



# Ngā Ringa o Te Auaunga Friends of Oakley Creek

SPRING 2025

## Editorial

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What a wonderfully mild spring we are having this year. Perfect growing conditions for the many new plants we have settled along the awa; perfect growing conditions for the weeds! So, the work of our dedicated volunteers continues unabated.

In this spring edition we update you on the work going on behind the scenes, the final planting sessions and, of course, keeping on top of that flush of spring growth. We have taken a first step to protect our precious

maire tawake – swamp maire – from myrtle rust.

We have found a new secretary! Eva Manandhar has taken on that role. You can meet her in this edition. We also introduce some colourful and acrobatic creek denizens – our damselflies. And finally, you will find some reflections on the season with some seasonal whakatauki to inspire you.

Get motivated! Enjoy!

**Gina Hefferan, Editor**

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Photo (above): Rachel, Ryan & Noah taking care of the awa

*"Alone, we can do  
so little; together,  
we can do so  
much."  
- Helen Keller*

## Friday Working Bees

**By Wendy John**

Over the last quarter our Friday Working Bees continued to be very productive, even with rain and storms 'stopping play' a couple of times.

As per usual, our volunteers have been busy working on a range of sites, and on a variety of tasks. These have included tidying up and helping to prep areas in readiness for planting,

rubbish removal and dealing with weeds such as Japanese honeysuckle, madeira vine, blackberry, *Tradescantia*, wattle, blue morning glory and privet – Chinese and tree. With winter being the main planting season, we have done a lot of planting – filling in smaller gaps, understory, riparian and enhancement plantings. Areas have included the rock forest, in Harbutt Reserve, Waterview Glades, Waterview Downs (streamside), the Wairaka Wetland area.



*Photo (above): Friday team*



*Photo (above): Friday team enjoying well-earned refreshments*

# Monthly Working Bees

*By Wendy John*

These past winter months have been busy getting as many plants in the ground as we can, so that their roots will be well established in time for the forthcoming drier months.

In July we put 220 plants in at one of our special 'rock forest' areas, in Harbutt Reserve. The planting of these areas is part of our aim to transition them from what were, predominantly, privet / wattle / mahoe rock forest into beautiful native forest with rock forest species such as titoki, pūriri, mangeao and kohekohe being the main canopy species, and mahoe, kawakawa, pigeonwood, hangehange and mapou making up the mid-canopy and understory. Over the years, with the support of the Albert Eden Local Board and contractors, the rock forest areas have been cleared of extensive areas of climbing asparagus, some very large wattle and any mid-sized privet, as well as some large privet. And work continues with the ongoing control of the privet – note all of the dead trees as you stroll past.

In August, we planted another 500 plants in Harbutt Reserve. This planting filled in the space between the existing bush corridor alongside of the rail corridor, and the bush islands in the south-west part of the reserve – leaving space for a quiet 'bush walk' through the area as, over time, the trees mature.



*Photo (above): Harbutt Reserve plant layout team*



*Photo (above): Harbutt Reserve planting crew*

A special thanks to the Albert Eden Local Board for sponsoring these two plantings.

And at the beginning of September, we managed to squeeze in one more planting. This was back up in Walmsley Park – with another 400 plants going in near the fale and outdoor classroom. These were mainly wetland and floodplain species, to add to the planting we did at the start of the planting season. Sponsorship for this was from the Auckland Council's Community Flooding Resilience fund, as part of the work we are doing in partnership with Manawa Taiaio – Urban Ark, to help build flooding resilience in the local community.



*Photo (above): Walmsley Park planting*



*Photo (above): Monthly Working Bee*

# Te Auaunga Partner Community Group Activities

*By Wendy John*

Our partner groups continue to work hard at protecting and restoring their sites.

**A Rocha** – A Rocha volunteers joined us on the creek for their annual tree planting. This time we moved upstream of the Cradock Street Bridge where the team put in 180 native plants and cleared a heap of post-flooding debris and weeds. Great work everyone.



*Photo (above): A Rocha – Katarina & Richard*



*Photo (above): A Rocha planting*

**Pt Chevalier Girl Guides** – The ‘girls’ were back in force to do some more mulching of the plants they put in earlier in the year. Their site, in the north end of Waterview Glades, is looking amazing with all the work they have done on it over the years.



*Photo (above): Pt Chevalier Girl Guides*

**Oakley Loop Group** – The ‘Oakley Loop’ community came together for the annual planting, extending on the previous plantings they have done over the past few years. This included planting the upper slope on the west side of their site, and an area on the flat by the creek which has been on hold until bamboo that was dumped there years ago had rotted down.



*Photo (above): Oakley Loop tree planting*

**Powell Street Sustainable Neighbourhood Group** – It’s always a joyous occasion when the Powell Street Sustainable Neighbourhood team come together. This time around they did an amazing job of clearing a heap of privet and other nasties and putting in another 60 plants.



*Photo (above): Powell St Sustainable Neighbourhood Group post working bee*

**1602-1604 Great North Road** – With the help of neighbours and friends we did a small planting on another area of esplanade reserve on the west side of the creek, downstream from Phyllis Reserve. It's very exciting to have another section of the creek being cared for by folk from the neighbouring properties. Thanks to Cath and Blair for 'rallying the troops' and, Cath, for the delicious afternoon tea.



Photo (above): 1602-1604 Great North Rd crew after planting



Photo (above): Planting below 1602-1604 Great North Rd

**Earth Action Trust (EAT)** – Sindy and team did an amazing job of bringing volunteers together to do a rubbish clean up in Walmsley Park – with the support of some of our regular volunteers. Check this out – <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1944491979734309> It was good to get the rubbish clean up done before we did the extra planting in this area – a great, collaborative effort to protect our precious awa!



Photo (above): Earth Action Trust volunteers sorting rubbish

**Conservation Volunteers New Zealand** – We had another great CVNZ CPP (Connecting People with Parks) team back helping on the creek during the winter months. They did a great job of weeding, plant releasing and rubbish removal from a couple of sites just downstream of the waterfall (both sides of the creek). Looking good!

And Teresa has been bringing volunteers through their Migrant Conservation programme to help with our Friday Working Bees on a monthly basis – weather permitting. They joined us for a session mid-Harbutt Reserve, where they cleared a heap of *Tradescantia* from one of the rock forest areas.



Photo (above): CVNZ CPP volunteers



Photo (above): CVNZ Migrant Group with Friday Team (CVNZ)

## Corporates and More

*By Wendy John*

Again, things have been a little quieter on the corporate front recently – but we have lots of bookings over the next couple of months. Corporate groups who have graced us with their presence and energy, this past little while, have included Stack, Construction Costs Consultants and The Collective.

The **Stack** team did a great job of spreading mulch along the top of the planted area behind the Akarana Dog Club in Phyllis Reserve – with the help of a cool trolley (thanks to the Dog Club); and clearing weeds from another planted area on the west side of Phyllis Reserve.



*Photo (above): Stack*

**Construction Costs Consultants** staff spent an afternoon plant releasing, clearing weeds and tidying up some dead trees in an area down behind BP (Great North Road). While this area has had some infill planting done, it is also filling up with natural regeneration – ti kouka, mahoe, porokaiwhiri (pigeonwood), hoheria and karamu – which is very exciting. And, we were graced with the presence of a kereru, feeding in a nearby pūriri tree.



*Photo (above): Construction Costs Consultants*

Another team from one of our key sponsoring organisations, **The Collective**, joined us to work on their adopted site down behind BP. It was great to get the weeds cleared from around some of the young plants, and to put some more in the ground. Being on the flat that is affected by flooding, especially when there is a high tide, this is a challenging area, but it is slowly starting to take shape.



*Photo (above): The Collective*

# Predators

**By Wendy John**

Trapping continues on the creek. But the continuing wet weather has meant that the ground is still slippery and muddy underfoot. Along with the regular trapping along the creek, including in the Waterview Heritage Area, we have just finished the spring baiting pulse – timed to happen leading up to the bird breeding season. As per usual, take in the bait stations varies considerably. We have three new trappers – Cameron and Beau on our mid-circuit, and Diana on our northern circuit.

However, one of our long-term volunteers, David, has had to step down from managing the traps along the southern side of the tidal reach of the creek – Howlett Reserve, Waterview. We would like to express our sincerest appreciation to him for the great work he has done over the past years. It has made a huge

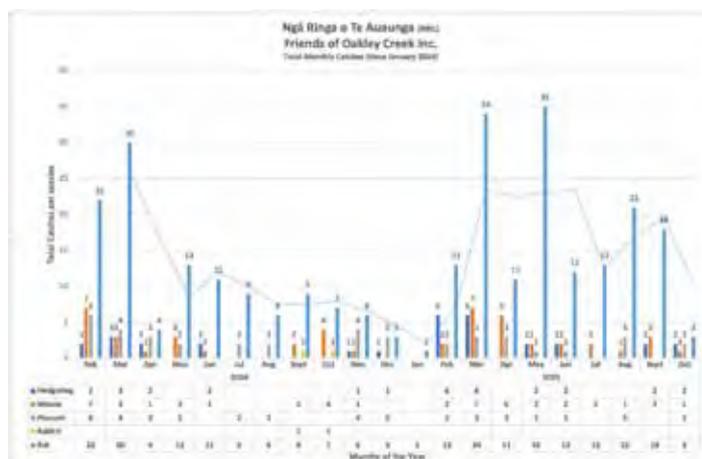


Photo (above): Total Catches per Species Feb 2024-Oct 2025

difference in assisting with enhancing the biodiversity in this area.

If you would like to join a small team of volunteers to continue with the trapping on Howlett Reserve, please contact Wendy – [info@oakleycreek.org.nz](mailto:info@oakleycreek.org.nz)

# Water Monitoring

**By Wendy John**

The spring quarterly monitoring has gone well. No negative readings, which, when it comes to water monitoring, is a good thing. As the community,

we all have a role to play in looking out for our streams. We need to be ever vigilant and on the lookout for any anomalies – unusual smells, levels of silt etc., and report any issues of concern to the Council call centre – 301 0101.



Photo (above): Helen at Cradock St Bridge



Photo (above): St Judes – Anna, Sophia & Cameron

# Outreach Report

**By Sandra Maclean**

Restoration at the Waterview Heritage Area (WHA) has continued apace. A rye clover seed mix was spread over the steepest area we'd planted up in June. This is a tricky bit of ground where we had worked hard to control bamboo and blue morning glory. Happy to say there is very little sign of either of these pest species and the seed mix took really well on the disturbed ground (it's greener than a green thing!) creating a skin that helps limit erosion. Through July and into August we carried on planting, particularly where we had monocultures of aging whau trees which were starting to keel over.

We've moved our attentions now to the southern downstream side of the awa. This is a section we haven't done any work in before. It's rewarding as it holds good native bush including some surprisingly big native specimens – most notably a kowhai. Tuesday sessions are now largely devoted to freeing up these trees from jasmine, privet, *Elaeagnus* and other pest species.



*Photo (above): CVNZ new migrants and Tuesday volunteers at WHA (Sandra Maclean)*



*Photo (above): CVNZ New migrant Group at WHA (Sandra Maclean)*

We are still busy keeping our plantings from last year in good shape and to help us out, Conservation Volunteers New Zealand came out with their fabulous New Migrant Group and a big team from Westpac to shift a couple of cubic metres of woodchip mulch.

Of late, several of our Tuesday volunteers have secured paid work which is great to see. Recruitment to boost our numbers back up, is underway with our volunteers putting the word out, and we also had a stall at the opening of the Waterview Environment Hub. This was a bustling event, well attended by the local community and it gave us the chance to make some new contacts and promote our Waterview project.

Our Stoddard Road site behind the Mt Roskill Police Station is looking really great, thanks to the attentions of local volunteer Lou, who comes over to give me a hand plant releasing on a regular basis. Blackberry is now largely under control, and our young plants are thriving.

Odyssey House residents have been busy on their site with weekly to fortnightly sessions planting and controlling exotics and *Muehlenbeckia*. We are now working on the downstream part of their ground, below their kai garden where cleared privet trees afford a nice view across to Owairaka. We'll maintain this view shaft by planting up with smaller natives next season.

At the Esplanade Reserve below 27-45 Powell St, we ran a session in July for residents where we moved logs from the floodplain and did some plant releasing. We are delighted to have secured funding from the Whau Local Board via the Whau Wildlink to engage ecological contractors to remove a massive clump of bamboo which is beyond the capacity of our volunteers.

The Chinese Methodist Youth Group came out with a big group and lots of energy in August. We kept them busy in Waterview Glades where they did plant releasing over an impressive amount of ground.

Moth plant and woolly nightshade control work included a session with our crack weed team of Jean and Keith, working away on Alan Wood Reserve where it backs up to private gardens on



Photo (above): Roger & Sandra moving plants for Odyssey House

Methuen Rd. This area has taken a couple of years to tame but is now in pretty good shape as regards those two pest species.

The Auckland Council Buffer Zone Project contractors, funded in this area by the Whau Local Board, will be operating this year on the adjacent private properties controlling a select range of



Photo (above): Chinese Methodist youth group at Waterview Glades (Sandra Maclean)

weeds, which will complement our work and free us up to focus on public ground.

Clients and staff from the Mason Clinic have enjoyed sessions restoring their adopted area near the Plane Tree Bridge. Our last session was graced with repeated song from pipiwharauroa – shining cuckoo telling us that spring had definitely arrived.

## Myrtle Rust Control on Maire Tawake

**By Wendy John**

As we have mentioned in previous newsletters – <http://oakleycreek.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Spring-2022-Oakley-Creek-Newsletter.pdf> – page 7, our beautiful maire tawake – swamp maire, are very susceptible to being affected and even killed, by myrtle rust.

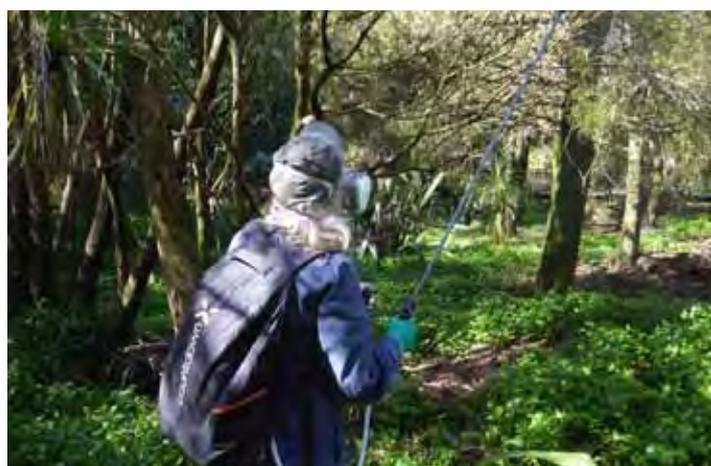


Photo (above): Spraying maire tawake

## Maire Tawake

Robert Beresford from Plant & Food has established a myrtle rust control programme. We have joined the programme to protect the trees on the creek, and were most appreciative of Kathy McCormack (Bush Glen Reserve) who brought her gear and did the first spray of some of our maire tawake for us, with Rob's support.



Photo (above): Infected maire tawake leaf

# Te Auaunga Maramataka – Curious Minds

*By Wendy John*

An exciting new cross-school initiative focused on reconnecting students to their local environment through mātauranga Māori and environmental science, is happening on our awa. A collective of schools from the upper catchment – Mt Roskill Grammar, Intermediate & Primary, and Dominion Road have come together to take part in a pilot programme that is being coordinated by COMET (<https://cometauckland.org.nz>), with support from Boffa

Miskell and Glasgow Contractors, and Ngā Ringa o Te Auaunga – Friends of Oakley Creek. The project presents a unique opportunity for students with ‘huge potential for cultural and STEM learning’.

After initial training in water monitoring – a key part of the project, the students are doing water monitoring and observations at three sites along the awa – the waterfall, Walmsley Park and Molley Green Reserve. The first session, at the waterfall, was a great success – and with lots of learning and fun.



*Photo (above): Maramataka sessions ((Credit – Jonathan Longstaff, Te Hononga Akoranga COMET))*

# Visitors to the Awa

By Wendy John

**Guided Walk – Underwood & Walmsley** – As part of the Council’s Community Flooding Resilience programme, we recently ran a guided walk from War Memorial Park through to Underwood Park, with support from Urban Ark. The walk was both educational – from the flooding mitigation perspective, and informative – ‘story telling’ – covering the history of the area, the transition – from a swamp to a straight concrete invert channel (drain), to a beautiful meandering stream surrounded by native plants, and the involvement of the community in the restoration project.



Photo (above): CFR Guided Walk

**Unitec** – Recently, we have supported four groups of Unitec students who have used the creek as part of their learning and study. The areas were:

- Architecture – using War Memorial Park as the space for their design project.
- Biodiversity – undertaking water monitoring – at the waterfall.
- Community Development – learning about the pros and cons of a community group and giving a bit of a helping hand.
- Landscape Architecture – learning about the various aspects of restoration, including soil types, plant species lists, pioneer planting through to secession and diversity planting.
- Biodiversity – lizard monitoring – unfortunately, the only lizards that were found in the traps during this monitoring were the pest plague skink.
- Biodiversity – kumerahou survey by the waterfall.



Photo (above): Unitec Biodiversity students water monitoring



Photo (above): Cameron & Marcel checking lizard traps

## Auckland Council Introduction to Harmful Plants Workshop for Mandarin Speakers –

Conservation & Sustainability Educator, Ben Zhang recently ran a weed workshop for Mandarin speakers on and around the creek. It’s always great to see the awa being used for education and connecting people with the natural environment. Feedback from one of the attendees was “Ben impressed me on his philosophy towards conservation in New Zealand. I learnt a lot from him. He was so good at communicating, particularly to explain the weeds being in the wrong place that harm the natural environment and disrupt the balance.”



Photo (above): Auckland Council Mandarin Weed Workshop

# Contractors

*By Wendy John*

**Programmed** - the various Programmed teams have been super busy on the creek, not just with their regular tasks, but also picking up on extra ones that we toss their way! These include the delivery of mulch, tidying up and planting a small corner in Harbutt Reserve (near the playground), spraying moth plant in War Memorial Park, and making a great start on clearing privet - Chinese and tree, in Alan Wood Reserve.



*Photo (above): Programmed delivering mulch*

**Treesafe** - have been busy clearing log jams along the creek recently. This included the removal of a large, fallen willow in Harbutt Reserve.



*Photo (above): Treesafe team clearing a log jam*

**Fulton Hogan** - Auckland Council Healthy Waters contractors, Fulton Hogan, very kindly gifted us 500 riparian plants for stream bank stabilisation. These are being planted at various sites along the creek to help prevent erosion. They also did an amazing job of clearing out a mass of old rubbish along a small tributary - no mean feat!



*Photo (above): Fulton Hogan delivering plants to nursery*

**Te Ngahere** - have been busy finishing off some of the tasks for this last year. These include making a start on clearing some of the bamboo up by the rail corridor in Harbutt Reserve; 'drilling and filling' the next area of tree privet in the 'rock forest' opposite Pak'nSave; and undertaking site preparation and planting another area in Howlett Reserve.



*Photo (above): Te Ngahere team*

# Ua Kōwhai – September’s Spring Showers

By *Marin Adams*

One Sunday, not long after we moved to our new/old house by Te Auaunga, I invited some woman friends around to a seasonal celebration. We chose a clearing beside the awa. As we walked from tarsealed road to concrete driveway to muddy track we collected stones, shells, leaves, sticks and flowers to make a centrepiece around which we sat. It is not often that city dwellers have a chance to sit quietly in nature and reflect. We are fortunate to have the creek so close.



Photo (above): *Celebrating Spring* (Marin Adams)

However, if you wish to sit outside in Spring, the weather cannot be relied upon. Maori referred to light spring showers as ‘ua kōwhai’ as they happened at a time when the kōwhai were in bloom. Tāwhirimātea is the god of weather, including thunder and lightning, wind, clouds and storms and he is closely associated with Spring. He is a son of Papatūānuku (earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father). Tāwhirimātea is the

second oldest in the family and a powerful force as most of us well know.



Photo (above): *Kōwhai in flower* (Marin Adams)

In Te Ao Maori there are many whakatauki that reference spring and provide wisdom about how we live our lives. Takē Kōanga, whakapiri Ngahuru’ which translates, absent at planting time, close by at harvest. People who disappear during the hard work of planting in Spring but show up when food is abundant at the autumn harvest. I remember as a teenager, trying to avoid gutting fish but being very keen to eat it once smoked.

Another wonderful whakatauki is Tūngia te ururoa kia tupu whakaritorito te tupu o te harakeke. Clear away the undergrowth so the new flax shoots can spring up. This proverb uses the imagery of clearing old growth to allow new flax shoots to emerge, illustrating that to grow and flourish, sometimes one must leave old ways behind and make way for new beginnings. In our personal lives, it can include the mundane; sorting through overfull cupboards

and deleting all the messages you don’t want any more from your laptop. On the creek, it includes many tasks. Clearing dead and fallen trees, releasing plants from the weeds that can smother them, and removing bindweed, nasturtium, hemlock and prickly oxtongue while they are still in the early stages of growth. And whilst working away, there is the reward of springtime perfume from the flowers of hangehange and mahoe.

I wish you well this season as you emerge from the cold of winter to the promise of warmth and new growth.



Photo (above): *Hangehange flowers* (Jeremy Wolfe) NZ Plant Conservation Network

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<https://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Inspiring-Communities---Whakatauki-information-sheet.pdf>

<https://www.massey.ac.nz/student-life/māori-at-massey/te-reo-māori-and-tikanga-resources>

<https://teara.govt.nz/en/tawhirimatea-the-weather> (page 2)

# A Creek Resident that Lurches Up and Down

By *Marin Adams*

I know very little about insects. I notice them of course; the holes in the silverbeet, the sting of a paper wasp that I hadn't noticed within foliage, and the tiny native bees that live in holes on our neighbour's property.

Writing this article has given me a chance to delve into the fascinating world of our New Zealand damselflies – *Austrolestes colenisonis* (the blue one and largest) and *Xanthocnemis zealandica* (the red one) – such big names for small creatures. I was surprised to read that their ancestor, griffinflies, large winged insects, predated dinosaurs. Fossils show that about 270 million years ago damselflies emerged as a separate species, within the order “odonata”. Odonata meaning “toothed one” in Greek, not that damselflies possess teeth. The adults have powerful serrated jaws (or 'mandibles') that do the job instead. Māori called our local blue dragonflies Tiemieme, meaning 'to lurch up and down'. The adult males do this with their abdomen.

Damselfly larvae are common in the waters of Te Auaunga. The larvae hatch from eggs, then live in the waters of the stream so are not visible to the passerby. They swim by wriggling and use three leaf like gills that protrude from their anus, for breathing. They crawl among submerged plants and along the sides of the awa, searching for other freshwater invertebrates to feed upon. The blue damsel larvae live in the water for eighteen months and the red damsel larvae for up to three years.

The third part of the damsel lifecycle starts when the larvae climb out onto plant stems and, like butterflies, metamorphize into winged adults. At first, they have pale, colourless bodies and shining wings. They then mature with the vibrant colours that attract the human eye. Although the damselfly has Blue in its name, only the male is truly blue. The female is greener. Wendy has observed that, on the creek, she



Photo (above): *Austrolestes colenisonis* larvae Landcare Research (Stephen Moore)



Photo (above): A newly hatched damselfly by the awa



Photo (above): *Austrolestes colenisonis* damselfly Waitakere Ranges West Facebook Post



Photo (above): A mature red damselfly by the awa

sees the red often, but rarely the blue. The blue damselfly dies comparatively young, while the red damselfly lives longer and can survive many months without eating. They have a different response to predators: red damselfly larvae freeze and escape notice, while blue damselfly flee and are more likely to get caught.

The adults have many remarkable features. To regulate their body temperature, they can change their colour, going darker to receive more warmth. Members of the Odonata species are some of the most successful hunters in the animal kingdom. They catch up to 97% of the prey they target. Rather than chasing their prey, they intercept it with remarkable accuracy, predicting where it will go and striking with precision. It is reported that most of their brain power is devoted to processing images through their large eyes. They are carnivorous and capture their prey during daylight. We can be grateful for all the mosquitos they eat, remarkably, capturing them on the wing.

And how can you distinguish damselflies from their cousins, the dragonflies? Damselflies tend to be smaller and look more delicate, they have wide-set eyes, and hold their wings close to their body when at rest. And when can you see them? Check the awa out from October to May for these brightly coloured creatures.

#### **References:**

<https://www.facebook.com/matukulink/posts/as-the-weather-gets-warmer-were-seeing-more-and-more-damselflies-and-dragonflies>

<https://www.facebook.com/WaitakereRangesWEST>

<https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/tools-and-resources/identification/freshwater-invertebrates-guide/identification-guide-what-freshwater-invertebrate-is-this/jointed-legs/insects-and-springtails/damselflies-and-dragonflies/blue-damselfly-austrolestes>

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/ourchangingworld/audio/201782907/damselflies-fast-blue-and-slow-red>

# Introducing Eva

*By Gina Hefferan*

You may have noticed that we have a new secretary!

After many months of searching, we are delighted to introduce the lovely young woman who has taken on the role. Eva Manandhar was born and raised in Kathmandu, Nepal. Although Nepal is renowned for its spectacular scenery, Kathmandu is a bustling city and Eva's childhood was an urban one. Her journey into conservation work began when she gained a scholarship to study for a Masters in Interdisciplinary Water Resources Management at Nepal Engineering College. After completing her master's degree, she worked as a consultant in integrated river system resource management planning, for the Nepalese government. The initiative focused on preventing landslides and erosion in the hills, while protecting the lowlands from flooding — issues intensified by deforestation, over-extraction of river materials, and rapid unplanned urbanization.



*Photo (above): Eva in action*



*Photo (above): Eva (left) with Conservation Volunteers*

When COVID brought her work to a halt, Eva took it as an opportunity to rethink her future. In 2021, Eva and her husband Yam welcomed their son, Yashvan, to the family. Eva's husband runs a hospitality supply business in Nepal. It was he who first suggested moving the family to New Zealand. He selected it as a peaceful country, whose people value nature. He hoped that there might be the opportunity to expand tourism links with Nepal.

So last year, Eva, her husband and her young son moved to New Zealand. Before she arrived, Eva enrolled in a master's degree, to add business knowledge to her existing skill set. The Master's degree in Creative Enterprise and Innovation offered by Whitecliffe College is designed to foster entrepreneurship. Eva's focus is on ways of conducting carbon audits and greenhouse gas inventory — finding ways for small and medium businesses to measure and reduce their impact on the planet.

Eva will graduate in December this year, but by April she was already searching for volunteer opportunities online. Through Conservation Volunteers New Zealand, she first met Wendy John at a Connecting People with Parks weeding event at Waterview. In May, she took part in her first community planting event with Friends of Oakley Creek and got to know Wendy better. Wendy started sending her our newsletters, but

at the time, Eva was busy with an internship with Waiheke Resources Trust. Ten weeks later, when that internship finished, she noticed that we were still looking for a secretary. She accepted Wendy's invitation to come to her first committee meeting. At the time, Eva and her family lived in Otahuhu, which made joining our meetings tricky. She was interested in taking on the position, but it seemed too far to travel. Some personal issues came along, and they were looking to move house. Coincidentally, the very day that Eva attended her

first committee meeting was the day that they viewed a flat in Avondale. They moved a week later.

Two weeks ago, she and her son Yashvan attended a guided walk on Te Auaunga. As Wendy explained more about the history and geology of the creek, she reflected on her knowledge of the management of river systems. Working with Friends of Oakley Creek felt like a good fit. Eva is happy to have found her place in New Zealand, and we are very happy to welcome her as part of the family.

## More News

*By Wendy John*

**Sign replacements** – the interpretation signs along the lower creek walkway have recently been replaced, thanks to funding from the Albert Eden Local Board. This is another step along the way to remediating and enhancing the creek and its surrounds, post the 2023 storms.

**The construction problem beneath our feet** – further to recent articles in our newsletter about a survey of the impact of compaction of the soil from development – with the Oakley Creek catchment being included, this article was recently published on Newsroom and is well worth a read – <https://newsroom.co.nz/2025/09/26/the-construction-problem-beneath-our-feet/> And, you might like to listen to this –

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/thedetail/575600/stormwater-solutions-could-be-lying-in-our-soil>

**Mt Roskill Grammar planting** – further to the planting that was done by the students during Matariki, a few more plants were put in the ground by two kaiako / teachers, David Syme and Phoebe Lee, to finish off planting the area.

**Five curious facts about the pīpiwhararua – shining cuckoo** – the first call of the pīpiwhararua this spring was heard on the 1<sup>st</sup> September. You might like to check this out – [https://predatorfreenz.org/stories/5-curious-shining-cuckoo-facts/?utm\\_source=PFN+Trust+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=b45a81e079-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2025\\_09\\_26\\_12\\_24&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_-b45a81e079-264680197&mc\\_cid=b45a81e079&mc\\_id=ff84fc3496](https://predatorfreenz.org/stories/5-curious-shining-cuckoo-facts/?utm_source=PFN+Trust+Newsletter&utm_campaign=b45a81e079-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_09_26_12_24&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-b45a81e079-264680197&mc_cid=b45a81e079&mc_id=ff84fc3496)



Photo (above): Replaced Sign



Photo (above): Mt Roskill Grammar planting

## Seasonal gallery

Kōtukutuku (*Fuchsia excorticata*) is a New Zealand native that is the world's largest fuchsia. It is one of our country's few truly deciduous trees, losing its leaves in winter in most areas. These attractive, small flowers appear between August and December, changing, as this photo neatly illustrates, from greenish yellow to purple/red.

Other seasonal sightings on the awa include: this lovely koru on a water fern (*Histiopteris incisa*); the kānuka (*Kunzea robusta*) flowering early; flowers on the kumarahou (*Pomaderris kumeraho*) and berries on the porokaiwhiri (*Hedycarya arborea*) or pigeonwood trees.



Photo (above): Tree fuchsia flowers



Photo (above): from left to right: Water fern koru (*Histiopteris incisa*); early flowering kānuka; kumarahou flowers and porokaiwhiri berries

## Notices

**Monthly Community Working Bees:** As per normal, our monthly working bees are held on the first Sunday of each month – 10.00am-12.00noon. Check out our FB page for more information – <https://www.facebook.com/OakleyCreek/>

**Tuesday Working Bees:** Tuesday mornings 9.30am to 12.00pm. This exciting project is looking for some more regular volunteers. For more information contact Sandra - 021 166 7647.

**Friday Working Bees:** Friday mornings 9.00am to 12.00pm. We work in different locations on Friday mornings, depending on the need at the time. If you're interested let us know and we'll include you in the Friday email list so that you can join us when you are free, or contact Wendy – 027 232 6454.

**Predator Control** – if you are interested in joining our rodent control team, we are needing volunteers to assist with this. Also, we are looking for volunteers to help with the trapping on Howlett Reserve. Training and resources are provided. Contact Wendy – [info@oakleycreek.org.nz](mailto:info@oakleycreek.org.nz)

# Ngā Ringa o Te Auaunga Friends of Oakley Creek

**Chairperson:**

David Bowden

**Treasurer:**

Helen Edwards

**Secretary:**

Eva Manandhar

**Committee:**

Adrienne Stanton, Chris Brown, John Stevenson, Marin Adams, Tane Feary, Kyle Hemming, Wendy John.

**Newsletter Editor:** Gina Hefferan

**Newsletter Photos:** Unless otherwise credited, all photos are by Wendy John



Newsletter contributions and comments are welcome - email [info@oakleycreek.org.nz](mailto:info@oakleycreek.org.nz)

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 can be made directly; our bank account number is 38-9003-0978224-00.

'Give a Little' is another, easy way to give donations - <https://givealittle.co.nz/org/friends-of-oakley-te-auaunga-creek-inc>

You can also find us at <http://oakleycreek.org.nz/> and <https://www.facebook.com/OakleyCreek>

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