

## Castlecliff Coastal Reserve, Whanganui



Invasive weeds were cleared and another 240 native trees planted on the rear dunes in Whanganui's Castlecliff Coastal Reserve in the winter of 2016 with the support of Trees That Count. The planting started at the end of June with members of the Castlecliff Coast Care Group and students from Wanganui City College.

The reserve covers 25 hectares on the northern side of the Whanganui rivermouth and extends 3 kilometres up the coast. It was originally known as Kai Hau ō Kupe, the place where Kupe ate the wind, so named because he was unable to land there to gather food for several days due to rough conditions. The area forms the southernmost tip of the rohe of Ngā Rauru Kītahi. The reserve offers recreational opportunities for the local people, but the management plan also provides for ecological restoration.

The Coast Care group was set up in 2005 by a former editor of Wellington's Dominion newspaper, Ted Frost, who retired to Castlecliff. Frost was the paper's editor when Robert Muldoon was Prime Minister, and the Dominion, as columnist Karl Du Fresne wrote, "had the misfortune to be the first paper he saw each day, and therefore bore the brunt of his well known antagonism towards the news media."

In his retirement, Frost formed the Coast Care group with a "2020 vision" for the reserve, which a small group of volunteers has continued to implement since his death in 2010. In the 21 years since the group's formation, and with 2020 now only four years away, they have planted several thousand trees on the rear dunes.

Current co-ordinator Graham Pearson, formerly of Massey University, says the group's key focus now is on community involvement and environmental education. They organise community planting days, educational visits from local schools and kura, and take part in the annual Seaweek in the reserve. A group of IDEA services clients comes to the reserve every second Wednesday for planting or mulching.



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## De La Salle College, Mangere



It was the shortest day of the year, and the warmest on record for the date, when members of De La Salle College's Enviro-Council planted 400 native trees and 200 other native plants on June 21 2016 beside a stream that runs along the school's border. It was a fitting reminder that taking action on climate change, including tree planting, is a race against time.

The Year 9 boys will provide ongoing leadership for the project, called Our Stream, Our Taonga, in years to come. The first stage, completed in 2015, has already earned them an Enviroschools award. Further plans include a rongoa garden of Māori medicinal plants, a Pasifika garden with plants familiar to the cultures of the mainly Pasifika students at the school, an outside teaching space - and planting more native trees, as part of a national tree planting initiative to reduce the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere that cause climate change.

Launched last year, Our Stream, Our Taonga comes under the college's Science Faculty and realises a long-time dream of Faculty Head Kane Raukura. Help and support has come from Auckland Council's Wai Care, Te Ngāhere and Education for Sustainability programmes, and the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Community Board. This year's trees were provided by Trees That Count.

The stream itself is of cultural significance, being on the boundary between the rohe of the Tainui tribe to the south, and the Ngāti Whātua tribe to the north.



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## Duck Creek, Mahurangi



Shelley Trotter's family have lived in the Duck Creek sub-catchment area of the Mahurangi River, north of Auckland, for five generations. It has been home to Shelley for as long as she can remember.

In the early 1970s, her father began fencing off riparian areas of the creek and from 1991 Shelley carried on his efforts. The neighbouring Solway Deer Farm was added in 1995 and a programme of "extensive fencing and planting" continued. "I worked out I was more of a tree planter than tree harvester" says Shelley. "I couldn't cut the trees down, they were just too pretty". The local council was meanwhile implementing the Mahurangi Action Plan - a 20 year strategy to restore the Mahurangi River and harbour (including addressing the high levels of sediment accumulation resulting from over a hundred years of pastoral farming), and to preserve the uniqueness of the landscape, location and history. Mahurangi Action, a community group led by local enthusiast and longstanding editor of the Mahurangi Magazine, Cimino Cole, was working with the council, local landowners, interest groups and schools, to promote various initiatives to demonstrate options for riparian retirement and planting using native plants.

Shelley took to the initiative like a ... duck to water. In the early days she planted a large variety of trees but, in line with the Plan, she narrowed her focus to plant only natives. Tens of thousands of natives in fact, resulting in a Fish and Game New Zealand Award for Excellence in Riparian Management in 2010 and a NZ Farm Forestry Association award in 2012.

Shelley's efforts were so prolific that she ran out of riparian areas on her own land and had to move on to her Uncle's. "I fenced and planted my Uncle's place, and, when the fence went in, I asked if we could leave room for a walkway. Thus, the Mahurangi Farm Forest Trail was born".

The Forest Trail represents a key initiative within the Mahurangi Action Plan, and aims to improve water quality and provide corridors of indigenous biodiversity through lining waterways with native trees. Also of importance is the role the Trail has in successfully retiring farmland into areas for native plants to flourish. The Trail itself runs alongside Duck Creek and the vision is eventually to connect the townships of Warkworth and Matakana.

Trees That Count funded the planting of 5,000 locally sourced native trees in 2016, including totara, kahikatea, manuka, kanuka, and tarata. They were planted in an area that runs alongside Duck Creek and is not only part of the Mahurangi Farm Forest Trail but also a number of other walking tracks. Shelley prepared the area by clearing the ground and erecting new deer fencing, while farm labourer Richard took care of getting the natives into the ground throughout August.

There is strong community interest in the Mahurangi district, with several large projects being run by Mahurangi Action in conjunction with Auckland Council and other interest groups such as Tane's Trees Trust, Trees for Survival and the local branch of the NZ Farm Forestry Association. All of these projects are working towards the common goal of reducing erosion and sediment input into the Mahurangi Harbour, achieved mostly by planting natives and fencing waterways to keep livestock out.



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## Hereweka Harbour Cone, Otago Peninsula



**H**ereweka, or Harbour Cone, is a major cultural landmark and landform feature of the Otago Peninsula. It was part of the much larger Dunedin volcano that was approximately 1000 metres high and began erupting around 16 million years ago in three main phases. The Dunedin City area, Otago Peninsula and Otago Harbour were all part of it. The sea has drowned its lower slopes. The name Hereweka (literally 'catch weka') refers to its traditional role as a food source for Māori.

The 320 hectare Hereweka Block was purchased by the Dunedin City Council in 2008 and its management was transferred to the Hereweka Harbour Cone Trust in May 2015. The area attracts significant numbers of visitors enjoying the long views across wide valleys, the peninsula and open sea, the physical presence of a rich cultural landscape, and an extensive network of tracks connecting local settlements.

Among the most significant values are the two main freshwater catchments at Smiths Creek and Stewarts Creek, which hold small populations of native fish. The Smiths Creek area has been fenced from the remaining farm and a small group of volunteers have been replanting the area slowly as resources become available.

In 2016, Trees That Count funded the planting of 2,500 kanuka and other mixed native species on one of the steep slopes above the Smiths Creek catchment. Among those helping with the planting were Trust members and volunteers and the Otago Campus Greens. The planting will complement the other catchment work done in this area by local groups and the Broad Bay School.



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## Kahuterawa Stream, Manawatū



**H**orizons Regional Council, Massey University, the New Zealand Defence Force and Rangitāne have been working together since 2013 on an 11 year restoration plan for the lower reaches of the Kahuterawa Stream. The plan includes the planting of 40,000 native plants.

The 4.2 kilometre stretch covers a total of 72 ha and marks the boundaries of Massey University and Linton Military Camp. The plan is to protect 10 ha of that space and recreate the lost valley eco-system with eco-sourced native plants. It has been identified as a significant area for water quality and biodiversity as it meanders through the Kahuterawa Valley before flowing into the Manawatū River.

In 2016, Trees That Count funded the planting of 10,825 native trees, including kānuka, kōwhai, ribbonwood, and māhoe. This doubled the number of trees planted the previous year.

Planting took place over a number of planting days with volunteer groups such as the Kahuterawa Bush Care Group and the CT Keeble Memorial Trust supplementing work done by contractors.

The plan for the area goes beyond revegetation and restoration. Massey University wants to use the site as an outdoor educational and research tool, while the Palmerston North City Council has expressed interest due to a proposed walkway / cycleway between the city and the army camp at Linton.

Connecting and protecting the existing vegetation will improve functioning and habitat, which will be reflected in improved water quality, aquatic life and bird life. Coupled with biodiversity improvements, the planting will provide channel stability, educational opportunities and improved views of the area.



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## Kani Rangi Park, Murupara



**E**arly in the morning on the Wednesday before Arbor Day 2016, Ngāti Manawa kaumātua and kuia gathered at Kani Rangi Park in Murupara to bless the site of a major planting programme. The programme was initiated by their iwi on land restored to them as part of the cultural redress in a 2011 Treaty settlement with the Crown. They planted a memorial grove of totara in honour of war veterans from their iwi, including Staff Sergeant Kani Rangitauira, after whom the park is named. He received a Military Medal for single-handedly taking 18 German soldiers prisoner in Italy towards the end of World War II.

With the combined efforts of trainees from Te Roopu Manaaki (a group established to develop the skills to look after the park) and children from Murupara Area School and Murupara College, a total of four thousand native trees were planted that morning and on subsequent days.

The park includes the confluence of two streams and the Rangitaiki River, Ngāti Manawa's tipuna awa, a famed habitat for eels and other native species and of Murupara, the local taniwha. The vision of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Manawa is to restore the 10 hectare reserve to a native podocarp/hardwood high forest for biodiversity, cultural and recreational values, and in so doing contribute to a national movement to plant more native trees to mitigate climate change.

The Runanga has worked with Landscape Architect Richard Hart to produce a development plan for the park. Partners in the project include Te Roopu Manaaki, local schools, Environment Bay of Plenty, Whakatāne District Council, Kaingaroa Timberlands Ltd, the Department of Conservation, the NZ Transport Agency and the Fish and Game Council. The Ngā Whenua Rāhui Fund has contributed to cultural training and upskilling. Two and a half thousand of the four thousand trees for the first stage of the planting were funded by Trees That Count.

In the days following the site blessing and the initial plantings, members of Te Roopu Manaaki work training scheme planted a further 2000 seedlings. The remainder were planted on a community planting day in June, including school children, volunteer fire fighters and other community members, finishing at lunchtime with speeches, a blessing and a barbecue.



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## Kia Ora Station and Te Rimu Station, Ruatoria



These two farms in the Ruatoria district have areas protected by a Ngā Whenua Rāhui covenant, a special form of covenant under the Reserves Act to protect biodiversity on Māori-owned land. Trees That Count funded the planting of 1,616 trees in the two reserves in July 2016. The plantings were organised by DOC ranger Graeme Atkins. Graeme was recognised by Project Crimson in 2015 for having planted over 14,000 pohutukawa and rata trees on the East Coast with the support of local communities.

Kia Ora Station is 10 minutes from the township of Ruatoria. The reserved area consists of a small forest remnant (15ha) surrounded by pasture. It is located on a fertile alluvial terrace in the lower reaches of the Tapuaeroa River. The forest contains tall kāhikatea, matai, totara and pukatea emerging over a canopy of tāwa and titoki. Other species present include miro, pigeonwood, putaputaweta, rewarewa, nīkau and māhoe. It is visited by schools, community groups, the polytech, wananga and marae groups for bush walks and overnight camps. These can include talks on ecology, rongoa or Māori medicine, plant identification and pest and weed control by Graeme and other DOC staff. Because of its handy location to Ruatoria and the flat terrain that it grows on, the forest is highly valued by the local community.

It has been fenced for 15 years which has led to a spectacular recovery of the understory. Despite this, there are still large areas of thick, rank grass inside the reserve that have so far resisted the natural regeneration that has occurred under the native canopy. This is the area that was planted in July 2016 with support from Trees That Count and the assistance of local school children.

The reserve on Te Rimu Station is a 20 ha coastal forest remnant consisting of mature pohutukawa, pūriri, tūwa, kohekohe, ngaio, cabbage tree, mānuka, kānuka, tauhinu, wharariki and taupata. Like the reserve on Kia Ora Station, it has many areas of rank grass as well as blackberry. These were sprayed before planting took place in July. Trees that Count funded the trees, which were planted with the help of local Polytech students.

Graeme Atkins hopes to extend the planting programme to other farms that have Ngā Whenua Rāhui covenants on the East Coast in years to come.

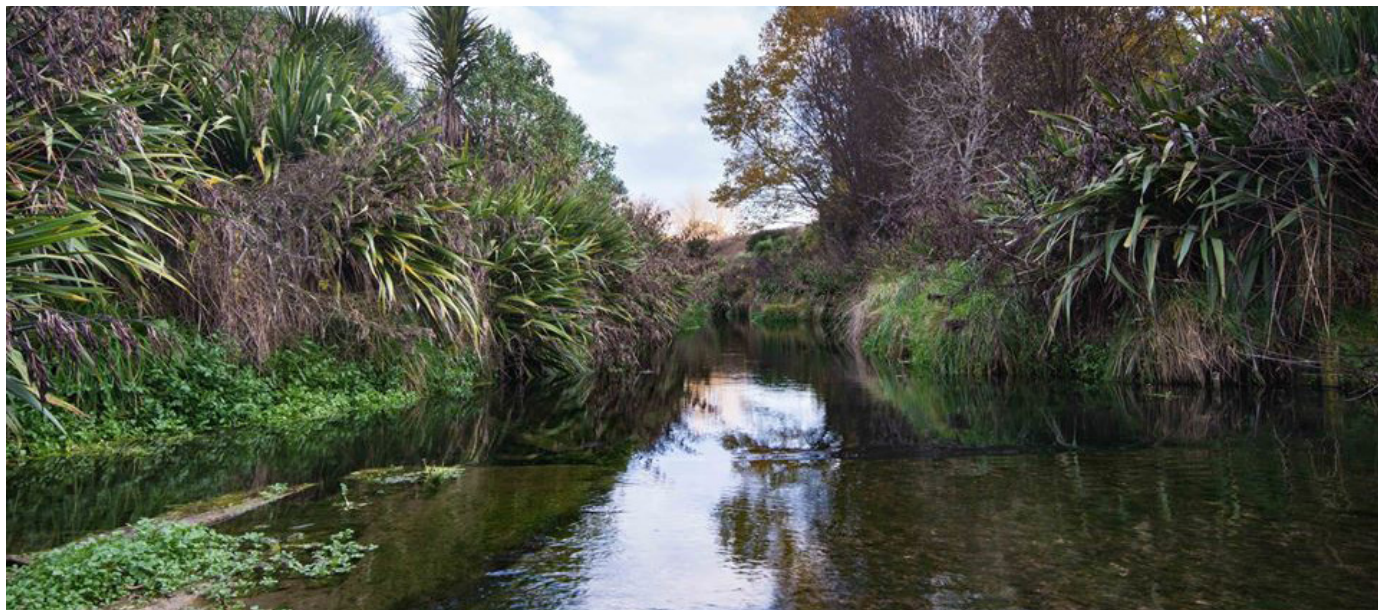


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## Maraetotara River, Hawke's Bay



The Maraetotara River in Hawkes Bay received a major makeover in 2016, as part of the Hawke's Bay's Cape to City project, working in conjunction with Hohepa Homes, local community groups, marae, schools and the Maraetotara Tree Trust. Trees that Count provided the funding to plant 5000 locally sourced native trees, including kowhai, cabbage, kanuka and manuka, as part of the project.

The Cape to City ecological restoration project is a partnership between Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HRBC), DOC, Cape Sanctuary, Landcare Research, iwi, and various landowners and businesses.

The five year project envisions a mostly restored Maraetotara River; a 43 km bird corridor which connects the 'footprint' of Havelock North, Cape Kidnappers, Waimarama and Kahuranaki. The Maraetotara is the only river system connecting the city and the cape in the region. This long term restoration effort has seen Cape to City plant 50,000 natives in the area this year, helping to restore the river, and create a native sanctuary that allows plants and bird life to flourish.

For their part, the Maraetotara Tree Trust annually plants around 4500 native trees, but as a result of partnering with HBRC and locals the number will increase to at least 13,000 in 2016.

A local contractor was employed to plant the 5000 native trees. Hetty McLennan, HBRC Land Management Advisor and Cape to City Habitat Workstream Lead, says this will go a long way to "getting the habitat sorted".

On a broader level McLennan wants to see "native species thrive where we live, work and play". This means minimising predator numbers, maintaining linkages in green corridors of the area, and improving water quality.

Ultimately, the vision is to create a native sanctuary to allow reintroduction of birds to the wetlands areas of the river. Robin and tomtit have already been reintroduced and the plans have been laid for kiwi and whio (blue ducks) to join them in the near future, so "providing a suitable habitat is crucial".



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## Mount Huruiki, Northland



**M**ount Huruiki is the highest point on the eastern coast of Northland. It offers a commanding view seawards over Whangaruru, Helena and Mimiwhangata Bays and the Poor Knights Islands, and westward towards the Kaipara Harbour. It forms the easternmost edge of the Kaipara catchment and water that falls on the mountain flows almost coast to coast across Northland. The land below at Helena Bay has been bought by Russian steel billionaire Alexander Abramov as a private retreat. Within easy sight is the Puhipuhi plateau, where Evolution Mining is controversially exploring for gold and silver. On the lower slopes there once grew part of the largest kauri forest in Northland, long since logged and burned.

Huruiki is of great cultural significance to the Ngāpuhi hapū, Ngāti Hau and Ngāti Wai. Until 1961, it formed part of land held under Māori title by shareholders of Ngāti Hau. That year the land was transferred to general title and sold, like in so many other cases, to pay arrears of council rates. It was bought and farmed as Huruiki Station by a Pākehā farmer.

The land has twice been on the market since then. Both times, Brandon Edwards, a descendant of the original owners, whose family had lived on the land for generations, sought to buy it back.

The second time, fifty years after the original alienation, he succeeded, having meanwhile pursued a career as an investment banker in Hong Kong and London. He and his marketing executive wife Kiri, also from the North, moved back home with their three children to run it.

Brandon and Kiri's vision is to develop the 350 ha property into a sustainable farm and regenerated native bush. At present it is about 65 per cent pasture, 35 per cent native. They aim to make this 50/50, and they have earmarked 70 ha for restoration. For them, kaitiakitanga is the top priority.

A total of 8000 trees were planted on three hectares on the mountain in June-July 2016, with 3000 sourced from the Reconnecting Northland programme and Ngāti Hau's Akerama marae nursery and 5000 provided by Trees That Count.

Brandon and Kiri have reopened the land and the mountain to their Ngāti Hau whānau, and the planting was done together with the people from Akerama and Whakapara marae. Every month Whakapara has a two day noho wānanga on language and culture, and the planting provided an opportunity for participants to take part in the planting and hear stories about the area from kaumātua Te Raa Nehua. Children from Whangaruru Primary School have also made the journey up the mountain to learn about its history and to see the new beehives that will be sustained by mānuka and other native trees.



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## Mt Kakepuku, Waipa



**3** 000 native trees were planted on Mount Kakepuku, 7 km south of Te Awamutu, with funding from Trees that Count in 2016. The plantings were on an area of recently acquired land (4.9ha) gifted by Jan and Laurie Hoverd, two local conservationists who have been very active in the district. Jan and Laurie helped to begin efforts to restore the mountain in the 1990s, and wanted the site to become part of the larger reserve so that hopefully one day it could be restored and provide habitat for native birds.

The site is on a very steep part of the mountain adjoining the reserve administered by Waipa District Council and the Department of Conservation. It was fenced and aurally sprayed for gorse and barberry before planting. Some parts of the site need further weed control before planting, but it is planned that eventually the site will have a variety of native species, recruitment of other native species will occur and weed control will be minimal.

Puniu River Care, a local marae based trust provided the plants from their nursery and a group from the marae did the planting of 2000 plants in June and 500 in September. Planners from Waipa District Council also planted 500 plants as part of a community service day. The majority of the trees planted were manuka and kanuka, especially around the top of the site at the ridgeline, and more sensitive species were planted towards the bottom of the gully, including *Coprosma robusta* and *Hebe stricta*.



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## Nga Uru Ora, Pataua North, Northland



**N**ga Uru Ora is Dr John Craig and Dr Anne Stewart's private ecological restoration site at Pataua North, a small coastal settlement east of Whangarei. The site was originally a small part of a 280ha run-down cattle farm that runs from the foredunes of Pataua North to the hill country skyline. The existing 9ha of forest on their 32ha property was totally eaten out and full of possums. The 23ha of pasture were heavily grazed and there was no standing water. The flats had deep drains. Most of the 32ha was fenced in 2004 to keep stock out.

John & Anne have a long history in conservation and restoration. Anne was a former conservation scientist with the Department of Conservation and also worked as a scientist in horticulture. John was an ecology academic (Professor, University of Auckland) who initiated the restoration of Tiritiri Matangi Island and other public areas. They took over the management of the full 280ha cattle farm and for eleven years from 2004 led the conversion of the property into a wildlife refuge. They developed their 32ha as part of the larger restoration and focussed solely on that area in 2016.

Planting areas as well as restoring and creating wetlands began in 2004 as did possum and predator control. The outcome has been spectacular and the area now boasts a large bird list including 23 species with some form of threat or at risk designation.

John & Anne built a house in 2013 on what had once been a bare paddock. Their house is fully self-contained with solar electricity. They have put in six ponds, the largest being over 1.2ha in size. Every year pateke or brown teal raise young in the ponds near their house. They also see bittern, fernbird, tui, kukupa, fantail, silvereye, grey warbler, all the duck species except blue duck, all the shag species, black swan and dabchicks. They have planted over 100,000 trees, shrubs and flax and this year's planting of 3,000 native trees provided by Trees That Count fills the gap between one of the large plantings and the old forest which after 11 years has a thick understorey. The planting will form an important corridor between habitats.



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## North West Wildlink, Auckland



**W**ith spring 2016 just around the corner, there was no better time to get some native trees in the ground in New Zealand's largest city.

Founded in 1995, The Gecko NZ Trust is an environmental organisation based in Auckland which aims to help communities restore the habitat and biodiversity in shared community landscapes. They work alongside many communities in the Auckland region, engaging them to achieve biodiversity outcomes.

One of their main efforts is the North West Wildlink project. Alongside partners Auckland University and Auckland Council, the project seeks to create a pest and weed free native habitat in the corridor between the islands in the Hauraki Gulf and the Waitakere ranges. The project is divided into three parts; Wildlink Wonders (sites of high biodiversity), Linking Sites (native corridors between the Wonders), and Matrix Efforts (activities such as negation of pests and weeds or enhancement of pollen to improve wildlife habitats).

The major barrier to achieving their aims is the cost of plants, says Gecko General Manager Jo Davies. "We would love to plant all the time, but we are limited by what we can afford and what sites we can prepare in time".

In 2016, Trees That Count funded the planting and maintenance of 5000 locally sourced, native trees, including kanuka, mahoe and red mapou.

Sunday 28 August was the day on which the majority of the trees were put into the ground. Local community members were welcomed at Dairy Flat Community Hall and assisted in planting the natives along the Blackbridge and Horseshoe bush road landscapes. These connect primarily to the south east where the major North West Wildlink connections are, up towards Whangaparaoa, and south west to Paremoremo, Riverhead and the Waitakere ranges.

The community has identified the opportunity to build on and expand these areas of native bush, as well as enhance and strengthen ecosystem structures such as bush edges already present. The objective was to extend the existing Wildlink Wonders in the area, create some new Linkages between them and, with the remaining trees, plant in urban areas for additional habitats.

Davies said events like the planting day stimulate widespread interest. "It was fantastic. Days like this really incentivise the communities we work with. Having trees available for this specific project really lifts morale. It has had an instant effect and was very well-received".



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## Punakaiki, West Coast



The Punakaiki Coastal Restoration Project (PCRP) covers 75 hectares of coastal land on the Barrytown Flats, 4km south of Punakaiki and bordering the Tasman sea to the west and Paparoa National Park to the east. The project is a partnership between Conservation Volunteers NZ (CVNZ), Department of Conservation, Rio Tinto mining and more recently Lincoln University. Conservation Volunteers NZ take the lead role in onsite project delivery and volunteer management.

The objectives of the project are to restore the biodiversity of the site through revegetating the previously cleared land with native plants; to protect the surrounding habitat of the Westland Petrel which has its only nesting sites located in the hills behind the site; to educate and create awareness of environmental issues associated with the site; to engage and build the capacity of local community groups on the site; and to provide a lasting community legacy for the benefit of future generations.

In its first seven years, the project has planted over 150,000 trees covering 27 acres, using over 8,000 volunteer days, predominantly by international visitors. Local schools, the Tai Poutini Polytech and community groups have also helped. The project has an onsite nursery with a capacity of around 20,000 plants a year.

In 2016, Trees That Count funded the planting of 5,000 trees on the site with the help of international volunteers, school groups and local volunteers supervised by CVNZ staff.



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## Quail Island, Lyttleton



If you had set foot on Quail Island near Lyttleton in Canterbury thirty years ago, you would have been greeted by what a DOC ranger describes as “a dusty dry grassland overrun with pests and wasps”. The site, once steeped in historical and environmental significance, had been cast aside as unused farmland.

Enter the Quail Island Ecological Restoration Trust. The Trust, made up of experienced representatives from a variety of backgrounds, drafted an ambitious 20 year plan to ultimately recreate a functional example of Canterbury’s ecosystem by restoring a 24ha native forest to Quail Island. 2016 was the 14th year of the plan’s implementation.

The Trust has successfully eradicated all pests from the Island, with the exception of mice, and planted 86,588 trees and shrubs to date.

In 2016 Trees That Count enabled the Trust to plant 2990 locally sourced native trees, including kanuka, kohuhu, lemonwood and manuka. The island has a special significance, being one of only two islands capable of supporting regional indigenous flora and fauna. It is also on the flightpath of native birds on their way to Banks Peninsula, providing a suitable home. The island is used for educational purposes, be it for pre-schoolers from Diamond Harbour Playcentre, students from Lincoln, Canterbury and Florida Universities, or local children from the Gifted Children Association and Girl Guides.

Public engagement and volunteer work is crucial to the restoration effort. Locals converge on the island every weekend in August to assist with planting, while fortnightly volunteers visit to help with weed and pest control. Local groups, such as Kiwi Conservation, Cathedral College, Sunrise

Rotary, and the Peninsula Tramping Club, have assisted the two Trust workers on the island to plant the trees provided by Trees That Count. Local firms, Fulton Hogan and Chapman Tripp, provided staff to support their efforts.

The fruits of their labour are already being realised with visitor numbers increasing and many positive comments on the island’s restored appearance being made. Several species of native birds, including the native woodpigeon and bellbird, have already returned. The endangered White-flipper Penguin will also be reintroduced as the island is perfect for protection from the threat of mainland predators, such as dogs.

Trust Administrator Barbara Price believes the island provides a unique opportunity for visitors. “They can come and walk on Quail Island and actually see the progress that is being made. I’ve had people call it ‘the jewel of the harbour’ now that its greenness can be seen from Lyttleton”.

“The funding from Trees That Count has been a God-send” says Price. “It’s been tough to get funding for these types of projects after the earthquake... we got to the point of considering not planting for a year. It has been an enormous help”.



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## Spicer Forest, Wellington



**L**ocal school children helped to plant another 5,000 native trees in Wellington's Spicer Forest in June 2016 as part of the national Arbor Day programme.

The 180 children came from four neighbouring schools – Porirua, Hampton Hills and Greenacres Primary Schools and Tawa Intermediate. The planting was part of a multipurpose project jointly organised by the Wellington and Porirua City Councils and the Department of Conservation with support from Trees That Count.

The forest is part of three parcels of land managed by the two councils and DOC. Included in the area are a pine forest, a native botanical park, the Colonial Knob reserve, a section of the Te Araroa national walkway and other walking, running and cycle tracks. The joint vision for the area is a major recreational park which provides opportunities for walking, running, biking and horse-riding and connects with Wellington's Outer Green Belt.

Apart from the school children and staff from the two councils and DOC, there were helpers from the Mana Cycling Group, Friends of the Tawa Bush Reserve, and Woodridge Planters.

Project Crimson Trustee "the Bugman", Ruud Kleinpaste, provided some on-site environmental education for the kids, introducing his famous Wetas.

The tree planting contributed not only to the vision of a major recreational park with enhanced native bush for walkers, runners, cyclists and horse-riders, but also to the rehabilitation of Porirua Harbour through soil stabilisation to reduce sediment run-off, and to the national effort to plant more native trees to mitigate climate change.

Wellington City Council is a supporting partner of Trees That Count. The Council has a vision of planting two million trees by 2020. Since 1996 they have already planted 1.4 million native trees.



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## Te Miro, Waikato



Another 7500 native trees were planted on Cassie's Farm in Te Miro, near Cambridge in June 2016, as part of a long term conservation vision for the property. Landowners Trisha Wren and Ian Brennan are committed conservationists, and before moving to the farm in 2005 they lived on land outside Edinburgh where they planted two and a half hectares of mixed woodland on degraded land.

On their 87 ha dairy support block they run dairy grazers, operate a bed and breakfast ("The Woolshed"), and Trisha's Equine Energy Work business. But their dream is "to reverse the damage that has been done to this land over the past 100 years." They are gradually fencing off, protecting, and replanting with natives all seven of the streams that start on the farm, and all of the steep gullies that they say should probably never have been cleared of native bush in the first place, as well as creating shelter and fodder belts on each paddock.

They began revegetation planting in 2007 with the help of volunteers who were working on the nearby Maungatautari ecological island project. Since 2009 they have done most of the fencing, planting and weeding themselves, planting over 14,000 native trees. The land has been identified by the Waipā District Council as a high priority site for the establishment of biodiversity corridors across the intensively farmed eastern

Waikato region. The Waikato Regional Council has assisted them in the ongoing fencing work. They have so far fenced and covenanted 16 hectares of forest remnants with the Queen Elizabeth II Trust.

Their major project for 2016 was to establish a diverse three hectare forest dominated by totara on retired steep pastoral hill country to reduce erosion, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity. In so doing they will also be contributing to the national project to plant native trees to combat climate change. The trees for the project were provided by Trees That Count.

Planting took place over four days in June 2016, involving six contract planters, landowners, local dairy farmers and Trees That Count. With 7.00 am starts, two thousand trees were planted each day. Besides tōtara, tree species included rimu, kauri, miro, maire, kāhikatea and rewarewa, along with shrub hardwoods mānuka, kānuka, tarata, five finger, wineberry, lacebark, ribbonwood, māhoe and ti kouka.



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## Tuhaitara Coastal Park, Canterbury



Just hours after the signing of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in New York in April 2016, busloads of volunteers from Christchurch's Student Volunteer Army descended on the Tuhaitara Coastal Park just north of Christchurch to plant 2000 kāhikatea, matai and tōtara trees as the first step in a five year programme to establish a podocarp forest in the park.

This was most likely the first tree planting project in the world to take place following the signing of the agreement, and was specifically responding to its call for communities as well as governments to take action on climate change. It was the first 2000 trees in the ground funded by Tress That Count.

The planting was organised by Te Kōhaka o Tūhaitara Trust, which manages the park, covering some 575 hectares along a 10.5 kilometre stretch of coastline from the Waimakariri river mouth to the township of Waikuku. The park was established as an outcome of the Ngāi Tahu Settlement with the Crown, with the lands being gifted by Ngāi Tahu to the people of New Zealand. There are six trustees – three appointed by the Waimakariri District Council and three appointed by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

The Trust has a 200 year vision for the restoration of the park, which includes areas of major ecological and cultural significance and offers extensive educational and recreational opportunities. Local schools and organisations have their own "bionodes".

Around 150 students and staff from the University of Canterbury took part in the planting. The Student Volunteer Army, which has its origins in the immediate aftermath of the Canterbury earthquakes, came prepared with spades and shovels, gloves, refreshments and a barbecue tent. Volunteers

had responded to a social media campaign initiated by SVA this year in conjunction with the NZ Returned Services Association called "Serve for New Zealand" inviting people to register to contribute volunteer time to serve the community in association with ANZAC Day. They want to extend the concept to other days of national significance, including, for example, Parihaka Day and Women's Suffrage Day.

The international significance of the signing of the Paris Agreement, with its unprecedented level of support from nations around the world, was reflected in the diversity of the people involved in the planting at Tuhaitara, including members of the local runanga and community, kiwi students and university staff from a diverse range of backgrounds, and members of the international student community at the University of Canterbury.

Trust General Manager Greg Byrnes told the group that with the Student Volunteer Army, Earth Day, Anzac Day, the signing of the Paris Agreement, the start of Trees That Count, and the Trust's 200 year vision, all the stars were in alignment that morning.

The plan is to plant an additional 2000 trees per year at the site for the next five years.



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