

NurseryNews

AN UPDATE FROM THE FOREST & BIRD NATIVE PLANT RESTORATION PROJECT (HIGHBURY & WAINUIOMATA)

WINTER 2025

Winter is progressing very much as winter usually does – some cold days, some very cold days and some not so cold days.

There's been a bit of rain too, from time to time, but nothing like the rain that has hit other parts of the country. (Although what we have had has caused a few incidents with cars getting stuck in the mud. Be careful where you park.)



The autumn distribution is well underway with a large number of plants going out to local planting groups. Almost all of this year's orders have been processed and we have sent out over 8000 plants so far.

Now it's time to start filling up the empty spaces. With this in mind, there have been several plant collecting trips recently – Johnston Hill and different areas in Huntleigh Park, and more to come, no doubt. The shelves in the shadehouses are starting to fill up.

It was good to have a visit from the Wellington Branch committee, some of whom were new committee members. It was an opportunity to show them around the Nursery and explain what we do.



Some of the plants in the standing-out area, waiting to be fetched to go out to their new homes.

Refreshments



Tea time – a good day.

NURSERY QUIZ N° 96



PHOTO: RACHEL GAUKRODGER

What plant is this? (Answer on page 4.)

NEWS FROM WAINUIOMATA



The nursery infrastructure is being expanded to include a seed propagation unit, storage shed and plant boxes for the standing-out area. These have been donated to F&B by MIRO (Mainland Island Restoration Organisation) which has had to decommission their nursery due to an infestation of climbing asparagus around their nursery, seeding into their plants. MIRO nursery supplied plants to the Pencarrow Lakes area. Being unable to find a new nursery site, it was decided that the F&B Nursery in Wainuiomata would absorb their operation. We hope that many of their volunteers (many of whom are F&B members) will join the Wainuiomata work force. (See also page 2.)



Tea time – a not-so-good day.

For further information contact Richard (fbnurserywn@gmail.com) or Gary (mistletoe1957@gmail.com)

Men at work



Peter working on the final stages of the trellis wall he has been building. This is going to tidy up that corner very nicely.



This is the new seed-raising bench donated to the Wainuiomata Nursery by the MIRO Nursery. (See also Wainui story page 1.)



David, along with a team of other volunteers, putting in plants from the Nursery at Whitiorea.



Marshall with the best job in the world - weeding the *Aciphylla squarrosa* (Speargrass).



Two men making a very important decision.



Mike doing a spot of weeding in a shadehouse.

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WHERE OUR PLANTS GO

Everyone's planting trees

These Clyde Quay students are working to restore the native bush on Mt Victoria with plants from the F&B Nursery.



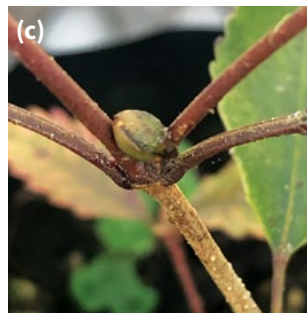
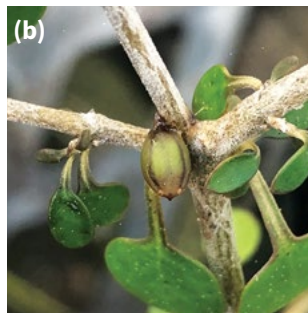
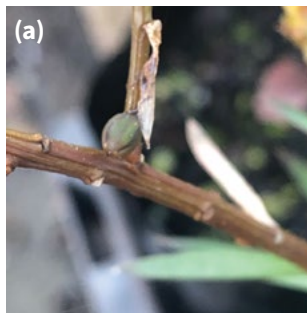
Trials with parasites



PHOTOS: LYN CLARK

Above: Ben Wright collected seeds of *Mida salicifolia* and planted them alongside kahikatea seedlings. Some have now germinated and put up shoots. *M. salicifolia* is a semi parasite and if it is to thrive, its roots will have to latch on to the kahikatea roots to get its water and nutrients.

Below: Ben has also collected seeds of the red mistletoe, *Peraxilla tetrapetala*, and stuck them on the seedlings of (a) Hall's totara (b) *Coprosma propinqua* (c) kamahi and (d) hard beech. Two have now started to germinate.



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FAUNA CORNER

It's not just plants at the Nursery

A plant nursery is the perfect place for small critters to work and play. This is good news, given that so many habitats are being destroyed by chemical spraying and other human activities, resulting in the monumental decline in invertebrate populations being reported worldwide. (Spider identifications unreliable.)



Vagrant spider.



New Zealand sheetweb spider, bush spider.



Nursery web spider.



Peripatus or velvet worm.



Everyone's favourite, the weta.



A northern grass skink hiding in a seed tray. They are found in a wide range of habitats but often in rough pasture grass and some urban gardens. They like lots of cover to hide under.



QUIZ ANSWER: Rangiora (bushman's friend).

... and the fauna non grata

Now Tahi has moved away, regular volunteers Marilyn and Roberta have taken over servicing the twenty traps around the Nursery. Since April, 15 rats and 6 mice have been caught. This trapping contributes to the local predator-free campaign. Thanks, Tahi, for all your trapping efforts.

