

**Otatara**  
Landcare Group

# PIGEON POST

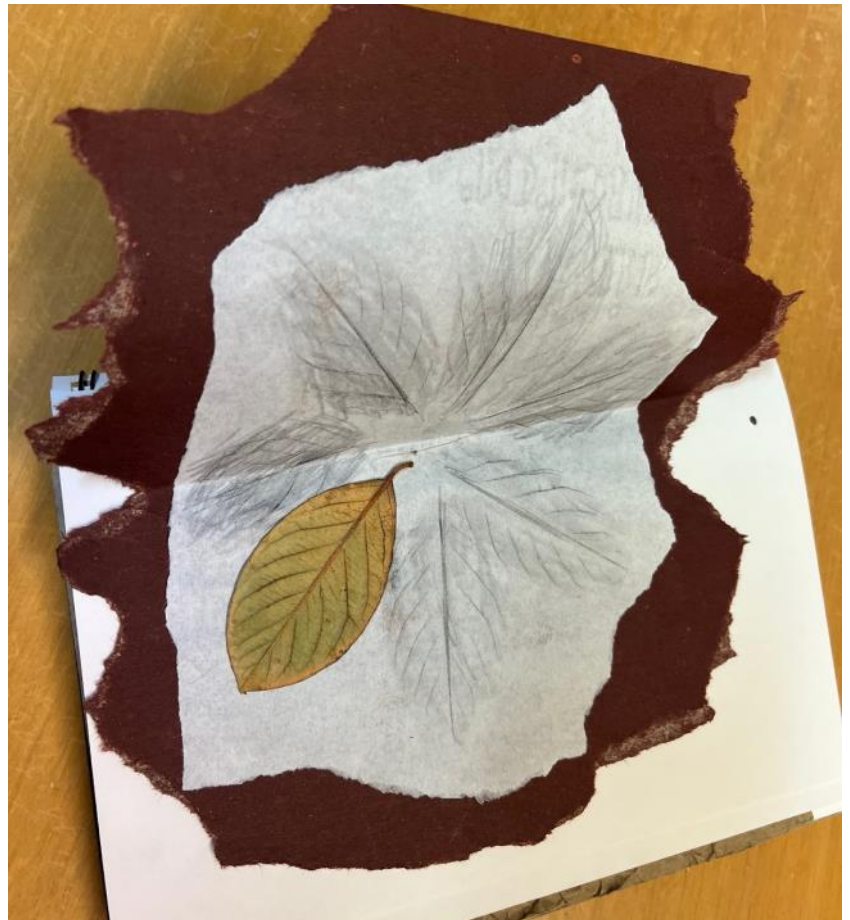
*Newsletter of the  
Otatara Landcare Group*

**Issue 71 Winter 2024**

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*The full colour version of this publication is available on [www.otataralandcare.org.nz](http://www.otataralandcare.org.nz) under 'publications'.*



*Otatara school students have been drawing inspiration for art from nature around them in the Otatara scenic reserve, and have produced some really great pieces of work. The piece above combines different leaves to tell a story through clever design. More on page 2.*



# INSPIRED BY NATURE



## Art from Otatara School

Otatara School values opportunities for students to think and work as artists, says principal Sharon Livingstone. "With the beautiful natural environment that surrounds us we find much to inspire art."

*Right, a reserve-inspired artwork by year three students - their representation of a part of the scenic reserve. They are adding to their work each time they visit. The ngahere floor and fern layer is being examined next.*



*Art inspired by leaves from year two students .*



*Year four students including Jake Stewart (above) created portraits using gathered natural materials.*

# HELP FOR BUSH HAVEN



## Meet Jo Cockroft

Hi, I am Jo Cockroft. I am the newest member of the Bush Haven team. Just so you get to know a little bit about me...

I have always had a connection with animals from a young age. I mainly spent time with dogs, cats and horses in my younger days, but I also brought home some birds that I felt needed help.

As I grew up my admiration for animals only increased. I have worked in pet shops, with rescue agencies, an aviary and I owned and worked in my dog daycare, which ended up attaching, grooming cats and dogs, boarding kennels and cattery. We also boarded the odd lambs and birds. I helped with fostering and rehoming dogs and cats, I continued to foster dogs even after daycare.

I have been so lucky to work with many animals over the years including tuatara and native birds, which helped me realise my passion for native birds (secretly I love the tuatara too!) and I love the idea of rehabilitate and release. Which is how I have ended up putting my hand up to be able to help these fabulous people that are already out there doing it.

I have met so many caring people over the years involved in helping animals of all types with either fostering and/or rescue and/or rehabilitation. I am truly honoured to able to help with this organisation.

I am going to start by taking over the tui and bellbird care so please phone for support with the rehabilitation of these birds. My number is 0211946696.

I may not always answer my phone straight away but please do leave me a message and I can usually get back to you within half an hour.



### HELP SAVE OUR KERERU!

- Check if your windows reflect bush, which could confuse excited kereru in flight.
- Check if a kereru could see through two windows/glass doors when lined up.
- Leave those windows dirty until March to reduce reflections of nearby bush.
- Hang window decorations to block any reflections of trees or bush.

**Let's aim for Otatara's beautiful kereru to be Injury-free this year!**



# TREE RELEASING IN AUTUMN



## A tale of dogged endeavour, by Douglas Black

We rehomed our daughter's family dog Meg a couple of years ago when their lifestyle in Cardrona underwent some big changes which left no-one at home in the daytime to care for Meg.

So she made her own life, roaming the hills for rabbits and heading down to the hotel for some company when she felt like it. She was a hit with tourists, a lovely placid blonde labrador/retriever cross who loved to be patted and photographed by her new friends, and to be rewarded with bits of food, which is kind of labrador dollars – a working girl, really.

Meg is the full sister of our dog Mochree, and thus the (naughty) auntie of Mochree's puppy Leila – like her nine siblings, unexpectedly black. Meg taught Leila all about hunting, digging up rabbit holes, and eating unspeakably decomposed animal remains, especially possums – and Meg's own freewheeling idea of time management.

The two of them would head off, noses up, and disappear gleefully without notice, for however long it all took. Pre-Meg, I used to walk Mochree at Bushy Point most evenings and stop as required to release young trees struggling to overcome grass and other competitors for sunlight, water and nutrients. Over time, I could just about keep on top of releasing trees in recent plantings, after working bees had made a big dent in the workload.

Last Spring, Meg's tendency to wander on these walks seriously curtailed the amount of time I could spend on tree releasing, and I had to watch with dismay as spectacular lupin growth overtook the September 2022 plantings below the lookout seat, rendering them virtually invisible. Nothing could be done till after the summer holidays and we organised a series of hour-long Wednesday evening working bees in February and into March.

My wife Kathy kept an eye on the dogs while she released trees, to free me up for these events. Lupin and broom growth made releasing urgent if

the invisible young trees were to survive. Survival rates for forest restoration plantings are variable but rates of over 90% are now required for external funding. That looked like a very big ask this year.

Tree planting is a high profile, community-level fun event with BBQs and other enticements, but tree releasing to ensure the seedlings actually survive beyond year two is not seen in the same glitzy light.

I believe a few years ago British Rail lost some 800 000 planted trees (ie, virtually all of them) by overlooking this seemingly humdrum task. Yet one volunteer told me that she absolutely

*Continued on next page*

*Below, recently planted native tree seedlings being swamped by grass at Bushy Point.*





loved the work of saving valuable native trees from being encroached by— even overwhelmed by—rank vegetation.

And young kids can have fun searching through lupins and long grass to discover fragile little seedlings which desperately need releasing from their competitors.

It was great this year to have some people who regularly enjoy walking at Bushy Point joining the work evenings, realising that this public reserve requires real care and commitment to ensure that the plantings survive and flourish.

So a big thanks to Kathy, Sherry, the two Chrises, Sally, Paula, Regina and her son Lief, Kaelym and Annaliese, Geoff, Brian, Barry, and Rahul and his son Millin, who collectively notched up over 30 hours work on the trees this autumn, giving

*After releasing, the young native trees have a better chance of surviving and flourishing.*



them a huge boost and repulsing the lupin invasion.

Meanwhile, Mochree and Leila had developed a real liking for poroporo berries they found amongst the plantings, and by the end, had accidentally released several trees by trampling the surrounding grass in search of the ripening berries.

Meg had better things to do.

### **Gostelow park pump track a finalist in national parks awards**

Recreation Aotearoa has shortlisted the Gostelow pump track in Otatara as a finalist in the 2024 National Parks Awards!

Recreation Aotearoa Te Whai Oranga describes itself as ‘the voice of recreation in Aotearoa, representing all professionals in the industry. We empower our members to deliver quality recreation experiences, places and facilities, that fuel a more active, healthy and connected New Zealand’

The winner will be announced at the end of the Green Pavlova 2024 conference, on May 30. This conference focuses on resilience through community partnership, technology and environmental sustainability, around innovative approaches for designing parks and play spaces.

Congratulations to Penny Ivey, who pushed for the park, to all those who helped it become reality including students from Otatara School who helped plant out the area, and the staff of the city’s Parks and Recreation department.

Russell Square from South Invercargill has also been chosen as a finalist, following recent redevelopment of the play area.



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# IN THE GARDEN

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By Sue Johnson

It has been a disappointing autumn—summer seemed to slip into wintry conditions very quickly. Many of us experienced late ripening of tomatoes and also pumpkins that were slow to mature. This was due to the low light levels with day after day of cloudy weather.

As gardeners we proceed with hope! Next season will be better! I am told the El Nino conditions are about to change and we will be back to La Nina with its drier, warmer summers. I hope it is true!

As the crop finished a little earlier I have begun to dig over the soil in the tunnel house, only to find it has been invaded by roots from nearby trees.

I have dug a trench around the edge and lined it with some leftover strong pond liner. I'm sure the roots will eventually find their way around it, but it will delay them for a couple of years!

Most feeder roots are within the top 30cms so I haven't gone down too deep.

Composting the beds now is a good plan. It gives time for the compost to break down and will help to keep the soil moist in winter. Trying to wet bone-dry soil in the tunnel house or glass house before planting in Spring can be a nuisance.

Winter is a good time to be turning compost heaps. I tend to have piles of mixed garden waste which needs sorting out. There are areas that have not broken down as much as other areas.

The good compost needs to be used and any that is not ready put back into a new heap. Some things just take longer to break down. Prunings can be cut up into small pieces and put at the bottom of the pile. The openness gives good air circulation at the base.

It is fine to use compost that is not completely decomposed, this continues to break down and encourages activity in the soil.

It is an untidy time of year—cut back perennials that have finished flowering or have been frosted, but it is too early to prune roses. They will shoot away with new buds in winter which will stall their ability to come away cleanly in spring. July and August are the time for rose and fruit pruning. A period of dormancy is important.

Cover bare earth with pea straw or mulch—this moderates the soil temperature during winter and spring.

Autumn is a good time for tree planting. I was interested in this tree seedling protector. It is made of recycled plastic and is rigid so it can be pegged to the ground. In the centre is a bowl that funnels rain water to the roots. Once the tree is established it can be opened up, removed and reused.

It has been designed and is supplied by a local farmer, who wanted a better way to protect tree seedlings from being eaten by rabbits and swamped with grass and weeds.

He popped into work to show me the product, which would be good for small numbers of tree plantings. More on [garto.co.nz](http://garto.co.nz).



# BUSY BUT GOOD TIMES



## Southland community nursery news by Chris Rance

Its that time of the year when the year seems to speed up (or am I just getting older!!). So since the last website post lots has been happening!

The Southland Ecological Restoration Network (SERN) trip that was advertised went ahead and a great day was had seeing other restoration sites, and nursery 'vollies' were in attendance:

[www.sern.org.nz/events/2024-sern-autumn-field-day/](http://www.sern.org.nz/events/2024-sern-autumn-field-day/)

The Dotterel Campaign launch did eventually go ahead, very successfully, with Daniel Cocker giving another impassioned plea – good local publicity ensued -

[www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/350270523/dotterel-defence-fund-gets-forest-bird-boost](http://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/350270523/dotterel-defence-fund-gets-forest-bird-boost).

You can support Dan and the Dotterel here: <https://nznaturefund.org/projects/southern-dotterel-tuturiwhatu/>. This is a very good video that shows how the last remaining Southern Dotterels are being predated by feral cats on Rakiura/Stewart Island and what is being done to save them from extinction.

You may wonder what this all has to do with the Nursery, but all are linked by our own volunteers and the conservation web we weave!

The apple pressing went ahead with a small but dedicated group and others have been collecting our Kingston Black, Yarlinton Mill and Sweet Alford apples to make cider (looking forward to the results)!

Anyway, back to nursery business – its been a busy time collecting and preparing seeds. Nursery volunteer Fridays have attracted between 15 and 20 volunteers so lots of work is being done.

A contingent weeded the nursery on a recent Friday, and the previous Friday a planting gang went out to the Moloneys in Otatara to help out Andrea and Kevin in their restoration project.



We are also preparing plants for other plantings like the annual Bushy Point community planting day on Sunday September 14 and a number of other plant orders.

Soon on Fridays we will be sowing all the seeds we have collected and after that we will hold some workshops on growing plants from cuttings, so if you are interested in those topics come along on a Friday morning.

We fund the nursery from sales so if you are looking for advice on what to plant in Otatara or want to purchase

local plants, have a look at our website:

[www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz/](http://www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz/)

Or send me an email :

[rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz](mailto:rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz)

and come and see what we have available.

If you want to see what we do have a look at our News and Events page:

[www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz/news-and-events/](http://www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz/news-and-events/)



*Chris Rance*

*Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road, Otatara*



# MEMORIES IN GARDENS



By Linda

## Looking and Listening in Otatara



On Friday mornings at the Community Nursery we have been collecting and preparing seeds for sowing soon, with cuttings to follow. Top crops and Flop crops have been discussed over morning tea, along with info re upcoming private and public planting projects, workshops, embarrassing photos, and lots of laughing.

One night recently around 9ish we listened to a morepork calling its 'Woo Woo', a possum with its guttural growl, a German Owl and an Australian frog, all close by. In the morning 10 kereru swooped up from the bush, a kingfisher flew down our drive and hawks snatched a mouse, leftover meaty morsels, a rat and a stoat from our obliging neighbour's traps and a couple of duck legs, all from a table 20m. from our kitchen window.

Harvesting:  
with April  
vegetables,  
Processing:  
preserving,  
Planning:  
when &  
Our local  
and useful



We enjoy growing and  
and May producing  
fruit, nuts, fungi, fish  
Juicing, freezing,  
smoking, storing.  
What to grow and  
how? What do we  
what do we need?  
community has heaps  
knowledge to share -  
pays off.

foraging,  
beautiful  
and fowl.  
pickling, drying  
gather next?  
have and  
of resources  
getting involved

Memories grow in gardens, from cuttings and seeds shared between friends and family, plants and structures to honour someone missed or to mark a significant occasion. I have enjoyed gardening always, and like to think of green traces in many places.

LJ





## Animal Pest Control at Bushy Point

While the planting programme at Bushy Point has been prominent over the past 23 years, the unsung heroes of the wider Bushy Point area are the animal pest control team.

Since 2007 the 90 hectares surrounding the Bushy Point Restoration Area have been under intensive pest control by a dedicated volunteer team. Intensive control means every two weeks checking the traps and bait stations set every 50 metres on lines 100 metres apart.

These grid spacings were set in 2007 to control possums, rats and mustelids (stoats, weasels and ferrets). The 50m spacing is for rats and then every 100m for possums and more sparsely the mustelid traps, all reflecting the home ranges of these species.

While actual placement of traps and stations can be varied to good spots in the vicinity, the grid is maintained, which means monitoring over a long period is meaningful.

Our trapping teams have changed over the years but one trapper has led the way from the beginning. Ian Gamble has been doing 'his lines' since 2007 and it is a mighty effort!

On other lines, Alan Ledington and Pauline McAlpine have taken over in recent times from

Sally and Gordon Duston. Don McMurtrie has taken over from Frith van Lier; Anna Harris, Michael Hargraves and Megan have taken over from Becky Goodsell and Chris Rance, and Brian Rance has taken over some of Ian's previous lines.

It's an effort that continues the good work of previous trappers Len Diack, the Kennedy family, Darren May and Randal Milne. All contribute to the success of the birds nesting in Otatara and having just come back from holiday in other parts of New Zealand, the bird-song in Otatara is really noticeable and much better than anywhere else we stayed.

Our trapping effort at Bushy Point is supplemented by all of the Otatara Pestbuster's efforts and is supported by monitoring by Environment Southland.

The most recent results continue the trend of very low rat and fluctuating mice numbers. A total of 360 possums have been caught and 197 mustelids – details can be viewed in the Bushy Point Annual Reports on the OLG website - <https://www.otataralandcare.org.nz/bushy-point-restoration/>.

All the work couldn't have been done without funding from DOC and ongoing support from Environment Southland.

It's an ongoing battle but well worth it. If you are interested in helping out with pest control at Bushy Point, contact me at : [otataralg@gmail.com](mailto:otataralg@gmail.com)

*Chris Rance, Bushy Point  
Pest Control Coordinator*





## Working together to save titi, by Kathy Morrison

It started last year when Annie and Trevor handed me a hitherto unseen bird as we came across each other on Oreti beach. I thought they were carrying a new puppy but no. The beautiful bird was quite limp and its eyes were barely open so I headed home, rang Alan at Avian Rescue in Alexandra and asked for advice.

I learnt that I needed to tube-feed the titi (or sooty shearwater) to rehydrate it for a day or two before releasing it so that it could continue with its pals migrating to Siberia.

Wow, the change was immediate, eyes opened and head up. Our friend Dallas informed us later that he had driven along the beach spotting at least 40 titi lying out there. Hitherto, people had been advised to put them up in the sandhills, which is a death sentence for starving, exhausted birds.

So this year we planned to get a team together and save as many of the titi as we could. The birds beat us to the formal planning but an amazing team has grown up around the urgent situation we suddenly found ourselves in.

Gareth Anderson rang on the first Thursday of May to say that he had two titi which he'd found lying on the beach after a night of rough weather. He

*Right, the first rescued titi of the season.*

actually arrived with eight, and helped Dougie and me with tube feeding them, which filled our indoor bird cages.

Later that same day he delivered another seven, two of which were badly injured, so we now also had boxes all over the living room floor, and our place was getting pretty sandy as the birds were fed and contained.

Some injuries were not going to mend in time for the birds to migrate so we faced some sad decisions. Thanks to Dallas the injured birds were helped out of their broken bodies kindly and respectfully.

From at least 6am on a Friday we were 'entertained' to a titi concert and a large amount of tapping which prompted pillows over our heads.

We loaded up Gareth's car boot with titi and headed down to Whalers Bay at the high tide. It was like having a car full of excited preschoolers.

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A fisherman asked if we were conservationists or something as he noticed our activity, placing the birds one by one on the shore from where they scooted off across the estuary in all directions, diving and flapping or just paddling hard. They somehow came around to form a small flotilla after a short time. Safety in numbers, we guessed.

And so the days passed with a chaotic boot load of 23 from Gareth, Sarah from Hawea brought in three birds, Lara from Wallacetown found one, the police rescued one from the gutter of a house in town and another Karen, a teacher at St Theresa's in Windsor, stopped and picked one up on the causeway, placed it in a safe place for the day then brought it to us in the evening.

After a week, we had had 56 titi in for rehydration, and 44 vigorous birds released after a day or two in care. We hope the peak demand has now passed for this migration!

We have been more than delighted to do the mahi and hope we have given these stunning birds enough energy to then be able to forage in the estuary until they are ready to fly on. And

who could resist these beautiful wee faces. What a team! Thanks to Gareth for doing beach reccies and helping with feeds and releases, Sarah, Karen, Lara and Ange for noticing and going out of their ways for the titi, Alan from Alexandra with advice and support, and Dallas for his readiness and kindness in helping with the badly injured birds.

## About the titi....

The sooty shearwater is one of the most widely distributed seabirds in the world. In addition to breeding in New Zealand, it also breeds on islands off Australia, Chile and the Falklands. During the breeding season (September-May) it occurs throughout coastal New Zealand waters, making trips of about 2000 km each way to forage in the vicinity of the Polar Front at about 65°, especially when gathering food for its young. After breeding, birds from New Zealand migrate to the North Pacific Ocean where each bird stops over in one of three discrete regions off Japan, Alaska or California before returning to New Zealand for the following breeding season.

All the large colonies are around Stewart Island or on The Snares. There are no accurate estimates of the total New Zealand population, but based on recent detailed work on the large populations on The Snares and islands off Stewart Island it was estimated that the population was about 21 million birds.

*Source: Birds Online.org.nz*

*Left, a titi snuggle!*



# SANDY POINT PLAN



## The submission on the long-term plan, by Brian Rance

This is the submission from the Otatara Landcare Group to the draft Sandy Point long-term management plan. The submissions are now being assessed before a draft plan is presented to Council.

The OLG is extremely fortunate to have Brian Rance to prepare such a comprehensive and interesting submission.

### Sandy Point Master Plan – Ecological information

#### Ecological Context

Sandy Point is within the Southland Plains Ecological District (ED). The Southland Plains ED is a large lowland area which incorporates most of the ICC District. The ED has been much modified with most of the original indigenous vegetation removed or modified. The major land use is now farming activity, with much forestry, urban/residential land and infrastructure (including extensive roading).

The Riverton-Otatara area (including Sandy Point) is one of six land systems recognised in the Southland Plain ED Protected Natural Areas Programme Ecological Survey Report. This recognis-

es the distinctive character of the area, a key defining feature being the sandy soils.

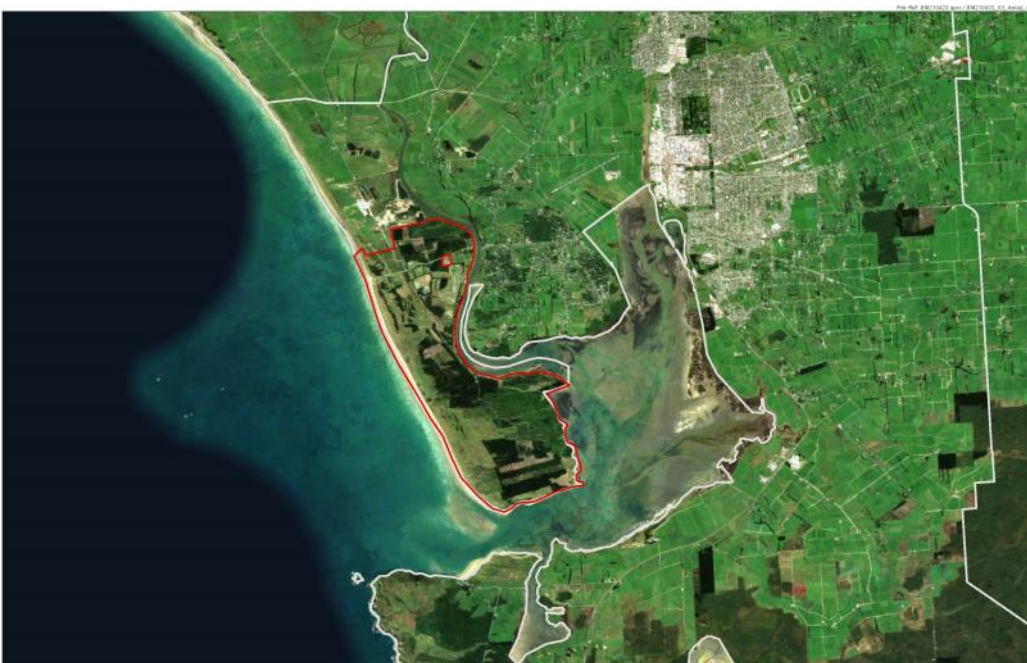
The soils of Sandy Point are dominated by the sandy substrate. Sandy Point has an ecologically significant soil chrono-sequence from Oreti Beach across Sandy Point and Otatara. The soils chrono-sequence spans from recent soils forming behind Oreti Beach to ancient sands dating from the last glacial period (c. 15,000 years).

Sandy Point lies between Oreti Beach and the Oreti River/New River Estuary. It is separated from Otatara by the Oreti River. The indigenous vegetation of Sandy Point is dominated by totara forest on sand soils and sand dunes. Other indigenous vegetation includes a range of wetlands and estuarine vegetation.

There are important vegetation sequences present. These include from dune swales to forest (i.e. wetlands to shrubland to forest and estuarine mudflats to forest and from salt marsh to estuarine shrubland to forest). In the past there would have been sequences of native dune vegetation to coastal shrubland to coastal forest.

Sandy Point is the largest reserve area and re-

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*Left, Sandy Point, a playground on our doorstep.*





tains some of the largest remnants of indigenous vegetation within the Southland Plains ED.

Sandy Point is an important stepping stone in the movement of native forest birdlife, including movement from Sandy Point to Otatara and Invercargill and from Sandy Point to Omaui and Bluff Hill (and to Stewart Island).

Sandy Point should be an important part of Pestfree Southland initiatives. It has defendable pest boundaries on three sides (i.e. the sea, New River Estuary and the Oreti River). It would be an important link from the Bluff Hill Omaui area and Otatara/Invercargill.

### **Ecosystems present**

**Forests:** Totara forest on sand dunes is the most extensive native ecosystem present on Sandy Point. This ecosystem is a Naturally Rare Ecosystem (a type of stabilised dune), with an Endangered threat status. Sandy Point is a national stronghold for this ecosystem, being the most extensive and intact in Southland and Otago (and possibly nationally).

**Wetlands:** There are a range of wetland types present. Silver Lagoon: Silver Lagoon is the best known wetland on Sandy Point. It is a pond/small coastal lake surrounded by fringing Carex swamp. It provides habitat for waterfowl and wading birds, depending on the amount/depth of water. Silver Lagoon is the largest of a few ephemeral wetlands present on Sandy Point.

**Ephemeral wetlands:** Ephemeral wetlands are a Naturally Rare Ecosystem. They have the threat status of Nationally Critical.

There are dune swales, these vary dependent upon the duration of inundation. They include Carex sedgeland and flax-cabbage tree wetlands. Old gravel pit ponds: These hold permanent water and provide habitat for waterfowl and wading birds. They have 'stabilised' and have a fringe of wetland vegetation.

**Estuaries:** Sandy Point adjoins New River Estuary. New River Estuary and its margins are part

of the Awarua/Waituna Ramsar Wetland of International Wetland complex. Estuaries are a Naturally Rare ecosystem, with a Vulnerable Threat status. The estuary contains a range of vegetation types.

**Saltmarsh turf:** This is found at Whalers Bay and other sites.

**Oioi rushland:** This is found at Daffodil Bay and other sites.

**Gravel banks and shores:** These have strand line vegetation. An example is at Sandy Point.

**Sand dune:** The extensive Oreti Beach sand dunes are now dominated by the introduced marram grass. Both active and stabilised sand dunes are a Naturally Rare ecosystem, with an Endangered threat status.

### **Important species present**

**Birds:** A range of forest birds, waterfowl and wading birds are present. Some of the more notable birds present include the rare species - Australasian bittern, South Island fernbird, and possibly marsh and spotless crakes. Tomtits are present - they are uncommon in Otatara and elsewhere in the Southland Plains ED.

**Plants:** Rare plants include the coastal herb - *Atriplex buchananii* (status – Nationally Vulnerable); the orchids - *Pterostylis prorecta*, *Drymoanthus flavus*; also the dwarf sedge *Isolepis basilaris*, the creeping herb *Mazus radicans* and manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*), all status – Declining.

**Lizards:** Common skinks are present, they are becoming increasingly rare in lowland Southland.

**Invertebrates:** A wide range of invertebrates are present. Some such as the moth *Asophodes frivola* are a threatened species.

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## Sandy Point submission Continued

### **Key Ecological/Biodiversity values**

Sandy Point is the largest area of reserved land within the Southland Plains ED. Sandy Point contains the largest and best condition area of totara forest on dunes in Southland (and possibly nationally)

Sandy Point contains several wetland areas. Wetlands are much reduced locally, regionally and nationally.

Sandy Point adjoins New River Estuary which is part of the Awarua/Waituna Ramsar Wetland of International Wetland complex. Sandy Point has important ecological sequences and ecotones. Notable examples are wetlands (including dune swales) into forest and estuary to forest

Sandy Point has huge potential for restoration and enhancement of existing indigenous vegetation. Sandy Point has high potential for expansion of extent of indigenous vegetation. Sandy Point has high importance in its biodiversity and recreational activity.

### **Important Ecological/Biodiversity initiatives to be promoted**

Expansion of the extent of indigenous vegetation. This would include the progressive removal of exotic forestry and replacement/transition to native forest.

- Linkage of forest stands.
- Buffering and enhancement of estuary margins.
- Buffering and enhancement of wetlands.
- Dune restoration.
- Restoration and enhancement of ecological sequences and ecotones.
- Increased weed control.
- Increased pest control.

### **Importance of Ecological Resilience**

Sandy Point is an important area for Invercargill City Council in its contribution to addressing climate change and building ecological resilience. It is important to work with nature and holistic methods to build ecological resilience, including

the restoration and enhancement of indigenous ecosystems. Carbon sequestration should be promoted through expanded areas of native forest. Carbon sequestration should be promoted through increased management and enhancing the condition of native ecosystems (especially forests and wetlands).

Intact dune systems are an important buffer from the coast and sea-level rise. They are able to reform following storm damage.

Intact estuarine saltmarshes and oioi rushlands also buffer the coast for storm event and sea-level rise.

### **Some comments on the Sandy Point Masterplan**

The OLG supports the Eco-park concept. We support the progressive removal of exotic forestry and replacement with native forest in the southern portion (half) of Sandy Point.

The OLG supports undertaking additional restoration planting with native species in other parts of Sandy Point, especially along road sides, Oreti River, the Oreti Sands (the former golf course area) and in the access to and around Kilmock Bush.

We seek wetland restoration and enhancement including of the Pit Road wetlands and other wetlands and their margins.

We seek a major dune restoration project.

We seek restoration and enhancement of estuary margins and ecotones.

We seek increased pest control ideally as part of a pest-free Sandy Point project.

We seek increased weed control. This would be partly as part of restoration, revegetation and enhancement of indigenous ecosystems.

We support not only the retention and continued management of the existing walking track network, but the expansion and enhancement of it.

We support a multi-use approach for the Oreti Sands area, including the progressive removal of pine trees/forest, establishment of native forest plantings and retention of some open areas.



# LOVE YOUR BIRDS?



## Remembering how it could be without pest control

I am making my way through a most interesting book, 'Port Preservation – the story of Preservation Inlet and the Solander Groups', by A.C. and N.C. Begg.

The early chapters look at the history of the area, beginning from the earliest days of Maori interaction and residency in the area. A chapter on the first European contacts and explorers reminded me why Otatara Pestbusters and all those who undertake predator control in Otatara are to be so thanked and appreciated – and supported.

The Begg brothers write about Andreas

Reischek, an Austrian taxidermist, naturalist, and ornithologist who added materially to the understanding of the biology and distribution of the New Zealand avifauna.

He had a genuine love for, and interest in, bird life and was the first to suggest Little Barrier Island as a sanctuary for native birds, according to online information on him.

He spent time in Chalky Inlet, and in 1887 he and his friend Rimmer visited Port Preservation and Chalky inlets, setting up base in North Port, for the purpose of exploring the surrounding country. His principal object was to find a *Noto-nis*, the takeha, but he also wished to collect other native birds, particularly kakapo and kiwi.

The Begg brothers write: 'In this his great enemy was the rat. These voracious animals swarmed everywhere. They gnawed the cases of food, they attacked the bird skins and skeletons, and they awoke Rimmer, who was a particularly heavy sleeper, by biting away the beard'.

Reischek painted a horrifying picture of their destruction of the birdlife: 'I have not found a sin-

gle Rock Wren here, and have always noticed where the rats are numerous there are few birds...they destroy large birds as well as small.'

He caught a number of kakapo to send to Little Barrier Island for a reserve for native birds he had proposed, but the rats got into the cage and killed two and wounded others by biting their throats and eating parts of their heads off.

Reischek also writes this: 'I found a great birch tree quite undermined with rat holes. The bark had been gnawed away up to 50 inches above ground level.

All vegetation was dead on the tree and the stink of excreta was strong. It took five months of shooting, poisoning and trapping before they showed signs of decreasing around camp'.

As I listen to the bellbirds, tuis, grey warblers, white eyes and kakariki singing in our garden and bush, and the kereru wooshing around, and think of Reischek writing about the devastated and silent forests in Preservation, I am reminded how vital it is that we not just maintain but expand our pest control efforts in Otatara.

Thank you to all those who are part of the predator control programme, and if you are not, please contact Dallas Bradley on 021 784 962, 213 0234 or [amberg2@gmail.com](mailto:amberg2@gmail.com) for lots of advice on baits and traps for rodents and supplies.

*Editor*



# THE FACTS ABOUT RECYCLING



## Update from Recycle South's Hamish McMurdo

Some helpful hints for recycling were given by Recycle South General Manager Hamish McMurdo, speaking before the Annual General Meeting of the Otago Landcare Group on Thursday May 16.

Recycle South is a not-for-profit registered charity organization. The core business is recycling and creating a more sustainable future, but is also proud to be removing employment barriers for people living with disabilities.

For the 80 employees who work on the recycling operations of Recycle South, their workplace gives a sense of belonging and purpose and a close and supportive community.

As well as outlining the structure, operations and the primary importance of care for the vulnerable employees of Recycle South, Hamish brought along items that can, and can't be recycled, and the reasons why not.

Among materials not able to be recycled are the carry bags now used for supermarket shopping, the opaque plastic containers for some



*Hamish McMurdo*

milks (they are laminated), pvc products like piping and roofing, as they are UV-stabilised and contain chemicals that cannot be removed, and tetrapak containers, as Recycle South does not have the equipment to process the laminated cartons which contain a layer of foil.

Also not able to be recycled is cell phone packing, chip and biscuit packets with a foil inner and

hard plastics that snap or crumble when put under pressure. Among these are plastic toys and plastic eating utensils.

Another surprise was that tissue boxes are a problem. Most have a thin plastic sheet on both sides of the opening—this cannot be removed and contaminates the process. Either tear off the plastic or look for tissue boxes that state they are all-cardboard.

Another product that cannot be recycled is the packaging for wipes, due to the mixture of materials used.

A helpful hint about placing soft plastics in for recycling is the 'bend and stretch test'! If it bends and can stretch, that's ok. If it does not, no thank you! Recycle South will be processing the soft plastics now being collected by The Warehouse and Woolworths supermarkets in Invercargill.

What can also be recycled is newsprint and paper, glossy paper, cardboard, steel and aluminium cans, number 1, 2 and 5 plastics, plastic bottles and containers for household cleaning products and personal care, clear and coloured plastic drink bottles, polystyrene, aluminium foil and containers, and of course, glass bottles and containers.

Paper goes from Recycle South to Oji Fibre Solutions, a nationwide company that recycles paper and card into bags, packaging and other

*Continued on next page*

### AGM NEWS

The reports from the annual general meeting of the Otago Landcare Group will be posted on the website, [www.otataralandcare.org.nz](http://www.otataralandcare.org.nz).

News from the AGM is that Chris Rance has stepped down as secretary after nearly 25 years in the role, but remains on the committee and continues with all she does for OLG and the wider conservation community in this area. Lloyd Esler has swapped from being treasurer to being secretary. Thank you to Jeff Walker, who is now treasurer.

The existing committee remains, but would welcome more people to join!



## Recycling facts and fiction continued

paper products.

Glass is ground into material for roading and for use in civil engineering applications. Steel and aluminium products are sold for processing back into their raw materials and used again.

There was confusion about what to do with the plastic and steel tops of plastic and glass containers! Some had heard that they are not required. "They are needed, but take them off and add them to your recycling! If not, workers on

the line will have to take them off, which is unnecessarily labour intensive", said Hamish.

Recycle South processes plastics into pellets, which are the raw material for new plastic products. Pellets are exported to China.


Recycle South has a separate plant at Makarewa that processes baleage wrap and agricultural containers into pellets, which are on-sold overseas and locally for use in new products.

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## DRY POINT ETCHING

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By Linda



Kyla Cresswell Workshop 2024  
@ The Southland Community Nursery

Our goal: to create postcard sized prints using drypoint etchings technique. This entails incising marks onto a piece of rigid clear material.

We were encouraged to explore our surrounds, with birds, insects & plants close at hand to inspire.

Our group included beginners through to art graduates, all intently focussed on learning from our patient, thorough & experienced tutor.

So much experimenting, comparing, trying again, and wishing the day was longer.

The chocolate bars and homebaking provided energy, with sharing knowledge & enthusiasm the impetus. The process of recording impressions of our individual interests is difficult to hurry, requiring intense, quiet concentration, then moving about to apply inks, prepare paper & holding your breath as the print comes through the roller.

Our workshop room was perfect, Kyla an engaging & generous tutor, participants enthusiastic & creative... so yes, I had a great day. Now to keep practicing...

# STEAD ST PUMP STATION



## Update from Environment Southland

Progress on the new pump station has been especially evident in the last three months for regular commuters between Otatara and Invercargill's CBD. Thankfully, this means Fulton Hogan has been able to ease up on its traffic management.

The temporary speed limit adjacent to the pump station is now 50kph rather than 30kph which still helps them to manage vehicle traffic Monday through Friday (and Saturday when works are underway on site). The normal 80kph speed limit is in place when contractors are off-site on public holidays and weekends.

Remedial works to address earlier design and construction issues were successfully completed in February, meaning Fulton Hogan could crack on with pouring concrete for the remaining 400mm thick pump house walls and the foundation slab for the control room. On 5 April, two impressive 16m long, 22.5 tonne Archimedes screw pumps were lifted into place, each into their own pump bay or wet well.

April also saw the installation of a new transformer by Powernet. This transformer provides a significant capacity increase over and above the existing transformer to supply more power to the new pumps, increasing capacity from 200kVA to 500kVA. The new transformer is also now locat-

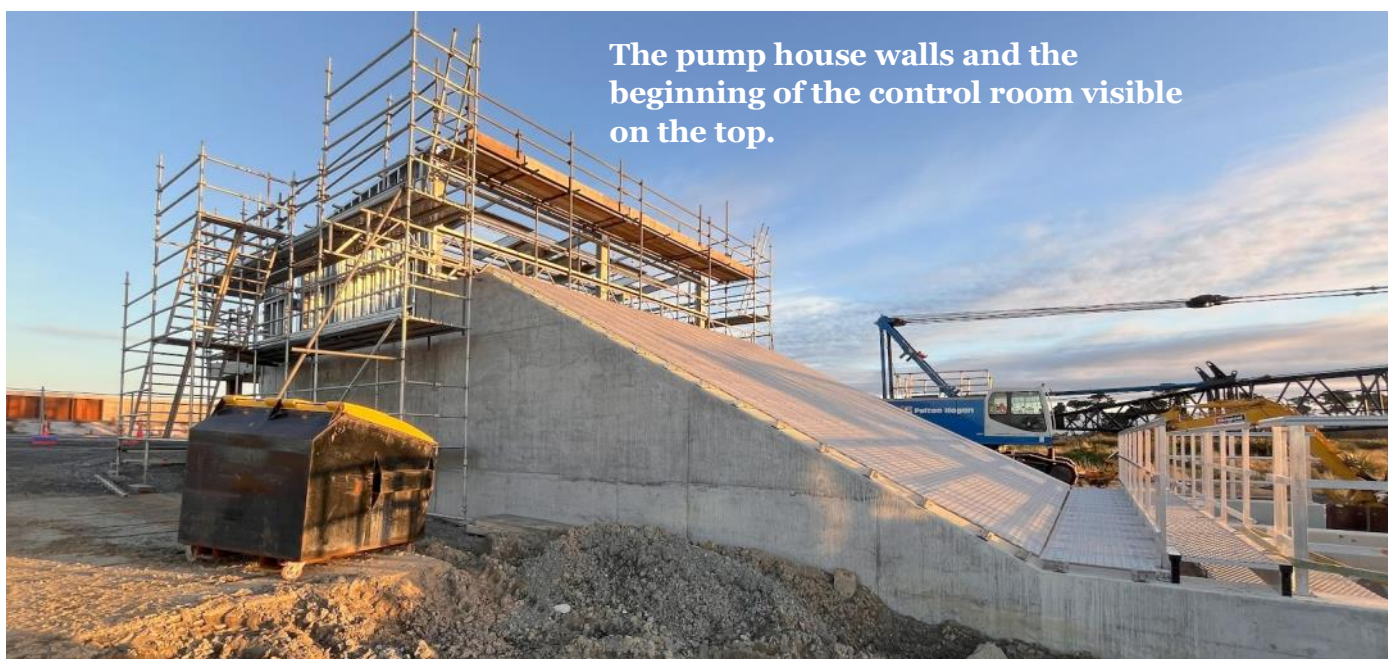
ed on a new transformer platform, above the 1984 flood levels.

This provides protection to critical infrastructure that supplies not only the new pump station but also backup supply to the Otatara Community. The pump station also has provisions to connect to a temporary generator, should there be power outages in the grid ensuring continued operation.

Construction of the control room is well advanced, and you can expect to see the control room cladding and roofing installed in the next week, followed by the handrails, windows, and doors. Once the control room is weather-tight, the all-important electrical work can be completed which will permit dry commissioning and rotation of the pumps.

The design of the Waihōpai Rūnaka-led Mahi Toi elements adorning the viewing platform and pump station is complete, with the fabrication and preparation for installation now underway.

These design and narrative components will form part of Te Ara Tūpuna, building on the recently completed Invercargill City Council climate resilience project on Stead Street and Airport Avenue.



**The pump house walls and the beginning of the control room visible on the top.**



# Otatara Landcare Group Membership



If you are not already a member and would like to help support the work of the Otatara Landcare Group, just fill in the form below and come and join us. We appreciate all our members both for their contributions of time and financial support. We can't do it without you.

## Membership Form

Please complete form for membership or if you require a receipt for any donation and email to [otataralg@gmail.com](mailto:otataralg@gmail.com).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers: (Hm) \_\_\_\_\_

(Mobile): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: (for newsletters and events) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my contact details to be retained exclusively for the purposes of communication in relation to the activities of Otatara Landcare Group.

### Subs:

**Subscription for Life Membership \$50**

**Donations:** also welcome! *NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORG. INC— CC47928*

*All donations of \$5 and over are tax deductible within allowable limits.*

Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

OLG bank account **03 1355 0805312 00**

Please use your surname and “olg subs” or “olg don” in reference boxes.

Alternatively, send completed form with cash to:

**Lloyd Esler – 15 Mahuri Road, Otatara**

### Otatara Landcare Group:

Chair, Richard Johnson 021 124 2746; Secretary, Lloyd Esler: 03 213 0404, Treasurer Jeff Walker [jeffreybwalker23@gmail.com](mailto:jeffreybwalker23@gmail.com); Pigeon Post editor, Richard Johnson 021 124 2746 , [richardsueinvercargill@gmail.com](mailto:richardsueinvercargill@gmail.com)

### Committee Members:

Brian Rance, Chris Rance, Sally Duston, Barry Smith, Graeme Childs, Linda Jackson, Ray Jackson, Geoff Dembo, Cathy MacFie, Dallas Bradley, Kathy Morrison, Douglas Black, Chris Rowe.

### Additional Contributors:

Please contact the Otatara Landcare Group if you have any questions, suggestions or problems relating to the Otatara and Sandy Point areas: [otataralg@gmail.com](mailto:otataralg@gmail.com)



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[www.otataralandcare.org.nz](http://www.otataralandcare.org.nz), Email: [otataralg@gmail.com](mailto:otataralg@gmail.com)

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