



Travis Wetland

September 2005

A newsletter from Travis Wetland Trust and the Christchurch City Council

PARK NEWS

Dates to Remember!

Travis Wetland Trust Workdays

Travis Wetland Trust Work Days

All welcome! Workdays are held on the third Saturday each month, 9.00 am to 12.30 pm. Meet at the Beach Rd car park, bring gum boots or boots. The work days are an opportunity to become involved in and learn about the restoration of Travis Wetland.

17 September 2005 Trees for Canterbury annual planting day

15 October 2005

19 November 2005

17 December 2005

21 January 2006

18 February 2006

18 March 2006

15 April 2006

Travis Wetland Trust AGM

Recent talk about the spread of mosquito borne diseases, has raised the question, What is the potential risk for Christchurch, particularly given recent waterway and wetland restoration projects such as Travis Wetland?

This will be a key question for speakers at the forthcoming Travis Wetland Trust's AGM on Tuesday 18 October 7 pm. Light refreshments will be served. (Trust members are asked to bring a plate)

Speakers: Steve Pawson - NZ Entomological Society and Sue James - Canterbury District Health Board will describe how mosquitos live, breed, spread disease and where they live in Christchurch.

Wetland Walk Re-opens

Installation of the Belfast to Christchurch sewer line, which disrupted the walk way between Inwoods Road and Mairehau Road is complete. Thanks to timely work by the contractors there is now an upgraded replacement path. Work has started on planting and sewing grass in line with the landscape plan.

Planting Projects

Several planting projects have been completed and are planned this season. Habitat Restoration Services have added 500 replacement plants to the "Telecom" exchange site and have planted 2540 plants along the north bank of Angela Stream. Once established this planting should improve the water quality the stream by shading and cooling as well as screening views of houses from the bird hide and other parts of the wetland. "Windows" of low growing *Carex secta* will enable visitors to see into the wetland.

The Travis Wetland Trust was also busy on the June, July and August workdays planting the lower dune slope between the wetland and adjacent to Mairehau Road. The dry winter has kept the IHC Conservation Team busy with watering and mulching plants in the old dune areas above. The team has also planted 330 replacement plants on the Bolero Place boundary.

Christchurch Native Habitats has planted a further 200 plants in the Kotuku Basin area adjacent to Clarevale. The Travis Manuka Group are about to plant 200 manuka into the manuka area as well as several hundred other plants under the western willow forest. By the end of the year and with the help of visiting schools more than 6000 plants will have been added to the park.

Trees for Canterbury Planting Day

The annual Trees for Canterbury planting event was held on 17th September. Trees for Canterbury donated 1000 trees, shrubs and flax and the City Council added a further 300 plants which were planted along the Frosts Road boundary. The sunny day was well supported by 50 people including a scout group, families, AFS students, Travis Wetland members and Trees for Canterbury staff and friends.



Trees for Canterbury planting Kahikatea

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CHRISTCHURCH
CITY COUNCIL - YOUR PEOPLE - YOUR CITY

Etu Kahikatea
Hei whakapae ururoa
Awhimai awhiatu
Tatau tatau e

The event marked a significant milestone for Trees for Canterbury, it reached the wonderful figure of 500,000 native plants donated to planting projects throughout Canterbury. To mark this occasion Trees for Canterbury donated two 10 year old 2.5 metre tall kahikatea trees to Travis Wetland.

The trees were planted adjacent to the Wetland Walk beside the pond where they are clearly visible and a reminder of the partnerships that are at work in the restoration of Travis Wetland.

Trees for Canterbury has donated more than 6000 plants to the Travis Wetland project including 3000 kahikatea. The wet snow on the following Monday ensured that plants got a good watering to set them on their way.



Travis under snow, September 05

What's going into our wetland?

Throughout Christchurch city you can see examples of small wetlands and waterways being used to collect stormwater from around roads (for example, alongside Anzac Drive) and commercial and housing developments. Stormwater from the Tumara Park subdivision drains into the northern boundary of Travis Wetland via a series of ponds and swales (broad, densely vegetated drainage depressions) that were created during construction of the subdivision.

These engineered waterways are beneficial in several ways: swales and other types of retention basin can hold large volumes of water, so prevent flooding downstream; these areas provide habitat for numerous forms of wildlife, including aquatic insects and native duck species; and they filter out nutrients and pollutants in the water, because the width of the depression slows water velocity, and the densely-planted vegetation traps additional sediment.

These systems are not perfect (only up to 90% of contaminants and sediments are captured in the Tumara Park waterways), so it is important that we are mindful about what enters the storm water system.

If we are not careful the chemicals we use to wash our cars, the pesticides we use in our gardens, and oil discharges from parked cars can easily wash into these waterways, and in the case of the Tumara Park drainage swale, eventually enter Travis Wetland.

These waste products can cause a direct threat to wildlife and ecological systems, degrade the water quality and even wind up in our groundwater aquifers.

All it takes is a little common sense to prevent contamination of our waterways, for example, washing your car on a lawn instead of your driveway. For advice on how to dispose of more toxic and harmful waste products, including solvents, oil and other petroleum products, garden sprays, explosives including fireworks, and even expired medicines, you can contact the Christchurch City Council's Hazardous Waste Advisory Service. Phone: (03) 941-8830; email waste@ccc.govt.nz. You can also use this contact in the case of a hazardous spillage on/in a road, waterway or storm water system. (Simon Shikongo)



Wildlife

The Glossy Ibis that usually visits Travis Wetland was last seen on 25th August. It has probably departed for Australia for the breeding season. For the past 6 years the Ibis has become a regular autumn and winter visitors travelling the way from Australia to the wetland. As the bird ages it may not be able to make the trans Tasman journey, is another likely to take its place? The Bittern hasn't been seen since February but during the winter one was seen in the small wetland adjacent to Donnell Park just south of Travis Road.

Kahu (Harrier) have been performing their aerial courtship displays and their call can be heard high above the swamp. Recently a kahu was observed landing at a Poaka (Pied Stilt) nest site and eating the contents of the single egg, unfazed by the persistent efforts of the Poaka to drive it away. Many of the wetland birds have begun nesting including Poaka, Putangitangi Paradise Shelduck, Pukeko, Papango (Scaup) and Kuruwhengi (Shovler).



Glossy Ibis at Travis Wetland



Pied Stilt egg eaten by Harrier, Travis Wetland

A pair of Tuturiwhatu (Banded Dotterell) have been seen in the central paddock. Perhaps they will nest here? Large numbers of Tete (Grey Teal) are also present. Tete like to nest in hollow trees, but will also use nest boxes. Thanks to a \$1500 grant from the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board last year nest boxes for Tete are being installed. The nest boxes have been made by patients at Burwood Hospital doing wood work as part of their rehabilitation programme.