

Peninsula Enviro News

Awhitu Peninsula Landcare Inc.



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From Your “new” Convenor

As the “baby sitting convenor” of Landcare I would like to thank our departing convenor David Millett who will probably be best remembered for his fantastic efforts coordinating the removal of car bodies from many Peninsula properties; a task that proved testing and frustrating but ultimately successful and popular.

Though I am working from the grass roots with Trees for Survival and the land care planthouse I plan to help maintain the fantastic momentum APLCG has achieved in pest control, zero waste/recycling, employment, marram planting, revegetation and reserve plants. I cut my community involvement teeth at Playcentre (7 years) and Pony Club (25 Years). Only time will tell whether this grounding sees me through challenges for Landcare.



I close on a sad note. The Peninsula recently lost one of its most tireless workers for community benefit - Helen Hirst. Helen was always among the first parents to turn-up whenever Trees for Survival needed help. She is greatly missed.

Anna McNaughton, Convenor



David Millett Reports from Overseas

My 18 months as Convenor has seen some remarkable achievements by the dedicated and enthusiastic people in Landcare, but it is time to sound a note of caution for the future.

Peninsula residents have already noticed huge improvements to the health of plant life on their property because of the highly successful possum eradication programme carried out by Landcare's Glenn Knight in association with the Auckland Regional Council. At the same time, large areas of erosion-prone land have been reclaimed thanks to the efforts of the marram planting team and Trees for Survival. Trish Aspin has been working steadily with FORMAK gathering vital data for native bush monitoring, and the Landcare projects team have recently entered a partnership with Franklin District Council to upgrade and maintain the recycle depot at Matakawau. Landcare has proven itself to be a well-run organisation, able to work with government agencies to affect real change for the district.

This proven record and perceived political influence can make Landcare vulnerable to attack from special interest groups and activists who endeavour to manipulate community groups like Landcare for their own ends. Through this magazine, we seek to remind people that owning land has responsibilities as well as rights. We seek to influence and inform, not dictate and legislate. We would like landowners to think about the implications their choices have for future generations.

In the same way that it is irresponsible to allow land to become over-run with pests and weeds, it is irresponsible to allow it to become polluted or infertile. My recent trip to South Island recycling facilities showed me that our culture of waste cannot continue. Throwing away almost everything we use destroys the land. Like it or not, we depend on the land for our survival as a species, and it is in short supply! Awhitu Peninsula Landcare performs a vital function for the future of our planet by reminding people how to care for their land while trying to repair some of the damage already done to it. I urge you to support this Landcare group by getting involved with, and pushing forward, ideas and projects that care for the land in your back yard. “Act locally, think globally”

Inorganic Collection Popular

Saturday 20 January’s inorganic rubbish collection was a great success, according to one of the organisers for Manukau Peninsula Playcentre, the principle local beneficiary. Arwen McMahon, roster clerk for the event, reported over \$800 collected for the Playcentre from some 90 vehicles. At two drop-points, Awhitu School in the morning and Te Toro turn-off during the afternoon, everything from old fencing wire to a spa pool was collected. Arwen further remarked that as much as fifty per cent of it was already presorted too, which simplified off-loading from trucks, cars and trailers. A horse-float was possibly the day’s most novel method of delivery.



Big machines make short work of Peninsula inorganics.

Our EcoHEROS

Rob 'T' or Robert Thwaites has been part of Awhitu Peninsula for longer than he cares to remember and even has trouble recalling when he first became interested in tackling the problems of indiscriminate dumping of rubbish.

Very early on he was locally lauded for his work in providing alternative leisure interests for children with his founding of Shoreline Kids - a concept that cleverly targeted the main perpetrators of rubbish dumpers - parents. Even today, Rob is still shocked by parents encouraging and abetting children to drop refuse where they shouldn't.

Rob's recreational programmes for kids coincided with his taking over the role of emptying Council's 44-gallon drum receptacles at beach car parks - a function Rob refined with a change to plastic for bottles and wheelie-bins for other trash. This was the beginning of pre-sorting that fed directly into Matakawau Road Recycle Centre first propounded by Anne Lee and constructed with Council and Landcare support and assistance. Eventually this facility is to be expanded in operation with the intent of making the Awhitu community a zero waste contributor to landfill. A plan Rob recognises as ambitious given the current small population size. But, as he freely acknowledges, anything is possible. After his decade or more of active involvement in peninsular recycling he is now observing:

- Glass being sorted into the appropriate bins.
- Continued growth in the practice of household recycling.
- Cleaner beaches.
- Children increasingly more environmentally aware.

On the other hand, reports Rob, some old habits refuse to die and most cannot be blamed on visitors, according to Rob.

He cites the bags of household rubbish clogging public bins most Sundays at Matakawau and those who dump their bottles (often boxes at a time) week after week at Orpheus Road end.

Circumspection prevents Rob from naming perpetrators; all he will say is "They're certainly local".

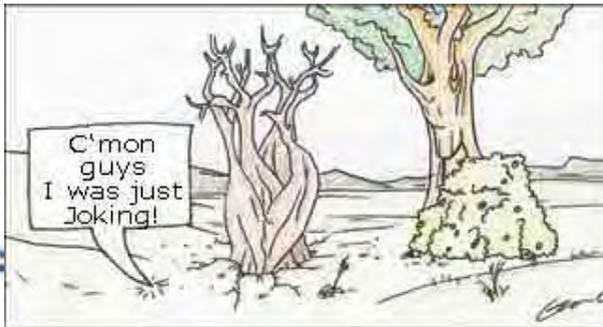


A Leafy Lesson

A thoughtful little tale gleaned from the December newsletter of the Auckland Regional Botanic Gardens.

According to African legend, the bottle-shaped baobab was one of the first trees to be created. Followed by the slender graceful palm. When the baobab saw the palm it cried out that it wanted to be taller. Then the beautiful flame tree appeared with its splendid red flowers and the baobab was immediately envious of its blossoms. And when the baobab saw the fig tree, it prayed for fruit too. At this the gods became angry, pulled up the baobab by the roots and replanted it upside down to keep it quiet.

Moral (what's a good story without one?): "Be thankful for what you've got".



Glenn Knight's Pest Report

Most people will have seen the Pohutakawas in full flower this year. I thought they flowered in patches all over the tree at different times. No, proper trees that aren't being decimated by possums are covered in deep red flowers all at the same time - a magnificent sight. So, why were they so good this year? Because of the landowners who have been out there in all weathers keeping their bait stations topped up and traps at the ready. Well, perhaps not in all weathers, perhaps most of them only go out on days when the weather is nice as I only ask them to top up their stations every 8-12 weeks. We have the possums under control over virtually all of the peninsula. A recent check by the ARC found only 3.3% possums remaining on the 220,000 hectares. This is a magnificent result, but we have to keep it up so if you need bait or traps, just call Glenn Knight 235 1501/021 108 1664

Rabbit in Red

Your opportunity to enjoy the vegetables (albeit in a round-about way) that you were beaten to by these long-eared interlopers.

Ingredients for 4:

- 2 x 1kg wild Awhitu rabbits, each cut into 8 pieces
- 100 ml olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 6 medium to large tomatoes peeled (optional) and chopped
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 100g chorizo, chopped
- 3 slices prosciutto or bacon, cut into strips
- 3 red capsicums, seeded and diced
- 2 tablespoons thyme, chopped
- 1 cup red wine
- 1 handful flat leaf (Italian) parsley

Method:

Season the rabbit pieces. Heat half the oil in a heavy flameproof casserole over medium heat; add the rabbit in batches and cook each batch about 4 minutes or until golden brown. Remove and set aside.

Heat remainder of oil in the casserole and cook the onion for about 5 minutes or until translucent. Add the tomato and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Stir in the paprika, garlic, prosciutto, capsicum, thyme, red wine, rabbit pieces and 2 tablespoons of the parsley. Check the seasoning. Bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for 35 minutes or until rabbit is tender.

Remove rabbit pieces and continue simmering sauce for 20-30 minutes or until reduced and glazy. Return rabbit to the casserole and gently heat through. Season to taste, garnish with remaining parsley and enjoy.

Calculating your carbon emissions.



Control of carbon emissions is a concept whose time has come. But for many desiring to offset their corporate or personal emissions the problem has been where to begin. Now Landcare Research offers an emissions calculator on its website www.carbonzero.co.nz which enables companies and individuals to invest in native forest regeneration as a means of offsetting their emissions. Via an on-screen programme of three steps - Measure, Manage and Mitigate - organisations or homeowners can begin the process that could see them achieving CarboNZero Certification. At the same time the CarboNZero programme actively encourages overall reductions of emissions.

Companies already participating include Toyota New Zealand, Marlborough's Grove Mill and Sanctuary Wines, World Wildlife Fund New Zealand, South Pacific Pictures - producers of Whale Rider and Shortland Street, Waiheke Island's Attitude Foods and Napier's organic bakery Quakebake. It's hoped Awhitu may soon be represented among them. To that end a joint Awhitu Landcare & Awhitu Enterprise carbon emissions information day is proposed for June this year.

Domestic Hot Water Heating	38%
Home Heating	36%
Refrigeration	7%
Cooking	6%
Lighting	5%
Laundry Use	4%
Electronics	4%

Energy use in New Zealand households
(EECA Energy End-Use database)

Looking for Work?
Awhitu Landcare has
jobs available.
Phone Kate at land care
Office 2351650

Virginia Christensen reports

WATTLE BAY OYSTERCATCHERS AND LOCALS BEATING ODDS

5pm, Sunday 17 December 2006 – Lloyd Mays spots oystercatcher nest with 3 eggs high up the beach. Marks nest with driftwood.

Dusk, 24th December 2006 – all three eggs accidentally destroyed by a motorbike.

10 January 2007 - Lloyd finds a new nest and two eggs just above high tide mark. The birds have waited till after the January high tides to nest again.

Lloyd and helpers mark the nesting area with driftwood and bright red warning tape and use a tractor to position big logs to protect the nest.



Proud parent stands guard by Wattle Bay's protective barrier.

Opportunity Knocks.

More information from Kate at Landcare Office. Tel. 2351650 kate@ahwitu.org.nz

Finding The Words

Saying what you feel and coping with conflict.

Course presenter Mahadevi (Norris Peel) offers a 6 week course starting Thursday 1 March 2007, 10am to noon.

In a small group of no more than 10 persons you'll learn practical skills to help enhance your sense of self worth and enable to accept and communicate better with other people.

Indian Cooking - May 2007

Instructor: Mala

Class size: 12

Venue: Matakawau Hall

Tractor Driving - May 2007

Instructor: Farmsafe

Duration: 2 days

Free to NZ residents over 16

Chainsaw Safety - Mid March

Instructor: Farmsafe

Duration: 2 days

Free to NZ residents over 16

ATV Handling - May 2007

Instructor: Farmsafe

Duration: 2 days

Free to NZ residents over 16

Agrichemicals/Approved Handler Training - April/ May 2007

Duration: 1 day

Location: Awhitu Central

Fee: \$55 for NZ residents