

Enviro News



**Awhitu Peninsula
Landcare Inc**



Manukau Harbour researchers keen to hear from locals and visitors

An online survey led by AUT about the Manukau Harbour is running until the end of April, at www.manukauharcoursurvey.co.nz.

The more people participating, the more can be learnt about Auckland's second largest Harbour.

It seems we often read about

Waitemata Harbour, and investment being directed east and north into environmental initiatives, but there is very little data publicly available about the Manukau.

If locals don't speak up about our Manukau Harbour - such an important natural resource - who will?

Jill Naysmith, Franklin Local Board, explains: "The intention of the research is to be able to use the data to put a proposal to Auckland Council / Ports of Auckland seeking the re-opening of Onehunga Port to public access. This has significant economic, social and recreation

benefits to communities surrounding the Harbour and, through those things, brings constant attention to the environmental wellbeing of the Manukau Harbour."

We're all for that.

Above: Manukau Harbour from Wattle Bay.

Welcome to Issue 38 of EnviroNews, our Awhitu Peninsula Landcare newsletter. The long hot summer days are coming to an end and autumn is upon us. It's time to celebrate the life about to be created in our local streams. Read about how that magic happens in our So Far, So Good article. Talking of life being created - Landcare volunteers are being kept exceptionally busy in our community plant nursery, germinating locally-gathered seeds and tending to all the gratifying number of resultant seedlings, as we prepare for a busy planting season ahead - come and join us!

Prolific Autumn needs increased pest control



The recent long, fine spell of weather has seen many of us relishing 'life outdoors'. The more observant amongst us will have noticed native trees fruiting prolifically. All of us involved in controlling pests have played a part assisting the obvious health of these trees. Of course, increased fruit also means the ideal habitat for pests such as possums! We all know that sex and food are the two main drivers for wild animals. The food is there and autumn is possum breeding season. So we humans - being the possum's only predator in this country - need to step up our control activity accordingly. Regular Timms trap baiting, or filling bait stations now and again in a month's time, is a really effective way to disrupt the breeding cycle of a possum. Let's do it! Feel free to contact us for advice.

Above: Prolific Kahikatea Autumn fruiting, Awhitu.

Easter Sunday outing explores wetland plantings

Sunday 20 April (Easter Sunday) is the date for our next Awhitu Landcare Walk, starting 2pm.

We will be exploring hills just south of Pollok Village - look out for parking signs on the main Awhitu road, north of the Given/Cochranes intersection.

George Flavell, kaumatua of Ngati Te Ata, will be walking us over the pa site on the Craig property, with David Craig leading the circuit which takes in coastal views and some high-quality, mature bush.

There is also the opportunity to view extensive riparian and wetland restoration plantings, including Trees for Survival plantings completed by Waipipi School.

The farmed grassland supports the grazing of dairy youngstock and beef cattle.

We would like to thank David Craig and family, and neighbouring owners - Cheryl Skinner, the McConnell family, and Helen Sharp, for opening their gates to us.

Bring good footwear, hats and water. Reasonable level of fitness required. The nearest toilets are at

Waiuku or Matakawau. Gold coin donation to assist Landcare projects is always appreciated. Below: Walkers can view wetland restoration plantings



New home for Trees for Survival - Awhitu School

Awhitu District School has moved its Trees for Survival growing operation into the Awhitu Landcare community nursery - with the approval of Waiuku Rotary, sponsors since Awhitu School began the programme in 1998.

The establishment of the community plant nursery at Matakawau, on a site adjoining Awhitu School, made the move a practical one.

The new nursery is a state-of-the-art growing facility, with high windcloth to keep the Peninsula winds at bay.

Another huge plus has been the ability to run the schools' regular working bees - from setting seeds to potting-up, with weeding in between - within the nursery area, which has both outdoor and in-

door benches able to be worked on, depending on the weather. The hand-carts for moving crates of plants are a great novel-

ty, enabling the children to move heavy crates full of plants.

The Awhitu School Trees for Survival team,

headed by teacher Alison Hammett, has recently been awarded a Kowhai Award for outstanding work with the programme.

Growing their own native plants from seed gathered at the Awhitu Regional Park has become an annual routine for the children, fitted into the busy school programme.

Parents carpool and park ranger John Allen demonstrates the different seed types before leading the collection.

The nursery germination area, which has light mist watering, should ensure record germination this year.

Pictured left: Trees for Survival - Awhitu School youngsters are enjoying their new home at the community nursery.

