

# Community Restoration Network

## Project Profile: THE KAIPATIKI PROJECT

### Project Location:

North Shore, Auckland, New Zealand

### Project Manager/Coordinator:

Hamish Hopkinson currently manages the project, although a steering committee meets regularly and provides overall governance.

### Project Duration:

Ongoing since 1998

### Ecosystem to be Restored:

Urban stream and adjacent riparian lowland forest

### Area to be Restored:

6.5-km Kaipatiki Creek and 7-hectare Witheford Scenic Reserve

### Primary Cause of Degradation:

Invasive species and urban anthropogenic pressures such as waste dumping

### Project Goal:

To restore the natural ecology of the Kaipatiki Creek and native forest margins.

To raise community awareness of ecology and environmental sustainability.

### Restoration Treatments Used:

Organic weed control via hand pulling, cutting down larger woody weeds, and mulching over ground-cover weeds. Mulching involves using wood-chips to smother weeds and preventing their regrowth, while keeping the soil moist and providing nutrients to the soil as the mulch breaks down.

Revegetation with native tree species, generally early forest species that attract seed-dispersing birds and help expedite natural succession. Seedlings are grown in the project nursery from eco-sourced seeds.

Planting along stream margins to improve habitat and water quality in the creek

Removal of non-native possums, weasels, rats and stoats that prey on native wildlife using humane kill traps

Monthly monitoring of water quality in the creek via samples collected at designated points



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## **Community Involvement:**

In 1995, local resident, Jenny Christianson, began cleaning up the rubbish dumped in the Witheford Scenic Reserve and Kaipatiki Creek and planting trees. Other residents soon became involved, and in 1998 the Kaipatiki Project was established as a not-for-profit community organisation. The Project invites local residents and businesses to become members for an annual donation of between \$10 and \$50. It also organizes weekly and monthly working bees, where residents can help out while learning restoration skills. Since 1999, over 28,000 volunteer hours have been contributed to the project's restoration and education activities.

## **Benefits to Local Ecology:**

Since 1998, over 9,000 eco-sourced plants have been planted in riparian areas along Kaipatiki Creek. Witheford Scenic Reserve is now greatly enhanced ecologically, and is no longer seen as a dumping ground for rubbish. Monitoring of the Kaipatiki Stream over the last 6 years shows that while water quality overall has remained static, clarity and oxygen are improving. This is attributed to effective riparian management, with well-established trees providing shade. Trees have also provided a reliable buffer that stops people from dumping in the stream and reserve.

## **Directions for the Future:**

Community education is an important component of the Kaipatiki Project. By educating local community members about the importance of maintaining native biodiversity on their properties, protecting key native species, and taking an active role in the stewardship of their natural areas, the Project hopes to empower an increasing number of people to take action for the environment.

## **Funding/Support:**

Funding has been provided by a large number of organisations, including: NSCC, Biodiversity Advice Fund, WWF-NZ, ARC, Lottery Grants Board Environment and Heritage, Lion Foundation, Wastewise, Community First Foundation, Tindall Foundation, Birkenhead Charitable Trust, Ministry of Social Development, and NZ Post Community Post. Funding has also come from the Infrastructure Auckland fund for a 5-year riparian planting programme.

## **References/Contacts:**

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