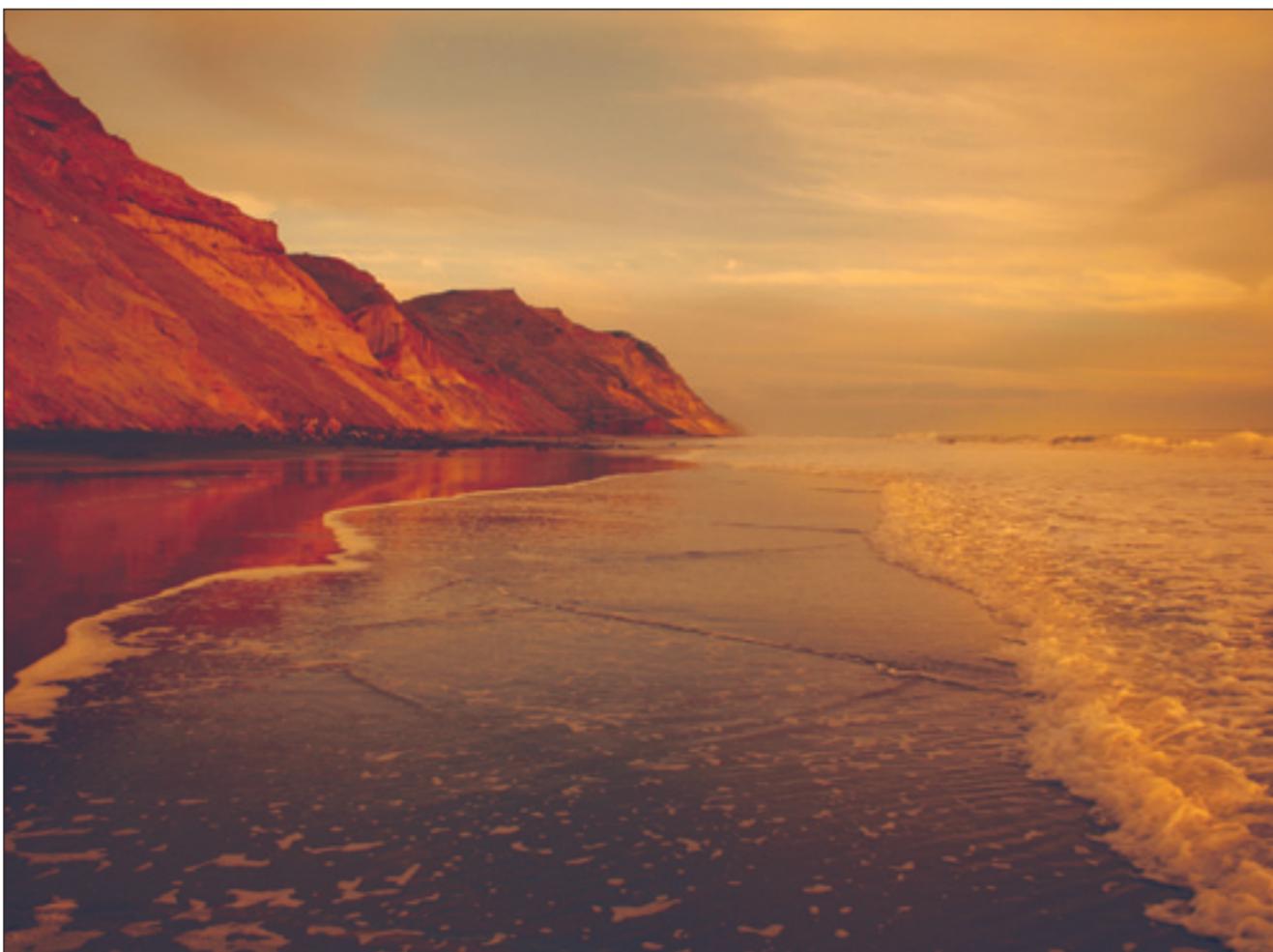




No plastic - fantastic!

Join us at the inspiring Waimatuku/Hamiltons Gap, *pictured right*, for a Beach Clean Up on March 10th at 4pm. Please bring sturdy footwear and gloves.

The new beachcombers



In times past, a walk on the our west coast would be an opportunity to fossick for treasures washed ashore. Ambergris, tropical shells, coconuts and the odd beached whale were the occasional bounty, delivered to us by the tides.

Sadly, the most common find these days is likely to be the detritus of our modern lives. The high tide mark is more often marked by a line of plastic than seaweed and our children's bare feet are endangered by more than just hot black sand.

The huge majority of beach rubbish is plastic. Besides being downright ugly, these plastics pose a threat to both our environment and us. They don't decompose - they just get ground into smaller fragments, more likely to be eaten by marine animals. Once swallowed, if they don't directly kill the animal (most do), the toxins they contain are released and enter our food chain.

Most beach rubbish has been washed out to sea from our streams and our stormwater drains. Litter reduction and riparian planting of streams will greatly help reduce this outflow and removal from the beaches will stop it being washed back out to sea.

Holiday Hours

We will be closed from Wed 21st Dec until Mon 16th Jan.
For urgent bait requirements, please contact Ian on 235-0851.

Successful planting season

Our major project this year has been at the Awhitu Central Reserve at the end of Kemp Road. Three plantings were undertaken and well over a thousand plants have been added to the scrub and wetland surrounding this ancient bush block.

It is difficult now to remember the state this site was in - head high gorse and pampas. With lots of volunteer effort and a tiny bit of council funding it has become a valuable commu-

nity resource for the Awhitu of the future.

A small planting of flax at Hamiltons Gap/Waimatuku was combined with a working bee to replace parts of the storm damaged fence.

It was encouraging to see that our dune plants which survived the winter onslaught have started to gather the windblown sand around them as expected. With time and favourable conditions they will eventually form a new dune system which will be more

storm resilient than any man made structure.

Project Crimson provided many young Pohutukawas for plantings at both the Pollok Wharf Reserve and the Manukau Heads Light-house.

In the case of the Light-house, Landcare volunteers assisted a team of pupils from Waiuku College to plant, weed and tidy up this popular visitor area.

Below: A wetland planting at Awhitu Central completed a successful season



Step out, and back in time

Another of our popular Anniversary Weekend walks will take place on Sun 29th January, starting at 1pm.

This will be a 3-4 hour walk to view historical sites, QEII covenanted bush, thriving wetland, a purpose-planted bird corridor, and a waterfall.

We are hopeful that

George Flavell, Ngata te Ata, will join us again, to paint a picture of the landscape as it was when the Peninsula was dotted with Maori pa sites.

•Please bring your own refreshments

•Ensure you wear good sturdy footwear - an average level of fitness is re-

quired

•Nearest toilet facilities are Waiuku, Te Toro or Matakawau

•Paddock parking, access from Awhitu Rd just south of J.Renall Rd (look for the sign)

•A gold coin donation would be appreciated

Shadehouse project update

After great news in August that Council will lease us a small area on the Matakawau Reserve for a shadehouse to raise eco-sourced native plants, we would like to be able to report that this project is full steam ahead..... unfortunately it is more like 'freeze frame' at the moment.

We have recently learnt that ASB Community Trust has granted us a portion of the funding for which we applied (grateful thanks to ASB Trust).

We have an application in to Council for assistance with infrastructure costs, and as

we write we are awaiting confirmation of the outcome.

We are still short at least \$20,000 for this project and as it is a constant struggle to keep the Landcare operation going on a month by month basis - \$20,000 seems a very high hurdle.

But, the season of goodwill is upon us and we remain optimistic. We are totally committed to this project which we believe will be of tremendous benefit to the community and the environment - land, waterways and harbour - for generations to come.

Pull out a boneseed this summer!

A common sight around our coastlines at this time of year is a bright yellow flowering shrub. To the uninitiated the spot of cheerful colour can seem quite welcome - to those who recognize this plant as an invasive weed it has quite the opposite effect. Boneseed, *pictured right*, is very easy to pull out when it is young and we encourage everyone who sees it to please do so. Best time to pull is during summer when it is easy to identify with its yellow daisy like flowers, before it seeds.

