare another new site for re-planting with native species at Alan Wood Reserve.





Ngati Tahiinga (Ngati Whatua / Iwi Representative Cultural Monitor), Brent Druskovich (Archaeologist) and David Stejskal (Auckland Council Contract Co-ordinator) undertook the annual **Archaeological and Cultural Assessment** of planting sites for 2016.

Children from **Collectively Kids** enjoyed planting a few more native sedges at 'their' special place near the waterfall in August.



Open Polytechnic Students Planting – July 2016

The **June Community Working Bee** was held at Alan Wood Reserve.



Manukau Institute of Technology students planted at the creek as part of their restoration unit. The plants were provided by the Well Connected Alliance as part of Alan Wood Reserve pollution mitigation.



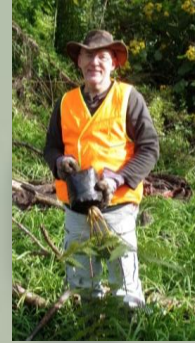


The **August Working Bee** planting was on the Powell Street Esplanade Reserve at the end of Powell Street, Avondale. The 26 volunteers had to really 'muck in' because the site was so muddy. Thanks to Huw Hill-Male, Auckland Council Parks Volunteer and Biodiversity Co-ordinator, and the Whau Local Board for supporting this planting. Mā whero, mā pango, ka oti te mahi. By each doing our bit, we'll get the job done.



Photo: A. Stanton

Thanks to the Albert Eden Local Board for sponsoring the planting of the next area of our Remnant Mahoe Rock Forest (Area E) in Harbutt Reserve for the **July Working Bee**, and to the volunteers for a great effort of laying out and digging in the plants in a very 'rocky' environment. This area is one of the six 'Remnant Mahoe Rock Forest' areas that are dotted along the creek from Phyllis Reserve up along the creek to opposite Pak'n Save.



A **Conservation Volunteers NZ Local** team spread mulch in Management Unit 5 at Waterview Glades. The mulch was created from the pine tree that was taken out to make way for the Alford Bridge,



The planted parataniwha is thriving at Oakley Creek Te Auaunga.



This group was another **Local CVNZ** team, who planted the floodplain area to the east above the waterfall and helped deliver plants for the September community planting.

A Rocha / Cradock Street Sustainable Neighbourhood group planted another 280 native plants in their area - a great job done!



A thicket of self-sown makomako wineberry seedlings in the remnant mahoe rock forest.



Photo: A. Stanton

Nanny's wisdom - solution

Nanny's wisdom appeared in 'Out and about ...' in the August Community Working Bee caption:

*'Mā whero, mā pango, ka oti te mahi', commented Nanny.
By each doing our bit, we'll get the job done.*

- excerpt from *The Tunnel in Our Backyard*, by Malcolm

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: Jane Shand, Sarah Woodfield Secretary: Sinead Spedding
Committee: Leslie Haines, Adrienne Stanton, John Stevenson, **Volunteers needed**
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