



Champion Bird Lady fundraisers, from left: Rosa Morris, Charlotte Behrent, Violet Behrent and Celia Morris

Photo: Victoria Morris

Newsletter No. 85

Centennial Park Bush Society Newsletter



April 2018

Family Bush Camp 2018



On the first Saturday in March, Centennial Park Bush Society hosted its second Family Bush Camp. After the success of the 2017 inaugural event, local families had been eagerly awaiting details of this year's camp. And from the feedback we received they weren't disappointed!

Over 40 people -- primary school children, plus parents -- camped overnight in perfect conditions. Activities included nature walks, flax weaving, a sausage sizzle, bug hunting and of course the highlight: toasting marshmallows over an open fire, carefully managed by local fire officer John Barlow.

The aim of the camp is to connect with local families and get them into the park for a memorable outdoor experience. We hope to be welcoming back some of the campers at park working bees in the not too distant future.

A very big thank you to Hibiscus & Bays Local Board and Seaweed for their support. And a special shout out to Auckland Council Parks Department staff Paul Duffy and Anna Baine - who put in so much of the hard work needed to pull it off. These camps are a great example of what can be achieved when a local community group works in partnership with Council. We hope to be able to repeat the fun in 2019.

-Dick Downing

Penguin Rescuers



Community Constable Penny Rusbatch holding rescued penguin, with Sylvia Durrant

By the time you read this you may have seen the signs near the little blue penguin statues by Campbells Bay Reserve. You may also be aware of the problems we had with vandalism when the statues were first installed. Thanks to the vigilance of residents and increased surveillance by visitors, we seem to have things under



control and, due to generous donors, the damaged statue has been repaired.

Recent plantings around the reserve, completed by Centennial Park Bush Society, and the delightful statues, increase the pleasure of visiting this end of the beach and help raise awareness of the wonderful work “Bird Lady” Sylvia Durrant and “Penguin Lady” Annwyne Standish do to help injured native penguins.

Campbells Bay can be proud our rock pools, at low tide, allow Sylvia and Annwyne, along with trusty dog Missy, to give recuperating penguins a regular swim, thereby helping the birds regain strength for release back to their natural environment. Please come to our celebration at the rock pools at 11am, Saturday 14 April and see Sylvia, Annwyne and Missy working with their current penguins.

Our thanks to two local families, especially Rosa and Celia Morris and Charlotte and Violet Behrent, who organised and ran a highly successful roadside stall on Saturday 10 March, in support of the Bird Lady’s work. These young wildlife champions (pictured on the front page) raised over \$500 to help Sylvia feed the birds she cares for.

-Max Thomson

Stream Restoration Project



Short fin eels - image doc.govt.nz

Campbells Bay Stream is a six-kilometre urban waterway with many high-value ecological areas along its course. But its water quality and habitats are at risk. Numerous stormwater discharge inputs which accompany housing development, have caused historic and ongoing erosion, which degrades the water quality.

The Stream’s main two tributaries – the north and south branches - originate on the 40 hectares of Centennial Reserve leased by Pupuke Golf Club. The north branch flows past residential properties within Campbells Bay, whereas the south branch runs through Centennial Park.

Centennial Park Bush Society has kick-started a Stream Restoration Project. In November 2017, volunteer ecologists walked the stream banks, surveying the stream’s condition and assessing its ecological values. Observations identified both good and bad areas and confirmed sediment input from erosion is a major issue. However, many stretches of vegetated stream margins, where native canopy provides shade, were in very good condition.

All historic water quality and stream ecology monitoring data, which Auckland Council and Waicare gather yearly, have since been reviewed and a Stream Restoration Plan has been drafted, to identify areas where stakeholders can help restore and protect the stream – enhancing work already identified and implemented by Council.

Future work in conjunction with Council, may include: ongoing stream monitoring, lining stream beds, invasive weed reduction and managing stormwater inflows. Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity is a key aim. Increasing awareness, particularly among residents whose properties back onto the stream’s north branch, will be a priority. Stream-edge residents who wish to learn more about caring for the important waterway at the bottom of the garden can email: fionadavies@windowslive.com

-Fiona Davies

Pest Free Centennial Park and Campbells Bay

That’s the aim and we are making progress, especially with our war on rats. Our monitoring tunnels continue to show a greatly reduced rat infestation. Yet rats invade the park from surrounding properties. Our CBUS (Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary) bait lines between Aberdeen and Kowhai Roads play a vital role in stemming this invasion.

The November 2017 newsletter acknowledged the very generous donation of 10 automatic resetting rat traps, which were deployed along the bush-clad north branch of Campbells Bay Stream between Park Rise and Beach Road. The latest result from this line alone is: 30 rats in three months – a rat every three days.

We need more of these modern traps. They are safe among pets, free of toxic baits and do not need constant rebaiting and resetting – the Bush Society welcomes donations towards the purchase of more of them. Also welcome would be offers to look after a new CBUS line, or perhaps act as a back-up monitor for an existing line of



bait stations. The task of monitoring a line once it is set up, is neither difficult nor time consuming under the pulsing regime now followed, in which stations are baited and checked four times in each of the months of January, April, August and November. Each check takes about one hour.



Peter Aimer talking to young campers about pest control

In the park, bait line monitors have also moved to the same pulsing schedule as practised by CBUS monitors. Experts assure us that pulsing is as effective as baiting continuously, while releasing less toxin into the environment and causing less work for volunteers.

-Peter Aimer

Coming Soon! To a motel near you!

There are weta in Centennial Park and probably in your backyard. They are nocturnal, flightless and live for about two years. Weta, *Hemideina thoracica*, are about 4cm long and can bite, scratch and hiss but really prefer to go away and hide. Their defence is looking large and spiky and they will arch and wave their back legs.

Weta live in tree burrows called galleries which they enter using holes formed by other beetles and moth larvae, or where branches have broken off tree trunks and rot has set in. Weta will enlarge the entrance to their gallery by chewing away the bark at the opening. Their favourite tree is marbleleaf or putaputaweta, which also means “many wetas”. They use the entrance holes made by puriri moth caterpillars – which also like this tree.



Auckland tree weta - image projectnoah.org

Weta eat lichen, leaves, flowers, seedheads, fruit and small insects. Females are smaller than males and have what looks like a stinger but which is actually an ovipositor – for laying eggs in rotting wood or soil.

Centennial Park Bush Society has commissioned the construction of six new weta motels, to be installed along the tracks. You will be able to see weta in their galleries, protected by clear plastic. But shut the door afterwards because weta like the dark.

-Jan Knight

Centennial Park Bush Society AGM

13 June, at 7.30pm

Campbells Bay School Staffroom

Please come along to socialise with other Centennial Park and CBUS supporters and hear guest speaker Fiona Davies, principal environmental scientist with AECOM engineering environmental consultancy – talk about planning to restore the health of all the streams in Campbells Bay.



Can You Help Sponsor Pest Free Campbells Bay?

Thanks very much to all those kind residents who supported our sponsorship drive in November 2017. We still need funds to purchase bait, bait stations, traps and other gear to make Campbells Bay Pest Free. We would love your support to help purchase these items.

Bait Station \$15 x _____ = \$ _____

Bucket of rat bait \$115 x _____ = \$ _____

Rat trap \$5 x _____ = \$ _____

Goodnature resetting rat traps \$180x _____ = \$ _____

Timms Possum trap \$40 x _____ = \$ _____

All donations to the Centennial Park Bush Society are tax deductible.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Existing member: yes/no Please notify me about Wednesday work days: yes/no or weekend work days yes/no

I would like to join the baitline monitors team: yes/no

Donation: _____

Direct Credit: Centennial Park Bush Society Inc. a/c 389001 0816766 00 and email: bushsoc@gmail.com with receipt address details;

Or post to: P.O. Box 31 677, Milford 0740; or deliver to: Max Thomson, Treasurer, 16 Sandford Street, Campbells Bay

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 Park Rise Bush and the 5th fairway clock.



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