

Awhitu Peninsula
Landcare



Annual Report

2025

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Our Vision

A rejuvenated Āwhitu where native wildlife flourishes in healthy ecosystems, cherished and supported by the people



Outcomes

- All native ecosystem types are growing and flourishing.
- We see native plant species represented, including native saplings.
- We see an increase in native wildlife diversity and abundance.
- Native wildlife on the peninsula complete their natural life cycle.
- We see an improvement in the water quality of our lakes and streams.
- We see an improvement in ecosystem function, for instance through seed dispersal and soil fertility.
- We do not experience any local extinctions.
- We contribute to and benefit from scientific advances in conservation.
- We uphold the mana of Ngaati Te Ata Waiohū and support the iwi to exercise kaitiakitanga.
- We have sufficient resources to deliver our environmental outcomes now and into the future.
- Our team are safe and supported in their work and have opportunities to grow.
- We attract new staff, volunteers and Committee members.

Committee Report

Tēnā koutou katoa,

It's a pleasure to reflect on another incredible year for Awhitu Peninsula Landcare. From forest restoration to freshwater monitoring, pest control to cultural connection, our work continues to grow in impact, depth and reach.

Biodiversity and Monitoring

Our peninsula is home to many precious taonga like the matuku-hūrepo (Australasian bittern), Māui dolphin and tūturiwhatu (NZ dotterel). To better protect these species, we've been expanding our ecological monitoring, alongside our replanting and pest control programmes.

With Mountains To Sea, we've learned water quality monitoring and inanga habitat surveys. eDNA testing and new acoustic recorders are also helping us detect hard-to-spot species.

At Taitua Forest, surveys have revealed a strong presence of native birds and freshwater life, with further research planned. We also joined the Great Matuku Muster and supported Awhitu Coast Care in their vital work protecting dotterel and other coastal birds.

Forest Restoration

Through our longstanding Te Korowai o Papatūānuku programme, we propagated nearly 120,000 native plants this year, with most restoring waterways and wetlands. Our funding from the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) for this programme was extended to 2026, and we've started selling plants as part of our mixed funding model to ensure our longer-term sustainability.

With volunteers contributing thousands of hours, and support from iwi, schools and whānau, our restoration work is truly community-driven. We're also improving nursery biosecurity through the Plant Pass standard and engaging in eco-sourcing seeds.

Simultaneously, we're tackling pest plants head-on—engaging with landowners, hosting community weeding bees, and raising awareness of moth plant.

Pest Control

We're making strong progress toward a pest-free peninsula. With more than 2,700 bait stations and an expanding network of traps—including self-resetting AT220s—we've seen a significant increase in pest control success.

Thanks to support from Auckland Council, we're tackling key threats like possums, rats, mustelids, and feral cats. We are also grateful to the many landowners and members of the community whose dedication to trapping intensifies our efforts in keeping pests under control.

Partnerships

Te Korowai o Manaaki has strengthened our connection with mana whenua, through wānanga, pōwhiri, and collaborative mahi across planting, water monitoring and ecological surveys. We are proud to walk this path alongside Ngaati Te Ata Waiohū.

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As always, our achievements would not be possible without the support of our funders—particularly Auckland Council, Foundation North and MPI. We are deeply grateful for their continued partnership and commitment to our shared goals.

Our partnership with Mountains to Sea has significantly boosted our ability to monitor results of our work in the environment, and Awhitu Coast Care continues to work alongside us, taking care of tūturiwhatu, dune plantings and beach clean-ups.

On behalf of the Committee, I extend our heartfelt thanks to Sarah, the staff, and our volunteers for their ongoing dedication and mahi, which continues to move the organisation forward. We are proud to have such a skilled and committed team, and to be offering meaningful work that supports sustainability and resilience on the peninsula.

A special thank you also to my fellow committee members for their guidance and support throughout the year. In particular, we acknowledge Debby Bradley for her outstanding contribution over the past five years. As Debby steps down from the committee this year, we thank her sincerely for her commitment and care of our finances.

We currently have two vacancies on our committee and warmly invite nominations from our members. Being part of the committee is an opportunity to contribute to conservation through a governance role that is both interesting and rewarding. Since joining, I've gained valuable knowledge, built strong relationships within the community, and connected with a wide range of stakeholders.

If you have an interest in conservation, governance, and can commit to attending monthly meetings, we would love to hear from you. We are especially keen to welcome members with skills in accounting, law, or marketing.

Ngā mihi nui,

Barbara Wilkinson

Committee Member



Manager's Report

Kia ora e te whānau,

As I reflect on another incredible (and incredibly busy) year, I acknowledge the people that have made it all happen.

Jill McLean, Linda Jones-Lee, Lisa Field, Kathy Graham and Christine Wormald have continued to propagate a vast number of beautiful native rakau, with help from our team of nursery volunteers. Phoebe Hewitt and Mike Lunn joined the team as well, filling in where we were caught short. This nursery team have pulled together through some real challenges this year, always putting themselves forward to help where needed. Their expertise, attention to detail and high standards are evident in the quality of the plants grown.

We farewelled Nicky Reynolds in November 2024. Nicky had diligently and expertly led Te Korowai o Papatūānuku for nearly four years. Under her leadership we delivered over 300,000 native plants to sites across the peninsula – more than 50,000 plants over and above our four-year target. Nicky also led the rōhutu conservation protocol pilot, furthering research on myrtle rust and helping to preserve a taonga species. We are incredibly grateful to Nicky for the many hours she spent championing restoration on the peninsula.

We also farewelled Courtney Torpey from the intern role in our nursery, wishing her all the best with her career moving forwards. Courtney brought a fantastic energy to the team, which proved invaluable as she scaled impossibly steep hills to care for rōhutu and diligently toiled in the nursery.

In March 2025, we welcomed Leah Warbrick as our new Nursery Team Leader. Leah's experience in native restoration, connection to the Āwhitu and mātauranga Māori is a wonderful complement to our skilled horticultural team.

Our pest control programme moved from strength to strength over the year, capably led by Sam Whitley. Sam maintains a network of around 1,000 bait stations and 150 traps across some of the most dramatic landscapes on the peninsula. Alongside Steve Sherie, he knocks down hotspots by shooting. Sam often acts as our eyes on the ground, letting the nursery team know when different species are producing seeds for collection, and checking trail cameras to see what the possums, rats and deer are up to.

Kevin Steger has continued to care for the wetland and spit at Rangiriri, managing a bait and trap line to protect this biodiversity focus area. He has also been known to bake a mean scone and occasionally treats the team to these.

Greg Lowe finished in his role progressing the possum barrier project in October. Greg engaged new people into the project, established more traps and trialled the remote sensors on single-kill traps. Fortunately, Greg continues to be involved with the organisation, representing Awhitu Landcare as part of Te Ara Hikoi.

Peter Whitehead also finished in his role addressing possum hotspots in RD3. Peter made significant progress connecting neighbourhoods and establishing new traps. Peter continues to be involved too, volunteering in the nursery and helping us with odd jobs.

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Between them, Peter and Greg removed nearly 400 possums from our environment and increased community trapping. They had a very clear and positive impact on our efforts to control possums on the peninsula. We hope to increase the pest control team again to continue this kaupapa.

Crystal Kahui finished in the pest plant role, having stepped into it at its' inception and establishing the groundwork for the role moving forward.

This mantle was taken up by Tui Stebbing, who has quickly progressed it. Tui has been on a mission to remove moth plant, has organised a community weeding bee at the Social Club, provided support and resources to the community, and has been developing our tool library.

We established a new role at the end of 2024 and brought Lizzy Farrington in to take it on. Her focus is to progress the environmental monitoring we undertake and to involve the local community in this and our other workstreams. She has taken a lead on the rollout of our stream monitoring mahi, provided scientific expertise to the nursery (or, in other words, distracted us all identifying *Carex* seeds under her microscope) and is looking into the sound patterns of a range of native animal species so that we can undertake acoustic monitoring.

Behind the scenes, Kiri Torpey keeps us all organised. She manages the (increasingly complex) accounts in Xero, runs payroll, and keeps us stocked with chocolate biscuits – all essential elements of a functional team. Kiri has a very structured approach to her work that ensures everything keeps running smoothly.

Underpinning the entire team is our volunteer Committee. I am grateful to them, not just for their expertise guiding me in leading the organisation, but also for their unwavering support and kindness.

I am also grateful to Te Taiao team from Ngaati Te Ata Waiohua. We have been fortunate to have worked alongside many iwi members this year. Karl Flavell, Selwyn Herewini and Ngaati Kaihau have had a particularly large impact on our team through Te Korowai o Manaaki programme and have helped guide our approach to our work. Paapaka Brown and Dani Zubrzycka have facilitated ecologist access to Taitua Forest, where they are active kaitiaki.

The people connected with Awhitu Landcare and the conservation kaupapa are our biggest strength. There are too many to acknowledge all individually, but we are grateful for every part of this wonderful community.

Ngā mihi nui

Sarah Mansell

Manager

Monitoring and preserving native wildlife

Native biodiversity on the Āwhitu is as unique and interesting as the peninsula itself. There are many threatened species who call Āwhitu home, including the matuku-hūrepo (Australasian bittern), Māui dolphin, and tūturiwhatu (northern New Zealand dotterel). To ensure that these species are flourishing, we recognise the need to undertake more environmental monitoring than has been done in the past. This year, we have made significant progress towards a rigorous monitoring programme on the Āwhitu.

Our friends at the Mountains To Sea Conservation Trust have been upskilling our team in freshwater monitoring.

With their support, more than half of the Landcare team as well as several kaitiaki from Ngaati Te Ata Waiohū have learned how to implement Stream Health Monitoring and Assessment Kits. Developed by NIWA, these kits (colloquially known as 'SHMAKs') provide simple, scientifically-sound tools to monitor the ecological health of our streams. We have practiced on multiple waterways on the peninsula, measuring water clarity, nitrate and phosphate levels, macroinvertebrates, harmful bacteria and more. We have supplemented this with some eDNA sampling of waterways – an expensive but detailed method that indicates the presence or absence of a range of native and introduced species.

We are in the process of developing a water quality monitoring plan for the peninsula, in which we will identify waterways to test each year. We also want these tools to be available for the community to use. We have purchased two SHMAKs which are available for testing waterways on landowners sites with support from our team.

Mountains To Sea have also trained our team to identify inanga spawning habitat, and how to give these native fish the best chance at success. Though this process is a little more complex than utilising the SHMAK tools, the two complement each other. We look forward to working with the local community to identify more spawning habitat as well.

Though Landcare does not have a long history of freshwater conservation, we have provided hundreds of thousands of plants to restore waterways and wetlands across the peninsula over the past few years. It will be interesting to revisit some of these sites to see the effect (if any) on our freshwater ecosystems.

We have engaged with a range of specialists to undertake rigorous ecological monitoring at Taitua Forest, a stand of critically endangered dune forest on the peninsula's west coast that is co-owned by Ngaati Te Ata Waiohū.

Mountains To Sea have undertaken freshwater monitoring, finding kōura, freshwater crab and banded kōkopu in the forests' waterways. EcoQuest have undertaken bird monitoring, with results indicating a healthy native population including migratory and nocturnal birds. The planned botanic, invertebrate, bat and frog surveys are not yet complete.



Top: Committee member Barbara Wilkinson checking the results of our E. coli testing, part of the SHMAK toolkit for waterway health monitoring.

Bottom: native fish surveyed during a stream health assessment at a local waterway and planting site.

We have invested in five AR4 acoustic monitoring devices from the Department of Conservation to identify the presence of different species. These are left in the field to acquire data, which is then analysed on a computer using free software. We will be able to support the community to utilize these devices to detect the presence of a range of species, including pekapeka (bats) as well as matuku-hūrepo (Australasian bittern). We are hopeful that these may also be able to identify if there are any seabird burrows near the Manukau Heads.

Volunteers participated in the Great Matuku Muster in late 2024, in which we listened for matuku-hūrepo for an hour at sunset in spring. Among our four survey locations, one (along Kauritutahi) had a booming male. These critically endangered birds have been observed in wetlands throughout the peninsula, so it was fantastic for us to participate in a coordinated effort to monitor them.

Our partner, Awhitu Coast Care, has again led the effort to monitor and support our native shorebirds. Volunteers minded tūturiwhatu (northern New Zealand dotterel) nests, noting that they were nesting earlier than usual, and advocated for these taonga during the busy summer season. We supported their efforts to monitor nests by providing three trail cameras.

Coast Care also participated in the spoonbill census, with South Auckland recording the highest number of these birds from within the Manukau Harbour area. A volunteer also rescued a giant petrel, which was eventually rehabilitated and released by Birdcare Aotearoa.

Our ecological monitoring work has been supported by Foundation North. We have also established a new Conservation Project Advisor role to progress our monitoring and community engagement, thanks to their support.

Protecting and restoring our native forest

The indigenous forest ecosystems of the Āwhitu Peninsula are incredibly important, with critically endangered dune forest and vulnerable native species. To prevent local extinctions, and to enjoy the benefits that our native forest provides, we want to help restore 2,000 hectares of indigenous cover to the peninsula.

Under our revegetation programme, Te Korowai o Papatūānuku, we propagate eco-sourced native plants for local restoration projects.

In the winter of 2024, we supplied nearly 120,000 native plants. As in previous years, we had high numbers of tī kouka, harakeke, mānuka and kānuka, though a total of 28 different native species were propagated. Most of our plants (about 80%) have gone to restoring waterways and wetlands. The remainder have gone to coastal dune sites and forest remnants.

79,000 of these were donated to project sites using funding from the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). Under our initial funding agreement, 2024 would have been the final year of Te Korowai o Papatūānuku. Fortunately, MPI accepted our proposal to extend the agreement to 2026, enabling us to transition to a mixed-funding model that will provide us with the financial sustainability to continue to grow plants into the future.

Under this new way of working, we were able to sell 40,000 plants, establishing this as a significant income stream and contributing to a healthy financial position for our nursery.

This year, we began to improve our biosecurity processes by undertaking the Plant Pass standard, with support from Auckland Council. This new structure will help us to ensure traceability of our plants and to minimise the risk of pathogens, in our nursery and on the whenua.

Our skilled team of horticulturalists are generous with their knowledge, facilitating community workshops on seed sowing, hosting group visits to the nursery, and supporting plantings at Awhitu District School.

As always, restoration is a collaborative effort and there are many hands contributing to our success. Volunteers have contributed nearly 3,000 hours – including the landowners who prepare for and maintain their plants, as well as our potting-up crew who help us to grow so many plants each year.

Through school, community and whānau planting days, volunteers planted nearly 18,000 native trees onto five iwi sites. The high volume of plants we have propagated has meant some spillover to small satellite nurseries nearby. We are thankful for the two landowners who have graciously allowed us space.

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We are fortunate to have strong governance and active partners in this space. In particular, we work closely with Ngaati Te Ata Waiohū and Auckland Council, with representatives from both groups and Awhitu Landcare forming Te Rōpū Paihere o Āwhitu – the binding group of Āwhitu – to guide the programme. The strong and expert leadership from this group is a key element of our success so far.

We are also fortunate to have support from a range of funders. MPI has been an incredible support for Te Korowai o Papatūānuku over the past five years. Foundation North has recently added support, easing our transition into a future without the backing of MPI.

The Franklin Local Board continues to support the site preparation and maintenance of the iwi planting sites. Auckland Council has supported landowners through the Waterway Protection Fund and has covered the costs of planting other significant sites on the peninsula. The Port of Auckland has also been undertaking a significant restoration project, for which they have partnered with us and other native plant nurseries.

We are on track to deliver a new high in winter 2025, with 130,000 native plants propagated. We hope to engage our partners and local community in developing a strategic restoration plan for the peninsula, identifying priority sites and species to ensure we are growing the future forests we need.



Left: eco-sourced native plants in the standout area at our nursery in Matakawau. Top right: mānuka overlooking the restoration site at Rereteewhioi Marae. Bottom right: young tī kouka.

Expert and community control of pest animals

There are a wide range of introduced animals on the peninsula, including possums, rodents, mustelids, feral and stray cats, deer, pigs and goats. Some pose a threat to our regenerating forest, some predate our native wildlife, and some do both. As a peninsula, Āwhitu has an opportunity to eradicate pest species and successfully stop them from coming back. Our vision is for a pest-free Āwhitu Peninsula: no possums, rodents or mustelids, with low numbers of deer, pigs and goats, and responsible pet ownership.

With ongoing support from Auckland Council, we are working to suppress the possum population to low levels.

We continue to manage a network of over 1,000 bait stations and support the community to manage another 1,700. The number of bait stations is increasing gradually, and the total amount of brodifacoum used is stable. We are mindful of the issues of continuing to rely on brodifacoum, including resistance to the toxin in pest populations. We are introducing alternative control methods and encouraging the pulsing* of bait stations just twice each year.

Trapping also plays a large role in our possum control programme. We continue to supply possum traps to the community, with approximately 150 currently in use. Our team also manage a network of sentinel traps, which they move regularly to address hotspots. Additionally, we have been increasing our network of self-resetting AT220 traps. These can be left for up to three months and are able to keep trapping repeatedly in that time. Over the course of the financial year, our small network of AT220 traps (currently sitting at 33 in total) removed 772 possums as well as 579 rats.

Shooting is the third tool we utilize to manage the possum populations. Over the course of the year, we undertook 11 nights of shooting, removing 157 possums.

We brought on additional capacity to help us address possum hotspots south of Pollok and to continue to build a possum barrier. Peter and Greg engaged with neighbourhoods to knock down possum numbers (using intensive trapping as well as shooting) and then install long-term controls in the way of community-managed traps and AT220s. Though these roles have since come to an end, Peter and Greg have significantly reduced the possum population in these neighbourhoods and have established controls that will help to keep those numbers low in the future.

The increase in our capacity as well as the introduction of self-resetting traps has resulted in a phenomenal increase in our trapping results, from about 17 recorded kills each month in early 2023 to over 100 each month in early 2025.

**Pulsing means strategically applying bait at timed intervals rather than continuously. This approach aims to interrupt pest life cycles, reduce chemical resistance, and improve long-term effectiveness while minimizing environmental impact.*

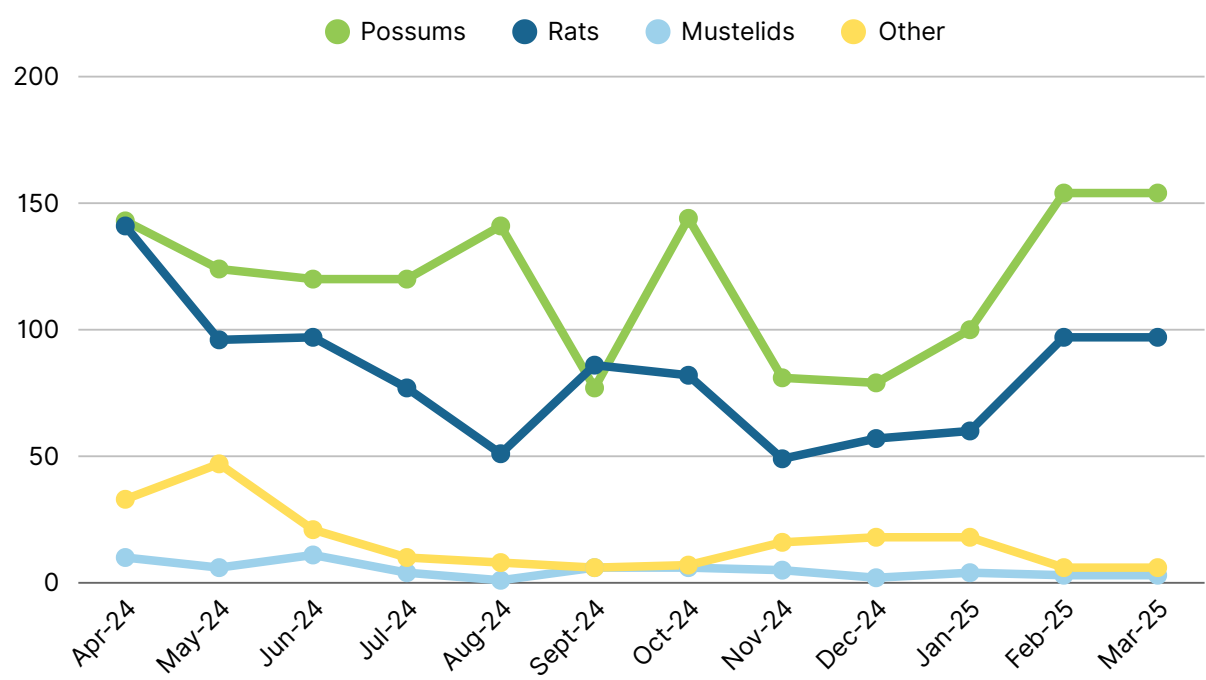
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The Lottery Grants Board have provided us with funding to continue our possum barrier work. This kaupapa started with support from the Department of Conservation, and is an effort to develop a virtual predator-proof fence using a high-density trap network across the width of the peninsula (rather than an actual fence). The live-capture and single-kill traps established previously continue to be managed by proactive members of the community. We look forward to welcoming a new member to our team and to building on the gains we have made in previous years.

Beyond possums, we undertake some work to protect biodiversity focus areas and provide other traps to the community. The wetland at Rangiriri has a bait and trap line that is maintained each month, protecting this taonga and the species within. We continue to supply rat and possum traps as well as a variety of lures to the community. We had been providing mustelid traps from Rewild, which were easy to set, though these are unfortunately no longer available.

We also received support from Auckland Council to grow our network of live-capture traps, enabling us to remove a wide range of pest animal species and to better protect our waterways from toxoplasmosis (a parasite that can prove fatal for the critically endangered Māui dolphin). We have traps available for the community to utilize, as well as a microchip scanner to help identify any trapped pets.

Monthly Pest Control Results



Monthly pest control results from our Trap.NZ projects over the course of the year. Possum and rat catches were the highest, reflecting our focus on possums as well as the efficacy of the self-resetting traps. Mustelids include ferrets, stoats and weasels. Other pests include mice, hedgehogs and feral cats.

Reducing the impact of pest plants

*Āwhitu has a very high incidence of woody weeds (such as woolly nightshade (*Solanum mauritianum*)) – the highest measured out of any region within Auckland. Surprisingly though, many other weeds taking over more urban areas have yet to get a foothold on the peninsula, including moth plant (*Araujia sericifera*). We want to stop these new pest plants in their tracks and to reduce the prevalence of the established weeds on the peninsula.*

Since early 2023, we have been part of an effort to remove weeds from the pest plant buffer around Āwhitu Regional Park. Buffer zones are a border to protect our regional parks from being reinvaded by some of the worst pest plants.

By mid-2024, we had engaged with 36 properties in the buffer, spanning 358 hectares. Our partners Sharplin Treecare undertook initial control of climbing asparagus (*Asparagus scandens*), a scrambling vine that smothers native ecosystems. We also discussed other weeds in the buffer, providing herbicide gels and guidance.

With the initial control complete, we have changed our focus to building resources to support the community with ongoing control. Our Pest Plant Community Coordinator has been developing a tool library with specialized equipment for the community to borrow.

In early 2025, we held our first community weeding bee. 12 volunteers joined team members from Āwhitu Landcare and Auckland Council to remove an impressive amount of woolly nightshade (*Solanum mauritianum*) and gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) from the Āwhitu Social Club. We are now planning a community planting day to replace these weeds with natives.

We have continued our efforts to prevent moth plant from establishing on the peninsula. We keep raising the profile of this weed through social media and local communications, and have encouraged people to report sightings to us. Where sightings are reported to us, Tui has been supporting the community to remove this aggressive vine and noting the locations for follow up in future years. We hope to run a moth plant competition focussed on pod collection and vine removal, similar to our partners in Pest Free South Auckland.

We are grateful to Auckland Council, who have funded our pest plant tools as well as the Coordinator role.

With funding from Counties Energy, we engaged West Coast Bush Services, a Ngaati Te Ata Waiohū whānau organisation, to undertake pest plant control around Taahuna Kaitoto Marae. They utilized a herbicide formulation to spray all visible pest plants along the coastal edge of the area, covering a total area of around 4 hectares. This mahi complements the work already undertaken to remove weeds and replant the area with natives, which we look forward to continuing.

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Top: the weeding bee at the Awhitu Social Club in full swing. Middle left: climbing asparagus smothering the forest floor. Middle right: a well-stocked resource centre, courtesy of Auckland Council. Bottom: a community weed workshop with guest speaker Kelly Wooton.

Minimizing harm caused by pathogens

There are three well-known pathogens of concern on the Āwhitu. Austropuccinia psidii, or myrtle rust, is a plant pathogen that impacts native species such as pōhutukawa and the locally endangered rōhutu. Phytophthora agathidicida (PA), or kauri dieback, is a fungus-type pathogen that damages the root system of kauri. Toxoplasma gondii is a parasite that replicates in cats and affects a wide range of native wildlife, often fatally. We are working to protect vulnerable species against the impacts of key pathogens.

Rōhutu (*Lophomyrtus obcordata*), a treasured member of the myrtle whānau, is regionally endangered because of the impact of myrtle rust. Since 2022, we have applied a selection of fungicides on a remnant stand of rōhutu at Mahanihāni, and when these plants responded by flowering and fruiting, we started propagating a new generation.

During 2024, we have been able to propagate over 600 seedlings from six source trees. We have also been able to harvest seed to germinate a further 1,400 seedlings from 13 source plants. Year-on-year, we have had greater success with both the number of seedlings propagated as well as the genetic diversity of those seedlings. As our long-term vision for the project is to establish genetic resilience against myrtle rust, we are heartened by our results to date.

Also during the year, we helped to plant the seedlings that were grown in 2023. 80 of these rakau have become a new trial group, allowing for a comparison of fungicide spray against baking soda in the treatment of myrtle rust.

We have continued to protect the mature stand of rōhutu through our fungicide spray programme.

We are grateful to Ngaati Te Ata Waiohūa who supported all aspects of the pilot project through governance and performed a karakia to protect the mauri of the seeds and growing seedlings. Scion Research and Plant and Food Research provided invaluable guidance to the programme. We appreciate the support of Lighthouse Station, who allowed us access through their farm to carry out this trial work. Auckland Council have been the primary funder of this kaupapa, with some additional funding was supplied by BlueFloat Energy.

This pilot was included in a New Zealand Geographic article on myrtle rust, which can be read online at:

<https://www.nzgeo.com/stories/the-forgotten-pandemic/>

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Top left: mature rōhutu in flower, protected against myrtle rust through our fungicide spray programme. Top centre: Committee member Alison Brown watering our rōhutu seedlings. Top right: a rōhutu seedling planted at Mahanihahi as part of a new trial site. Bottom: planting the new trial blocks of rōhutu at Mahanihahi.

Kaitiakitanga

Awhitu Landcare and Ngaati Te Ata Waiohua have engaged a team of kaitiaki, whose role is to help us realise the outcomes of the Kaitiakitanga Plan and improve cultural understanding within the Landcare whānau.

Kaitiaki have developed and delivered Te Korowai o Manaaki, an educational programme for the Landcare whānau. We began this journey with a pōwhiri onto Taahuna Kaitoto Marae, where we had the privilege of meeting more members of the iwi and hearing their kōrero (including around the significance of native trees, like those we grow).

We have had wānanga focused on whakapapa planting, Matariki, ecosystems and taonga species.

As well as the wānanga, we held hikoi to a range of Wāhi Tapu, Pā and mahinga kai sites, hearing the history and the significance of these places. We were welcomed onto Rereteewhioi Marae with another pōwhiri, and were able to visit Te Pu-a-Nga Maara, a rangatahi-led group restoring the Puhinui Stream on the other side of the Manukau Harbour.

Finally, we collaborated on Tiaki Te Whenua Day, a community event bringing together a range of local groups and kaitiaki with a focus on conservation.

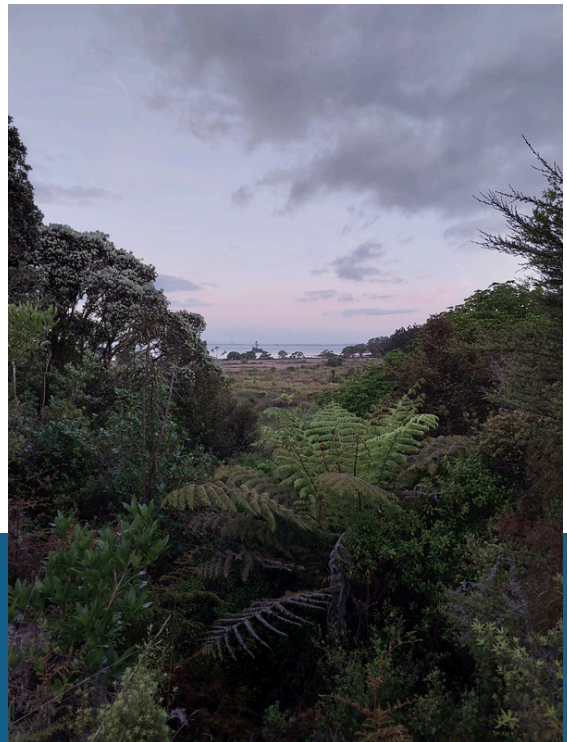
Through this programme, we have deepened our connections with mana whenua and built on our understanding of the Āwhitu Peninsula. The programme is also drawing in professional knowledge and expertise that we have needed.

Beyond Te Korowai o Manaaki, we have collaborated with kaitiaki on the ecological surveys at Taitua, supported planting days at the iwi sites, and worked together on our water quality monitoring and inanga spawning programme together with Mountains To Sea.

More connections have been forged, more collaboration is happening, and we are all excited for the future of our work together.

We are extremely grateful to Foundation North, who have supported this kaupapa.

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Top left: kaitiaki describing the cultural significance of the Rangiriri wetland to a group through Te Korowai o Manaaki programme. Middle left: members of the Landcare whānau holding the Tohu Mahitahi - Collaboration Award given to us and Ngaati Te Ata Waiohū. Bottom left: a community workshop on the invasive golden clam and native bats, held at Waiuku Library. Top right: Lizzy using a microscope to identify Carex seeds. Bottom right: dusk over the Āwhitu Regional Park during the Great Matuku Muster.

Behind the scenes

Some of our most important work is happening behind the scenes, not attached to any one project or workstream.

Though not as exciting as our frontline conservation work, the mahi to build our financial resilience, to improve our internal structures and to advocate for effective legislation and planning is a vital part of what we do.

We have been very fortunate to receive significant grants from a variety of funders. This year, we have also received support from corporate sponsors: BlueFloat Energy, Winstone Aggregates, Contact Energy and Stevenson. Alongside the income we have received from selling a portion of our native plants, we have made significant progress towards diversification of our income streams.

Continuing to build new sources of support will enable us to continue our kaupapa with confidence in the future.

We have developed a new policy manual which we continue to review and improve. We have built on our existing health and safety frameworks with new tools for event planning and a broader range of hazards identified. Through the Plant Pass standard, we have improved our biosecurity practices.

LEAD have supported part of our organisational evaluation, and we have reviewed our constitution in light of the changes to the Incorporated Societies Act.

We made a written submission on the Fast Track Approvals Bill, recommending that the bill be rejected. We opposed the prioritization of short-term economic gain at the expense of communities and the environment; the criteria for decision-making, ministerial decision-making and lack of public consultation; and disregard of the obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Our written submission was followed by a verbal submission, focusing our arguments around the protection of the Māui dolphin and other taonga species.

Foundation North continue to support our infrastructural improvements, including a contribution toward the Manager role.

Financial report

Statement of Financial Performance

Our total revenue has increased by 30% since the year prior. Unlike last year, when expenses and revenue increased at the same rate, our expenses have increased by only 8%.

The progress we have made towards diversification of our income streams has contributed to this growth, in particular plant sales where sales have increased by \$137,000.

This year, grant funding represented 77% of the total revenue recognised, down from 91% in 2024, showing we are starting to diversify our income streams. The MPI Billion Trees initiative has contributed 34%. Auckland Council and Foundation North each contributed 21%. We had smaller grants from the Department of Conservation and Goldman Sachs Gives.

Plant sales represented 15% of the total revenue recognised – a substantial increase from 2024, in which it represented just 2%.

We were fortunate to have four new corporate sponsors join us this year: Contact Energy, Winstone Aggregates, BlueFloat Energy and Stevenson.

The remainder of our revenue came from interest earned on income, donations, memberships and book sales.

Statement of Financial Position

At the 31st of March 2025, our bank balances totalled \$1,132,000 (\$753,000 in 2024).

Landcare recognises the liabilities we have to those funders where there is a requirement to pay back any remainder not used.

The total grant funding liability in 2025 was \$559,000 (\$471,000 in 2024).

The total accumulated funds at 31st March 2025 stood at \$521,000 (an increase of \$224,000 from 2024).

We need a healthy cash reserve to withstand temporary disruptions in the funding environment. This year we've been able to strengthen our reserves, increasing our assurance that we could continue operating through financial challenges.

	2025	2024
Revenue	\$1,016,870	\$784,156
Expenses	\$792,429	\$731,504
Surplus	\$224,441	\$52,652

	2025	2024
Assets	\$1,244,189	\$874,223
Liabilities	\$722,690	\$577,165
Accumulated Funds	\$521,499	\$297,058

To request a copy of the full audited financial report, please email landcare@awhitu.org.nz.

Note that we use accrual accounting. We only recognise conditional grants as income when we expense the funding.

Our funders

Ministry for Primary Industries

MPI fund Te Korowai o Papatūānuku, our native revegetation program. Since 2020 they have covered the majority of the operating costs of our nursery in Matakawau.

Through MPIs support, we have been able to provide employment opportunities to 5 members of the local community.

With the extension approved to 2026, MPI will continue to be a significant contributor to our mahi.

Foundation North

Foundation North has enabled us to have a full-time general manager – a critical role to manage our complex funding environment, oversee our many projects and ensure our sustainability as an organisation.

They also resourced the creation of the Kaitiakitanga Plan and establishment of the kaitiaki roles, with positive outcomes for both Landcare and Ngaati Te Ata Waiohua. The Kaitiakitanga Plan has also deepened the relationship between our two groups

Beyond that, Foundation North has supported our community engagement and education programme, provided resources for neighbourhoods to form conservation hubs, and supported our evaluation journey.

As of August 2024, Foundation North has also been contributing to employee costs of our native plant nursery, supporting our transition to a mixed-funding model on our journey towards financial sustainability.

Auckland Council

Auckland Council are a key supporter of all our workstreams. Over the year, they have provided:

- expert guidance and a contribution in kind to Te Korowai o Papatūānuku;
- funding for our pest control operations, with a focus on possum control, protecting biodiversity focus areas and protecting waterways;
- funding for our Pest Plant Community Coordinator role and mahi in the pest plant buffer;
- resources to undertake Plant Pass;
- funding and guidance for the rōhutu conservation protocol pilot;
- support for us to build relationships with corporate sponsors.

BlueFloat Energy

BlueFloat contributed towards the costs of our rōhutu conservation protocol pilot as well as towards the operating costs of the organisation.

Contact Energy

Contact Energy are a new supporter of the organisation, providing sponsorship towards our revegetation outcomes.

Counties Energy

Counties Energy has provided resources for us to remove pest plants around Taahuna Paa.

Franklin Local Board

The Franklin Local Board has supported Te Korowai o Papatūānuku by covering the costs of site preparation on iwi land.

Goldman Sachs Gives

Goldman Sachs Gives kickstarted our community pest plant control work.

Lottery Grants Board

A new funder for the year, the Lottery Grants Board are supporting the possum barrier project through the Environment and Heritage Fund.

Stevenson

Stevenson are a new supporter of the organisation, providing sponsorship to be used as needed to further our conservation aims.

Winstone Aggregates

Winstone Aggregates are a new supporter of the organisation, providing sponsorship to be used as needed to further our conservation aims.



Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



Goldman
Sachs
Gives



STEVENSON



Our partners

Ngaati Te Ata Waiohua

Mana whenua of the Āwhitu, Ngaati Te Ata have a Kaitiakitanga Plan with broader outcomes than the focus of Landcare. We are working closely together across all workstreams, and through Te Korowai o Manaaki and the kaitiaki team.

Many thanks to Karl Flavell, Edith Tuhimata, Ngaati Kaihau, Selwyn Herewini, Lyall Flavell, Skye Flavell, Paora Puru and everyone else from the iwi who works alongside Landcare to ensure we are achieving the best environmental outcomes we can, and in a culturally safe and valuing way.

Awhitu Coast Care

Coast Care do incredible work on the Āwhitu, including dotterel-minding, dune planting, cleaning litter off beaches and more. We provide help with financial management, and Coast Care have a representative on our Committee.

Thanks to Anna McNaughton and the many other Coast Care volunteers. We acknowledge and appreciate the mahi you do on the peninsula.

Mountains To Sea Conservation Trust

You may know them by their other names: Wai Connection, Whitebait Connection and Experiencing Marine Reserves.

Together, we are developing a water quality monitoring plan for the peninsula, undertaking inanga spawning work and fish surveys, and organising community events.

Awhitu District School

Our wonderful neighbours who support our nursery and allow us to take up space to host our events. Our team supports the school with their plantings.

Te Ara Hikoi

Together, we undertake and collaborate on pest control mahi on the Āwhitu and beyond.

Awaroa Ki Karioitahi Landcare

Our newly-established neighbours, now supporting community conservation from our shared boundary at Karioitahi Road to the Waikato River.

Acknowledgements

Thanks again to all our partners, funders and supporters.

Auckland Council
Awaroa Ki Karioitahi Landcare
Awhitu Coast Care
Awhitu District School
Awhitu Peninsula Historical Society
BlueFloat
Counties Energy
Dr Michael Bartlett
Dr Robert Beresford
Foundation North
Goldman Sachs Gives
Kauri Rescue
Lighthouse Station
Mountains To Sea Conservation Trust
New Zealand Plant Producers Incorporated
Ngaati Te Ata Waiohua
Pest Free South Auckland
Plant and Food Research
Pollok Hall
Ports of Auckland
Scion Research
Te Ara Hikoi
The Bittern Conservation Trust
The Department of Conservation
The Franklin Local Board
The Ministry for Primary Industries
Waiuku College

Mā te whakatū, ka mohio,
mā te mohio ka marama,
mā te marama ka matau,
mā te matau ka ora

*With discussion comes knowledge, with
knowledge comes light
and understanding, with light and
understanding comes wisdom,
with wisdom comes wellness*

