



Counting birds in Centennial Reserve, August 2018

Photo: Julius Yang

Newsletter No. 86

# Centennial Park Bush Society Newsletter



November 2018

## The Next Generation of CBUS Eco-Warriors

**C**ampbells Bay Urban Sanctuary (CBUS) working bees are a fantastic way to connect with the local community and we're thrilled to see more families joining regular volunteers at recent events. Children add wonderful energy and enthusiasm and impress our teams with their skill and stamina.

At our 5 August family planting day at Campbells Bay Beach Reserve, around 30 volunteers braved light rain to plant flax and oioi along the stream edge.



Todd Dorset teaching bushcraft to entranced youngsters.  
Photo: Victoria Morris

When teachers went on strike on 15 August, a tribe of kids joined the regular Wednesday Bush Rangers to help spread track metal. We had 20 kids racing up and down the tracks, moving metal with huge energy – fuelled, as always, by a delicious shared morning tea.

On 3 October, we invited kids and parents to the park for a morning outdoors. Around 45 came and this time we entertained the kids, while parents worked on the Avenue of Remembrance Track. Todd Dorset from Hakuturi Ltd captivated

the youngsters with his bushcraft skills, including flax flower making, flax dart firing and weaving. They also made dolls from raupo stems. Thanks to Anna Baine and Auckland Council for supporting this event – hopefully the first of many CBUS school holiday happenings in the park.

Along the way we're sowing the seeds of conservation in the next generation of nature enthusiasts: explaining how stream edge plantings protect our waterways and the ocean they flow into, the need to protect natives from invasive weeds, why dogs need to be on-lead on the tracks and teaching about precious native birds and trees.

While it's fabulous to have youthful energy at working bees, mostly we're just thrilled to see local kids being active outdoors and getting to know their special patch at the heart of CBUS.

Working bees are family-friendly and a great way to meet like-minded locals. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for details.

We'd love to see you at our next event!

-Victoria Morris



Mini metal movers taking a break during August's teachers' strike.  
Photo: Victoria Morris



## Facebook Refresh

Our beautifully re-vamped Facebook page **Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary NZ** went live in June and is well worth checking out. It features working bees, family events and guided park walks, plus other relevant topics eg conservation, flora and fauna information, pest control methods, green space advocacy and national events such as Conservation Week, the Great Kereru Count, Bird of the Year etc. Designer Victoria Morris says two of the page's objectives are to connect with the local community and encourage involvement and it's working. "Numbers are steadily climbing. Over 160 people like or follow the page and our posts are reaching about 2,000 people per month. We want to make sure everyone in the locality knows about our 'hidden gem' Centennial Park, cares about it and has the opportunity to enjoy it."



## Hot Dogs!

Summer's almost here and local ecologist Mette Rossaak and her gentle black lab Roxy will be among Centennial Park's many dog-plus-owner users enjoying the reserve's cool green mud-free tracks and sunlit open grassy spaces. Mette is a keen supporter of Council's sensible dog rules – which allow dogs off-lead, but under control, in open grassed areas and on-lead along the tracks.

Mette says it brings her peace of mind knowing Roxy is under control, especially when warm weather makes cooling off in the streams very tempting for dogs. "Roxy loves

the water and would jump right in if she



*Lead champions Mette Rossaak and Roxy*

*Photo: Victoria Morris*

"wasn't on her lead," says Mette. Dogs can easily damage stream-edge habitats, causing silt and debris to enter streamwaters, making them too cloudy for aquatic life to

survive. "Keeping Roxy on-lead on the tracks also shows my respect for the hard work of park volunteers, who weed, plant, maintain tracks and look after the stream network – all the things we love about the park."

**Note:** For off-lead zones in Centennial Park see Council's map on the back page.

## Good Things Take Time – and People

When I walk round Centennial Park and Campbells Bay, I am constantly remembering how things used to be: muddy tracks, weed infestations and lots of four-footed predators. We continue to find areas needing work, pest plants to remove and private landowners who still don't "get it", and we still need to expand our CBUS pest con-



*Kowhai Road Planting Day, 2010*

*Photo: Richard Hursthouse*

trol network. But overall the transformation in so many places is positive and a real joy. Looking through hundreds of park photographs going back to 2003, the main theme is people -- he tangata.

For many years we have had a regular core of volunteers turning up to Wednesday and monthly Saturday working bees (that's 60 plus working bees a year) to weed, plant, fix tracks, maintain predator control and monitoring lines and set possum traps. Without this consistent support our bay would not be in the much improved state it is. As this 2010 Kowhai Road planting photo shows, many regular volunteers are still our backbone workers. We are also lucky to have newer younger supporters making waves



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with Facebook, Bush Camps, family working bees and the like. What keeps a community project like this ticking along is feet on the ground, hands-on work and engaging more support. Kia ora and thank you everyone.

-Richard Hursthause

## Park Treasure

Centennial Park is a sanctuary for hundreds of New Zealand natives which are otherwise rare in urban environments. Look up into the spring canopy and you might spot this beauty: puawhananga, *Clematis paniculata*. It forms thick mats of luminous white flowers in the tops of trees. It is difficult to establish in the average garden -- so we're really lucky to have it in our park.



main areas needing attention are the Walking Bus Track, the Aberdeen Track from East Coast Road to Rae Road and the top of the Kohekohe Track. At the same time several rotting seats and retaining walls will be replaced. The Bush Society is grateful to the Hibiscus & Bays Local Board for funding this work.

-Richard Hursthause

## Stormwater Upgrades

Erosion is a major issue in the entire catchment. We are lucky to have so much bush because it helps prevent silt and mud washing down to the beach. However the combination of infill housing and ever expanding concreting of the valley causes huge stormwater overflows which hammer the gullies. We have been working hard over many years to plant these vulnerable areas. Council's Healthy Waters (aka Stormwater) department has been working with Morphum Consultants on a comprehensive plan for the entire Campbells Bay catchment. The plan includes reinforcing high priority areas with rocks, and other projects around the bay to help reduce erosion and improve the quality of our streamwaters.

-Richard Hursthause

## Rat Stats

From small beginnings our defence against roaming rodents has grown over the years into a network of seven lines of bait stations in the park, and another 12 lines monitored by volunteers between Aberdeen and Kowhai Roads.

The small beginnings gave us some measure of the local rat problem. During 2010 to 2013, a couple of dozen spring traps in the park scored 238 rats. Now rodents have a choice of 84 bait stations to visit in the park and nearly 100 more in the CBUS halo around the park.

All the lines are now operated on a pulsing regime: stations are baited for a month, then rested before baiting resumes. Our current baiting pulse was scheduled to start at the end of October.

Bait take statistics are gathered from each line and are recorded for analysis and stored with data from other community groups in repositories such as CatchIt.

During April's pulse more than 60 volunteer hours were spent laying and checking more than 600 baits – more than half of which were eaten.



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From small beginnings our campaign has grown into community-wide action. But more help is needed – especially to provide backup when line monitors are away during baiting periods.

Please get in touch.

*-Peter Aimer*

## Walk In The Park

Auckland Council community park ranger Anna Baine is leading a guided walk and talk in Centennial Park on Friday 16 November, from 9.45 am to 12 noon. Meet in the main car-park, opposite the tennis courts on Morton Way. Good fitness and mobility required.

## Family Bush Camp

Look out for information on our Family Bush Camp, which is scheduled for early March. This very popular overnight camp is a joint venture between Centennial Park Bush Society and Auckland Council.

### Help needed!

Would someone like to help maintain our website?  
Please email: [bushsoc@gmail.com](mailto:bushsoc@gmail.com)

## We acknowledge the support of:

**Devonport Takapuna Local Board** for funding weed control in Greville Reserve.  
**Auckland Council Parks Department** for supplying plants, track metal, rat bait, herbicide gel and equipment for volunteers.  
**Hibiscus & Bays Local Board** for funding weed control in Golf Course bush blocks.



## Contact Us

**Chair:** Richard Hursthause 021 216 1296

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**Treasurer:** Max Thomson 479 1681

**Committee:** Peter Aimer, Jan Knight, Liz Goodwin, Joe Greig, Sue Rawstron, Bob Fairbairn, Dick Downing, Victoria Morris, Fiona Davies and Jo Broad.

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Find out more and sign up to follow our blog at [www.centennialparkbushsociety.org.nz](http://www.centennialparkbushsociety.org.nz)

## Dogs on and off-lead walking map – supplied by Auckland Council



*— Dogs allowed under control off-leash in open grass areas  
All other areas in the park are dogs under control on-leash*

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