



## Bad news for Boneseed

Awhitu Landcare's good friend Chris Katterns of ARC Biosecurity visited the peninsula earlier this year with some heartening news on the boneseed scourge — *Chrysanthemoides monilifera monilifera*.

It appears, according to Chris, that boneseed is being attacked by a fungal disease causing tip dieback.

During his visit he was able to point to evidence on boneseed at Orua Bay showing as browning-off and death of established green matter on older plants.

New growth seems immune from the disease, suggesting that the virus works in conjunction with another agent like leaf miners.

"This does not appear to be the leaf-roller biocontrol released at Mangawhai, where the fungus effect has also been identified", Chris reports.

As the leaf-roller does not appear to have reached Awhitu in any great numbers yet, this new natural control (already identified by MAF as *S. lycopersici*) could be a

cheap and effective answer to the weed pest. Here's hoping.

**Below:** Chris Katterns, ARC Biosecurity, identifies fungal attack on boneseed.



## You just need a spade and a smile



A good volunteer turn out at Pollok Wharf made for a highly successful planting day in June, despite wet conditions underfoot. The numbers were in fact, so great that further plants were brought onto site so everyone could be kept busy. Our members were supported by local residents who not only provided man power but horse power too. The trusty tractor of local farmer Brian Johnston was required to manipulate the mountain of wood chips and logs which were left following

the felling of pines last year. The logs will be removed in due course but the wood chip was put to good use on the site when it was spread as a mulch around the newly planted native trees. More planting will be undertaken in future but extension of the revegetated area will be dependent on prior weed management.

Above: A spade and a smile is all you need to bring. Landcare members Gary Marson and Adam Scattergood celebrate a successful planting at Pollok.

## Which way is up?

Thanks; to all those people who responded to our 'What Bird is This?' question in the last EnviroNews. There was a split of opinion as to whether it was a Rifleman or a Grey Warbler. We can confirm the delightful little fellow was indeed a Grey Warbler.

*Sophora molloyi* 'Dragon's Gold' is attracting hungry tui... This, the first flowering kowhai of the season is producing its flowers at the moment, much to the delight of our nectar feeding birds.



'Dragon's Gold' was discovered on Stephens Island out in the Cook Strait where Tuataras flourish.

So you can see how it got its name. It is an ideal plant for the garden — small, tough and rarely failing to produce a ray of sunshine in the middle of winter.

A word of warning though — rabbits just love kowhai bark and will kill young unprotected plants over time with their constant nibbling

Inset: a contortionist tui enjoys the first kowhai nectar of the year

### 2010 Winter Planting Dates

It's always great to see new faces at our planting days so please come along to lend a hand. We are starting a couple of large projects this year so we need as many volunteers as possible to get our plants in the ground. A spade and a smile is all you need to bring...

- Saturday 24th July 11.00am, West Coast Road, Dune Restoration Waimatuku/ Hamiltons Gap

- Sunday 1st Aug, 10.00am, Kemp Road, Awhitu Central Reserve

- Sunday 25th Aug, 10.00am, Awhitu Road, Craig Reserve

Further dates to be announced for Spring plantings in the next EnviroNews. Call Kate at the Landcare office on 09 235 1616 for further information, or email [landcare@awhitu.org.nz](mailto:landcare@awhitu.org.nz), or check out our website [www.awhitu.org.nz](http://www.awhitu.org.nz)

## Stopping the sand

One of the more ambitious projects Awhitu Landcare has undertaken has been the drive to stop sandblows continuously eroding land on the west of the Peninsula, by planting marram grass to stabilise the land, followed by coastal-hardy natives.

The marram planting team recently completed year four of this major project on Awhitu's wild west coast, which has now achieved successful plantings over approximately eight hectares of sand.

The project has already protected pasture, three coastal bush remnants, and two farm access tracks from encroaching, wind-blown sand. The marram planting has

been funded by the landowner, with initial assistance from New Zealand Steel/Maioro and Agmardt.

The ARC's Coastal Enhancement fund has assisted with the follow-up planting of coastal native plants — predominantly coastal flax/ harakeke, with coastal toetoe, *muehlenbeckia*/ pohuehue, and *ozythamnus*/ tauhinu.

Donations of flax cuttings by locals have been a great success with close to 100% survival — last winter's plantings thrived despite the very long dry summer.



**Inset:** At the end of a long day's work on the dunes.

## Kauri hokey-kokey!

Right: Landcare members Anna McNaughton and Margaret Makgill demonstrate the new dance which is breaking out all over the country!

Actually they are disinfecting their footwear after working around Kauri at a recent planting day.

We would like to remind everyone that this is essential in order to prevent the spread of PTA — the fungus that causes Kauri Dieback.

All footwear needs to be free of soil before and after entering an area containing Kauri.



Please join us, we'd love to have you as part of the Group.

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