

Chairperson's Annual Report 2017

Tena koutou katoa

2016-2017 has been yet another busy and productive year, with so many different things occupying our time.

Volunteer efforts totaled approximately 8638 volunteer hours (that we know of). In the 2016 planting season 6026 native plants went into the ground, bringing us to an overall total of 72,272 since 2004. Planting was undertaken by members of the local community; as well as a wide range of community organisations, educational institutions and businesses including:

- Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre
- Collectively Kids Early Childhood Centre
- St Judes Scouts
- Auckland A Rocha & Haven (Kodesh) Christian Community / Cradock Street Sustainable Neighbourhood
- Powell Street Sustainable Neighbourhood
- Conservation Volunteers – Local & International Teams
- Bank of New Zealand 'Closed for Good' Team
- NZ Language Centre
- Auckland International College
- Open Polytechnic
- Manukau Institute of Technology
- Scripture Union
- Warren & Mahoney
- Lynfield College
- ATEED
- Latter Day Saints
- Students undertaking their Duke of Edinburgh Awards community service hours
- And more

We continued to hold regular, monthly community working bees, including another successful annual clean up - removing yet more rubbish including tyres and shopping trolleys from the creek. Weekly weeding sessions over the summer / autumn months by a small group of dedicated volunteers, saw us remove around 230 black rubbish bags of bindweed – a problem weed that is not on the Auckland Council's list. And, we had an evening guided walk with entomologist, Grace Hall (Landcare Research) and David Court (arachnologist).

Our monitoring and pest control programme continues – thanks to the commitment of our volunteers. Trapping catch numbers maintain at a low number, and rat numbers are well down – as is shown in the monitoring. However, reducing mice continues to be a challenge.

The final monitoring of the lizards in the Lizard Management Area, as required by the Waterview Connection consent conditions resulted, again, in the sighting of a number of native Copper Skinks at each session. Also, weta numbers are looking healthy

throughout the reserve.

Our water quality monitoring teams - the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre 'garden group', Eileen Witt at the St Judes Scouts site, Jagjeeta and Guntaas Kaur, at the Unitec Bridge, and, Rachel Shearer and her two children, Serge & Sunny, at the Cradock Street Bridge site, continue with their quarterly monitoring.

The efforts of the teams from Conservation Volunteers (CV) have, yet again, been a great help in keeping up with work - planting, plant propagation and weed control, with their regular visits.

We continue to grow some native plants, for planting along the creek. This gives us flexibility to accommodate for one-off groups that approach us, wanting to do some planting at short notice.

Outreach is ongoing, to further raise awareness of the creek and keep supporters up-to-date with what is going on, through our excellent newsletter produced by committee member Adrienne Stanton – and now with assistance by Lana Rail, our website and facebook page.

We continued to attend the regular Waterview Connection Community Liaison Group meetings. And now that the project is drawing to end, we will meet, for the next little while, with the tunnel monitoring team, until things are settled down. We, also, continue to have input into the Shared Path works.

We continue to be represented at the Community Advisory Group meetings for the Te Auaunga Awa: Underwood & Walmsley Reserves stormwater upgrade project – which is well underway. And, there is a constant stream of new developments happening in the catchment that require us to keep a watchful eye on things like silt control, weed control and encroachments onto reserve land.

Much time and energy has gone into the co-ordination of activities, networking and liaison with other stakeholders and interested parties e.g. Auckland Council, Local Boards and contractors; and into responding to enquiries and expressions of interest from numerous educational, community organisations and individuals – including students – undertaking assignments and research projects.

Once again, funding from Foundation North, the Lion Foundation and The Trusts Community Fund has been crucial for ensuring the sustainability of the project. And, thanks to David Bowden, for taking over the role of fundraiser.

Auckland Council, the Albert Eden, Whau and Puketapapa Local Boards continue to support the project, with things such as site preparation, weed control, plants, nursery supplies and the monitoring and pest control programme.

So, all in all, 2016-2017 has been another exciting and busy 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, efforts and encouragement:

- John Maskell, John Stevenson, Per Nielsen and Bruce Henry – for their regular contribution to the monitoring and pest control.
- Karen Mann and her team, from the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre.
- St Judes Scouts Venturers and the Roskill Rovers for their contribution to the reduction of pests, and the St Judes Scouts for continuing to restore a section of the creek adjacent to their 'den'.

- A Rocha and the Haven community who continue to contribute to the restoration of the creek around the Cradock Street Bridge area.
- Our two Sustainable Neighbourhood Groups – Powell Street and Cradock Street, who are doing a wonderful job of restoring the creek and surrounding areas, in their neighbourhoods.
- Te Ngahere for their work on site preparation and weed control, and for undertaking another planting.
- Manukau Institute of Technology and Unitec – for the use of the nursery and propagation facilities.
- Our ‘weedbusters’ team – Jean Barton, Keith Ayton, David Smith, for the great work they do on removing some of our nastier weeds – especially moth plant in our area – and beyond.
- Frances & Dave Morgans – for putting our events posters up along the creek.
- David Stejskal, Auckland Council, for organising the removal of dead trees, extra weed control, mulch and, again, more specimen trees for Harbutt Reserve.
- Sarah Peters and Huw Hill-Male, Auckland Council Parks Volunteer and Biodiversity Co-ordinators
- Brent Druskovich, our ‘resident archaeologist’.
- Our regular volunteers – including Margaret McConnell and Arthur Heighton, 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, John Stevenson, Leslie Haines (who stepped down part way through the year, due to other commitments, but continues to support us when she can), Sinead Spedding and Sarah Woodfield, for the great work they have done – and continue to do.

And, as you will know, the restoration of Oakley Creek continues to be a ‘work in progress’ with lots more to be done, including encouraging more community support and involvement, and advocating for the creek. So, we hope you will continue to be involved and support the project in the coming year.

Many thanks.

Wendy John
Chairperson
19.6.2017