



Ngā Uruora – Kāpiti Project Incorporated 22nd Annual Report 2018 – 2019

17 April 2019



Photo by Andy McKay

Committee 2018- 2019

Convenor

Andy McKay

Secretary

Pete McLaughlin

Treasurer

Steve Mann

Committee

Ken Fraser, Peter Kentish, Pete McLaughlin, Andy McKay, Steve Mann, Drew Kear, Sue Boyde

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 of coastal forest on the Kāpiti – Porirua coast.

While the focus of Ngā Uruora has shifted over the past 22 years, the core activities of planting, weeding and pest control have continued. Over recent years, as other community conservation groups have formed around us, activities have become geographically constrained to a 292 hectare strip of land between Paekākāriki and Pukerua Bay.

This area contains the Paekākāriki Escarpment, recognised as an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL)¹ under the Resource Management Act and in accordance with the Greater Wellington Regional Policy Statement.

Within this ONL exists the Paekākāriki Escarpment Key Natural Ecosystem (KNE) which is 118 ha of land that straddles the boundary between the Kāpiti Coast District and Porirua City councils' jurisdictions². The KNE site comprises an exposed, steep coastal escarpment and contains remnant and regenerating coastal forests, grey scrub, and flaxland. The majority of the KNE site is legally protected, either by agreement between KiwiRail and the QEII National Trust, or by being within local council road reserve and recreation reserve designations.

Convenor's Report 2018-2019

We have had an extremely productive year over the last 12 months, growing our support base and working collaboratively with a large number of organisations.

Attracting and keeping volunteers remains a struggle. We have a core group of about five that meet every Tuesday to carry out work along the escarpment. Once a month they visit the Pukerua Bay end and are joined by a handful of locals. We also have an enthusiastic team of about 12 trappers who collectively check over 200 traps at least once per month, and a monthly weekend working bee that is open to the public.

Our committee currently sits at seven members of a maximum allowable total of eight. We have greatly appreciated the addition of Sue Boyde and Drew Kear to the committee at the last AGM and they have been valuable team members bringing new skills and ideas to the committee.

Despite our relatively small size, I am consistently surprised at what a small, dedicated group of volunteers manages to achieve. I will briefly cover off what we have been involved in over the past 12 months on the next page.

¹ Kapiti Coast District Council Proposed District Plan, Landscape and Coastal Environment Addendum, August 4th 2015

² Key Native Ecosystem Plan for Paekākāriki Escarpment 2015-2018, Great Wellington Regional Council

2018

April

- Site visit to the Quarry Lizard Garden with Gerald Dickinson, winner of a 2017 WWF Innovation award to develop infrared camera traps
- Planted tī kōuka and toetoe around the Hairpin Gully stream by Bridge 1 and rengarenga lilies by the notice board

May

- Two new committee members came on board, Sue Boyde and Drew Kear
- Track maintenance at the Paekākāriki end of the Escarpment Track
- Ngā Uruora car stickers go on sale
- Spectacular kohekohe flowering begins

June

- Two public planting days at the Quarry Lizard Garden, including installing the lizard cut outs made by Kāpiti Menzshed and painted by Paekākāriki School students
- Seed balls for sale on the Paekākāriki Escarpment Track
- Ngā Uruora Pest Control Strategy 2018 – 2021 completed

July

- Planted the Paekākāriki School Lizard Garden
- Three public planting days at the Pukerua Bay end
- Installed the first gate at the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Planted 15 kowhai above Rosemary's seat
- Successfully applied for \$2500 from the QEII National Trust's Stephenson Fund

August

- Planted 100 plus muehlenbeckia around the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Winner of the Radio New Zealand Critter of the Week Competition along with three other New Zealand community groups
- Controlled wilding pines up Fly-By-Wire Gully

September

- Planting, weeding, track work and laying out irrigation pipe at the Pukerua Bay end of the track
- The new irrigation pipe from the tank to the Quarry Lizard garden was completed
- Bob's Track maintenance

October

- Paekākāriki FM interview
- Information table at the Paekākāriki School Plant Sale
- Hosted a Paekākāriki Escarpment Track Walk as part of the Paekākāriki Pride Festival
- Conservation Volunteers Wellington helped to build rock piles at the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Fence posts were erected, boxthorn and banana passionfruit were removed, tī kōuka/cabbage trees were released and the path around the new lizard sign was completed at the Quarry Lizard Garden
- More Bob's Track maintenance
- Paekākāriki Beach survey for kororā/little penguins

November

- Conservation Volunteers Wellington helped to transport nearly 40 bags of mulch and 10 bags of driftwood to the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Started the Paekākāriki Kōwhai Project, using local knowledge to crowdsource a map of all the kōwhai in and around Paekākāriki Village
- Mulched the Quarry Lizard Garden and put in fenceposts
- Pest control team potluck dinner and honoured 15 years of volunteering service by Helen and Tony Griffiths
- Paekākāriki Beach survey for kororā/little penguins

December

- Installed the Cacophony Project cacophonometer, a solar powered bird call listening device
- Redug pitfall traps at the Lizard Protection Trial site, put out onduline and replaced old A24s with new A24s with the mouse attachment
- Site visit from Lynn Freeman at Radio New Zealand to interview us for her radio show
- Paekākāriki Beach survey for kororā/little penguins
- Penguin protection signs installed
- Gerald Dickinson's infrared Grid-I camera installed on the escarpment as part of a trial
- Trail cameras installed on the escarpment as part of the DOC Community Fund
- Successful application to the GWRC contestable fund for \$1500 of track work for a new trapline

2019

January

- Interview with Lynn Freeman played on Radio New Zealand
- Conservation Volunteers Wellington helped to build a section of a new track for a trapping line
- Second gate installed at the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Trail camera work continues

February

- Conservation Volunteers Wellington helped to collect driftwood and build rock piles at the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Trail camera trial with lizards

March

- Working bee to take care of blackberry up Fly-By-Wire Gully
- Third year of the Lizard Habitat Protection Trial completed
- Tuesday team helped to install lizard pitfall traps at Whareroa Farm

Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project

The Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project continues to meet on a regular basis. Ministry for the Environment funding ended in March 2018 and field operations largely wound down for most of 2018.

The project received \$30,000 from the DOC Community in September 2018 which helped to kickstart field operations again. However, this level of funding is not enough to maintain the project for particularly long and group is looking for considerably larger sources of funding to help fund community conservation on the Kāpiti Coast.

The group has very recently been incorporated as the Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Projects Inc. and this will assist with the group having financial autonomy.

A recent application was submitted to the DOC Community Fund 2019 Round, for a feasibility study looking at a predator proof fence for lizard conservation. The group is waiting to hear back as to whether this application has been successful.

Planting and weed control

Planting

We began planting at the Pukerua Bay site in 2017. An extremely dry spring that year meant that we had to spend a lot of time watering these plants. Thanks especially to Vicky Griffin and Steve Mann who kept these plants alive with their watering efforts. 2018 was not nearly as dry but there was still a huge effort keeping the plants watered. Success has meant a large proportion of seedlings have now survived two summers.

We are grateful for plant donations from the Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park, Paekākāriki School and Te Rito Gardens.

Most of our planting at the Paekākāriki end has been around the Quarry Lizard Garden. We installed a water tank and with the addition of sheep fencing have had phenomenal growth since Winter 2018. We have also focussed our attention on specialist planting, adding in a number of species to the lizard garden that have been locally extinct for a considerable amount of time.

We also planted a lizard garden at Paekākāriki School. This has been a great success with at least one Raukawa gecko moving in along with the expected northern grass skinks.

Weed control

During the year this work included controlling climbing asparagus, English ivy, pampas and boneseed control and has been undertaken by Ngā Uruora Contracting Ltd³ (NUCC) under a contract, reviewed annually. We thank NUCC for carrying out a substantial amount of extra weed control work for us free of charge.

In addition Ngā Uruora has continued work weeding and planting at the Pukerua Bay end of the escarpment as well as controlling wilding pines up Fly-By-Wire Gully.

Pest control

In 2018 we developed an updated pest control plan with the help of Pete McLaughlin, Sue Boyde and Paul Callister. We were advised by Department of Conservation and GWRC through this process. One of the biggest changes is reducing our use of brodifacoum, increasing our trapping and trialling other less environmentally persistent toxins.

Pest control activities are getting more technologically advanced and includes collaboration with Queen Elizabeth Park and Whareroa Farm.

Recent activities have included:

- Continuing trialling Goodnature and Econode remote sensing traps
- Use of trail 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

³ An unrelated business founded by members of Nga Uruora Kapiti Project Inc.

- Helping Gerald Dickinson trial his infrared Grid-I camera trap
- The Lizard Protection Trial on the escarpment, including replacing 40 Goodnature A24 traps with a new version that are more effective at targeting mice.
- Tracking tunnel monitoring

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 people and organisations, in no particular order:

- Rob Cross, Kāpiti Coast District Council for advice and support
- The team at Greater Wellington Regional Council for advice and support
- Department of Conservation, especially Angus Hulme-Moir
- Lawrence Silas and John Tesoriero from Kāpiti Coast District Council for supporting our field work
- Trish Sarr and Keith Johnston for their generous financial support
- The team behind the Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project - in particular Glenda Robb and John Hay, the project team leaders and Paul Callister who has managed the largest component - the pest control project and also the Lizard Protection Trial
- Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park
- Guardians of Whareroa Community Trust
- Trent Bell and Asha Fernandez from Ecogecko
- Queen Elizabeth II National Trust for their support and engagement over the year, especially Trevor Thompson and Jess
- All the Pukerua Bay end Tuesday volunteers
- Groundtruth and their generous support of our remote sensor trapping and web camera
- Conservation Volunteers Wellington for providing lots of volunteers
- WWF New Zealand for their lizard garden funding
- Isobel Gabites for her support with developing signage
- Paekakariki Station Museum for helping us with historic images for the lizard garden sign
- NZTA and Kiwirail for ongoing access to their land, and Kiwirail for fencing
- Winifred Long for undertaking the analysis of lizard data
- Ted Coates for all his hard work dealing with our sheep issue
- Pamela Meekings-Stewart for allowing us continued access through her farm over many years
- Te Rito gardens for donating plants

Our pest control team continued to keep rats, stoats, weasels and possums under control. We would like to thank Drew Kear, Eric Waanders, Terry Brown, Helen and Tony Griffiths, Cheryl Gwyn, Mark Johnstone, Sue Boyde, Ruth Doyle, Rob Hawke, Tony Older, Andy McKay, Paul Callister, Pete McLaughlin and Lynsey Earl for all their hours spent checking traps.

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 also like to thank Paekākāriki School for allowing us to grow plants within the school nursery.

Thank you to all the people that helped with the 2019 lizard survey: Sally Bain, Glenda Robb, Marian Cox, Michael Stace, Andy McKay, Ollie Gibson, Paul Callister, Chris Hughes, Sam Hughes, Roy Slack and Pete McLaughlin.

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

Thanks to Val Little and Liana Stupples for all their help with the newsletter.

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.

Financial report

Ngā Uruora – Kāpiti Project's accounts record an equity of \$70,755.81 at the close of the 2019 financial year. Included in this is the holding of \$14,070.63 for the DOC Community Fund that we are holding for the Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project. Ngā Uruora – Kāpiti Project's true equity when the DOC Community Funds are removed is \$56,685.18, this is a reduction in equity of 16165.73 over the financial year. This means Ngā Uruora – Kāpiti Project spent \$16,165.73 more on its own projects and running expenses than it received. This is first time in the last 5 financial years funds have been drawn from the savings account.

Revisions to the NUKP Rules

During 2018 the Committee took on the job of considering and revising the constitution of the society. This was in part because no significant changes had been made since our inception in 1997 and it was timely to make revisions to reflect the realities of the 21st century. These types of changes involved:

- Incorporating macrons as appropriate (eg Ngā Uruora – Kāpiti Project) – Rules 1 & 2
- Replacing the term “Chairperson” with “Convenor” – Rules 7 & 8
- Removing reference to cheques and withdrawal slips and replacing with electronic banking – Rule 9
- Removing the requirement that the AGM appoint an auditor since Incorporated Societies of the NUKP's status are not required to present audited accounts.

We also took the opportunity of correcting a number of typographical and formatting errors that related mostly to the fact that the original document had been prepared on a typewriter. These amendments extended to correcting a small number of omissions. An example of this was to add the words “at least” to the requirement that 7 days' notice of General Meetings is given.

The Committee took the opportunity to make three more significant amendments:

- We have deleted Rule 2(c) which stated that an object of the society is to “promote conservation work as a source of employment”, which we do not believe has remained a primary objective of the group. We have replaced this with a new Rule 2(c), to “protect and enhance native fauna in the Wellington – Kāpiti district” which we believe more accurately represents the goals and work of the group.
- We noted the potential contradiction between Rule 10 that prohibits the society from borrowing money and Rule 12(d) that allowed us to “raise or invest money on such terms as

may be thought fit". We added the words "though not by borrowing" to 12(d) to remove any doubt.

- We inserted a new Rule 13(e) that permits the Committee to waive membership fees in exceptional circumstances. This amendment arose from the inevitable situation in groups like ours where life membership is granted, or other similar circumstances.

Approval of the amendments to the Rules requires a formal vote following any questions or discussion. On adoption the revised Rules will be submitted to the Incorporated Societies Office for registration.