**CONVENOR’S REPORT**

Once again, it is my pleasure to present this report on the progress and commitment of this small band of people who are the brains and the brawn behind Landcare. Our current financial membership is approx. 60 and as our organisation enters its 21st year, I feel that our presence in this community is a good thing!

Our nursery has been operating for just over a year and I wish to acknowledge the dedication and hard work that Adam has contributed to this project. It's rather frightening though, when you see the number of voluntary hours that are required to keep the nursery running efficiently and you wonder where the next generation of helpers will come from. Adam keeps the volunteer workers busy and it's a happy group who willingly come to help out each month. The community planting days are when all that labour of love comes to fruition and the plants are finally put into the ground in the public reserves etc on the Peninsula.

Once again, I wish to acknowledge all members of the committee for their on-going commitment to Landcare - to Anna and Ian McNaughton for the many hours spent arranging the delivery and distribution of the possum bait and filling of bait stations etc. and to Anna for her role as Trees for Survival contact person in this area and the work she does helping the local school children gain a life-long love of growing trees; to Eric Gillott for looking after our finances and making sure the funding received from the various organisations is spent wisely; to Margaret Makgill for her willingness to get stuck in and do what's needed; to David Craig who, after 20 years as a committee member, is a mine of information on anything happening on the Peninsula, both past and present; to Gary and his trusty tractor who is always ready to help out with any fencing and other manual work; and, lastly, to Anna White, who is an absolute gem and who has the responsibility of endless letter and report writing, phone calls and personal visits in order to get things moving in the right direction. Thank you to you all - it's not always easy when tough decisions need to be made or there's dissension among us, but as a group, I feel we work well together and all have our different strengths.

It's been another busy year with walks being arranged at Antonia & David's property at Labour Week-end and over three adjoining properties in Pollok at Easter. Our thanks to those landowners who willingly allow participants to walk over their farms to take in the magnificent views and scenery and to view re-vegetation and other projects on those properties.

During the year we held a Mustelid workshop here at the Nursery; our committee members attended a Biosecurity/Biodiversity meeting organised by Auckland Council staff which included a follow-up meeting 6 months later; Landcare members have been on a couple of 'seed collecting' visits to local properties; two

beach cleanups at Hamilton's Gap have been organised and well attended and we are represented each month at the public Local Board meetings in Waiuku.

The Pest Control Project is on-going and I thank all those who are out there, regularly topping up bait stations and generally helping to keep the pest numbers down. Without the commitment of the landowners and volunteers, we'd be losing the battle in our fight to rid our Peninsula of pests. The Pest Control programme is funded on an annual basis by Auckland Council and that funding is currently $50,000 per annum (equating to $2.20/ha - elsewhere in NZ pest control is $80 - $100/ha). For our 2014/15 funding we have not yet had confirmation that this will be forthcoming, but have sufficient reserves in hand until the end of the year. So we wait now until Council's decision on future funding which will happen around September/October.

I would like to acknowledge Peter Shepherd who has been Ian's right-hand-man this past year and has made big in-roads to keeping possum numbers down in the northern part of the Peninsula. Sadly for us, Ian has indicated he would like to take a step back from his role as Pest Control Officer and I'd like to say a big 'thank-you' to Ian for his dedication, his down-to-earth approach when dealing with landowners and his commitment to the work he's undertaken for the past 6 or 7 years - and I know Anna has been right there helping with computer work, phones calls etc.

During the year Anna White indicated the need for a new website which was supported by the committee and, to this end, this project is under way and will, all going well, be up and running in the not-too-distant future. It's a big, complex project and will be aimed at incorporating online community conversations, e.g. facebook and twitter. The need to reach a younger audience and try to get them involved, we feel, is important.

Our monthly meetings are always well attended and usually last for 4 hours, where there is plenty of discussion, decision-making and the odd light-hearted moments. My thanks to Kate for ably recording these meetings and for her presence in the office 3 days each week. I know this past year has had its difficulties for you, Kate, but we do appreciate the work you do and for being our 'face' to the community.

Finally I'd like to express my appreciation to the two Anna's and Adam for keeping Landcare in the public eye when they contribute articles to The Peninsularama and EnviroNews. Communication is important if we are to make the public aware of environmental issues and concerns in our community, so thank you to you all and best wishes for the year ahead.

Alison Marson

16 June 2014.