



Aerial view of Travis Wetland, 2013

A note from Treasurer Dave Evans

The new financial year began a few months ago, so unless you have paid recently a subscription request for the 2014/15 year will be included with your newsletter, or posted separately. Subscriptions and donations greatly support the work of the Trust in restoring and enhancing Travis Wetland Nature Heritage Park.

Since we changed from using a PO box to a letterbox at the Wetland last year a couple of times the postie has failed to see the letterbox and correspondence has been returned to the sender. If this happens to you please contact the treasurer.

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Dates to Remember

Help Restore Travis Wetland

Travis Wetland Trust Work Days are an opportunity to help the Travis Wetland Trust and Christchurch City Council restore the wetland. Meet people interested in restoring the native biodiversity of our city, share ideas and do some light physical work. Tasks vary according to the seasons and range from planting, release weeding and invasive weed control. Morning tea provided.

When: Third Saturday of every month 9am to 12.30pm.

Where: Meet at the Beach Road car park.

What: Bring gumboots or boots, gardening gloves and clothing suitable for the weather and season.

Work day dates for 2014 are:

- November 15
- December 20

Work day dates for 2015 are:

- January 17
- February 21
- March 21
- April 18

Crossroads in Time

Joe Greenaway 1994

To the passing traveller it's just a hill of sand
But beyonder under blackberry and willow lays a great swamp land
In days gone by was kai to Oruaperoa the nearby Pa
Then supported a living to the European from afar
Now home for many a plant and bird
Where on a moonlight night the pukeko can still be heard
Where sedge still sways when the Nor'wests blow
Through the nodding plumes of the noble Toe-toe
Endless flax fringed waterways surrendering
To beyond the gentle Avon calmly meandering
This great land so unselfish to share
Its resources be it food or plants so rare
History records beyond that mud and bog
Lies the heart of a giver under the protective morning fog
To some this should be saved
To some this should be enslaved
For the mark of progress has come to its green quarters
And box like buildings may bury its flax and waters
And so great swamp it has come to pass
Will we save you clock of shimmering grass
Or do you succumb to something called progress
And make it your duty
Giving a home to some who won't appreciate
Your sacrifice and see your beauty

It takes a lot of people to create a forest

John Skilton

This planting season at the Totara-matai forest has been very successful and a wonderful example of community and business volunteering their time. Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time with out your support restoration would not be as successful.

As mentioned in another article in this newsletter ten staff from the BNZ enabled us to do some early planting and maintenance of the site. A beautiful morning greeted people at the annual Trees for Canterbury, Travis Wetland Trust, and CCC community planting day on the 20th September (note to government to check their calendar before setting the next election date!)

Close to 100 people volunteered their time, including 40 forestry students from the University of Canterbury. Most of the 1735 plants were able to be planted on the day. Afterwards people enjoyed the BBQ and a time to chat.

The following week the combi-guards were in place thanks to a big effort from the Wai Ora Trust conservation work team.

Thanks to Trees for Canterbury for donating 1000 plants which is very much appreciated by everyone involved with Travis Wetland.

The total number of plants in this part of site 2 is now 4175 (2473 September 2013 survivors and 1735 September 2014).

The original site has proved difficult to establish with high mortality of plants due to flooding, unseasonal snow, liquifaction and changes to the watertable.

This season Wai Ora Forest Forest Landscape crews have been contracted to infill plant and maintain the original site with 3330 plants.

The total area planted is now approx 3.5ha.



A forest of combiguards and their installation



Volunteers planting at a community Planting day



Starting volunteers at an early age, Donovan Rose being shown how to plant by his father Ranger Kenny Rose

Glossy Ibis - *Plegadis falcinellus*

Graham Bell

The Travis Glossy Ibis was first seen in the winter of 1999 and has been back every year since. That makes this year the 17th visit. Generally it arrives late February and leaves in September.

How long do Glossy's live for?

The longest known wild bird is 14.3 years while the longest in captivity is 26.8 years.

Where's the best place to see it?

The Glossy is a flighty bird but it has a few places that can provide a good view.

Look for it in the north end pond behind the Information Centre, or from the bird hide look to the west to the far bank pond behind the stock yards.

Happy Hunting.



*Glossy Ibis - *Plegadis falcinellus* Graham Bell*

Pukeko Stomp

The Breeze Walking Festival Pukeko Stomp event in October saw over 300 parents and young children enjoying Travis Wetland. Pirate music, a giant pukeko, fruit kebabs and pukeko stories entertained everyone.



Long-jawed orb weaver spider, Genus *Tetragnatha* Graham Bell

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Graham Bell

Tetragnatha also known as Long-jawed orb weaver have a world wide distribution containing many hundreds of species.

Not yet well studied in New Zealand they have long legs, held out in front and behind their elongate bodies when at rest. Their orb webs have an open structure rather than the tighter form seen in the common orb webs we see round our houses.

Where to find them?

Have a look at the harakeke and carex around the track edges. Around sunset is a good time as they come out to prepare their webs for a nights hunting.



Long-jawed orb weaver spider, Genus *Tetragnatha* Graham Bell

Closed for Good

Charlie Catt

Ten willing Bank of New Zealand 'Closed for Good' volunteers spent a day in September planting trees and spreading mulch at Travis.

After a short introduction to the history of the wetland and the Travis Wetland Trust, everyone headed out to the totara and matai forest where rangers John and Kenny had laid out 100 trees ready for planting. Simon gave an admirable demonstration of how to plant the trees and how to protect them with combi guards and within about two hours all was done.

After lunch we returned for some harder work, wheel barrowing mulch and spreading it around the planted trees. The team made excellent jobs of both the planting and the mulching and no-one seemed unduly worried about leaving at the end of the day covered in dirt and feeling a little tired.

Our thanks go to the BNZ team and especially to Mark for setting it all up – we hope we can repeat this next year. Thanks also to the rangers and the Travis team: Graham, Simon, Eleanor, Charlie and Deidre.



BNZ Closed for Good Team



T-shirts

The Travis Wetland Trust now has t-shirts for sale. Two great designs and sizes.

Check the website www.traviswetland.org.nz for details and ordering.

Spider orchids - *Nematoceras irridescens*

Eleanor Bissell

A Travis Treasure. These delightful, tiny orchids are a special treat.

You would need to hunt very carefully to discover colonies of them tucked away in remote, shady places. They hug the ground and their iridescent caps (giving its name) make them difficult to spot when looking down from above.

The flowers are mostly green and deep red-purple although some are all green and happily grow alongside their coloured cousins. The sepals and petals elongate into thread like antennae (up to 4 cm long) which give these little plants their common name of spider orchid. A full sized flower will easily sit on your fingernail. They have a small heart shaped, green fleshy leaf and a seed capsule which never stands very high above the ground.

Somehow they escaped farm animal's hooves and munching when the area was a town milk supply farm. Now they are carefully protected and meticulously weeded against smothering lotus and Yorkshire fog; and so are slowly increasing in number.

Another rare relic being saved for Travis Wetland and apparently not recorded anywhere else in Canterbury. More common in Canterbury is *Microtis* [onion orchids] which are also found at Travis.



September In The Styx

Deirdre Johns

I was lucky enough to attend the Styx Living Laboratory Trust AGM and education day held at Willowbank Wildlife Reserve in September.

Travis Wetland Trust was invited as part of the local network of Wetland and Conservancy areas, along with Avon-Otakaro Network, Evo-Space, Waihora Ellesmere Trust and Landcare Research. It was a very well organised event, with excellent speakers on a range of interesting and relevant topics:

Antony Shadbolt - CCC – Bird Monitoring in the Styx. Waihora Ellesmere also have an excellent bird monitoring/recording program.

Trevor Partridge - CCC – Styx Mill Plants – differences between fens, bogs, swamps and marshes.

Simon Pollard - UOC – Bugs and Spiders, in depth discussion on local spiders especially the mildly ghastly eating habits of a specific spider in the Styx.

Grant Morriss - Landcare Research – Predators and bones. Complete with skulls boiled on his kitchen stove, much to his wife's horror, of common local predators; Stoats, Weasels, Ferrets, Rats, Mice.

Bridget Armstrong – Styx Water Quality Monitoring Volunteer - Why I am a Volunteer

Mike Willis accompanied by his beautiful Collie "Kiwi" dog – Willowbank – Conservation Dogs, talk on the great work the various dogs in the DOC conservation team do in locating endangered species, assisting in breeding and monitoring programs.



Ranger – Willowbank – Kiwi Recovery breeding programs and projects both in the wild and at Willowbank.

And then the Willowbank staff took attendees on a guided walk thru Willowbank to feed the eels and tour the Kiwi Hatchery. Unfortunately the weather was a little cool, but the excellent BBQ lunch put on by Willowbank staff was a welcome warmer.

It was great to see all the positive work being done in the other areas by these passionate groups! Trips, studies, monitoring, education, conservation, plans for the future. And discussing issues in common; difficulties in funding, public knowledge, pests etc.

I really enjoyed the day and hope I will be able to attend again next year.

Travis Wetland Trust Meetings

The Travis Wetland Trust board meets monthly on the Tuesday following the work day, from 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm at the Travis Wetland Education Centre. The board extends a welcome to all who wish to attend.

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