

Travis Wetland

October 2009



Trust Membership and Activities

The TWT is an important partner in the continuing success of Travis Wetland and members are important in the future success of the Trust. To support the Trust become a financial member and/or get involved. Subs are \$10/\$5; \$15 family.

AGM | Travis Wetland Trust
Tuesday 20 October 2009
7pm Travis Education Centre, Beach Road

Butterflies at Travis Wetland AGM

Guest Speaker: Vicki Steele, Trustee of the Monarch Butterfly NZ Trust, will talk on a potential habitat improvement programme for Travis Wetland to encourage native butterflies into the area. All Welcome. Contact Eric Banks phone 382 5756.

Creating Habitats for Butterflies at Travis - Denise Ford

The Manuka Group, with advice from Vicki Steele, is working on creating a habitat for butterflies in Travis Wetland - in particular the Red and Yellow Admirals - and also the Copper Butterflies.

Butterflies require nectar plants to feed on and cover from predators such as birds and wasps. Vicki suggests that corridors of plantings include large patches of koromiko (*Hebe salicifolia*) because of its nectar-producing flowers, and also plantings of pohuehue (*Muehlenbeckia* spp), which will host the Common Copper butterfly.

Nettle (*Urtica* spp) is an important species for our native butterflies as they provide food for the larvae. *Urtica ferox* hosts the Red Admiral but will need to be kept away from walkways. The Yellow Admiral likes *Urtica urens*, which is an introduced species, and which could be used until enough of the native species have been established such as *U. incisa* and *U. linearifolia*. Butterflies will also visit the Manuka flowers.

We are hoping to trial *Urtica* spp in pots set slightly above the ground so they can be monitored and easily weeded, very carefully!

For more information on New Zealand's butterflies and moths go to the Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand
<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/butterflies-and-moths/1>

And Butterfly Info
<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~nzbutterfly.info/index.htm>

Vicki is going to be the guest speaker at the AGM this year, so come and hear her talk about this fascinating subject.



Red and Yellow Admiral Butterfly - (Monarch Butterfly NZ Trust)



Donated totara for Travis and Eco-sourcing

Neighbours to Travis Wetland Colin and V'ron Holdstock gave three large totara to the Trust to replant in the wetland. These trees were grown from seed collected from Akaroa. They had started to outgrow the garden and the Holdstocks were pleased to see them relocated where they can now grow and spread their branches. Thanks to Colin and V'ron.

When this was part of Joe Greenaway's report to the Trust Board in July, there was some reaction to the news that the seed for the trees was collected in Akaroa.

As a rule seeds for trees planted at Travis are sourced very locally. This is to avoid unnatural mixing of gene pools and also, in practical terms, to ensure that the resulting trees will be well adapted to the Travis environment and grow to be strong specimens. This practice is known as eco-sourcing. Travis Wetland Trust president, Colin Meurk, wrote the following note on eco-sourcing and these totara in particular:

'The ideal of eco-sourcing is well established in ecological restoration circles; and the specifics and details of it have become quite controversial.

In brief, I fully support the principle of eco-sourcing or using local genetic stock. There are major problems with the genetic integrity of narrow-leaved lacebark in the South Island because of the widespread introgression (crossing) with imported North Island species. But the question is how local is local and does this vary according to species and what do we do about depauperate areas (places with very little remaining natural vegetation) and with existing 'foreign' seed stock. Riccarton Bush took a stand on the North Island lacebarks and removed them and any hybrid material. At Hinewai, no plant material is allowed to be artificially introduced from outside the valley.

We can say that wind-pollinated trees like beech and podocarps (totara, matai, kahikatea) and wind-blown spore-dispersed ferns are relatively uniform across large regions. For instance most NZ ferns are similar to or conspecific with Australian ferns. Secondly, in regions with very few habitat remnants the remaining genetic pool is likely to be severely restricted and even unrepresentative of the historic flora. These are not arguments for necessarily relaxing the definition of 'local' because we can still only speculate on the genetic impact of these factors and a precautionary principle is desirable.

However, it should be noted that there are almost no natural totara on the low plains - even those in Riccarton Bush are largely planted from outside sources. At the risk of being branded unclear, I would argue that a wider pool of stock for re-vegetating the low plains and Travis Wetland is an unfortunate necessity, but acceptable under the circumstances. Whatever we plant, it is important to document what we do and ensure this information is archived for future generations.

Already some of the kahikatea planted in the early days at Travis is from Banks Peninsula. Totara is wind-pollinated, morphologically uniform over large regions of the country and there are really no certainly natural populations in the Low Plains Ecological District. For such circumstances, I would suggest that the wider North Canterbury region was an acceptable catchment. On the other hand, insect, lizard or bird pollinated species and those where there are large local populations must, when being propagated for restoration, be restricted to the ecological district or even to a finer scale as at Hinewai.'

Poem

Travis Wetland - Joe Greenaway 1994

To the passing Traveller it's just a hill of sand

*But yonder under the blackberry and willows lay
a great swamp land*

*In the days gone by was Kia to Oruaperoa the nearby Pa
Then supported a living to the European coming 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

An box like buildings may bury its flax and waters

And so, great swamp, it has come to pass

Will we save your cloak 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

Help Restore Travis Wetland

Travis Wetland Trust Restoration 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.

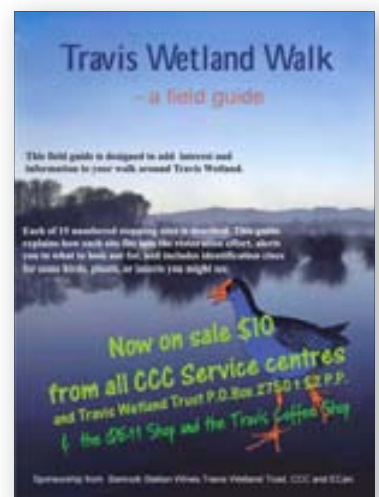
When: 3rd Saturday of every month 9.00 am to 12.30 pm.

Where: Meet at the Beach Road car park.

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

Dates to Remember

- October 17, 2009
- November 21, 2009
- December 19, 2009
- January 16, 2009
- February 20, 2009



Travis is a biodiversity sanctuary

- John Skilton Park Ranger

In July 2009 I had the opportunity to attend the Sanctuaries of New Zealand hui in Havelock North. The Sanctuaries of NZ workshops, hosted annually by Landcare Research, share best practise information between those who manage sanctuaries and the researchers as well as promote the sanctuaries and educate the public.



Predator fence, Cape Kidnappers wildlife preserve, Ocean Beach

More than 41 biodiversity sanctuaries are spread across New Zealand. Sites listed include fenced and unfenced sanctuaries and those awaiting a fence, and include community-based, privately funded, DoC mainland islands and local authority administered projects.

Participants at the hui included managers, trust members, volunteers from community-based sanctuary projects, local government park rangers, ecologists, DOC mainland island rangers, research scientists from DOC, universities and Landcare Research. The workshop was an opportunity to learn how other biodiversity sanctuaries are being managed.

Being an island of habitation in an urban sea Travis Wetland is well placed to be managed along similar lines to other sanctuaries and we share the common aims of:

- Restoring functioning ecosystems
- Controlling or eradicating a range of plant and animal pests
- Managing a permanent risk of re-invasion
- Reintroducing missing species
- Involving local communities

Sanctuaries are innovative and experimental ways of protecting and restoring our natural ecosystems. Whether unfenced or fenced, sanctuaries face significant challenges. Common to both is the requirement for management that is sustainable far into the future. This includes funding and community support.

In addition to protecting biodiversity, sanctuaries provide benefits to the community:

- Inspires local participation in conservation
- Builds communities
- Provides opportunities to act
- And opportunities for learning and change

For the past seven years predator control at Travis Wetland has provided a predator-reduced environment which has seen an increase in nesting wading birds, waterfowl and sightings of rare native and migratory bird species. Predator control has been continually evolving and improving with new trap technology and techniques reflecting current "best practise". This year we

will install more intensive trapping, poisoning and monitoring, and aim to achieve minimum pest densities. Since April 2008 we have also been working closely with DOC rangers to control Rudd, a pest fish illegally introduced into the wetland.

The Travis Weed Control Plan prioritises the eradication or containment of invasive weed species that threaten the ecology of the wetland. The four priority species are grey willow (female trees), Beggars ticks and purple loose-strife, blackberry.

More than 60000 plants have been planted in the park during the past 10 years to restore native plant communities and provide habitat for wildlife.

Windsor School planting: future guardians of our parks



Windsor School planting, September 2009

Windsor School continues their close association with Travis Wetland. On Arbor Day (6 June, 2009) two classes planted along the edge of the newly-built waterway at Kotuku Basin. Last month students from Room 23 contacted the rangers to organise their own planting day. On Tuesday, 22 September 2009 eight classes planted 100 plants alongside the recently-created swale adjacent to Chartwell Street. The organising students managed everything from the pairing up of planters to the planting demonstration, giving the final seal of approval to each plant with the 'pukeko tug'. Several students said they had come to the World Parks Day planting event the previous weekend. Perhaps these children will become the guardians of our parks in the future. Our thanks to Windsor School students.

IHC conservation team

During the winter months the IHC conservation work team has continued to enlarge the areas of old coastal dune habitat at two entrances to Travis Wetland off Mairehau Road. These are Inwoods Rd and the boundary fence behind the bus shelter. The team prepared the areas by digging off the twitch planted coastal dune species and have mulched them with recycled carpet. The team will continue to look after the plants watering and weeding during the summer months.

Travis Wetland Contacts

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Web site: The Travis Wetland Trust now has a presence on the World Wide Web at www.traviswetland.org.nz. The Trust can be contacted at info@traviswetland.org.nz.

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Travis Wetland hosts World Parks Day for Christchurch



Mayor Bob Parker with the commemorative Totara tree and Steve Bush, Travis Wetland

Mayor Bob Parker marked the occasion by planting a Totara tree. Trees for Canterbury Manager, Steve Bush says coinciding the planting day with World Parks Day is a great way to acknowledge the importance of parks and green space in the community and involving the public in the special day. The planting was a continuation of an ambitious project to create a Riccarton Bush-sized area of six to eight-hectares of Totara/Matai forest within Travis Wetland. To establish this will mean planting some 60000 plants over many years.



Travis Wetland Trust workday, volunteers, August 2009



Community Planting, World Parks Day, 19 September

Sunday 19 September was a sunny day, a fine choice for the Travis Wetland Trust to host a public planting day. This date also marked World Parks Day, the end of Conservation Week, (Get Involved) and the chance to celebrate Trees for Canterbury's milestone of 600,000 native plants donated to community groups and schools for the restoration of native habitat in Canterbury.

More than 150 people including neighbouring families, supporters of Trees for Canterbury, scouts and staff from Fedex and Rydges Hotel joined Travis Wetland Trust members to help plant nearly 2000 flaxes, shrubs and trees. A 1000 plants were donated by Trees for Canterbury, matched by a 1000 from the Christchurch City Council.



Wai Ora Trust site preparation

Thank you to the Wai Ora Trust work team for the preparing the site and the follow-up watering and replanting... and then it rained and rained!! Thanks to everyone who took time out to support us.