



Habitat Extra - North Shore Branch e-news

Kauri dieback disease may have reached the North Shore



Thinning canopy of kauri trees



Kauri bleeding gum

A track at Chelsea Estate Heritage Park has been closed as a precautionary measure while investigations are carried out on a kauri tree that may be affected by dieback disease.

Visual inspection of the kauri was inconclusive but there is a strong possibility that the tree is infected. Soil results are likely to be confirmed in early June.

The kauri with suspected infection was found during Auckland Council's track surveys that have been happening in the north of the Auckland region in recent months.

We can't assume anywhere is disease free, and the tree in question is likely to have been in decline for several years. And with up to 75 track entrances in the Kaipatiki area alone that require significant investment in cleaning stations, it is time for a significant breakthrough in funding to conserve our taonga.

What should you do if you discover (or think you have discovered) an infected kauri?

- Email Auckland Council biosecurity: biosecurity@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz with as much detail as possible, exact location and take some photos if you are able to capture these.
- Alternatively, you can complete a Kauri Dieback Disease reporting form on the www.kauridieback.co.nz website.
- If you don't have email, call the Auckland Council main line: 09 301 010

Wetland Degradation



Pukeko and eel feeding on bread at Northboro Reserve pond

Some years ago Healthy Waters, the Council agency, planted out the pond area at Northboro Reserve to create a valuable wetland habitat following a major re-configuring of this area with caged rocks to manage storm water in-flows from nearby roads. But recent deaths of ducks that inhabit these ponds (see Flagstaff 23 March) indicate that all is not well in this habitat. It has been suggested by Healthy Waters that botulism is responsible for the death of the ducks and that E.coli is present as well as an oily film. Water temperatures have been higher than average this summer and there has been relatively little rainfall until recently to flush out the pond.

Other factors that could be contributing to degradation of this precious wetland are that the stormwater in-flows are coming from roads where infill housing is being built. Contractors wash mud from footpaths and roads into the gutters and within 10 minutes this water is flowing into this area. Upgrading of the access road from Northboro Road to the old sewerage pumping station nearby allowed silt to contaminate the water too, while very recently at Ngataranga Bay silt containment fences were not installed to contain a slip under repair by the authorities.



The degradation of this wetland area is affecting more than just ducks. Some very large eels are often seen here, some of them nearly a metre long - they could be at least 60 years old. Eels can be sensitive to the quality of the water they inhabit. And committee member Philip Moll notes that he hasn't seen them recently.

The Black Shag (Great Cormorant) occasionally visits this pond, sometimes perched at the top of



the large damaged pine tree nearby. A little shag, a more frequent visitor, swims submerged for short bursts as it hunts for food. White faced heron have nested here. In the early summer many welcome swallows fly fast skimming the surface of the pond as they catch insects occasionally stopping for a breather on the pipe that crosses the pond.

It's unlikely that the results of water testing by Healthy Waters will be made public. Which is a concern, given that there are large intensive housing projects planned for around the wildlife-rich estuaries of Shoal and Ngataranga. If compliance to protect streams and water areas is not followed, we can expect further pollution, as our estuaries and beaches continue to be used as a large convenient drain.

(Above abridged from [article by Philip Moll, Flagstaff May 4 2018](#) 'Not Just Ducks Threatened by Development')

Additional photos: white-faced heron; welcome swallow.

Branch Night - This Month

Monday 4 June (Queen's Birthday)

Lizards

Chris Wedding is a senior ecologist with Bioresarches, a specialist ecology and environmental consultancy. He designs habitats in and around the structures of our city (such as pipelines, subdivisions, marinas) that are useful to native animals. Chris will be talking about lizards, their roles in urban ecology and the dangers they face in suburbia.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Take place on the first Monday of each month excluding January, including public holidays.

Venue: Takapuna Senior Citizens' Hall, The Strand – through the courtyard at the rear of the Takapuna Library.

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Admission: A koha/donation is appreciated to cover costs. Non-members are welcome. Please join us for supper afterwards. For further information, phone Jocelyn Sanders on 09 479 2107.

Branch Night - Next Month

Monday 2 July

Bar fights and bad tenants; sexually selected behaviours in New Zealand sheet-web spiders

Leilani Walker is a PhD student at the University of Auckland working with Dr Greg Holwell. She is using New Zealand sheet-web spiders (Cambridgea) to help untangle our understanding of how males compete for access to mates using their incredibly large jaws.

Leilani will be discussing some of her results.

Branch Trip

No trip in June – we have a planting day at Tuff Crater instead. See below for details.

Tuff Crater Work Day

Saturday 9 June, 9a.m. - Planting day at Tuff Crater

We are planting the bank below the Canon building. Come to the Warehouse Way. Please come prepared for sloping terrain, with a spade and as many friends and family as you can muster. It is likely all the plants will be in by 1030a.m. so best come early.

There will be a great morning tea for everyone when all the plants are in.

If in doubt or lost please phone Richard on 021 216 1296.

We hold working bees at 9a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. For further details and updates see our [website calendar](#). To be on the separate email list for Tuff Crater news and events go to our [Tuff Crater page](#).

We also run a weekly working bee on Thursday from 930a.m. For meeting place and other information contact Anne Denny on 021 121 4610

Native Plant of the Month

At our monthly meetings we have a presentation of a native plant. As our last meeting was also our AGM, we did not have time for this presentation, so for those of you who are interested, here is last month's plant, the very hardy and attractive oioi.

Apodasmia similis

Apodasmia: From the Greek apodasmios meaning 'separated', referring to the widely disjunct distribution of the species (there are two species in Australia, one in New Zealand and one in Chile)

similis: similar to another species

Maori name: oioi

Common Name: Jointed Wire Rush

Description

- Not Threatened



- Endemic (found nowhere else): North Island, South Island, Chatham Island, Three Kings Islands.
- Family: Restionaceae (rushes and allied plants)
- Habitat: Mostly coastal in estuaries, saltmarshes, dunes and sandy flats and hollows.
- Occasionally inland in gumland scrub, along lake margins, fringing peat bogs or surrounding hot springs.
- Features: Dioecious (male & female flowers on separate plants), rush-like, perennial herb. Flowers October – December. Fruits December - March.
- Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces of underground rhizome.
- Very popular tub and traffic island plant.
- Extensively used in the landscaping e.g. in front of Mitre 10 Albany and the approach to Auckland airport.
- Used by Maori for thatching the roofs of houses. It made a very durable thatch roof.



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To protect and restore nature in Aotearoa/New Zealand.*



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