



Travis Wetland Trust earns Green Ribbon

David Williams
 Environment reporter

The Travis Wetland Trust has been recognised for preserving and restoring the nature park.

The trust was honoured by Environment Minister Nick Smith at Thursday night's Green Ribbon Awards in Wellington, winning the national urban sustainability section.

The Ashburton District Council won the eco-subdivision award for its affordable and energy efficient homes in Albert St/Geoff Geering Dr.

Wetland trust chairman Eric Banks said the award recognised the close relationship the 17-year-old trust had with the Christchurch City Council, which provided nearly \$8

million to buy the land.

Some council staff are board members.

Travis Wetland, a 119ha wetland site in northeast Christchurch, is the last large freshwater wetland in Christchurch. It is an important refuge for pukeko and home to more than 60 native bird species.

John Skilton, the council's ranger for the wetland, said the award was reward for the largely voluntary work put in by trust members over the years.

"It's a good story for Christchurch because the trust grew out of people who lobbied the previous council to save the wetland,

so I think it recognises the work they've put in," he said.

Smith said the wetland complemented Christchurch's image as the Garden City, and should be considered alongside Hagley Park.

"It's an equally iconic part of Christchurch's natural history."

The city council spends up to \$130,000 each year maintaining and developing Travis Wetland.

The awards paid homage to those who contributed positively to addressing environmental issues and inspired others to take action, Smith said.



Branching out: Ducks enjoy the trees at Travis Wetland.



Food for thought: Pukeko forage at Travis Wetland.



Back to nature: Travis Wetland trust chairman Eric Banks, right, points out winning features at the park to National MPs Nick Smith, left, and Aaron Gilmore.



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Serenity: The sun shines through the branches at Travis Wetland, which was one of the big winners in the annual Environment Awards.
Photos: PETER MEECHAM

