



Working bee morning tea

Photo: Richard Hursthouse



Newsletter No. 97

April 2024

Pretty As – But Definitely Not Wanted Here

Over summer CPBS volunteers have been focussing on pest plants, those often beautiful flowering plants early settlers brought to New Zealand for gardens, or which arrived in ballast in the holds of ships. The soil was tipped out and so the plants started to spread. Many of these were from South Africa.

Bulbous watsonias flower in November and we race against time to get these guys before myriad bulblets form on their stems. Mostly we remove spent flowers and bulblets and cut and paste the stems. At the same time, Japanese honeysuckle is trying its luck, climbing up trees and attempting to smother them. We clip the vines down low and paste the stumps with MetGel. Cut vines left in trees usually quickly disappear but honeysuckle is sneaky and keeps coming back.

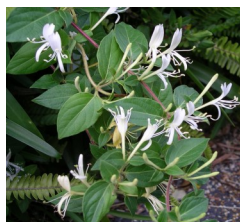
Once the watsonias are over, montbretia starts its round of pretty orange flowers. It loves the wetland areas along the Kohekohe Track, coming back each year. If the soil is soft we gently pull the bulbs out and place them, plus seedheads, into old compost bags. These are stashed discretely in the bush to allow the bulbs to rot. A couple of years later we empty clean soil out of these bags. This year volunteers have spent 165 hours just clearing montbretia from the main valley. We believe we are slowly winning. It is super satisfying



Montbretia



Bulbous watsonia



Japanese honeysuckle

to look back and see a weed-free valley full of beautiful native plants.

Got these at home? We would love you to remove them from your garden. Birds love to spread them so every bit of weeding helps protect our beautiful park.

Richard Hursthouse

Good Stream, Bad Stream

A friend of mine, who works in finance and lives in Campbells Bay, recently became interested in restoring his riparian land. I find it so encouraging and inspiring that busy people, particularly those who aren't involved in conservation, care about the state of their land and want to make a difference. And so I became involved!

First my friend worked very hard removing arum lilies, the main culprits, while I pointed out the other exotics we needed to remove: moth plant, senna (buttercup bush), taro, bangalow palms and English ivy to name a few. It wasn't hard work, in fact it was enjoyable, working together and removing what was not adding value. Whilst we were weeding, fantails flicked about our heads. We felt this was a message of thanks!

The plan is to wait a few months, to ensure every unwanted plant has gone, but, in the meantime, we are creating a restoration plan for winter planting. This will include native carex (wetland grasses), reeds and other stream-edge natives.

Native planting is key to achieving healthy waterways. It improves water quality by filtering out pollutants and acting



Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary

like a sponge controlling stormwater flows and reducing flood peaks. The vegetation lowers water temperature, which increases oxygen levels. Erosion is also reduced, resulting in less sediment sent out to sea. And on top of all that, you have more diversity in aquatic life and greater ecological quality. It's win, win, win!



Caring for streams makes a world of difference.

Photo: Richard Hursthouse

I'm very excited to be Campbells Bay's new Catchment Activator and I feel as a community we can make a difference. If you would like guidance and support in restoring riparian (streamside) land please email: viv@restorehb.org.nz and please, please when walking your dog along park tracks and stream edges, keep it on-lead.

Viv Walker

Rangitoto College Student Wins Environmental Award

Rangitoto College student David Paas received a Restore Hibiscus and Bays Environmental Award in December 2023 for his volunteering work in Centennial Park. For two years David organized and led a group of around 12 keen Rangitoto College International Baccalaureate students to help at Bush Society Saturday and holiday working bees.

Every time David's group appeared to wheelbarrow track metal and bags of mulch, or weed pest plants, we cheered. David's team brought physical strength, enthusiasm and fun to the hard mahi and worked happily alongside volunteers of all ages and abilities.

David motivated his group with information, conversation and laughter – showing how to work hard for nature and have a great time doing it. Few of the students had prior experience of digging, planting or weeding and most did not know any native plant names. These fun-filled working bees went a long way to filling gaps in their knowledge and appreciation of Aotearoa's natural heritage.

David completed his final IB exams in English, Japanese, Dutch, Maths, Physics and Geography in early November and left Aotearoa New Zealand before Christmas, to attend

university in Amsterdam.



From left: Leo Paas, IB student volunteer Jonathan Hii, Linda Paas, David Paas, Richard Hursthouse, Liz Goodwin

Photo: Jenny Chamberlain

Our heartfelt thanks to David and his IB team for their contribution to the life and health of the park.

Jenny Chamberlain

Positive Penguin Progress

As regular CPBS newsletter readers will know, four of six bronze kororā (little penguin) sculptures were stolen from their Campbells Bay beach locations and a fifth was damaged and had to be removed.

Three of the stolen sculptures were sold to a scrap metal agent who, luckily, noticed the sculptor's name, Samantha Lissette, engraved under the wing of each penguin and so we were contacted.

Using funds kindly donated by locals we have been able to repair and restore three penguins and one, Bernie, has been installed in the entrance to Browns Bay Library. If you are visiting the library and want to borrow the book telling Bernie's story you will find a copies of Sylvia and the Birds shelved under 925DURR in the local history and children's non-fiction sections. It is interesting that Bernie has been given his broken wing back. That wasn't possible with the live Bernie whom Sylvia Durrant looked after for five years.

Auckland Council kindly provided the rock base for Bernie to stand on and arranged the installation for us. Thanks also to Hibiscus and Bays Local Board for your moral support.

The popular playground penguin sculpture, donated by Sylvia Durrant and Annwynne Standish, was damaged in November 2023. It has been repaired and resurfaced and is now ready for reinstallation near the playground.





Bernie - safe at last on his library rock.

Photo: Max Thomson

Unfortunately penguin restoration project funds have run out and it is hoped more donations will be forthcoming, to allow two sculptures to be installed at the beach and a new one to be purchased to go into the coastal section of Auckland Zoo.

If you would like to contribute, please transfer your donation to the Centennial Park Bush Society's Kiwibank account 38-9001-0816766-00 and include your name and

"Penguins" in the payment details. If you would like a donation receipt for tax purposes please email thomson.max@gmail.com and I will send you a charity receipt.

Max Thomson

Pest Control in Campbells Bay

The Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary 40-strong Predator Control Team focuses on rats, possums and mice. Rabbit control is left to Pupuke Golf Club and Auckland Council. We've radically reduced possums over the last five years, with only four caught in 2023, and mice take rat bait, so it's rats that most need our attention. In favourable conditions and without control, a single pair of rats can multiply to over a thousand rats within a year – a formidable increase! We all need to do what we can to keep numbers low.

Rats damage our natural and built environments in several ways. They climb trees to reach birds' eggs and chicks in nests, eat seeds and regenerating plants, carry and spread nasty diseases, and gnaw at houses, other structures and domestic power cables. Fewer rats allows more birds, plants and invertebrates to thrive and helps reduce hospitalisations and power interruptions.

Rats depend on their ears and nose to move around, not so much their eyes. They continually excrete urine – then follow the scent trails created by themselves and others. We use a single-meal bait so any meal will kill a rat, but we bait the stations only one month in three to reduce bait in the environment and reduce the demands on our volunteer baiters.

Our rat baiting team currently needs three more baiters – can you help?

Email me, Jo Broad, jo_broad_nz@yahoo.com or phone: 021 045 5000.

A heads-up to all the Predator Control Team and anyone interested – our annual team hui will be in September, details to be advised. Many thanks to all our trappers, baiters, monitors and experimenters for your time and commitment. Campbells Bay residents and Centennial Park users frequently express their appreciation.

Jo Broad



Greg Thomson Summer Watering Team (SWAT) volunteer watering a young kowhai. Huge thanks to this summer's SWAT waterers: Joe, Max & Julie, Greg, Liz, Richard, Mark, Peter, Christine, George, Claudia and Damon – you keep the trees alive!

Photo: Donna Thomson

Well Done EcoNet!

EcoNet's CAMS weeds toolkit is a finalist in the Mondiale VGL Innovation Award – part of the April 2024 New Zealand Biosecurity Awards.

May Is Mushroom Month

Now's the time to look for mushrooms in the park. Neither animal nor plant, mushrooms are fungi. There are 7300 species of fungi in Aotearoa New Zealand but scientists think there may be 15,000 more yet to be discovered. Mushrooms are a critical part of our ecosystem because they break down plant matter and animal waste - without them we would have no soil.



Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary

As the weather cools, keep an eye out for the many fascinating species of fungi which grow in Centennial Park. You might spot this beautiful pleurotus, or white-rot fungus, growing on a dead or dying tree trunk.



Karen Brook

Save the Dates

CPBS 2024 AGM - Wednesday 19th June @ 7pm for 7:30pm, Pupuke Golf Clubrooms—all welcome!

Matariki: our popular star-gazing gathering will take place before sunrise on Friday 28th June. Details to come.

Family Planting Day: Saturday 6th July. Details to come

Contact Us

Chair: Richard Hursthouse 021 216 1296

Secretary: Jenny Chamberlain 021 057 6167

Treasurer: Max Thomson 479 1681

Committee: Liz Goodwin, Joe Greig, Victoria Morris, Jo Broad, John Kinloch and Vivienne Walker.

Centennial Park Bush Society Inc.

Email: bushsoc@gmail.com

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

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

 www.facebook.com/campbellsbayurbansanctuary/

 www.instagram.com/campbells_bay_urban_sanctuary/

We acknowledge the support of:

THANK YOU!!

A special thanks to our supporters:

Auckland Council Parks
Hibiscus & Bays Local Board
Devonport Takapuna Local Board
Pupuke Golf Club
East Coast Bays Rotary
Restore Hibiscus & Bays
Campbells Bay Stream Savers
Million Metres via Restore Hibiscus & Bays for stream restoration funding
Downer for stream weed removal
Lotteries via Restore Hibiscus & Bays for stream restoration funding
Campbells Bay School
Benefitz for newsletter sponsorship
Lika De Vito at Barfoot & Thompson for newsletter sponsorship
Bunnings for their mahi and supplies
All our wonderful donors and workers

Support our print sponsors

BENEFITZ®

→ Design → Web → Print → Signage

→ Future thinkers.

Lika De Vito

Mob: 0275 833 655 email: l.devito@barfoot.co.nz



Adding value, providing exceptional service,
supporting the community

BARFOOT & THOMPSON
LICENSED REAL ESTATE



Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary