



Newsletter 13 ♦ March 2014 ♦ ISSN 1178-4393

From the Chair

Great news: it is likely (although not yet certain) that our hopes for Riverlea Road – to make it essentially a 'light and service industry' area – are to be realised.

Thank you for the overwhelming number of supportive submissions to the council on this topic. No other topic, at least in the Industrial Zone section of the proposed district plan, generated nearly as many submissions.

Last month I walked through Hammond Park with our former Chair Stephen Hamilton. He was thrilled at how well our plantings have grown.

Hammond is well-used by dog walkers. Thank you to all those who spare us having to dodge the dog-do on the boardwalk and grass verges around the streets. To the few who don't, please remember your plastic bags.

Compare that small task to the huge service done by Silva Crescent resident Terry Hume, who voluntarily restocks bait stations in Hammond Bush to control rodents and possums. Huge thanks, Terry.

Finally, facebookers can now 'like' our Facebook page, which was launched last year; we can keep in touch with you very easily that way.

Andrea Graves, Chairperson

Proposed district plan & Riverlea Road

Hamilton City Council responded to our many submissions on the Riverlea Industrial Area by making recommendations in close accordance with our requests:

"The Riverlea Industrial Area... provides for a range of light and service industrial activities. Its location within close proximity to sensitive land uses means that the establishment of heavy industry and noxious or offensive activities is not considered to be desirable or appropriate."

The final decision rests with the commissioners who presided at the December hearing, at which the Society appeared. Their decision is expected some time this year. Any new rules will not apply to businesses already operating in the area, although they must of course adhere to existing rules for noise, odour, etc.



Kiri Cutting, PhD student, in a Tradescantia research plot.

Tradescantia research

Our monthly working bees will one day tackle Hammond Park's smothering carpet of *Tradescantia*. This will need a lot of hands, especially from adjacent landowners.

The weed, also known as wandering willie or wandering jew, halts regeneration of native forest species. University of Waikato PhD student Kiri Cutting is experimenting with the best way to replant native trees in its presence. Three of her sites are in Hammond Park. She is growing tawa saplings in the presence and absence of the weed, and in some places testing the effect of mulch vs. no mulch. In some plots she's continuing to remove the weed, and in some she's letting it regrow. She will take air temperature, humidity, soil temperature, carbon and nitrogen into account. Kiri will regularly monitor the saplings' growth over two years. During that time she wants us to *please* resist weeding near her sites, as it would jeopardise her results.

If you are not on our email list and would like to be notified about working bees and other news, please email us.

Riverlea Industrial Area newcomers

Some of you may have noticed new activity on Mexted Place, where Blacktop Construction wanted to build an asphalt plant in 2007. A boat-building yard is now established, and two other sections have been purchased by long-time Tamahere and Hillcrest residents to house low-footprint technology businesses. One building has already been constructed, and its neighbour will be built this year.

Clean up gang

Sadly a lot of rubbish gets dropped in Hammond Park. We have some residents who do an excellent job at picking this up. A big thank you to Richard Thomson of Sherriff Place and Brian Mear of Malcolm Street who each regularly walk through the park and pick up litter as they go, getting a sizeable bag daily, particularly of takeaway food packaging. Thank you to the collectors we don't know about, too.

Tui time

The wonderful year-round resurgence of tuis in Hamilton means that they have become residents that nest here. In past years they only visited in spring, then went 'home' to breed.

You can help them thrive by spotting nests and advising Waikato Regional Council, who will place intensive predator control around nests and hope to focus cameras on some.

Therese Balvert, Hamilton Halo co-ordinator, advises that nests can be identified by seeing adult birds repeatedly coming and going from a single tree. They generally enter it low down, then work their way up to the nest, and leave directly from the nest. They may arrive carrying insects to feed their chicks. Nesting season starts in September.

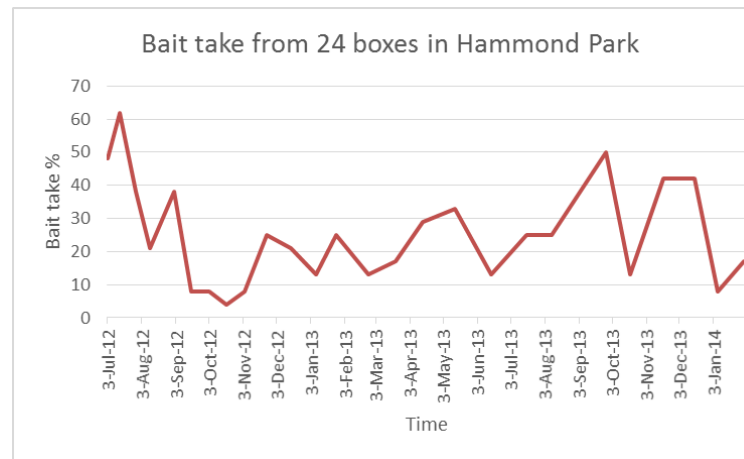
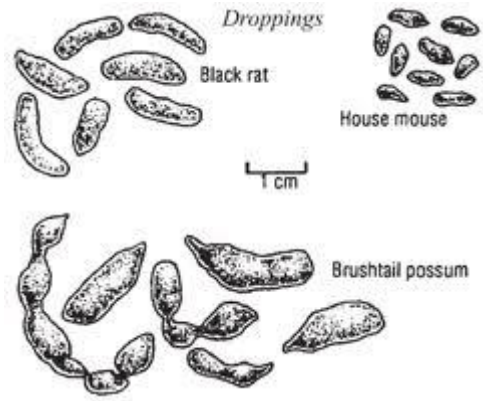
Predator control

Last year Hamilton City Council contracted Rentokil to do some pest control in Hammond Park, but Riverlea's Terry Hume also carries out intensive control. Every 2-4 weeks he checks and restocks 24 bait stations located between the end of Riverlea Road and the Malcolm Street end of the boardwalk. The aim is to protect native birds and bats by reducing predators, primarily ship (black) rats, using toxic baits.

These pests can never be eradicated, because as we kill them more enter from surrounding areas. You can often see their droppings on the boardwalk hand rails, which pests use as a highway.

There is also evidence for pest persistence in Terry's records. His graph shows how bait-take fluctuated between July 2012 and January 2014. At times the bait was untouched, yet at other times bait was taken from almost half of the boxes. Although the poison is lethal, the graph shows no pattern of decline. The message is clear: the pests keep coming,

and to protect native birds and bats we must continue with pest control.



I would like to renew/add my financial support to the Riverlea Environment Society Inc. with a tax-deductible donation.

Name(s)

Address

Phone

email

Signature

Donation per household: \$20 []
 \$40 []
 \$ []
 Receipt required? []

Thank you for your support