



The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Inc. is a registered charitable entity in terms of the Charities Act 2005. Registration No. CC46103

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President's Report

Thanks to the many members and friends who attended the AGM in March; there was a really good turn-out. Following business, we had a very inspiring address from Professor Mick Clout on his research into threatened native birds such as the kakapo and the recovery programs, and the strategy for a predator-free New Zealand.

We are very pleased to welcome Orhan Er and Christine Rose to our committee. You can read about Orhan and his environmental work in this newsletter, and I am sure you all know that Christine, who was our Heritage Area Coordinator, is now the Auckland Council's Kauri Dieback Community Coordinator.

At our first committee meeting since the AGM, Christine spoke of the current situation with kauri dieback. It is very alarming. The recent aerial and ground surveys show that the disease is continuing to spread through the ranges. Public understanding of the ecological threat to the kauri and the ranges is poor, as is compliance with track closure and the use of hygiene stations on the tracks that remain open. This disease is the most serious threat to the ecology of the ranges since logging in the early 20th century.

The Society continues to be engaged with the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan hearings. We are well represented by legal counsel Douglas Allan and planner James Hook, who have attended many hours of meetings. We estimate that we are currently about half way through the process and while the costs are mounting this is the most important work that the Society can do to ensure the long-term protection of the ranges. We are budgeting for final costs of around \$70,000.

Following the end of quarrying operations at Te Henga, we are keeping a close watch on the rehabilitation of the quarry. Also of concern at Te Henga is the extensive infestation of the noxious water fern *Salvinia* in the wetland. This fast growing aquatic plant threatens the entire wetland. The Ministry of Primary Industries and the Department of Conservation have an eradication program in place involving ground and aerial spraying, and current information is available on our website.

*John Edgar
President*

Orhan Er - New Committee member



Orhan grew up in close proximity to the Waitakere Ranges, starting life in Glen Eden and now a resident of Laingholm. He is an ecologist intern for the Auckland Council and also works within the Twin Streams Project as an ecological restoration field worker for McLaren Park and Henderson South Community Trust.

Orhan has spent the last decade working with and studying the New Zealand flora. He studied at Unitec Institute of Technology gaining a Bachelor of Applied Science, majoring in Biodiversity Management, and also a Certificate in Horticultural Science. He also has been involved with various research projects at Unitec, looking into potential fungal pathogens of African club moss (*Sellaginella kraussiana*), and lichens of New Zealand's mangroves and numerous flora surveys.

Orhan now spends his spare time upskilling in everything ecological. He volunteers for the Motu Kaikoura Trust helping with annual ecological surveys and pest plant management. He has also spent time on Hauturu reptile monitoring and helps with Argentine ant control on Kawau Island.

Orhan is a keen runner and spear fisherman who has been brought up with holistic views and sustainable principles for which he thanks his mother for instilling in him. He is excited to bring what he has learnt to the table and is looking forward to learning and sharing knowledge with the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society.

Heritage Area Coordinator position: Applications invited

The Society has received funding to appoint a part-time Heritage Area Coordinator (HAC) and is inviting expressions of interest for this position. Contact us at the email address on the newsletter banner above and we will send you details of the position and a copy of the job description. We have received confirmed funding from Foundation North (prev. ASB Community Trust) for an average of 10hpw for approximately 6 months.

Update from Regional Parks, Auckland Council

The Western Regional Parks revegetation programme is underway with planting already completed at our most northern park in the west, Te Rau Puriri at South Head. The planting days are run by the rangers assisted by local schools and communities groups whose contributions are greatly appreciated by the regional parks team.

The public can get involved in the park programme through the Matariki planting days at Pae o te Rangī in the Cascades Kauri area on the 24 June and 1 July. Meet at the stockyards at the corner of Te Henga and Bethells Road at 10am. For more details phone 09 817 0089.

In support of our planting days we have started an intensive programme of rabbit control at several of our key revegetation sites including Whatipu, Muriwai and Cascades Kauri. For several nights a team of shooters patrolled these areas to significantly reduce the rabbit populations, hopefully also reducing the risk of browse on new plants. With the rabbits removed from all sites numbering hundreds, we are expecting new plantings to be more successful.

After many years of planning, the council's parks and stormwater teams are working together to install structures to improve fish passage in western parks streams.

As 13 of the 35 species of freshwater fish found in the ranges are diadromous (move between fresh and salt water during their life cycle) it is important we maintain fish passage. Providing access will involve the installation of a combination of weighted spat ropes, rubber mats, offset starter troughs and fish ladders.

Finally, Regional Parks is working with Auckland University to monitor potential grey faced petrel colony sites in the west. These birds would have been widespread along western coastlines before mammalian predators were introduced. Pest control projects at Muriwai and Piha are creating environments for these birds to return and we are exploring opportunities to encourage further colony sites along the coast.

Kauri Dieback Community Co-ordinator – Waitakere Ranges

The 'Kauri Dieback Community Co-ordinator – Waitakere Ranges' role has been a busy one over summer with attendance at events throughout the west. The team and I

have been handing out information, trigene and 'care for kauri' guides, talking to the public at meetings and in the forest, and carrying out surveys about track use.

To keep our kauri standing, we all have to 'do the right thing'. As individual track users, and as communities, we all have a role to play. That means spreading the word – not the disease, cleaning gear before and after visiting kauri zones, keeping on the tracks and off kauri roots. Even on private land, kauri need careful treatment – avoid walking or mowing over kauri roots, and leave root zones undisturbed.

From 7-9pm on June 8, the Titirangi Residents and Ratepayers Association are hosting a public 'Caring for Kauri' meeting at the Kelston Community Centre. Experts will provide updates on the disease and treatment trials, and provide advice and support to care for kauri on both private and public land. All are welcome.

Auckland Council Regional Parks and Biosecurity are also about to start targeted discussions with residents and track users about the 'Kauri Protection Areas' within the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. These Protection Areas were formed by closing tracks through areas of healthy kauri, to prevent the spread of kauri dieback from diseased areas. We're reviewing the Kauri Protection Areas and we'd like to know your thoughts on how well they are working, and how we can support your recreational needs while saving kauri ecology.

Please send us your thoughts, come along to the Titirangi Ratepayers' 'Caring for Kauri' meeting, and come and meet with us when we're in your area talking about the Protection Area review.

If you'd like trigene to help care for kauri on your own property, in your street, neighbourhood or local track or park, please let us know, and we'll provide you with the resources needed. You can contact me directly at Christine.rose@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz. Thanks!

Christine Rose



Annual Report of the Executive Committee

presented at the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Monday 30 March, 2015
by John Edgar, President

I am pleased to present the 41st Annual Report of the Executive Committee of The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Incorporated.

The Society is 42 years old. It has been long and effective advocate for the ranges, and we acknowledge the members who have supported us over many years.

We reported last year that in 1973 when the Society was formed, few of the activists who opposed the proposed rubbish tip in the old Duck's Quarry in the Waitakere

Valley would have thought that 40 years later we would still be fighting similar battles. We have known that the Te Henga quarry that has operated in the valley for many years would be closing soon, but were surprised last year when Auckland Council Properties Ltd. proposed that the quarry would be used for the next fifteen years as a clean fill dump. Lobbying by the Society and the community resulted in a retraction of the proposal, and we are keeping a close watch on the rehabilitation of the quarry following its closure in April this year.

We have been actively involved with the development of the Te Henga Local Area Plan (LAP). A draft LAP will be available for submissions later this year. Of concern is the recent discovery of a new infestation of the water fern *Salvinia* in the Te Henga wetland. The Ministry for Primary Industries, in partnership with the Department of Conservation and the Auckland Council, is currently carrying out a range of activities to control and ultimately eradicate the aquatic weed which is a notoriously aggressive pest plant that if left unchecked, would rapidly cover the surface of the wetland and ultimately destroy the unique ecosystem there.

Without doubt the best news for the ranges in a long time is that in July Auckland Council purchased the Byer family property at Piha and these 78 hectares of forested land have been added to the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. This land has been on Council's parkland acquisition plan since the 1960s as it links two disconnected parts of the Waitakere Ranges parkland. It has high biodiversity and recreational values and outstanding natural features including regenerating native forest, sea caves, blow holes and pa sites. It is a key piece of land and is finally in public ownership and fully protected. The site will allow extension of the Hillary trail from Karekare to Piha thereby avoiding Piha Road.

Kauri in the ranges are infected with the pathogen *Phytophthora* taxon *Agathis* (recently renamed *Phytophthora agathidicida*) and there is no known cure. 13% of kauri in the ranges are infected, and 65% of these are along walking tracks, an indication that trampers, runners and animals are spreading the disease. 27km (10%) of walking tracks in the ranges, closed in 2012, remain off-limits to the public but compliance has been poor. Auckland Council is currently undertaking a five-year ground and aerial survey to determine the spread of the disease. New funding of kauri dieback research and management has been made available by MPI to various authorities. However in January, with no public consultation, Council granted a consent for the next three years to the Hillary Trail Ultra Marathon from Arataki to Muriwai involving up to 675 participants each year. We are not convinced that the conditions imposed on the event in March will stop the spread of kauri dieback, the greatest occurrence of which is along the Hillary Trail.

We began our oral history project in 2004, and over the past few years Anna Fomison has progressed this project well. In the last year three new interviews have been recorded and lodged with Auckland and Turnbull Libraries and to date 27 interviews have been completed. Our new website has been active since July, and is

proving an excellent tool for communication to members and other users of the ranges. Thanks to Anna Fomison and Tim O'Shea who oversaw the contract with the Think Red design team. Anna Fomison is our webmaster, and we suggest you visit the website regularly to keep up with our news. Thanks also to Auckland Libraries who have scanned and digitised all our newsletters since 1973. These are archived and available to the public at Waitakere Central Library or from the Society at members' request.

At the end of 2014, our Heritage Area Coordinator, Christine Rose resigned to take up a new position with Auckland Council as their Kauri Dieback Coordinator. We thank Christine for her very diligent work for the Society, and while we are sorry to lose her we wish her all the best for her new and very important role.

Over the past year the Society has spent considerable time working on the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (PAUP). The complex hearings process has been a challenge for our legal and planning team, but they have represented the Society to the highest standards. The hearings will go on until 2016, when recommendations will be made by the Independent Hearings Panel, Council will make decisions, appeals will be heard and the plan will become operative.

During the year we have made submissions on the Waitakere Ranges Local Board and the Rodney Local Board three-year plans, the protection of Maui dolphin, the Te Henga quarry, and the Te Henga LAP.

We welcome the establishment of the Waitakere Ranges Conservation Network, an organisation that will coordinate with all groups and individuals who are contributing to conservation in the ranges.

During the year we received \$4,500 from the ASB Community Trust to fund the Heritage Area Coordinator. We also made a donation of \$7500 to the Environmental Defence Society towards the development of a new online environment guide. It will contain information about how our environmental laws work and will help community groups and iwi wanting to get involved in plan and decision-making.

The Society relies on professional consultants to prepare submissions and evidence for us on a range of matters. The *pro bono publico* contribution of our legal counsel Douglas Allan from Ellis Gould Ltd. and RMA consultant Gary Taylor from EDS is invaluable. Thanks also to James Hook at Envivo Planning who has advised and represented the Society on various planning matters. And once again our thanks go to Jenny Taylor who has maintained our membership database and coordinated mail-outs for many years.

The executive committee has met on the second Wednesday of the month. During the year we co-opted Joanna Silver onto the committee and as a lawyer and conservationist she will be a valuable member and has already made a strong contribution. I would like to ask the outgoing committee to stand up. These people are your elected executive who have given the Society so much of their time over the past year. It has been a pleasure to

work with them and I would like this meeting to join with me in showing our appreciation for their efforts on our behalf.

Special thanks go to our Vice-President Anna Fomison, Secretary Lynda Williams and Treasurer Sandra Jones. Sandra has also edited our quarterly newsletter and Lynda writes our funding applications. The Society currently has three Patrons, Emeritus Professor Dick Bellamy, the Rt. Hon. Jonathan Hunt and Lynne Pillay. It has been my honour to be President and to chair the executive committee for the past seventeen years. I want to thank Society members and my family and friends for their support that has enabled me to better serve the Society.

As you will hear in the financial report, the Society remains in a strong financial position. The majority of the reserves have accumulated from sales of the Waitakere Ranges book and these funds are currently tagged for future publications.

During the year some long-time members of the Society died. We were very sad to hear that Jean Smith passed away in June. Jean and her late husband Neil had been members for many years and some years ago when they moved to a smaller home, they sold their art collection, and from the proceeds donated \$20,000 to the Society to be spent as we wished. We decided to invest the capital as the "Neil and Jean Smith Fund" and use the interest to fund projects. Bob Ussher who died in October 2014 was a descendant of one of the pioneer families of the Waitakere Ranges. He had tramped every inch of the Ranges and knew every track, and the plants and birds. Bob was a foundation member of the Society, and he remained a member of the Society all his life, serving on the committee for many years. Bob always attended the AGM of the Society and he will be missed. Jack Colmar died in November 2014 and in his many years living at Te Henga was a great advocate for the ranges and especially the concept of the Heritage Area. The list of supporters to his Heritage Area petition in the 1990's included Sir Edmund Hillary, Don Binney, Graeme Dingle, Stanley Palmer, Peter and Silvia Siddell and many other artists and well-known Aucklanders. Long-time member Isobel Thompson died on June 2014. We offer our condolences to the family and friends of these great supporters of the Society.

Our congratulations go to Bruce and Trixie Harvey, editors of our Waitakere Ranges book who received the JM Sharrad book award for excellence in local history. The judges said that the book maintained a high standard of research and writing and also carved a new path by including traditional history, accounts of the natural history and land, and social history. Bruce and Trixie donated the \$500 prize to the Society.

The Society is forty-two years old. To the members and friends who were there when the Society was founded in 1973, and the many others who have since joined we would like to express our thanks for your support. The Society has a proud history, but our work is not done. While the Heritage Area Act has made some matters more certain for both landowners, developers and the Society, recent and proposed new changes to the RMA will have

adverse effects on the landscape and environment of the ranges. Your support in the coming years will be more important than ever.

Correction – Newsletter Feb 2015

The images of the Kakamatua fire in the February 2015 newsletter were incorrectly credited. The credits should have read: [facebook.com/The-Waitakere-Ranges--WEST](https://www.facebook.com/The-Waitakere-Ranges--WEST)
Our sincere apologies to Jacqui Geux

ECODAY Report (12 Apr 2015)

Ecoday was held as usual at Olympic Park New Lynn and run by the Ecomatters Trust. Many conservation organisations and others catering to ethnic and green issues took stalls. Bruce and I, with help from Joanna and Sandra, ran a stall for WRPS with two aims. Firstly we wanted to raise the profile of our organisation which we felt is in danger of being overlooked in the swathe of new green-type organisations that have blossomed over the last few years, and secondly we wanted to raise some money by selling our new T shirts and pottery. WRPS is one of the oldest conservation organisations in the Ranges, and can boast over 40 years of working for the Waitakeres, and during that time we have added land to the Regional Park, and fought many battles to secure the future of the Ranges as a sanctuary for native flora and wildlife. All this is recounted in our book 'Saving the Ranges' which was also on sale at our stall.

Our new T shirts, the result of planning and design initiatives by John and Anna are lovely. In several colour combinations and designs, aimed at both men and women, they feature our distinctive logo and serve both of our aims above. We sold several and they were much admired. Now our new T shirts can be purchased off our website. In addition we sold pottery designed by Lynda Harris for WRPS with native birds featured in the design. We also sold some prints of a Don Binney painting that had been found in our archive. Altogether we raised over \$500 for the Society, did some networking with other like-minded people and had a very pleasant day out.

Trixie Harvey



Te Henga swamp from Te Aute Ridge Road

Photo: Sandra Jones 20 Sep 2008

Financial Report to the AGM

Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Incorporated Statement of Financial Position As at 31st January 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
ASB Bank – FstSver (N&JSmith Fund interest)	4,738	3,808
ASB Bank – Short Term Deposit	20,000	20,000
Kiwibank - 00 Account (H.A.C.)	1,293	7,777
Kiwibank - 01 Account (Operating)	19,911	5,474
Kiwibank - 02 Account (WRPS publications)	1,778	7,209
Kiwibank – Notice Saver	-	5,343
Kiwibank - Short Term Deposits	163,389	196,261
GST Refund Due	2,231	863
Accounts Receivable	-	252
Accrued Income	-	5,095
Stock on Hand – Finished Goods	<u>17,261</u>	<u>17,885</u>
Total Current Assets	230,601	269,967
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Fixed Assets as per Schedule	<u>15,557</u>	<u>6,786</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	246,158	276,753
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	-	2,200
GST Due for payment	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Current Liabilities	-	2,200
TOTAL LIABILITIES	-	2,220
NET ASSETS	<u>246,158</u>	<u>274,553</u>

Represented by:

TRUSTEES FUNDS

Retained Earnings	<u>246,158</u>	<u>274,553</u>
TOTAL TRUSTEES FUNDS	<u>246,158</u>	<u>274,553</u>

Copies of the Audited Financial Statements are available on request from the Treasurer Ph: 817 2788

Auditor: McGregor Bailey, Chartered Accountants

NOTES:

Bank accounts:

Operating account

In February 2015, \$10,000 will be transferred to a 90-day Saver a/cc. Part of the balance retained in the operating account is tagged to cover anticipated Unitary Plan Hearing costs, Audit fees, etc.

Land acquisition funds

Held in Term Deposits totalling \$57,210

WRPS publications account

Total: \$1,778 + \$106,178 held in Term Deposits.

These funds are being accumulated principally to cover the costs of a possible reprint (or second edition) of the *Waitakere Ranges* book in the next few years. A portion of the interest earned on these Term Deposits over the last 6 years was used to subsidise the publication of the history of the Society, *Saving the Ranges*, in June 2013, and to fund the development of the new website which was launched in mid 2014. Some of the interest and a small portion of the capital is expected to be needed to cover costs relating to the Society's work with Planners on the Unitary Plan Hearings.

Fast Saver Account - Neil & Jean Smith Fund

The original donation (\$20,000) is held as capital and the interest earned (current balance \$4,738) is tagged for special projects.

Stock on hand – value \$17,263.

This consists primarily of stocks of *Saving the Ranges*, and residual copies of *Waitakere Ranges*.

Fixed Assets - value \$15,557. These include equipment purchased in 2009 from NZ Lottery Grants Board and ASB Community Trust grants (laptop computer, data projector and screen, digital recorder, mobile display) as well as the new website, launched in 2014, which is included as a fixed asset.

Total Trustees Funds combines \$274,553 carried forward from previous years, less \$28,394 excess expenditure over income in the current year. A major portion of these funds is held in tagged Term Deposits – the Land Acquisition Fund, the Neil and Jean Smith Fund, and the Publications Fund.

Cont. next column

Change to Reporting Standards for Not-for-Profit Organisations

In 2015 the Reporting Standards used for preparing the Society's Annual Accounts was changed from Accrual to Cash Accounting, in preparation for the new statutory Reporting Standards which are being introduced on 1 April 2015.

Update on the control of the water fern *Salvinia* - a pest water weed in Te Henga wetland

From: Susanne, Ministry of Primary Industries

Date: 23 April 2015

“We would like to thank the community for your support as we progress with field operations to eradicate salvinia from Te Henga wetland.

Helicopter treatment

The weather conditions were ideal on Wednesday 22 April, and helicopter treatment was successfully completed following the helicopter treatment plan (a copy of which was sent in my previous email). MPI would like to acknowledge the property owner that allowed us to use their land as a base to launch the helicopter. This enabled us to ensure undisrupted traffic on the road.

The site officer from AsureQuality, Don Hammond, as expert for helicopter operations and myself went on a helicopter survey with the pilot prior to treatment occurring. This was helpful for surveying the results of the ground based treatment that occurred on March 25th and April 1st in the eastern area of the wetland and for identifying other areas where a closer look is necessary to be sure that salvinia is absent.

The ground based treatment was very successful in knocking back salvinia. However, it was also clearly visible from the air, that due to the thick layered salvinia mats that have developed in areas, some plants have survived, as only the top layers were treated. Follow up targeted treatment is required to ensure all plants are treated. This is what we expected.

We anticipate a similar result in the middle and western area where helicopter treatment was carried out on Wednesday. An update on the efficacy of the helicopter treatment will be made available once results are received from a follow up survey of the area.

Water sampling was conducted again for this treatment and results will be shared when available.

Additional Booms

Over the weekend 18/19 April 2015, two small booms were placed in the far western area of the wetland near the outflow to contain a couple of salvinia outliers.

Next steps

Follow up treatment for areas where thick salvinia mats were present is required

“A detailed survey of the helicopter treated area to see if salvinia is dying and also the small water pockets observed from the air which are not visible from the ground.”

YOUR COMMITTEE

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WRPS Merchandise

Details of the Society's merchandise (publications, pottery mugs and bowls, t-shirts, a Don Binney poster print) will be included in the next newsletter in late August, but in the meantime please refer to WRPS' online shop at www.waitakereranges.org.nz. Images of the new t-shirts and some additional mugs will be posted on the website shortly.

WRPS Newsletter Email List

If you are receiving this newsletter by post but would prefer to receive it by email (as a .pdf file), please let us know (email us at wrps@waitakereranges.org.nz). You will have the added advantage of being able to view the photographs in full and glorious colour.



The Waitakere Ranges Protection
Society Inc.

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