

A network of volunteers prepared to help maintain and enhance the historic and indigenous natural features of the reserve and adjoining slopes.

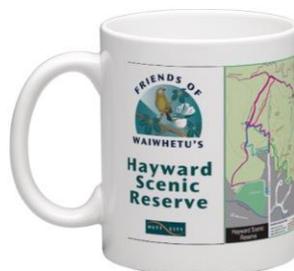
Apprentice Coordinator: Bill Trompetter
 233 Whites Line East
 Waiwhetu
 Phone: 569-6909 (home) 022 3632055 (cell)
 E-mail: b.trompetter@gns.cri.nz

Newsletter Number 12

1. *Russ McStay: 12 years as group coordinator*
2. *Forward plan*
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1. **Russ McStay: 12 years as group coordinator**

- ❖ On 27th April 2017 we had a morning tea to thank Russ McStay for his 12 year contribution to our group as coordinator since 2005. He was doing conservation in the reserve prior to this when Russ spent many years in the reserve trapping possums.
- ❖ He has now moved house and now lives in the new Bob Scott retirement village.
- ❖ Apologies and best wishes were passed on from Colin Sarten, Brian Shearer, Murray McGregor, George Scott and John McKenzie.
- ❖ Janet Lawson (HCC volunteer coordinator) acknowledged Russ and all our contributions to our reserve in Lower Hutt city.
- ❖ We are most grateful to Alex and Barbara Bridger for hosting this very pleasant gathering.
- ❖ Bill (the new apprentice coordinator) presented Russ with a coffee cup decorated with images from the reserve.



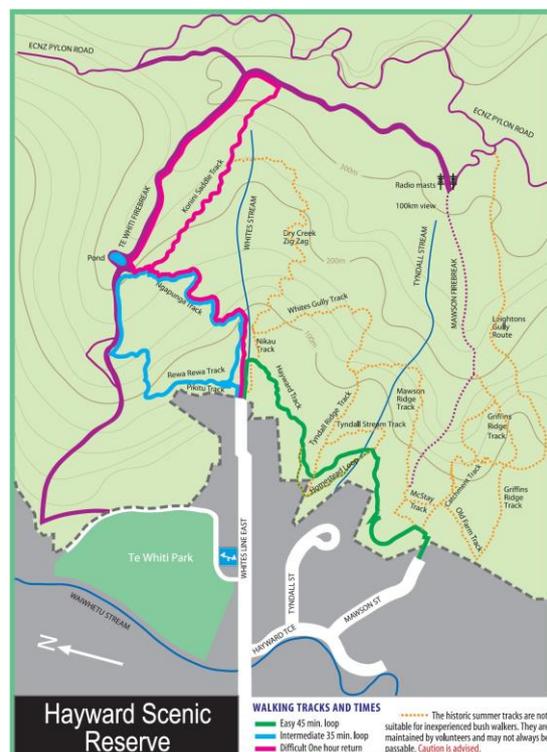
2. Forward plan

- ❖ *Recruit new members:* A stock take of the group membership has revealed that several other members have also retired to other accommodation (although still keen to know what it happening with our group). Hence we are in need of doing a publicity drive to recruit new members from those who have been in the neighbourhood for a while and to new people who have moved into the neighbourhood. The plan is to do this in Spring and will entail.
 - Letter box drop.
 - A series of public weekend working bees (Janet Lawson HCC will help with this).

- ❖ *Pest control continues:* Don Milward is continuing to run bait lines to control rats and mice. Alex Bridger and Bill Trompetter are continuing to spray snake feather from White Line East fire break to Mawson ridge firebreak with support from HCC. GWRC are spraying north of Whites Line East and south of Mawson ridge.



- ❖ *Track maintenance:* I was most pleased to have Hamish Howick volunteer to investigate some of our southern tracks (Mawson firebreak, and the Griffin's Ridge Track, and the Old Farm Track). Barbara and Alex Bridge continue to work on the Mawson Ridge track. While most tracks are still walkable, some need some attention and support to our volunteers and will be the subject of our spring working bees. So look out for those later this year.



3. **GWRC Regional Pest Management Plan:**

- ❖ Don Milward and Bill Trompetter attended a meeting 13 June 2017 at Judgeford Golf Club where GWRC wanted feedback on their Regional Pest Management Plan.
- ❖ We were pleasantly surprised to find out that GWRC are actually doing quite a bit of both animal and plant pest management. For example they have already had 3 spray events up the Te Whiti riser and over to the Whites Line East firebreak. To revisit the Mawson Catchment is also on their to do list.
- ❖ It was great to meet the relevant GWRC personnel and they will advise us when next in our reserve to coordinate spray efforts and discuss spray methods. It was also great to meet up with other volunteer groups from other reserves and hear about their pest eradication efforts in conjunction with GWRC and local city councils. The Pauatahanui reserve group are particularly active getting rid of pest animals (trapping and baiting) and it was good to hear their stories.
- ❖ Don and I encouraged GWRC to do more to raise awareness about their efforts and about the issue that conservation groups like ours are about. ie what is the impact of the pest animal and plants.



4. **Website:**

- ❖ Our website is very kindly hosted and managed by local resident James Cross. His server has died which was why our website is down at the moment. However, James is rebuilding the server and is happy to keep hosting our website.
- ❖ Many thanks James.



5. **Falcon newsletter:**

- ❖ Did you know that Wellington has some of the highest numbers of falcon sightings in NZ and they occur all through the year?
- ❖ Did you know there are two species?
- ❖ The close encounter picture of the falcon here having caught a mouse was taken on 15th april 2017 at the Seaview Motor Camp.
- ❖ More info in the attached newsletter or <http://www.nzfalcon.org.nz/home>
- ❖ Please pass on any encounters/sightings to myself or to the above website (preferably both)



Bill Trompetter
Apprentice Group Co-ordinator