

## RIVERLEA ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY INCORPORATED



Newsletter 19 ♦ May 2017 ♦ ISSN 1178-4393

### **From the Chair**

*Thank you to all who attended or contributed to our Hammond Park Fun Day in October last year. Over 200 people attended on a beautiful sunny day to celebrate the wonderful flora & fauna, which is thriving thanks to community and council efforts.*

*We've been rewarded for our commitment to Riverlea with funding from Trust Waikato, Len Reynolds Trust and Kiwibank. Thanks to our Conservation Co-ordinator Adrienne Grant, who wrote the funding applications. Some of the money will enable her to continue to assist owners of properties adjoining Hammond Park to restore their land.*

*Our successful bid to be Kiwibank Predator Free community is exciting, and will boost bird and bat life in our gardens and bush. Recently I heard of two residents paying over \$100 for a contractor to control rats on their property. But this is simple and cheap with a trap! Let us show you how.*

*The committee has liaised with authorities about nearby roading projects and a proposed cycleway through Hammond Park. We're concerned about the latter, and prepared to enter activist mode if need be. We'll keep you informed.*

*I thank our donors and working bee volunteers, and our committee, who are working hard on many fronts.*

Anne Ferrier-Watson, Chair

### **Te Awa Cycleway**

There is a proposal to route 'The Great NZ River Ride' through Hammond Park. This would include connections between Hamilton Gardens to the north, and Tamahere, via the Mangaonua Esplanade, to the south. It would involve widening the boardwalk.

The RESI committee welcomes the prospect of new connections, but is very concerned about pedestrian and cyclist safety, harm to the bush's rare ecology, and respecting the historic pa site.

We have been speaking with engineers, the NZ Transport Authority and Hamilton City Council. Our concerns are shared by HCC planners, and we have been assured that a careful process will be followed and consultation sought. There is a road-only route that may be constructed instead.



**Luke in his restored gully (see over for details).**

### **Pest-free Riverlea**

We have \$5,000 from Kiwibank, via Predator Free New Zealand, to help make Riverlea pest-free. Thanks to all who voted for us in the online contest.

Would you like to become part of Pest-free Riverlea? It means having a trap on your property, which will be low cost. You'll be shown how to use it safely and effectively. No poisons will be used.

If you would like to boost the birdlife and get rid of rats and possums, please see the accompanying flyer.

If you don't want to look after a trap yourself, there are other ways to be involved in this ground-breaking project, which we hope will further draw our community together.

We are also pleased to announce that that Acorn ITM of Riverlea Road will be supporting us. We'd love other local businesses to offer support.

**We may need to inform you quickly about further developments regarding the Te Awa proposal; please ensure we have your email address.**

### Backyard restorations are happening

Winter is a great gardening time. Riverlea residents wishing to restore their gully sections can get advice and support from Conservation Coordinator Adrienne Grant. She will visit your site and prepare a list of plants suitable for your section, taking into account your particular needs. She will identify problem weeds and advise on their management, and recommend nurseries that sell eco-sourced native plants. With this scheme, RESI will refund of up to \$300 of your purchased plants.

Luke of Balfour Crescent has taken up the offer and is pleased with the result. "Adrienne's advice allowed me to add plants to my gully that were not well-represented and provide character in keeping with local gully system. The plants have flourished with the wet summer. The more I plant the fewer weeds there are! It is rewarding to walk into my gully and see the new growth and the native seedlings that are now naturally appearing thanks to the increased bird life."

### Nasty weed masquerades as native

There is a common garden plant that's become a weed, quietly spreading via seed into Hammond Bush. It looks a bit like a five-finger, but *Fatsia*, or Rice Paper Plant, has a palm as well as fingers. It is native to Japan and Korea. It can grow up to six metres tall and form thickets by suckering.



*Fatsia japonica*, or Rice Paper Plant

Is this in your garden? If so, please cut it down or dig it out, and treat any regrowth with herbicide.

### Wairere Drive Connection to Cobham Drive

The bridge across the Waikato River linking Wairere Drive to the Peacocke area is still a decade away. However, the road between Wairere and Cobham Drives will open quite soon, and RESI was recently consulted about this connection being made before its associated Ecological Monitoring and Management Plan is signed off.

We approved the connection, and are pleased that the Plan will seek to preserve the river corridor and Peacocke gully system. We were able to have some input into the Plan.

### News flash! Weekday working bees are here

We are setting up a weekday working bee group on Mondays from 10.30-12.30 pm to do planting and weedbusting. For two hours a week you will get to make a difference to the Riverlea environment, build connections with people in your community and work out in the best outdoor gym there is - Hammond Bush!

To register your interest, please contact Adrienne on 853 6288/ 027 308 1992 [adriennegrant01@gmail.com](mailto:adriennegrant01@gmail.com)

### RESI Committee news

Farewell and thanks to Carolyn Lundquist, who served over five years on the committee, and a warm welcome to Tania MacDonald. Welcome also to David Pattemore and John-Paul Oliver, who are assisting ex-officio with Pest-free Riverlea.

Our 2017 committee is John Badham, Don Burns, Kun Cao, Anne Ferrier-Watson, Andrea Graves, Jane Landman, Tania Macdonald, Graham McBride, Allan Pearson, Robert Welch and Bruce Winders.

### Next working bee = planting time!

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May, 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.*

[www.facebook.com/Riverleaenvironmentsociety](https://www.facebook.com/Riverleaenvironmentsociety)