



# Ngā Uruora – Kāpiti Project Incorporated

## 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Report

### 2020 – 2021

20 April 2021



**Committee 2020-2021**

**Convenor**

Andy McKay

**Secretary**

Andrew Kear

**Treasurer**

Barbara MacDonald

**Committee**

Peter Kentish, Pete McLaughlin, Andy McKay, Barbara MacDonald,  
Andrew Kear, Sue Boyde, Nick Vincent, Ollie Gibson

## 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 24 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)<sup>1</sup> 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' jurisdictions<sup>2</sup>. 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 2020-2021

It would be an understatement to say that the last 12 months has been difficult for many people. In terms of Ngā Uruora, we were champing at the bit to get back onto the escarpment to be with the landscape we all love after lockdown.

The mental health benefits of nature are well documented and I like to think that the work that we do as an organisation helps in some small way, both for the volunteers and the 30,000 or so people that walk the Paekākāriki Escarpment Track each year.

We weren't particularly active last year applying for funding, which means we ended up being relatively constrained with how much money we were able to spend. You will see below however in the annual recap that we were still able to achieve a huge amount.

We have also heard in recent weeks that we have some significant new funding coming our way, as well as some generous donations by long term supporters and some other applications still in the pipeline. Overall I think Ngā Uruora is in a strong position to achieve its goals over the next few years.

As always, people are the centre of our organisation. We wouldn't be able to achieve what we do without the generous support of time and money from a wide range of people. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported us over the last 12 months, in whatever form that has taken.

Thank you all so much!

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

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

## 2020

### April

- Paekākāriki Escarpment closed at Level 3 and 4

### May

- Paekākāriki Escarpment Track and the Kohekohe Loop Track reopened at Level 2
- Kākāriki spotted in Pukerua Bay
- Planted *Anthosachne solandri* in the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Farewelled Ken Fraser and Steve Mann from our committee
- Working bee removing wilding pines, boxthorn and boneseed around Waikākāriki Gully

### June

- Planted three locally rare *Clematis afoliata* in our Quarry Lizard Garden
- Visit from the Kāpiti College Eco Action Group
- First Pukerua Bay working bee since lockdown
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, the Waikākāriki Wetland and the Paekākāriki School Lizard Garden

### July

- Article published on Paekākāriki.nz about the Waikākāriki Wetland
- Andy McKay and Sue Boyde were interviewed by Sharyn Goldstien for her KnowledgeAble Communities podcast.
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, the Waikākāriki Wetland and the Paekākāriki School Lizard Garden

### August

- Kākāriki spotted in Pukerua Bay
- Conservation Volunteers Work Skills start work on a new trappers track
- Boneseed and wilding pines control above the Waikākāriki Gully
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden

### September

- Experimental planting with silver tussock (*Poa cita*) next to some steep steps on the escarpment track
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden

### October

- Large slip on the escarpment closes the track for repairs
- Continued work on a trappers' track
- Replaced lizard pitfall traps and onduline that had been damaged by sheep
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden
- Donated excess root trainers, cages and PB3 planting bags to the New Plymouth Community Tree Trust

### November

- Annual maintenance of Bob's Track
- Replaced lizard pitfall traps that had been damaged by sheep
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden

## December

- Myrtle rust discovered for the first time in Paekākāriki
- Kororā/little penguin rescued from hole in a seawall
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden

## 2021

### January

- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden

### February

- Began the 5<sup>th</sup> year of lizard surveys on the escarpment
- Conservation Volunteers Wellington visit to Pukerua Bay
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden

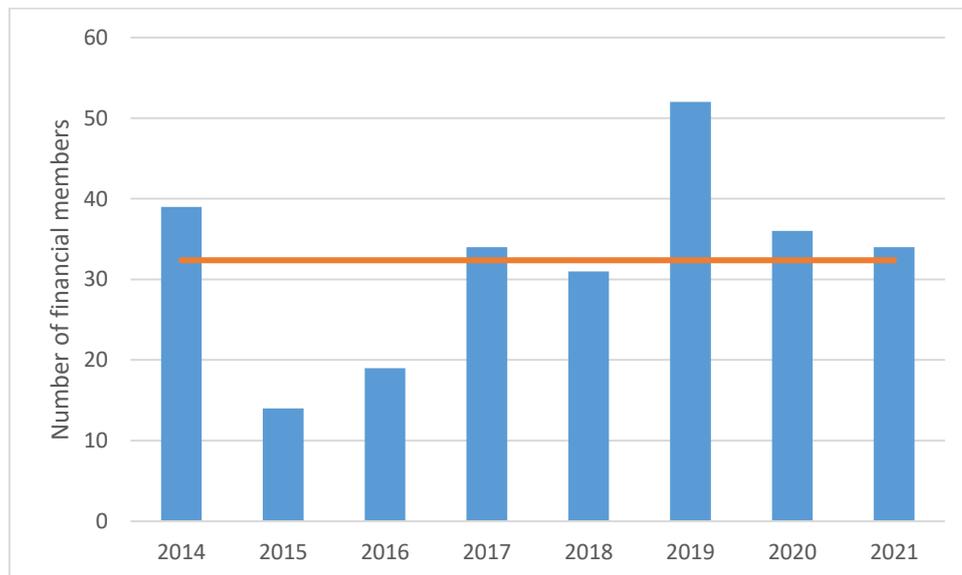
### March

- Planting regionally rare *Melicytus orarius* in our Quarry Lizard Garden.
- Pampas control along SH1
- Working bees at Pukerua Bay, Waikākāriki Wetland and the Quarry Lizard Garden

## Membership

We had 34 financial members over the 2021 financial year.

We are always grateful to our financial members as this money and associated donations allow us to pay for administration fees such as the website and post box that funding from organisations generally doesn't cover.



## Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project

The Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project formally incorporated in 2019 and Ngā Uruora remains an active member.

The Kāpiti Coast Biodiversity Project was recently granted \$276,000 by the Wellington Community Trust Climate Action Fund to undertake restoration projects in our local area. Our part of the project involves planting 5 hectares of pioneer species above Paekākāriki, planting 1,000 enrichment species (the types of trees that would have once been common in our area such as northern rata, matai, miro and totara) and giving a boost to our Waikākāriki wetland project work.

We believe that local resident Val Sanderson planted the now mature cabbage trees on that site. We hope to rename that part of Te Araroa 'Sanderson's Way'. In association with the Kāpiti-Mana branch of Forest & Bird we will also develop signage about Sanderson in time for the 100th anniversary of the founding of Forest & Bird in 2023. In doing this we will acknowledge the special connection Ngāti Haumia Ki Paekākāriki have with this area and will be working closely with them.

## Planting and weed control

### Planting

We began planting at the Pukerua Bay site in 2017. Vicky Griffin, Steve Mann and Jim Cox have led a watering programme that has meant most of these plants have survived four summers now. However, given the early site is extremely exposed to wind and salt most of these plants have barely made it above their guards. Wetter, more sheltered areas have been much more successful and we have had great success with both plant growth and survival.

Most of our planting at the Paekākāriki end continues to be around the Quarry Lizard Garden. We remain focussed on specialist planting, adding in a number of species to the lizard garden that have been locally extinct for a considerable amount of time.

2019 saw the addition of another planting programme, as part of the restoration of the Waikākāriki Wetland. Weeds are a huge issue but we have managed to get a range of natives in. The new funding from the Wellington Community Trust Climate Action Fund described above will be a huge boost for this particular project.

Thanks also for the efforts of Drew Kear and Paul Callister and for planting around 100 Carex secta at two locations.

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

### 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 Ltd (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 and boneseed up Fly-By-Wire Gully.

Thanks also to Greater Wellington Regional Council for their weed control efforts on the escarpment.

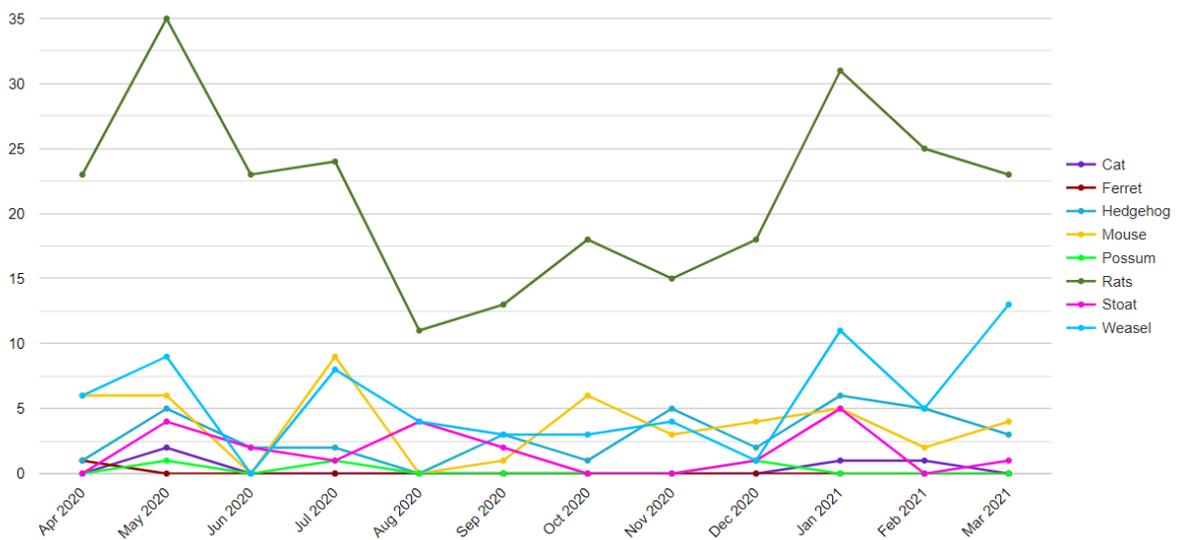
## Pest control

We run a network of 231 traps and 174 bait stations and expand this each year.

We continue to look at alternatives to brodifacoum, and trials of Double Tap (Diphacinone and Cholecalciferol/Vitamin D3) appear to have been successful with mouse tracking remaining low at our lizard protection site.



470 pests were caught over the last financial year (500 the year before), with over half of those being rats with the next most common species being weasels at 14%.



## 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 continue to hum. 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, particularly Kim Broad 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
- Paul Callister for his 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
- Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park
- Guardians of Whareroa Community Trust
- Queen Elizabeth II National Trust for their support and engagement over the year, especially Trevor Thompson and Jess Stevens
- All the Pukerua Bay end Tuesday volunteers
- Groundtruth and their generous support of our web camera, providing Trap.nz and donations of plants
- Conservation Volunteers Wellington for providing lots of volunteers and their Conservation Work Skills group.
- NZTA and Kiwirail for ongoing access to their land, and Kiwirail for fencing
- Ted Coats 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 growing plants
- Goodnature for their donation of lures and gas for our lizard garden A24s
- Wellington Zoo for funding assistance for our lizard trial
- Te Araroa, and their funders, for all their work maintaining the escarpment track
- Fly-by-Wire for giving us access via their track for trapping and weed control work.

Our pest control team continued to keep rats, stoats, weasels and possums under control. We would like to thank Drew Kear, Terry Brown, Helen and Tony Griffiths, Sue Boyde, Ruth Doyle, Jackson McKendry, Rob Hawke, Nick Thompson, Tony Older, Andy McKay, Paul Callister, Malcolm Garnham and Pete McLaughlin for all their hours spent checking traps.

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

Thank you to all the people that were signed up to help with the helped with the 2021 lizard survey. Unfortunately, it was cut short by poor weather this year. Angus Hulme-Moir, Ollie Gibson, Andy McKay, Pete McLaughlin, Sue Boyde, Vicky Griffin, George Hobson, Sam Hughes, Cameron Thorp and especially Paul Callister for organising.

We would like to thank the regular Tuesday working bee team including Peter Kentish, Ken Fraser, Drew Kear, Paul Callister, Steve Mann, Michael Stace, Georgia Beechey and we are grateful to Ken Fraser and Peter Kentish for the many hours they has put into controlling cape ivy, blackberry and other weeds. Thanks also to the Pukerua Bay end volunteers including Ashley Blair, Janette Tolley, Victoria Roberts, Jim Cox and Vicky Griffin.

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

## **Financial report**

Ngā Uruora - Kāpiti Project's accounts record an equity of \$68,781.62 at the close of the 2021 financial year. This is an increase of \$1,048.42 from the equity from the previous years \$67,733.20.

However, there was \$1,366.74 in payments owing at the close of the financial year so the true equity is \$67,414.88, a decrease of \$318.32 from the 2020 financial year.