



Marvellous Matariki family planting, 2 July 2022

Photo: Victoria Morris



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Fabulous Planting And Metalling Seasons

Thank you everyone who organized, participated in, or funded the 2022 winter planting season – our best yet. In all, 5,193 native plants went in at 66 sites, including: Centennial Park, down at the beach, along stream edges, into the Campbells Bay School to Braemar Road stream project, and into Braemar Reserve. Plant purchases were funded by Auckland Council Parks, Million Metres, Devonport-Takapuna Local Board, and private landowners. Thank you! Biggest vote of thanks goes to Richard Hursthouse who



Joe Greig and small Matariki helpers.

Photo: Victoria Morris.

organised the whole season and trailered and personally planted many hundreds of plants.

Our Matariki family planting on 2 July made a stellar start. 80 people got 650 plants into a challenging site on Pupuke Golf Course. Many volunteers were from the Aotearoa Multicultural Families Society – thanks to Cheryl Han for organizing this great

support. Thanks to everyone who made the fabulous morning tea happen, from bakers and thermos-bringers, to table and gazebo lenders and clearer-uppers. Everyone loved being outdoors enjoying kai and korero, even including one disappointed coffee-drinker who requested (but couldn't get) a flat white!

As for our ongoing stream restorations, you haven't lived until you've been up to your gumboot tops in stream mud,

dealing to tobacco weed, ginger and other nasties, before replacing them with natives.

It's the best fun. And BTW thank you Callum Keer Keer for your divine home-made waffles. Legend!

Planting was followed by weeks of incredible track-metalling. Massive amounts shifted and spread on the park's network. It's strenuous work and absolutely vital. Well done heavy metallers!



Lachie and George.

Photo: Victoria Morris.

Happy Christmas Everyone!



Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary

Kumarahou

Pomaderris kumeraho is one of three pomaderris species in the park and is the most spectacular, with masses of yellow flowers in spring on small shrubby trees. Kumarahou resembles cotoneaster (watch out weeders), but is endemic to the North Island and is most often found in lowland regenerating areas, such as road cuttings, and on poorer soils.



Kumarahou in flower.

Photo: Richard Hursthouse.

To grow eco-sourced plants for Centennial Park small mesh bags were placed over spent flowers on trees at the end of Park Rise, and retrieved in December and January, when black seeds began to gather, shed from small dry capsules. Seeds were treated by pouring boiling water over them and leaving them to soak for a day before spreading out over seed-raising mix. The tray was covered with a clear dome and kept at around 30° C, under grow lights (in case they



Young kumarahou in pots.

Photo: Robyn Aimer.

This has been quite an exercise, and an eye-opener on how little is known about propagating many New Zealand native plants. Reputedly tolerant of hot, dry conditions, it will be interesting to see where these kumarahou grow best in Centennial Park – 70 were planted during the winter season.

Robyn Aimer

Rangitoto Magic

In early 2022, Rangitoto College International Baccalaureate student David Paas gathered a group of his Year 12 IB counterparts to volunteer for Centennial Park working bees. The Creativity, Service, Activity (CAS) component of the programme prompts all IB students to participate in activities outside school, explains David. “We are all friends because only around 30 students take IB, so we have got to know each other well.” David attended 10 working bees and his friends came to several each. “We gained CAS hours, built teamwork skills, muscle strength, ethical awareness of natives and non-natives, weeding, appreciation of nature and we got to know each other even better. The most challenging work was wheelbarrowing track metal up hills!”

Working bee regulars enjoyed the humour and fun-loving energy these students brought to their volunteering and greatly appreciated their awesome barrowing. David and friends are currently sitting exams and plan to study a variety of subjects at university next year, including: business administration, transport management, Japanese, maths and engineering. We wish them every success.



Paco Poon, David Paas, Liang Sun and Jonathan Hii.

Dumping – A Pain In The Park

From a few dog owners who toss poop bags anywhere except into the Council bins provided, to park rim residents who heft old pipes, building waste and garden weeds over their fences, to drive-through dumpers who leave large items like old ovens in the undergrowth – park dumping is a perfect pain. Hardworking volunteer David Hughes has shifted more than his share of park refuse and says, “Any pile is an encouragement to others that dumping is okay. It’s not. And the \$20,000 fine is costly compared with dropping rubbish in



free bins.” He also points out that Council contractors and volunteers risk injury when retrieving and disposing of heavy items. Garden weeds don’t make useful compost by the way – they just liberate more weeds into the bush. Nobody needs this extra work and the park deserves better. Please report dumpings and thanks to those who clean them up -- so we can all enjoy the park.



Dumped weed pile.

Photo: David Hughes.



Emily collects random refuse.

Photo: Jenny Chamberlain.

Guarding Against Rabbits

Centennial Park is rabbit heaven and the furry varmints particularly love nibbling the lower leaves off freshly-planted trees and shrubs. In response to the rise in rabbit numbers we now install fibre-board guards to protect the young plants rabbits like best. Teams of rabbit guard assemblers are now an essential feature of CPBS plantings. The guards we buy are New Zealand-made from recycled materials and are fixed in the ground with bamboo stakes. They protect plants from rabbits and harsh summer sun too. The guards add around \$2.50 to the cost of each plant, so, if you’d like to donate a packet of 50, plants and planters would be very grateful. The rabbits not so much.

Five Minute Bird Counts

Five minute bird counts (5MBC) have been running in New Zealand for at least 40 years and next year the system will be introduced in Centennial Park. CPBS volunteers have run two-hour monthly bird walks since November 2007, resulting in 15 years’ bird data and knowledge. These walks provide a unique, rounded record of species, habits and habitats and will continue. Meantime, if you’d like to take part in the quick -fire, five-minute version each November we’d love to hear from you. A natural interest in birds and bird calls and a couple of hours outdoors in the park are the only requirements – training in identification and data recording will be provided. Please get in touch if you’re interested.

We Need You! No Experience Necessary!

You don’t have to be a botany boffin to help the park. Runner John Pawson, a veteran of 25 marathons, didn’t know his natives when, three years ago, he switched from training in Centennial Park to volunteering. Now, after three years’ digging drainage channels, mulch and metal-moving, weeding and planting he can identify many native trees and plants and knows a lot about weeds too. “I know all the bad plants, arum, ginger, tradescantia etc and I know the native trees, the common names, not the botanical names. But that’s not why I do it,” he says. “When I stopped work I wanted to give back to the reserve where I trained for years. I like to keep fit. I enjoy the work and I enjoy the company too.”

Centennial Park has lots of opportunities for people like John who want to give back. Track-work is a great workout but patient weeding is just as vital – weeds never sleep! Or how about hosting a bait station or possum trap on your property? Or, better still, running your own baitline? Jo Broad, who runs our 30-strong predator control team, currently needs rat baiters. “The role entails four visits, over a month, replenishing bait in bait stations, followed by a two-month gap. We also need a person to record, in a computer system, data provided by baiters, trappers and monitors,” says Jo. Please ring Jo on 021 045 5000, or email: jo_broad_nz@yahoo.com if this sounds like you.

No time for the above but the park’s important to you? Donate dollars instead of hours, so we can buy plants, rabbit guards, fencing to keep dogs out of streams...and more. Your donations will be greatly appreciated and wisely and transparently spent. To everyone who already volunteers for Centennial Park, however you do it, huge heartfelt thanks. To everyone who wants to help but isn’t sure how, email:

bushsoc@gmail.com



John Pawson with a newly-planted rewarewa.

Photo: Richard Hursthouse.



Ngā mihi nui e te whanau

Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary (CBUS) has grown a lot over the last few years. Our regular park-work is well supported, especially at winter plantings. But there is another, largely hidden effort going on especially in predator control and stream restoration. We have 35 volunteers who manage bait and trap lines in the Campbells Bay catchment, with approximately 250 bait stations and 50 traps, requiring 12 visits per year each. We have seven monitoring lines, each of which is checked three times a year. About 20 properties are



Photo: Richard Hursthouse

actively involved in the stream programme, each requiring a willing landowner and a team of hard-working coordinators and volunteers. Volunteer churn is a reality so ongoing training, upskilling, and encouragement are essential. To keep track of this huge effort we are implementing a CRM (Contact Relationship Management) system, developed by EcoNet.nz especially for conservation groups. The scale of CBUS is testament to the amazing community we have in Campbells Bay and surrounds. Our efforts help nature thrive and build community spirit and cohesion. A massive thank you to everyone who is on board. If you don't have the time to physically assist, we would love your generous donation.

Richard Hursthouse

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Centennial Park Bush Society Inc.

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Find out more and **sign up to our mailing list** at

<https://campbellsbayurbansanctuary.org.nz/>

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