



Newsletter 17 ♦ June 2016 ♦ ISSN 1178-4393

From the Chair

We are delighted to have appointed Adrienne Grant as our Conservation Project Co-ordinator. We chose her carefully from an exceptionally strong field of applicants; thank you to all who applied.

I'd like to acknowledge our hardworking committee of community minded folk who give their time to RESI. Many have science backgrounds, strong community links or both. They are:

- Andrea Graves – immediate past president
- Robert Welch – meeting chair
- Graeme McBride – secretary
- Bruce Winders – treasurer
- Allan Pearson – webmaster and RESI historian
- Carolyn Lundquist
- Don Burns
- Jane Landman

Thanks also to our working bee volunteers. Special thanks to Terry Hume, chief rat buster, who regularly clambers over the boardwalk fence checking 22 bait stations. Special thanks also to Brent Prime who spends many hours clearing some of Hammond's worst weeds.

New committee members are welcome, see more about this in the AGM notice below.

We look forward to seeing you at our AGM on 5 July or at our planting bee on 25 June.

Anne Ferrier-Watson, Chairperson

Annual General Meeting – All welcome

Our AGM will be held on Tuesday 5th July at 7pm. Dr Kevin Collier will speak on "Restoring Hamilton's Streams."

Dr Collier is a Waikato University scientist who has spent over 30 years working with streams, grappling with their ecology and how to prevent adverse effects from human activities. One thing that has always perplexed him is how to restore urban streams which suffer from multiple pressures, while also providing opportunities for the public to interact with native biodiversity. This talk will explore the ecological values of Hamilton's city streams, why their intimate connection with the Waikato River is so important, and ways to enhance aquatic biodiversity within the city.

The meeting venue is 28 Hudson Street. Please follow the lighted path from the letterbox to the front door. A light supper will be provided afterwards.

If you wish to join the committee, please email riverlea.soc@gmail.com to put your name forward.



Adrienne Grant, RESI's new Conservation Project Co-ordinator.

New Conservation Project Co-ordinator

We welcome Adrienne Grant (pictured), who will be speaking with residents whose properties adjoin Hammond Bush about restoring the bush on their properties. She'll also be raising the profile of Hammond Bush to encourage more working bee participation, and applying for future funding to continue and expand restoration work adjacent to Hammond Park.

Adrienne grew up on Newell Road and has a background in conservation and environmental engagement. We are able to contract Adrienne's services thanks to funding from the Waikato Regional Council's Environmental Initiatives Fund.

Planting working bee

Our last tree-planting working bee for the year will be held on Saturday 25th June from 1-3pm, featuring hot drinks and baking afterwards.

We will complete this year's planting of 500 new trees. This is another opportunity for time in nature, exercise and community service! It's also an easy way to get to know other Riverlea locals. Some people from further afield attend, which is always appreciated. Please meet at the Balfour Crescent (i.e. south) end of the boardwalk, with a spade if possible. Children welcome. RSVP to riverlea.soc@gmail.com by Friday 24 June.

Thank you, Terry

For the past five years the pest animals of Hammond Park have been kept under control largely thanks to the work of Silva Crescent resident Terry Hume, who has been faithfully restocking bait stations and keeping records.

Terry's property has Hammond's oldest tree on it: a tawa, which has at least one resident tui, and this year housed two fledgling tui! Possums and rats eat tui eggs and chicks, so the results of controlling them are very rewarding. Sadly for us, Terry and his wife Anne leave Riverlea later this year for Waiheke Island. Thank you for your valuable service, Terry.

The future of predator control

We all hate rats, and most of us like birds, so we need to make sure predator control keeps happening. Hamilton City Council's new health and safety focus means that for the time being we are no longer able to carry out pest control on council land. They are paying an excellent firm to do two bursts a year of predator control in Hammond Park. We are hoping to do something just over the boundary with private properties, but only with permission from owners.

Is there somebody who would be willing to assist with predator control? We have one new volunteer, but need two. We don't yet know what our new practice will be, but it is likely to require walking off-piste through Hammond bush once every two to four weeks to replace bait or check traps. This could tick several boxes: time in nature, exercise and community service. Please telephone or email us if you might be keen.

Past newsletters on website

If you would like to check up on RESI's deep dark past, all RESI newsletters stretching back to 2007 are now available on our website at: www.resi.org.nz/newsletters

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

Restoration plan

The clearing and planting we do in Hammond follows a restoration plan co-authored by Professor Bruce Clarkson of Waikato University. Professor Clarkson is one of New Zealand's foremost authorities on ecological restoration. The plan divides Hammond bush into zones according to conditions such as drainage and light levels. For each zone it lists the weeds to remove, plants to replace them with and the best way to proceed. Property owners will be pleased to hear that planting choices take into consideration the need to preserve their views!

Courtesy crossings

The raised cobbled road crossings on Howell Ave were installed a few years ago now, but what exactly are they for? They are 'courtesy crossings', at which cars have the right of way; they are not obliged to stop.

However, the raised and cobbled surface lets drivers know that pedestrians often cross there, and they are strongly encouraged to slow down as they approach. If a driver does stop and wave a pedestrian across, a friendly wave of thanks is highly recommended in recognition of the courtesy shown.

Local school children often use the courtesy crossings, and the potential ambiguity of the rules at these crossings mean that extra care is needed.

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

Suggested donation per household: \$20 per year, or another amount of your choosing.

For online donations, our bank account number is 03 1559 0110053 000. Please use your surname as the reference, and email us stating the amount, your name and address so we can issue a receipt. Thank you for your support.

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