

RIVERLEA ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY INCORPORATED



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From the Chair

It's all go for Saturday 29 October, 1.00-3.30 pm. Join our Hammond Park Community Fun Day to play, learn and relax with friends, family and neighbours in our own backyard. Bring a picnic if you want!

Conservation co-ordinator Adrienne Grant is a catalyst for great ideas like the Fun Day. She's also inspired the committee to develop a vision, mission and strategic goals, which will be launched at the Fun Day. Wait until you see our ideas! Imagine a pushchair-friendly track from Hamilton Gardens through Hammond Park, and right along to the Mangaonua Esplanade. The plan will soon be on our website, and we welcome your feedback, questions and suggestions. Contact details at bottom of page.

Anne Ferrier-Watson, Chairperson

Hammond Community Park Fun Day

Please join us in Hammond Park on *Saturday 29th October* for a community fun day to celebrate Hammond Park's flora and fauna and those who work to enhance it. The committee is making sure this is an interesting and rewarding afternoon for all. Bring along a mystery weed you'd like identified, ask the experts about weeds or pests you want to deal with, enjoy guided tours, enjoy fun nature activities for children, and partake in a free sausage sizzle thanks to Hillcrest New World. Also, discover just where the oldest tree in Hammond bush grows. BYO gumboots.

The event runs from **1.00-3.30**. If you can help out on the day, please email us. To attend, RSVP for catering purposes at www.resi.org.nz/community/.

Hamilton Expressway

A City Edge Alliance representative will attend our committee meeting on 3rd November to discuss the Hamilton bypass section of the Waikato Expressway. We will ask to see maps and aerial photos showing how the expressway intersects with the Mangaonua Stream, which runs under the SH1 dip near Riverlea Wreckers. We will also ask about restoration, impact on flow and water quality of streams, and whether any monitoring is planned. People on our mailing list will receive a report of the meeting.



A mighty tawa, the oldest tree in Hammond Bush.

From our conservation co-ordinator...

It's been four months since I started as Conservation Coordinator, and good progress is being made. I am developing a database of neighbours bordering the park, and working with neighbours who want advice and support to restore the bush on their sections. I can provide a tailored planting plan and advice on weed control. If you would like to take up this offer, RESI is also able to provide some funding for eco-sourced plants.

Pest control is also vital to restoration efforts, and regular pest control is already undertaken in the park by HCC. I am looking into the best way for residents to carry out pest control on their land. If you are interested in being part of either initiative, please get in touch with me on 027 308 1992/ 853 6288, or at adriennegrant01@gmail.com. *By Adrienne Grant*

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

Predator-Free Riverlea

Adrienne has applied on behalf of our society for Riverlea to become a Kiwibank Predator Free Community – a Predator Free New Zealand initiative. This would fund equipment to rid Riverlea of rats, possums and mustelids. Kiwibank are funding only 10 communities, so our chances are slim, but we think it's worth a try.

Our application was made with the support of Predator-Free Hamilton, which is a group of scientists, councils and community non-profit representatives who are establishing a strategy for making Hamilton predator free. They are aiming for a toxin-free approach, relying on traps rather than poison. Their decisions will produce a best practice how-to guide for residents and land owners, so watch this space!

Spring growth

Spring is always time of unprecedented growth and, this year, precipitation! You can almost hear the weeds growing, and if you turn your back the hard work of winter plantings or previous weed control can be quickly undone. For people lucky enough to have a gully section, little and often is key to weed control. Nature abhors a vacuum, so a large cleared area is an invitation for new weeds to establish. Pull out weeds and grass around any native plants. Lay mulch (leaf litter, grass clippings, bracken, a square of old carpet) around them to suppress weed growth, being careful that it doesn't touch the stem. You can roll up small areas of *Tradescantia* (aka Wandering Willy) and cover with black plastic to rot down.

Most invasive weeds were once favourite garden plants that have 'jumped the fence' and out-compete native species; many are also spread by birds. Become aware of what you have in your garden (and what you buy from garden centres) – just because it's pretty doesn't mean it's good! www.weedbusters.org.nz is a great site for weed information. *By Adrienne Grant*

Stream protection

We had the pleasure of hearing Waikato University scientist Dr Kevin Collier speak at our AGM in July. Dr Collier highlighted how most of the water that ends up in our suburban streams runs off our landscape: roofs, driveways and roads. It carries with it all the contaminants it picks up along the way. The many hard surfaces in towns mean there are limited places for rain to be absorbed, so it sweeps rapidly into streams, drastically increasing their flow, causing erosion and harming aquatic life.

To help Hamilton's native aquatic creatures, we can wash cars on the grass, never tip paint or harmful chemicals down the drain (try the lawn instead), paint zincalume roofs, and make sure stream banks and borders are planted. We need to remove rubbish from

streams, but leave natural debris such as branches that fall in, because it forms vital habitat.

Hot drinks and baking make weeding fun

A popular development at our working bees is tea, coffee, hot chocolate and home baking. This is a great reward for our labours, as is the chat that naturally flows as we enjoy the food and drink. A gazebo helps in case it's raining.

Late summer working bees are hard, hot work, but they are vital because of the smothering vines that encroach over summer, threatening our young native plants. As the weather heats up we will transition to cold drinks, the alcoholic content of which is still being discussed.

Expert gathering: Ecology and restoration day

If you want to learn why digital technologies can make trapping 80,000 times more effective, or how much of a problem mice are for biodiversity, you may soon be in your element. The Australasian Society for Ecological Restoration is this year having its annual conference in Hamilton, and there is a public open day on Sunday 20th November for only \$25. You need to be a regular restoration/conservation volunteer to attend at this low price, and can register at www.era2016.com/programme.html

Remaining working bees for 2016

Saturday 5th November, 1-3 pm

Saturday 26th November, 1-3 pm

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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