

Centennial Park Bush Society Inc

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www.campbellsbayurbansanctuary.org.nz



Chair's Annual Report - June 2020

The Bush Society's main focus is to foster the health of our environment in Campbells Bay by controlling pest plants and predators, planting native plants, improving stream health and raising awareness in the community.

1. Pest Plant Control

1.1 Volunteers

Our Wednesday and monthly Saturday teams continue to get through a great deal of pest plant control. We have worked in all areas of the park and in Greville Reserve and Campbells Bay School Community Forest. This year we were assisted by a team of Rangitoto College students led by Hugo Depelle who removed a huge area of bamboo near the 15th tee, much agapanthus and also removed lots of inorganic rubbish from the bush. We hosted a small team from Chorus.

1.2 Council Funded Eco-contractors

Centennial Park is classified as a "general reserve" for the purposes of council funded weed control work. This only started in 2018. The park eco-contractors, Wildlands, are controlling a very limited suite of weeds in the main reserve area and Park Rise Bush.

1.3 Bush Society Funded Eco-contract work

With funding from the Hibiscus & Bays local board we were able to fund John Barber to control pest plants in the 4th, 8th and 17th fairway blocks of the golf course. He is also controlling pest plants in Campbells Bay School Community Forest and Greville Reserve funded by a Takapuna Devonport Local Board grant. We have funded Wildlands to control arum, tradescantia and alligator weed sites.

1.4 Wilding pines

The Bush Society has consent to fell 3 pines per annum. We did not fell any large pines in 2019. Wilding pines are an ongoing issue which volunteers address.

2. Planting

2.1 Volunteers

We planted a total of 1900 plants in multiple sites in the reserve and surrounds, mostly funded by council but also some plants were grown by John Chapple and Eric Martin and some large grade trees were funded by the society. The bigger planting days were at Greville Reserve, the old workshop site, with a huge family day around Rae Rd.

2.2 The Warehouse Group

A large group from The Warehouse planted about 700 plants at the 18th tee mulch site.

2.3 Healthy Waters

Council supplied another 700 plants which our volunteers planted in about 12 riparian sites around the bay after the major stream strengthening work done over summer 2018/2019.

2.4 The Dairy Garden

We continue to maintain this demonstration native plant garden with regular forays to maintain and add to this garden. We are also upgrading gardens at Huntly Rd.

2.5 Drought

We suffered the worst drought for at least 15 years over summer. This resulted in a higher mortality at our planting sites. Volunteers worked hard to keep our larger trees alive.

3. Predator Control & monitoring

3.1 Rat baiting and trapping network

Rats and possums pose a significant threat to our wildlife. Control of these pests results in a proliferation of native birds and invertebrates which is exactly what we are trying to achieve in the Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary. Volunteers continue to maintain a comprehensive rodent control bait station network of about 100 bait stations in the reserve under the supervision of Peter Aimer. The CBUS network of bait stations and self-resetting traps on 12 bait lines in private land is working well. We have only 2-3 bait lines remaining to be filled. We also have 4 DOC200 traps in the reserve.

3.2 Extra bait stations and traps

We have bait stations, bait, rat and possum traps available for residents to use.

3.3 Possum champion

John Kinloch has taken on the role of possum champion, installing 30 Trapinator traps in the reserve. John's small team is having great success catching a surprising number of possums.

3.4 Rabbits

Rabbits are proliferating and spreading right down as far as the tennis club. Chris Goodwin is working on a prototype dog and human proof rabbit bait station. We will make and install at least 10 of these and will be looking for volunteers to monitor these around the bay.

3.5 Predator monitoring

Bruce Rogers is monitoring two lines of 10 monitoring tunnels in the reserve and Chrissy Cunningham is monitoring two lines in the bay – one on View Rd and one near the beach. Peter Aimer monitors a line in Park Rise Bush. These are checked three times per year. Rat presence, according to these tunnels, is still very low despite a rise in bait take last year likely due to the mast year conditions.

3.6 Wildlife Monitoring

Monthly bird counts have been continued by Jenny Chamberlain, Liz Goodwin and others.

4. Healthy Streams

4.1 Riparian planting

Much of the planting we do is focussed around gullies to improve stream health and reduce sedimentation.

4.2 Golf Course

Adair Brimelow is working on a survey and plan for improving storm water management on the golf course.

4.3 Stream savers

The Stream savers group working in the northern branch of the stream ran a wonderful open day at the day care centre and are working with residents on weed control and planting. We are working on this with Restore Hibiscus & Bays and Million Metres, which will see good funding and possibly a paid coordinator to work with private landowners.

4.4 Stream monitoring

Fiona Davies has commenced regular fish monitoring in our streams with fish traps funded by the Bush Society. Waicare monitoring is ongoing.

4.5 CBS to Braemar

The Bush Society is working with the Castor Residents and Ratepayers Assn on a plan for the stream from Campbells Bay School to Braemar reserve. So far we have gained consent from all the landowners and will be working with Healthy Waters and the council biodiversity team to progress this plan. The first sign of progress has been Mette Rossaak's lockdown backyard weed control project near the bottom of the CBS Community Forest !!

4.6 Dogs off leash

We welcome dogs in Centennial Park, but Council bylaws state that dogs should be on leash in bush tracks. The main issue with off leash dogs is significant damage to the bush and stream from large dogs entering and exiting. We have installed appropriate signs at every entry point to inform owners of the dog bylaws. We also have fenced off sections of the stream to prevent off leash dogs trampling the stream edges and native vegetation. This is paying dividends as vegetation recovers naturally. More work needs to be done by council to ensure compliance with bylaws.

5. Track/Road network

5.1 Volunteer work

Volunteers had less to do last year on tracks after the major council funded upgrade of the track network. There is always plenty to do in winter to keep drains clear and top up track metal from strategically placed piles around the reserve.

5.2 Track Signs

New direction signs were installed by council after considerable input from the Bush Society.

5.3 Park Rise to Baylis

Council has plans to upgrade the path from the Park Rise cul de sac around to the top of the Baylis Track for safety reasons. While we were consulted on this and are happy with the safety improvements, we are not happy with approximately 120 square metres of concrete planned for near the 10th tee. In a catchment already under stress from stormwater this is ridiculous. It is also completely unnecessary and a waste of ratepayer funds. Feedback from the Bush Society has been ignored.

5.4 Morton Way

We are concerned about the deteriorating state of Morton Way. Asphalt and cobblestones are breaking up and roadside carparks are eroding out. There is, as yet, no plan to remedy this. The railings are a mess and we have asked for these to be replaced.

6. Community Engagement

6.1 Newsletter

Jenny Chamberlain edits our newsletter, published in April and November, and Nadine Hollier puts it together beautifully. Printing is fully sponsored by Barfoot & Thomson and Benefitz. 1500 are printed and distributed throughout the bay with an extra 1000 going to Campbells Bay School in April this year.

6.2 Mailchimp

We send out an email once a week to those on the volunteer lists. People can sign up and disconnect as they wish.

6.3 Social Media

Victoria Morris manages our Facebook page and Instagram with excellent engagement.

6.4 Website www.Campbellsbayurbansanctuary.org.nz

Our website has had a major overhaul with great assistance from volunteer Caleb Watson. Take a look.

6.5 Nature Trail

Dick Downing distributes about 700 nature trail guides to Rae Rd and the start of the nature trail. We have started on a refresh of the guide and are looking at how the trail could be improved.

6.6 Plant labels

East Coast Bays Rotary has funded five small tree ID signs which will soon be installed.

6.7 Park Camp

We held our fourth successful family camp in March. About 20 families pitched tents, went on bush walks, played games, made damper on the fire and went on a night bug hunt. Thanks again to the camp subcommittee and to Paul Duffy and Anna Baine from council.

6.8 Restore Hibiscus & Bays

This new umbrella group is working with all the ecology groups in the local Board area to accelerate environmental outcomes by assisting with predator control, pest plant control, stream health and funding. Watch this space.

6.9 Management Plan Review

Council is preparing an omnibus local parks management plan for all Hibiscus & Bays Reserves with supplements for reserves such as Centennial Park. The draft has been approved by the Local Board and will soon be out for community feedback. We will be encouraging you to submit on this plan.

7. Thank You

Our genuine thanks to:

- Council Parks Officers Paul Duffy, Anna Baine and Dan Marrow for their support with plants, chemicals, tools, and materials. We welcome new park ranger Sinead Brimacombe.
- Matt Owen, GM and Mat Cheer, head groundsman of the golf club for their assistance
- Wildlands for council funded weed control
- John Barber of Rahopara for weed control in Campbells Bay School, Greville Reserve, 4th, 8th 17th bush blocks
- Hibiscus & Bays Local Board for funding support
- Barfoot & Thompson and Benefitz for sponsoring our newsletter
- Our committee and the hard core of dedicated volunteer workers
- Arnold Elley - our honorary auditor
- Our predator control and monitoring teams
- And all our wonderful donors.

Richard Hursthouse
Chair
June 2020