



*Nga Uruora - Kapiti Project*



*Bringing Kapiti Island's dawn chorus back to the coast*

# **Ngā Uruora – Kāpiti Project Incorporated 20th Annual Report 2016 – 2017**



May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017

**Committee 2016 - 2017**

**Convenor**

Malcolm Garnham/Andy McKay

**Secretary**

Andy McKay/Pete McLaughlin

**Treasurer**

Steve Mann

**Auditor**

Michael Ayre

**Committee**

Ken Fraser, Malcolm Garnham (Malcolm resigned from the committee at the last AGM), Peter Kentish, Pete McLaughlin, Andy McKay, Steve Mann, and Finn Michalak

Please note only eight months has passed since the last AGM on September 28<sup>th</sup> 2016. This is to better align with the financial year and allow for more effective planning by the committee.

## Introduction to Ngā Uruora - Kāpiti Project Inc.

Ngā Uruora - Kāpiti Project Inc. was established in 1997 by Fergus Wheeler and the Paekākāriki community to halt and reverse the decline in coastal forest on the Kāpiti – Porirua coast. The vision is to link the conservation successes on Kāpiti and Mana Islands to the mainland coast, to create a ribbon of native forest to bring back the native birds that used to sing in our trees. Our status as a community group allows us to actively initiate conservation on both public and private land. We believe there is huge potential for community involvement in, and appreciation of, conservation.

Our flagship project is the escarpment. It consists of all the steep ground between SH1 and the farmland at the top of the escarpment, and it stretches from the north end of Pukerua Bay to the Paekākāriki overbridge. In the centre of the escarpment, Bob's Track gives access to the Ecosite which is a large area of remnant native bush.

## Convenor's Report 2016-2017

The 2016-2017 saw Ngā Uruora continue move from strength to strength. The membership base continues to grow from a low in 2015 and a sustained communications effort through social media and public events has continued to raise our profile as a valued community group.

As a committee we have continued to operate in as efficient a manner as possible by focusing on core activities to lighten the administrative load of office bearers. The Kāpiti Biodiversity Project has also been of huge benefit to the committee, allowing for projects on the escarpment to take place without having to be directly involved in planning and fundraising. This has enabled us to focus resources on key restoration and conservation activities, namely to:

- Increase focus on pest control
- advance collaboration with the wider conservation movement on the Coast
- continue a three year programme of contracted weed control, recognising that this is a key activity that cannot readily be undertaken by volunteers
- plan public events including a renewed energy for planting, especially at the Pukerua Bay end.

The previous convenor, Malcolm Garnham, resigned from the committee at last years AGM in September 2016. Malcom oversaw the splitting away of the contracting portion of Ngā Uruora in 2013. This was a huge amount of work and very technical. We thank Malcolm for his commitment over the years and we are sure he will remain involved as a member and volunteer.

The number of people using the Escarpment Track section of the Te Araroa Trail continues to astound. We have not quite figured out how to tap into all the walkers as a conservation resource but there are plenty of ideas. An MOU with the Te Araroa Wellington Trust is currently being written so our two organisations can work more efficiently together and continue our positive relationship.

### Appreciation for support

During the past year many organisations and individuals have helped us with field work, office work and many other activities that make Ngā Uruora work. All this help is greatly appreciated. It is difficult to provide a list of everyone, but we would like to thank the following:

- Rob Cross, Kāpiti Coast District Council for advice and support
- The team at Greater Wellington Regional Council for advice and support

- Lawrence Silas and Stefan Hope from Kāpiti Coast District Council for supporting our field work
- The team behind the Kāpiti Biodiversity project - in particular Glenda Robb, the project team leaders and Paul Callister who has managed the largest component - the pest control project and also the Lizard Protection Trial
- Trent Bell and Asha Fernandez from Ecogecko
- Queen Elizabeth II National Trust for their support and engagement over the year
- All the Pukerua Bay end Tuesday volunteers

Our pest control team continued to keep rats, stoats, weasels and possums under control. We would like to thank Terry Brown, Helen and Tony Griffiths, Mark Johnstone, Sue Boyde, Amelia Geary, Ruth Doyle, Phil Wiles, Rob Hawke, Tony Older, Andy McKay, Paul Callister and Pete McLaughlin.

Paul Callister, Vicky Griffin and Gay Hay continued to grow plants at Pukerua Bay Nursery, Queen Elizabeth Park nursery or in their home gardens.

We would like to thank the regular Tuesday working bee team including Peter Kentish, Ken Fraser, Paul Callister, Steve Mann and Michael Stace and we are grateful to Ken Fraser for the many hours he has put into controlling cape ivy, blackberry and other weeds.

This year the Paekākāriki School garden group rounded up the amount at their plant sale and donated the difference to us. This amounted to \$138.50. They also donated leftover 100 karamu and mahoe which will be planted on the escarpment.

Thank you to all those that have contributed over the year whether on the committee, planting, setting traps, potting up or one of the many other jobs that are needed.

## Planting and nurseries

### Planting

Now that the Pukerua Bay end of the Te Araroa trail has been opened it gives Ngā Uruora an opportunity to begin weed control and planting in this area. There is a serious amount of gorse and cape ivy beside the trail and this needs to be controlled before planting can begin. We begin planting these sites this coming weekend. We are grateful for the help given by Rebecca Cray in preparing a planting plan.

The Paekākāriki School garden group also very generously donated \$138.50 from their plant sale as well as 100 karamu and mahoe that will be planted at the north end of the Escarpment by the Paekākāriki Scouts. We are very thankful to the school for these donations.

### Weed control

Ngā Uruora has a major commitment to controlling weeds and this has been our main use of funds during the 2016-17 financial year. To help make our work more efficient and effective, we agreed to spend \$5,000 annually for three years on weed plant control on the escarpment.

During the year this work included climbing asparagus, English ivy, pampas and boneseed control and has been undertaken by Ngā Uruora Contracting Ltd<sup>1</sup> (NUCC) under a contract, reviewed

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<sup>1</sup> An unrelated business founded by members of Nga Uruora Kapiti Project Inc.

annually. We thank NUCC for carrying out a substantial amount of extra weed control work for us free of charge.

In addition Ngā Uruora agreed to spend \$5000 on weeding and planting at the Pukerua Bay end of the escarpment. Other activities were controlling Cape Ivy at the quarry and assisting with the school clean up.

We are very thankful to QEII National Trust for donating \$1000 of tools and herbicides earlier this year. More recently they have also donated six brand new DOC 250s for ferret control.

### Pest control

Pest control activities are now largely under the management of the Biodiversity project and the guidance of Paul Callister and Pete McLaughlin and includes collaboration with Queen Elizabeth Park and Whareroa Farm. Recent activities have included:

- Testing the Trap.nz app for recording pest kills
- Trialing Goodnature traps
- Use of field cameras placed in various areas of Paekakariki Escarpment to record photos and videos in a time lapse form for surveillance of trap and bait stations
- Organising and attending various works shops e.g. a pest workshop about the efforts of local community groups
- Lizard Protection Trial on the escarpment.
- Tracking Tunnel monitoring
- Installing a radio tower on Tokomapuna Island to allow for remote sensor trapping on the mainland

### Working bees

Working bees are held every Tuesday, coordinated by Peter Kentish. Throughout the year a small group of keen volunteers carried out a range of activities including track maintenance, planting and weed control. Our work has been greatly supported by a scheme where the KCDC provides staff to assist us. Specifically we:

- continued to release plantings undertaken over the last couple of winters.
- maintained the Kohekohe Loop Track.

Steve Mann was coordinating monthly working bees at the Pukerua Bay end and these have been hugely successful. Steve is taking a break for 2017 due to work commitments and Peter Kentish has been looking after things in the meantime. We are looking forward to beginning planting down this end and getting new volunteers on board.

### Perkins Farm/Middle Run

There have been ongoing discussions and debates on options for Perkins Farm with the idea of bringing it into the conservation/restoration estate. There is considerable support in principle but a proposal that will engage all parties has yet to be developed.

### Web cam

A web cam that was crowdfunded at the end of 2016 went live at the end of January. It has been used to raise the profile of Ngā Uruora and to be used as community tool. The web cam saw a massive increase in website traffic and a number of new subscribers to our email list. We hope to convert a portion of these people to members and volunteers.

### Ministry for the Environment Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project

This is a significant project for the region and provides strong support for key areas such as pest control. It will provide a platform for the future development of biodiversity and conservation programmes on the Kāpiti Coast. The project is now into the final of three years funding and will need to focus on having a cohesive and fundable plan and building on the great work done by the current teams.

The Lizard Protection trial was set up early 2017 and surveys were carried out in March. While initial results in terms of lizard numbers were disappointing it gives us a base to work from. Subsequently a good lizard population has been observed around the quarry area.

### Promotion and membership

Last years membership and subscription drive netted just over \$1,000 – some of which is from new members and some from long-standing supporters. We hope to increase membership with the opening of the Te Araroa trail and a spike in interest from locals at the Pukerua Bay end of the track in becoming involved in planting activities.

### Financial report

The 2016-17 accounts are provided and will go to the usual auditor, once we obtain the necessary paperwork. We note that there is no requirement for audit by the Charities Commission for an organisation of our size but an audit is a requirement under Ngā Uruora's rules.

NUKP is in a stable position with equity of \$63,029.46 at the close of the 2016-17 financial year. This is down from \$63,888.96 at end of the previous financial year. NUKP spent \$535.23 more than income for the year (refer to Treasurers report for full details).