

# WHAREROA GUARDIANS COMMUNITY TRUST

## Update 03 February 2022

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### **No working bee Sunday Feb 7<sup>th</sup> as leaders away**

We are watching the spread of Covid in NZ and will make a decision about a possible working bee on Feb 14<sup>th</sup> and send around a message a couple of days before.

Volunteers have been busy over the summer: releasing plants, clearing blackberry, watering some special plants, mowing and weedeating, bee keeping and track maintenance. All this help is really appreciated. Special thanks to Bruce and Denys who have put in many hours on the tracks. Thank you everyone.

### **Last working bee Dec 5th 2021**



We cleared long grass from around lots of plants. It was a “bottoms up” morning. Saws and grubbers did the job. Some plants grow quicker than others; we are building up a picture of what does best where. Kanuka and manuka seem very tough. Denys and Ian mowed the orchard.



General scene



Rachel and cleared mahoe



Matt ready for action



Ellen among the carex secta

*Many thanks to: Matt Whittaker, Sandra Rowland, Rachel Calvert, Ellen Soulliere, Dawn Bush, Janet Wilson, Peter Kentish, Jan Nisbet, Bernard Cammack, Shane Williamson, Bruce Bulmer, Linda Hill, Denys Crengle, Ian Redward and Ann Evans.*

## Sadly, weather has impacted badly on Whareroa in several ways:

First flood – with significant slips, erosion and washing away the steppingstones by the Gums. An important fence above the Cairn is badly damaged. Bruce rapidly put-up temporary electrics but it is not totally sheep-proof. It will be repaired.

Then drought. We inspected the Carex Valley plantings this week. The carex are doing fine amongst the grass. Many trees are also fine but the lovely kahikatea have sustained major losses, even those planted in what was expected to be a moist environment. However, totara seem very resilient, as are kowhai, mahoe, rata, wineberry, and lemonwood and there should still be an impressive mini forest in a couple of years.

The GroundTruth plantings high on the ridges are struggling. Again, kanuka and manuka seem to be the stars. It will take a lot of rain to saturate the ground again.



Slip above the Cairn, damaging fence



Erosion of main track by Gums (Bruce repaired)



Ground Truth plantings, alongside the Ti Kouka/Rocks Track



**NB Fruit is ripening in the orchard – plums are nearly over, damsons coming along. Apples & pears will be later. You are welcome to sample the produce, thanks mainly to Liffet.**

## New downhill MTB Track

This was opened in late December and is an engineering feat. It is a “flow” track - riders can “flow down it” rather than being on constant alert for tricky bits. It awaits a formal name. It starts from Campbell’s Mill Rd several hundred metres to the south of the existing Whareroa northern access. It is one way (downhill), has stunning views and is for bikes only. Congratulations to Steve Lewis and the Kapiti MTB Club for seeing this through.



**Future working bee: possibly Sunday February 14<sup>th</sup>, 9-noon**

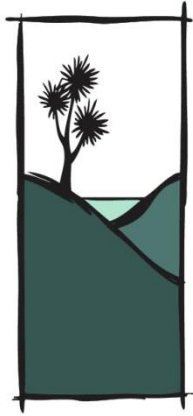
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## Update 03 March 2022

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### **No working bees March and April due to Covid**

We're sorry about this but we are "playing safe". Organised activity should start again in May and there will be over 2,500 plants to plant this winter. However, volunteers are very welcome to continue releasing, track trimming, thistle grubbing, picking up litter or anything that needs doing! A number of volunteers spend many hours at Whareroa mowing, clearing blackberry and noxious weeds, improving tracks, building stiles, collecting litter and being generally useful. All help is appreciated, many thanks to those volunteers.



Carex Valley: plantings beyond the table (the last one built by Richard).

## Richard Caldwell and Tony (Griff) Griffiths. RIP

We are sad to report the loss of two of our longest serving volunteers. Tony & Helen were there at the very first planting in 2007 and Richard was at most working bees for over ten years. Both were quiet, observant and had a dry sense of humour.

Richard was our “go to” man. His practical skill in all sorts of ways will be really missed. His engineering background led him to adopt Miss Piggy after Leon died. He kept our lower tracks mown for many years and stripped down the motor and replaced drive belts as needed. When windows were broken in the caravan, Richard had them repaired in no time, even making new brass catches. Then as Miss Piggy aged, he adopted the new mower and was still mowing in his early 90’s – he would get (quietly) cross if one of the other mowers did his section. Richard’s other incredible contribution was in carpentry: six picnic tables, two seats and about ten little benches were made by him. His wife Audrey would come down to the farm and knit while he mowed – our condolences to her and the family.



Miss Piggy



New mower on her maiden mow at the Cairn.



Richard and Bruce at his table by Ti Kouka, Theo’s landrover transported

Tony's special contribution was growing numerous kowhai trees from seeds obtained on the Raumati Escarpment and then nurturing them until they could stand on their own. Many of the middle-sized kowhai at Whareroa were Tony's. He would put his hand to any task, planting, clearing the stream, removing fence wire and in particular, supporting Helen's regular bird monitoring trips. He discovered Whareroa's own peripatus whilst cleaning a drain on Carex Valley track. Again, our condolences to Helen and family.



Peripatus, Carex Valley



Tony at the back in green



Stream clearing



One of Tony's kowhai, with blue marker

Close up of some of last year's plantings in Carex Valley



Wineberry



Totara



Carex secta



## An amazing vine – *Passiflora tetrandra* in Ramaroa Bush



Flowering at present



Clearing blackberry – a regular Tues job

**Keep enjoying Whareroa and we look forward to meeting up again soon.**

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# WHAREROA GUARDIANS COMMUNITY TRUST

## Update 01 April 2022

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**Working bee this Sunday, 03 April. 9 to Noon - by popular demand**

Despite Covid being active in Kapiti, people want to come to a working bee at Whareroa. We will work around the Dell, there are lots of different jobs: clearing seedlings from under the giant totara, grubbing out a few small patches of blackberry, releasing young trees, cutting down some bigger gorse. Please bring suitable tools and your morning tea. We need to be socially distanced – wear a mask if you wish. Drive into the Hub then follow the flags. Close all gates as sheep are grazing in the Hub.



Denys mowing the Dell Terrace. Denys spends many hours mowing tracks at Whareroa. Bruce looks after the Ti Kouka/Rocks track – an epic to mow. It makes such a difference to the pleasure of walking the tracks now they are mown regularly. Thanks from us all.

## Fence Repairs

The fencer has been busy repairing fences between retired land and grazed. There have been gaps and sheep have at times been damaging plantings, both ours and the Rotary Forest of Peace and Remembrance, up on the hills. Thanks, DOC, for funding this.



Lovely to see the new battens

Rosemary McCarthy cleared her bamboo patch and produced several hundred bamboo stakes – many thanks Rosemary.

Bernard Cammack has finished the easier track down from the Dell Terrace. It was seeded last weekend, we hope rain arrives before sparrows have eaten it all.



### Another sad loss – volunteer Bill Jansen

Bill was another of our long-standing volunteers. He died recently, well into his 90's. Bill had attended working bees for many years, turning his hand to planting, track excavating and then helping with the sausage sizzles when no longer able to do the physical stuff. Our condolences to his family.



Bill with son Paul at the Caravan opening. Paul had lived in the caravan on Kapiti Island.

### Autumn is fruiting and seed time



Passiflora, Kaikomako and totara fruit and seed

**Bad news** – a ferret was trapped at Whareroa. These are even more harmful to native fauna than stoats and weasels. Postmortem showed it had recently eaten rabbit and weta.





Liffet and Theo extracted 10L honey from the hives. Numerous stings were experienced. Thank you both for your care of the bees over the year, and to Ken for experienced support.

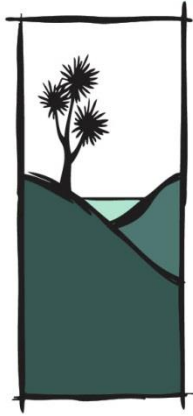


Contractors' vehicles parking up at Whareroa getting ready for the opening of Transmission Gully on March 31<sup>st</sup>. All the cones and barriers had to be removed at dead of night to avoid queues developing. Whareroa is now much closer to Wellington and the Hutt.

**Keep enjoying Whareroa and we look forward to meeting up again soon.**

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# WHAREROA GUARDIANS COMMUNITY TRUST

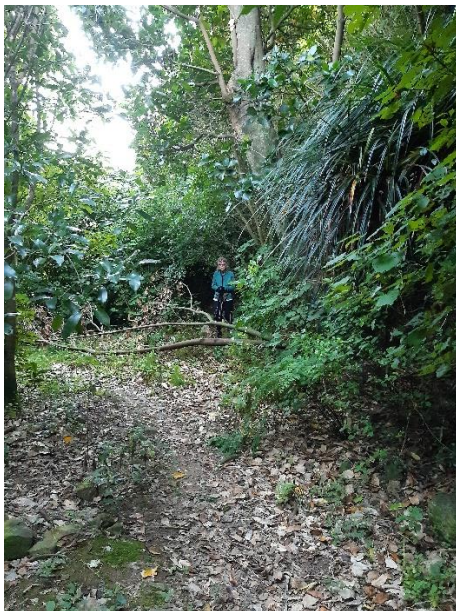
## Update 29 April 2022

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### **Working bee this Sunday, 01 May. 9 to Noon**

We will work along the “Vollies’ Track”. This allows volunteers access along the main valley just beyond the entrance, access is on the right just after the foot bridge at the beginning of Coastal Lookout Track.

The key job is cutting a diversion a short distance through scrub as the current track is being undercut by the stream. Hand saws, spades, shovels, grubbers etc will be useful.



New track will go where the person is. Undercutting of existing track.

Other jobs: cutting down gorse bushes, and general tidying up. The track continues into Kohekohe Bush to the “outdoor classroom” and is fun to explore. Kohekohe is budding. Please bring suitable tools and your morning tea. We need to be socially distanced – wear a mask if you wish.

## Last working bee – April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

We had a happy morning in the Dell.



Hopkinsons releasing trees



Dean, Tiff, Jan & gorse devastation. NB Miro



Socially distanced morning tea and catch up.

Lots of disparate activities went on: releasing last years' trees, removing gorse to give older plantings space (the miro is about 12 years old), trimming back bushes along track, removing bushes blocking sight lines, track development, clearing blackberry etc etc.

**Many thanks to:** *Dean Arthur, Dawn Bush, Rachel Calvert, Bernard Cammack, Sue Campbell, Phil Curry, Ann Evans, Linda Hill, Albie, Fred, Sarah & Marcus Hopkinson, Peter Kentish, Jan Nisbet, Ian Redward, Ellen Soulliere and Tiff Stewart.*



Hopkinsons after their hard work



Ann gathering *Coprosma rhamnoides* seeds



Lynette by a pile of blackberry cuttings



Shane heading off with a load of new traps

The trappers have a batch of advanced traps which reset themselves. They are bulky and strong and it is hoped they will catch the ferrets. The trapping team are out regularly as the standard DOC traps have to be reset. Once they are triggered they can't catch anything else. They recently caught their 1000<sup>th</sup> possum. Congratulations guys.





Annie and possum 1001 in Mamaku Valley today



Rainbow over Carex Valley

The Wellington Botanical Society have a field trip at Whareroa on Saturday May 7th at 9.30. There will be an introduction to identifying native plants as well as their usual detailed exploration – in Kohekohe and Matai Bush areas. Whareroa supporters are welcome.

**Next working bee 05 June (Queen's birthday weekend)**

**Planting will start on Sunday 19th June then 1st and 3rd Sunday mornings through July and August.**



Rata and totara planted Upper Mamaku Sept. That little plant could grow into this (in Dell)

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# WHAREROA GUARDIANS COMMUNITY TRUST

Update 02 June 2022

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**Kohekohe Celebration and Working bee**  
**Sunday, 05 June. 9 to Noon**

We will again work along the “Vollies’ Track” which starts just after the footbridge. Follow the flags. We will continue cutting back gorse – a very satisfying job with visible results. A good start was made last time exposing lots of kahikatea growing well. Bring good gloves and footwear and hand saws and loppers. We will provide “Bamboo Buster” to paint the stems so they do not regrow.

We will be working to the noisy calls of tui and other birds revelling in the adjacent kohekohe flowering – it’s really loud even walking along the Farm Race. Being under those tall trees surrounded by birdsong, in the faint aroma of the flowers in profusion is an awe-inspiring experience.

Please bring your own morning tea and maintain social distance as we are still in Covid level Orange – there are plenty of cases in Kapiti.



## Last Working Bee May 1st

The key job was cutting a diversion a short distance through scrub along the "Vollies Track"



This to . . . . .

this . . . to the end result below

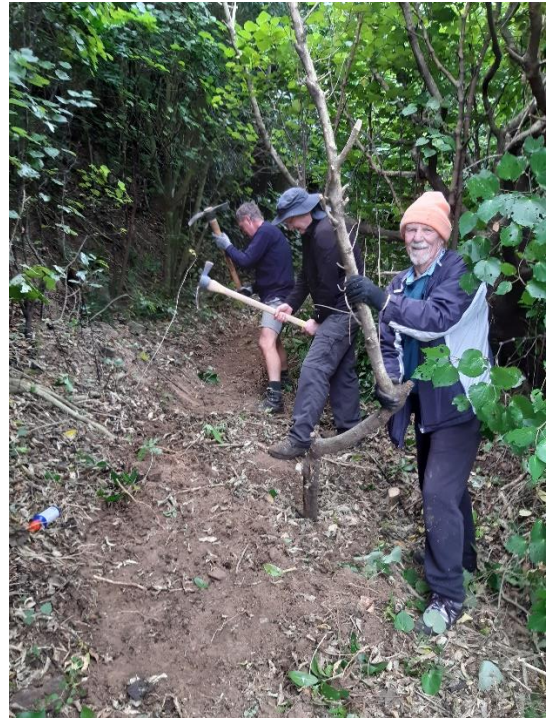


**Many thanks to:** Shane Williamson, Peter Davis, Peter Kentish, Dawn Bush, Ellen Soulliere, Janet Walker, Sue Campbell, Jan Nisbet, Ann Evans, Rachel Calvert, Sue Blaikie, Ian Redward, Bernard Cammack and the Roberts family: Anias, Danika, Devon, Jamie and Mali. The children arranged the rocks and trimmed bushes.

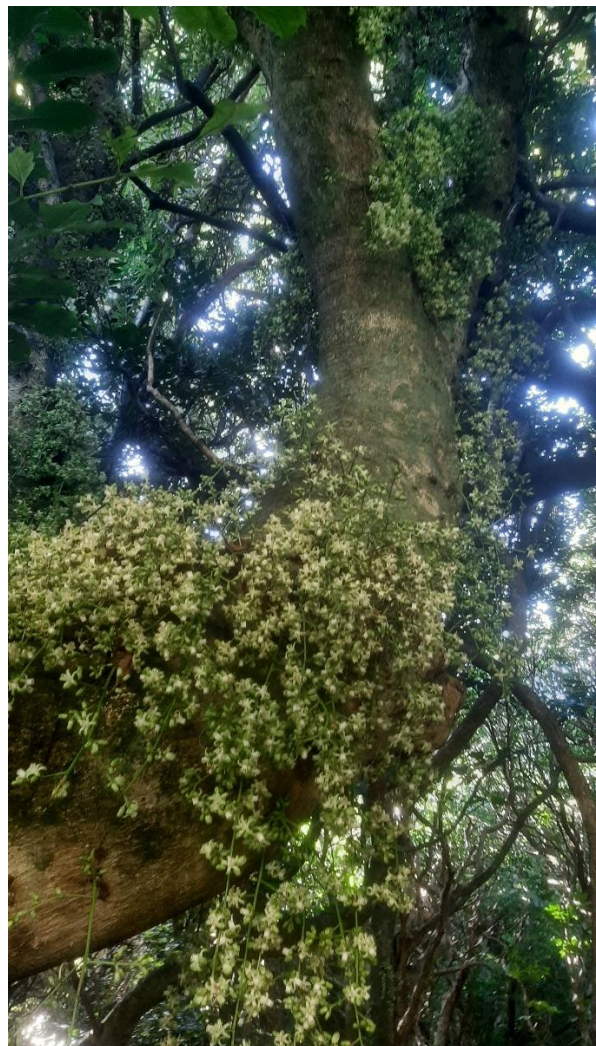
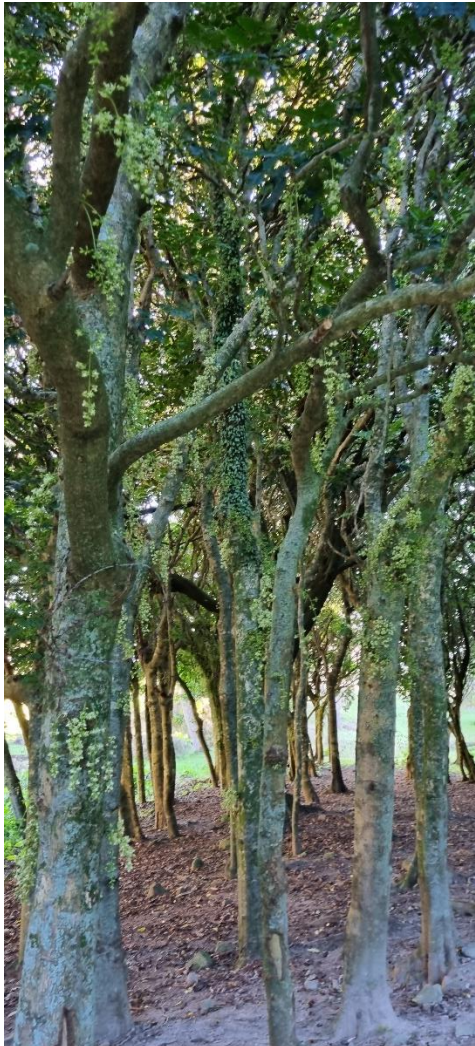
**Lots of big gorse was dealt to:**



There is plenty more to do but it is good fun and exercise.



These Kohekohe pics by Rachel Calvert & Sandra Rowland



## Bees – another volunteer needed please

The bees have been looked after by Theo Barsanti and Liffet Stewart with occasional support from Peter Davis. However, another volunteer is needed. It is quite physical and jobs have to be done regularly. If you would like to know more about this fascinating activity please send a note to the gmail address below. Full training will be given. Protective gear is provided.

## Track warning

Caution is needed along the Link Track in Carex Valley – the stream has undercut the edge. DOC will be addressing this but in the meantime, keep close to the bank.



Undercutting of Link Track



Sprayed spots for planting in wetland below Hub

**Planting this year** will be mainly in the wetland area between the Hub and Matai Bush. It has been funded by Wellington Community Trust, linked to Kapiti Biodiversity Project. Additional trees, provided by Trees that Count, will go in other areas. Many thanks to both these organisations.

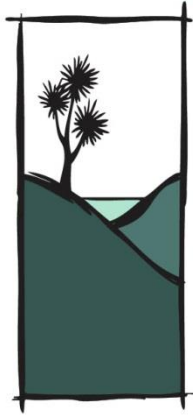
**Planting will start on Sunday July 3<sup>rd</sup> and then continue on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays through July, August & maybe Sept.**

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# WHAREROA GUARDIANS COMMUNITY TRUST

## Update 30 June 2022

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### **Wetland Planting starts Sunday, July 3rd. 9 to Noon**

There are 1000 wetland plants – carex, rushes and sedges. These will start to return the rank pasture back to its original state and establish native vegetation up the valley past Matai Bush and later Upper Bush. The ground is saturated, wear good boots or gummies and gloves, bring your spades. One plant per sprayed spot please. You can drive in to the Hub, please close all gates. Follow the flags, the site is just beyond the caravan. We have cardboard guards and bamboos to place around smaller plants to protect them from pukeko and rabbits. Bring your own morning tea. Hot dog after, back at the shed. All welcome.

### **Last Working Bee June 5th**

We did a huge amount of gorse cutting along the “Vollies’ Track” – a very satisfying job with visible results. It was great to have several children taking part.









One more session should see it cleared – any volunteers with an hour or two to spare are welcome to do some more – if you need Bamboo Buster contact Liffet.

We were delighted to meet the 4<sup>th</sup> generation of Durrant-Bush family; hopefully little Theo will follow in the footsteps of Mum Ruby and great-gran Dawn. Also good to catch up with Darrel and John, out to check the traps.

**Many thanks to:** Shane Williamson, Peter Kentish, Dawn Bush, Ellen Soulliere, Jan Nisbet, Ann Evans, Rachel Calvert, Ian Redward, Bernard Cammack, Dean Arthur, Liffet & Jiff Stewart, Gary Crilley, Sandra & John Rowland, the Hopkinsons: Albie, Fred & Marcus and the Roberts's: Anias, Danika, Devon, Jamie and Mali. Janet Walker did some during the week

## Whareroa Farm Plan Review – your thoughts invited please.

Our first comprehensive Farm Plan was prepared in 2012. It is due for review. It is accessible on the website (see below). Please see attached questionnaire, all feedback welcome.

## Wai Tuwhera o te Taiao - Open Waters Aotearoa

Samples of stream water were taken as part of this Citizens Science project, run by the Environmental Protection Authority. They were taken just above the place where Ramaroa Stream joins the main Whareroa Stream to compare the two streams. On the left is a filter disc before starting, on the right the two discs after one litre of water was filtered – amazing how much “stuff” there was. The disc from the Ramaroa Stream (stock accessing the stream) had significantly more material than the other. This will now be analysed for E-dna.



## Bees – another volunteer needed please

The bees have been looked after by Theo Barsanti and Liffet Stewart with occasional support from Peter Davis. However, another volunteer is needed. Full training will be given.

**New culvert for Ramaroa Stream under the farm race.** This is due to happen in July. That section of the race will be closed for a couple of weeks. Walkers will have to use the Coastal Lookout Track; bikers and horses will follow a temporary bypass route across hilly paddocks, accessed off the road to the farmhouse and joining the track to the Cairn. It will be well marked. Take care as it is not a developed track and the ground is pretty wet.

**Planting this year** will be mainly in the wetland area between the Hub and Matai Bush. It has been funded by Wellington Community Trust, linked to Kapiti Biodiversity Project. Additional trees, provided by Trees that Count, will go in other areas. Many thanks to both these organisations.

Also thanks to the volunteers who collected and unloaded plants on a wet afternoon: John & Sandra Rowland, Ann Evans, Shane, Jeremy, Ann & Kenya Cave, Liffet Stewart, Ian Redward & Dawn Bush.

**A new table at the Hub** – donated by Richard Caldwell's family. Richard was a key volunteer by many years. The Hub was one of the many sites he mowed regularly. The table was built by Howard Davis. Many thanks to the Caldwell family.



**Planting on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays thro' July, August & ?Sept.**

**Darrel and Diane will provide BBQ sausages afterwards back at the shed**

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