

# Nursery News

SUMMER 2021

AN UPDATE FROM THE FOREST & BIRD (WELLINGTON BRANCH)  
NATIVE PLANT RESTORATION PROJECT

**Happy New Year** and **Thank You** to all volunteers and supporters for your contribution during 2020



**2375 voluntary hours were worked in the Nursery during 2020\***



## State of play

So far this season we have not had any of the usual weather catastrophes, probably because it hasn't been much of a summer.

In the Nursery there is much weeding to be done, of course, and a lot of potting up and potting on is happening. It's the final round of preparation for the 2021 distribution of plants and we're starting to get stock ready for 2022.



## The new toy

Thanks to a generous donation from a volunteer, the Nursery has been able to buy an electric wheelbarrow.



The joys of such a machine were discovered when we were lent one by a kind supporter of the Nursery, Denis Asher. The wheelbarrow is invaluable for

fetching earth from the compost bin, taking plants up the drive to the standing-out area and other moving about of stuff.

## WHERE OUR PLANTS GO

### Waiu Wetland Project

The Waiu Wetland project in Wainuiomata was started by Russell Bell in 2010. The area, about seven hectares, had been cleared and drained and converted to farming back in the day, but then abandoned to become a dumping ground (old cars, fridges, etc) with the usual plant pests – blackberry, gorse, Himalayan honeysuckle, flowering cherry, hawthorn – invading the area. After discussions with the Hutt City Council, permission was given for Forest & Bird to go ahead with converting the area back to a wetland. The Council helped to clear the land of rubbish.

In 2012 A Rocha, an international Christian organisation concerned with environmental research and community conservation projects, started work in partnership with the Council and F&B restoring the wetland in an adjacent area. →



\* We lost some hours due to the lockdown, of course.

For further information contact Chris ([chris@kriss.nz](mailto:chris@kriss.nz)) or Gary ([mistletoe57@gmail.com](mailto:mistletoe57@gmail.com))



Now established grasses, flaxes, toe toe and cabbage trees.



New planting including Carex and Phormium spp.

Gary (James) took over the F&B project in 2017. With the help of volunteers, an enormous amount of progress has already been achieved. Weed plants have been methodically removed and traps and bait stations installed throughout the area to deal with stoats, rats, mice, etc. There has also been culling of deer and rabbits.

They are already finding that skinks are moving back into the improving habitat.

Over 5,500 trees have been planted and several rare or endangered plants can now be found in the wetland. These include *Ranunculus macropus* (swamp buttercup), *Olearia virgata*, *Coprosma*

*tenuicaulis* and *Carmichaelia australis* as well as the narrow-leaved mahoe (*Melicytus lanceolatus*), which is uncommon in the Wellington area. There are also some very old kanuka and manuka trees.

The plan is for the two wetland areas to be linked, and the two groups are liaising with the mountain bike community who have a loop track running through.

It's a long-term project but the planting plan is very much underway. We must congratulate those who had the original vision, when all they could see was a mound of rubbish and a wall of 3-metre high gorse and brambles.



Scorched earth – ground ready for planting.



An old existing manuka tree.



A fine example of *Olearia virgata*.



The wooden dam on the bifurcated stream.



Narrow-leaved mahoe (*Melicytus lanceolatus*).



A very old, established kanuka.