



WHAREROA GUARDIANS COMMUNITY TRUST

Update 28 September 2023.

Next working Bee Sun Oct 1st 9am to noon Lower Ramaroa

“Whareroa Farm Rotary Peace, Remembrance and Community Forest”

An event was held in Carex Valley on Sept 3rd.



Sophie Handford (KCDC), Peter Handford (Groundtruth), Vic Hewson (Kapiti Rotary) Ann Evans (Guardians), Janet Holborow (Mayor) and Nick Barnes (DOC) and the plaque.

A beautiful day greeted us for this special event. Guest speakers were Mayor Janet and Councillor Sophie, Kapiti Rotary president Vic Hewson, Peter from Groundtruth who had initiated and carried through the project and Nick from DOC. The plaque was unveiled. This had been a \$300,000 project, facilitated by NZ Rotary with additional support from Trees that Count funding the 1000+ trees planted by the Guardians. It has doubled the number of native trees planted at Whareroa to about 150,000 since 2007.

About 300 Carex secta plus a couple of hundred trees were also planted on the day. Thanks to David from Kapiti News for a nice article – publicity helps bring in volunteers and support.



Almost everyone!

Next year we plan to do more streamside planting further up the valley. We have already obtained funding for 1500 trees and about 300 wetland plant. Denys has recently potted up over 300 totara & manuka to grow on and we grow plants from our seeds as well.



Planting and protecting

Thanks to Peter Kentish, Jan Nisbet and Bernard McManus for photo recording.

Many thanks for planting and support to: Vic Hewson & the Rotary Group, Mayor Janet Holborow, Councillor Sophie Handford, Peter Handford, Bede Laracy (Raumati Community Board), Nick Barnes from DoC, Sue Campbell, Lynette Francis, Richard Lambert, Peter Kentish, Denys Crengle, Theo & Yemma Barsanti, Ian Redward, Shane Williamson, Ann Evans, Jan Nisbet, Sandra Rowland, Sue Blaikie, Bernard & Alex McManus, Rachel Calvert, Bruce Bulmer, Paul Callister, Kerry Gray, Helen Griffiths, David Haxton, Sally Heppenstall, Andy & Juneau Hummel and the Kirton family: Greg, Amelia, Isla, Hayley & James.

Next working Bee Sun Oct 1st 9am to noon Lower Ramaroa

Lower Ramaroa Valley – releasing plantings, cutting back any vegetation overhanging the tracks, chopping the flowers off arum lilies and for those who wish (if conditions suitable) checking celery weed in the stream bed. Lots of work was done in the stream last year and it'd be good to keep it in check before it gets away on us again. It'll be some years before there is sufficient shade to control it. Forecast is for a sunny morning. Bring appropriate tools and also your morning tea. We will get together at 10.30 at the Kahikatea picnic table.

Recent volunteer activities

Update on the Gabions – the job is complete, many thanks to Bruce for an amazing effort. Another quiet hard worker is Janet Walker who is **chipping away at gorse** on the slope of Ramaroa swamp. The area will then be planted with natives. And of course, **our mowers** who are out there regularly: Denys Crengle, Brian Law and Bruce Bulmer. Jan cleared out **invading Harlequins** from the caravan (see below).



Gabion protection in Carex Valley

Ramaroa Wetland - Swamp bank. The swamp is *deep* mud

A WEA Group visited for a morning – guided by Ann, Jan and Sue Campbell. They had an introduction to the history of Whareroa and were then taken “off the beaten track” to appreciate

some of Whareroa's special places. A donation of \$200 was then received – this will go towards more wetland plants. Thanks WEA and to the guides.

Birds at Whareroa

Our always active online coordinator Scott in Switzerland, working with our bird expert Helen has recently updated the "Birds seen at Whareroa" file – it's worth a look with pictures of every species – now approaching 40. Many thanks Scott & Helen. [Click on the link below](#) or go to our website.

[Flora & Fauna](#)

Spring is here



Lots of kereru have been seen including a pair in the same place several times. Maybe they are nesting. The lambs are bouncy and fun to watch.

Toyota Kiwi Guardians Scheme is no more.

Sadly the plug has been pulled on this, presumably due to cost. It is a significant loss – there were places to explore all over the country and it encouraged many children and their families to go to different places to get their badge. We certainly saw lots of kids hunting for the Kiwi Guardians' Post in the Dell. We will look at the possibility of establishing a replacement "Whareroa Kids' Trail" though it won't have the publicity being part of a national scheme provided. Other local sites were at Nga Manu, Pauatahanui, Battle Hill & Staglands.

Harlequin ladybird, *Harmonia axyridis*

Whareroa is now host to one of the world's most invasive ladybird species, the Harlequin Ladybird, *Harmonia axyridis*. It has been overwintering in crevices in the caravan. Thanks Erica for the alert, Jan has cleared them out but no doubt they will be back. Something to watch.

First found in New Zealand in 2016 in Auckland it has rapidly spread down the entire North Island and is now also present down most of the east coast of the South Island. They are native to eastern Asia and because of their voracious appetites for aphids were introduced into the US and parts of Europe as a bio control agent.

However, it can out-compete other species of ladybird for the available food supply causing population crashes in native species. (It is also known to eat ladybird eggs and larvae.)

They are bigger than native ladybirds and are resistant to diseases that kill other ladybirds. Oh dear.