

# Centennial Park Bush Society Inc

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[www.centennialparkbushsociety.org.nz](http://www.centennialparkbushsociety.org.nz)



## Annual Report 2012

### 1. Summary

- Membership – 162 households
- Finances are healthy with end of year balance of \$7650
- Volunteers put in 2091 hours of work in the 2011 calendar year
- CPBS continues to work on the native forest restoration of Centennial Park in Campbells Bay and in sites outside the park as part of the Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary
- Again the summer has been wetter than usual promoting strong growth of new plants
- Stan Knight continues to grow ecosourced plants
- Erosion continues to be a serious issue
- Volunteers do most of the track maintenance, as well as constructing a new detour on the Mamaku track and three new detours on the Kohekohe track.
- The Rae Rd landscaping project has been completed
- Volunteers continue to trap for possums, rats and stoats and maintain a bait line along the Aberdeen boundary.
- We continue to monitor water quality, bird life, and weed invasion

### 2. Membership

Current membership is 162 households (147 in 2011).

### 3. Finance

Our main expenditure this year has been

- felling ten large monkey apple trees in Greville Reserve, \$1300
- poisoning monkey apple and privet trees in Greville Reserve \$700
- felling 8 monkey apple trees near Beach Rd \$1932
- weed control of the Park Rise gully \$2200
- Rae Rd landscaping \$5000

Main income

- DOC grant \$10000
- Hibiscus & Bays Local Board grant \$5000 Rae Rd
- Donations \$1500

### 4. Volunteers

“Wednesday Workers” meeting every week, weeding, mulching, planting and maintaining tracks.

“Weekend Workers” work days occur every month with excellent support of up to 20 people at a time.

Jan Knight has been supervising a small crew of workers on Wednesdays who have been concentrating on weed control of our planting areas.

### 5. Bush restoration work in the main bush valley

#### 5.1 Avenue of Remembrance

We recently carried out a blitz on weeds along the Avenue over four separate work dates. We have removed more agapanthus and bamboo from the “Dugdale gully” above and below the road and replanted. We have also planted more in the “tennis gully” next to court 6.

### **5.2 Acmena replacement program**

Eight acmena were removed last year leaving five acmena remaining in the Beach Rd area. Replacement planting last year was entirely exotic species at the arborists discretion. Council has declined consent to remove these five monkey apple trees this year until such time as the replacement planting has matured, even though trees planted in 2008 are now 4m tall. Meanwhile native pigeons continue to spread the seeds into the bush.

### **5.3 Pine reduction program**

We hope to fell three more pines this year from the main bush. This will cost about \$1500 as prices of arborists seem to be skyrocketing.

The area below the flame trees where 40 pines were removed in 2007/2008 are doing well with replacements and natural regeneration growing well.

### **5.4 Wattles**

Wattles were removed on the edge of the bush near Rae Rd by council last year. Bush Society volunteers have planted this area and will add more plants this year. The remainder of the wattles here remain protected by the management plan until such time as they are legally declared pest plants.

### **5.5 Wetland**

Council is funding contractor Steve Cook to control tradescantia in the wetland area. Bindweed is making a come back and would ideally be controlled by a contractor in the next season.

### **5.6 Aberdeen Track**

Rae Rd gully has not been touched for 2 years. Erosion remains a serious issue in this gully. We spray climbing asparagus in the Rae Rd plantation regularly.

The jasmine infestation on "Joe's ridge" below the large rewarewa has not been revisited.

We have continued weed control in "Harvey gully". Setaria (palm grass) and tradescantia keep reappearing.

Under the flame trees and through to the swimming pool, council is again funding Steve Cook to control tradescantia. Below the flame trees honeysuckle requires ongoing control.

The planting under the pool, where jasmine was removed is doing well. Adjacent park trees remain a target for chopping presumably by neighbours.

Further along the area on the left where the bamboo was removed several years ago has been revisited to control *Callistachys*, Trad and jasmine.

### **5.7 Kohekohe track**

We have revisited the bush along the kohekohe track removing mainly ginger. Trad is again controlled by Steve Cook. Selaginella is still a problem which we need to address. At the top end of the track adjacent to the golf course where a huge area of bamboo was controlled is now regenerating well. Erosion is an issue in the upper kohekohe.

### **5.8 Below the 14th tee**

Our planting area at the 14<sup>th</sup> tee continues to mature. The riparian planting in the slip site on the 14<sup>th</sup> fairway is doing really well. Kowhai are now 4 metres tall.

### **5.9 Centennial Place bamboo**

We continue to revisit this bamboo gully near Centennial Place to attempt to control stubborn regrowth. At the same time we spray climbing asparagus in the pine plantations along the mamaku track. Recently seedlings of *Dracaena draco* have been discovered in this pine plantation as well as the Rae Rd plantation.

### 5.10 **The main bush weed sweep**

We carried out a systematic sweep through the main bush block in Centennial Park in 2009 and 2010. The bush was very wet this summer and we have not continued this over the summer. We are up to a stubborn area of honeysuckle in tiger country below Centennial Place.

## **6. Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary (CBUS)**

CBUS is about working with the community to improve the ecology of Campbells Bay, to provide a weed and pest free environment to welcome native birds and wildlife. In practical terms this has meant weed control in the golf club lease, particularly Park Rise bush, at All Hallows church, Greville Reserve and the corner of Huntly and Red Bluff Rise. We have made no progress with the proposed rhamnus removal project. Pest control is discussed later. We have a good relationship and have met on several occasions with the golf club.

### 6.1 **Golf club acmena**

We removed the last 4 acmena from the golf course near the 6<sup>th</sup> tee. This makes more than 50 acmena removed from the course. One remains in one of the bush blocks.

### 6.2 **16th tee**

The 16<sup>th</sup> tee restoration project is maturing and the 3 totara there are starting to take off. The blue cedars on the edge of the 16<sup>th</sup> fairway planted to replace acmena are doing well.

### 6.3 **17th fairway bank and plantation**

A wattle was removed by us from the edge of the fairway. We had a group of Conservation Volunteers join us for a morning to work in the 17<sup>th</sup> plantation. This group of 12 or so mainly overseas students displayed variable enthusiasm for attacking ginger and arum lily. At a cost of \$600 to council for the day I am not convinced this is good value for money. We have prioritised work on the plantations with the 17<sup>th</sup> top of the list, followed by those at the 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. We have met with the club about the 17<sup>th</sup> plantation and how to progress felling the dead gums. We have a quote to control the ground weeds using a contractor, then fell the dead trees (quote to fell trees is \$16000) and replant the area and move on to the next plantation. We just need some more dollars.

### 6.4 **15th tee/old workshop area**

The planting area below the old workshop and adjacent to the 15<sup>th</sup> tee has been revisited to control woolly nightshade, tradescantia, climbing dock. The three giant redwoods are growing well. This area is ready for the next stage of removing all the invasive spreading bamboo.

### 6.5 **The 4th fairway plantation**

This has been Peter Bioletti's patch. A contractor is required to control tradescantia before we replant the gully. This plantation is priority two.

### 6.6 **The 8th fairway plantation**

There is plenty to do here with ladder fern, ginger, wattles. Priority three.

### 6.7 **The 5th fairway plantation**

This is the weediest site but drains into "Park Rise Bush". It is priority four.

### 6.8 **Park Rise access path**

At the top of the path leading uphill from the cul de sac the planting site is growing slowly. Thankfully the neighbours have stopped dumping there. At the 11<sup>th</sup> tee fence line, the 2007 planting is doing well. Blue passion flower an invasive climber requires annual control. It would help if the neighbours did not throw their debris over the fence.

### 6.9 **Park Rise bush**

Natural regeneration is flourishing and we are slowly getting the main weeds - privet, wattle, ginger and climbing asparagus - under control.

"Park Rise gully", runs from the redwoods on the 7<sup>th</sup> fairway to the steep drop off to the main gully. We have spent \$4500 on initial control + \$2000 pa on maintenance weed control here funded by the DOC

grant. This fund is exhausted and we will need new money to maintain this gully and prevent alligator weed and trad returning. Volunteers planted this area in 2010, 2011 and again this year.

Last year we removed agapanthus along the edge of Tree Fern trail with neighbour consent, and a small dingo excavator, replanting with native species. So far this site is looking good

The Park Rise Bush Track to Kowhai Rd has been discovered by the community and receives a lot of positive comment. We continue to maintain this track.

Last years planting sites below the 6<sup>th</sup> tee and below the 7<sup>th</sup> green are doing well.

Two puriri planted in honour of Pat and John Morton have tripled in height since planted last year at the lowest point on the track.

Park Rise bush includes the pine plantation near the playcentre. We have planted in this area and continue to spray climbing asparagus here.

#### **6.10 Kowhai Rd restoration**

This area was planted 2009, 2010 and 2011. Jan, Wendy, and Marie do a wonderful job of controlling the weeds here. We will put a few more plants in here this year. A large dying gum behind the 3<sup>rd</sup> tee has been removed by council at our request and I am in discussions with the new arborist over what should be planted there.

#### **6.11 All Hallows Church bush**

This is now in weed maintenance mode with one site visit in the past year and volunteer control of tradescantia. We planted a kokekohe tree here last year around arbour day.

#### **6.12 Huntly Rd**

We are continuing a staged removal of honeysuckle, ginger, wattle and privet from the roadside at the corner of Huntly and Red Bluff Rise, another CBUS initiative. This is almost complete.

The council planting below Huntly Rd bridge is doing really well.

The broken retaining wall on the other side of the stream at the beach remains something we would like to see tidied up.

#### **6.13 Greville Reserve**

While not strictly in the CBUS area, we have been concerned about the acmena forest developing in this reserve and the risk to Centennial Park Bush from acmena seeds transported by birds from this reserve on Forrest Hill Rd. With the consent of the parks department we have either felled or poisoned most of the monkey apple and privet trees in this reserve. Volunteers planted karaka, rewarewa and other natives in the bush to help compensate. Devonport Takapuna Local Board have been very supportive voting \$10,000 to fund ground weed control by a contractor over the next three years. The Bush Society will plant those weed controlled areas.

#### **6.14 Campbells Bay School**

A CBUS supporter, Campbells Bay School removed a row of large acmena trees in 2010. The titoki they planted are struggling in the clay soil. I have been asked to advise on the Community Forest restoration project which I was involved in many years ago in its infancy.

#### **6.15 Rhamnus**

*Rhamnus alaternus* or evergreen buckthorn is a nasty pest plant widespread in the private properties in Campbells Bay with increasing numbers cropping up in the park. Volunteer resource is focussed on the park but I am optimistic work may start this year to remove rhamnus from private properties.

### **7. Ecosourced plant propagation**

Stan Knight continues to grow about 3000 ecosourced plants on his property. John Chapple in View Rd is also helping out with about 50 plants. Last year we planted about 1650 plants in Campbells Bay.

## **8. Erosion**

We are extremely concerned about erosion in the park. The catchment management plan was started last year but we are told it is a three year process. We have had several site meetings with council engineers and stormwater planners. We have secured some rock deliveries which have been used by the golf club to fill in a large eroded hole on the edge of the 13<sup>th</sup> fairway. Unfortunately with the wet summer we have not been able to get more rocks there to help stop erosion below the fairway. The erosion in the Asbury gully has worsened hugely. A large gully has been carved out where there was once a lovely natural valley. Large amounts of clay have been spewed out at the beautiful glade near the large kahikatea on the Kohekohe track. This is a direct result of the sheer volume of water coming off the Park Rise subdivisions. We are advocating strongly for work to be done to stop the erosion in this gully and for a boardwalk to span the mud now covering the kohekohe track. The Local Board is supportive but the process is slow. Council also put rocks below the track in the Harvey gully. More work is needed at other sites around the park, including the lower tennis club gully.

## **9. Rae Rd**

After several site meetings with councillors, contractor, parks officers, and neighbours, the local board and parks funded the revamp of Rae Rd. The Bush Society managed this process and will be planting this site with our own funds (\$1200). The cost of the landscaping was \$7000, paid by the local board (\$5000) and Parks (\$2000). We are most appreciative of the work on landscape plan, provided free by Geraldine Bayly of Kaipara Plant Centre. An opening event involving Campbells Bay School children is planned for Sat June 9, 2pm.

## **10. The track network**

Volunteers have worked hard on the track network this year continuing to do most of the track maintenance in the park. We rebuilt the upper kohekohe track bringing metal down from the 14<sup>th</sup> fairway. We have built three new detours on the Kohekohe track. The first was just above the boardwalk above the track to the wattle area. The second was a retaining wall, rail and new track to bypass the steep steps. The third was to bypass an area of track which had slipped into the creek. All the metal for these must be barrowed in from the wattle area.

The wet summer has meant we have been unable to bring metal through the golf course for the winter track program.

Council supplied new track signs which we installed. Three of these have been removed and vanished. We hope to replace these.

## **11. Nature Trail**

The nature trail guides ran out. With the new council they have had to be revamped with the new logo. This means we have been without them for 6 months.

## **12. Communications**

We put out a 4 page newsletter twice a year, now in full colour, thanks to sponsorship through Garry Browne of Print Advisor Ltd. The printing has been sponsored by Crucial Colour and now Kale Print. We are very grateful for this wonderful sponsorship.

We send out an email once a week to those on the volunteer lists.

Our website at [www.centennialparkbushsociety.org.nz](http://www.centennialparkbushsociety.org.nz) requires input. Cathy and Max have offered to help do this.

## **13. Animal Pest Control**

We now have two trap lines, patrolled by 4 volunteers, covering about 40 rat traps, 6 possum traps and 2 stoat traps in the main valley. Peter Aimer despatched at least 40 rats last year, more this year and 2 possums. Bruce Rogers has set up a network of monitoring tunnels. Council is funding a professional pest control plan for the park. Watch this space. My impression is that the dawn chorus in the valley is improving.

#### **14. Bird Counts**

Monthly bird counts continue by Alan Emmerson, Jenny Chamberlain and Liz Goodwin. People can join this early morning walk if they would like to.

#### **15. Looking ahead**

Bush blocks require ongoing community input to control pest plants and animals. CBUS is part of a wider scheme of green corridors in Auckland, in particular Northwest Wildlink, linking the Hauraki Islands to the Waitakere ranges. The committee have a comprehensive plan of action required to reduce the pest plant burden in the park including the golf course land and Greville Reserve. We now just need the funds to do the work required. There are fewer areas needing planting and some, such as the gumland scrub along the Baylis track should be off limits to planters. Ecosystems such as this have developed over hundreds of years and should not be tampered with by humans apart from judicious weed control. Our focus should be on weed control, planting only where necessary, track maintenance, and pest control to bring rat numbers to low levels. If we can keep the main bush under control more attention should be focussed on CBUS projects such as raising community awareness of the issues of pest plants, erosion and animal pests.

#### **16. Thankyou**

Thanks to Laurie Flynn and Matt Cheer of the golf club, parks officers Nicki Malone, Paul Duffy, Paul Cliffe, Danielle Hancock, and Matthew Woodside for their support with plants, spray gear and supplies, tools, contractors and materials. Thanks to Andre Le Claire and now Adrian Lamont, parks arborists, who have to put up with us. Thanks to Recreational Services for removing multiple piles of weeds. We particularly appreciate the support of Julia Parfitt and the Hibiscus & Bays Local Board as well as Chris Darby and the Devonport Takapuna Local Board. Thanks also to Bruce Rogers for the superb job he does caring for the park grass areas.

Special thanks to our committee, the hard core of volunteer workers, especially Stan and Jan Knight for giving up your garden for our plants. Thanks to Jenny Chamberlain for her secretarial and newsletter skills, and Max Thomson and Marg Palmer for handling the funds and Arnold Elley our honorary auditor. Our regular crew of Bob and Daphne Fairbairn, Stan and Jan, Joe Greig, Steve Phillips and Peter Aimer form the backbone of the workers in the park. Thanks too to Cathy Roughan, Liz Goodwin and Dick Downing.

Thanks to the pest control team – Bruce Rogers, Peter Aimer, Kevin Dawkins, Eve Downing, Julia Adams and Paul Brosnahan.

I would like to especially acknowledge Peter Bioletti whose health has meant he is not able to keep up with committee or park duties. Peter's input supervising community service workers and in particular maintain the bush around the 4<sup>th</sup> tee has been superb.

Richard Hursthouse  
Chair  
May 2012