

Hawksbury Lagoon update July 2018

I often take a walk around the causeways on the Lagoon, as do many others, mostly I see work still to be completed.

However, I can also see that the plantings we did at the Stewart Street and Inverary Street entrances, have become quite established. In particular at Inverary Street there is now a riparian margin all along the large grassed area. If you remember we removed three large willows and planted a number of ribbonwoods and kowhais to replace them. We have recently had the fences removed around two of the plantings as they are now strong enough to survive. The hope was that they would eventually provide sheltered areas for people to picnic and enjoy.

The old landfill site, where many locals assisted with the planting, still struggles in the poor soils, but the cabbage trees, flaxes and toi tois are generally coping well with the difficult conditions. We have been back to this area several times since the original planting to clear around the shrubs/trees and to add more, but there is still more to be done here.

The other main area we have been focusing on in recent years is the old pine plantation next to the railway line at the end of Dame Street. After the pine trees were removed we planted a range of natives, again with varying degrees of success. But quite a number are forging ahead and will provide protection for future plantings. We eventually hope to include a path with a seat at the end, another place to observe the spoonbills.

We have been delighted to see two areas of rushes we planted along the water's edge are doing really well. We have had lots of losses and it was hard to know what the problem was. Water level too high, salinity of the water or maybe wrong time of the year. We need to extend this type of planting because it helps in removing nutrients and sediment thus improving water quality as well as providing future nesting/hiding places for birds and their young.

We are now beginning to turn our attention to the area over the bridge, looking towards Edinburgh Street. Some totaras were planted here for the millennium and we have since added kowhais. Access to add permanent mulch to the extended path is a problem yet to be overcome, but the location again provides a different view of the lagoon. Particularly interesting when the cygnets are learning to fly.

Our thanks to DOC for mowing the main paths.

Shirley McKewen
Chair