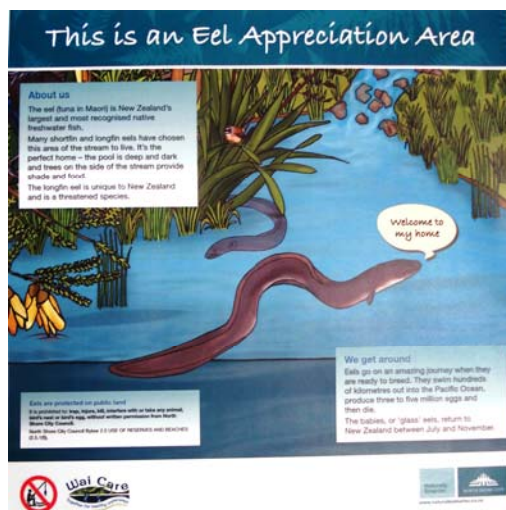


NORTH SHORE UPDATE JUNE 2010

Kia ora Wai Carers. Earlier this year I decided that this year would be all about eels. A number of factors contributed to this decision but an important driver was when I received a call from a member of the public, Jock Orbell, who was concerned about the safety of the eels in the stream next to his house. Jock lives next to Brookfield Reserve in Albany and an arm of the Oteha Valley Stream wends its way through the area. It's a lovely stream dotted with deep pools along its tree-lined course providing cool and shady habitat for both longfin and shortfin eels. Jock and other members of the local community frequent the pool next to Jock's house to feed the eels, a ritual repeated by countless other people and communities across this country today and in many years gone by.

Jock was very perturbed by an unpleasant turn of events at this normally-idyllic streamside spot. He was alerted to a grisly sight by the piercing screams of a neighbour's granddaughter who had skipped down to the stream to feed the eels – about a dozen physically damaged and very dead eels floating on the surface of the water in the pool. Remnants of basic fishing equipment littered the streamside. It's not unusual for eels to be fished out of streams, but it is an unusual and terrible act to fish creatures out of the water to sadistically torture them and throw them back in.



So Jock was put in touch with me. I was horrified by his story and very interested to hear of this community who so obviously value the eels in the stream. Jock wanted to do something to protect these eels – not just so that the community could continue to enjoy the experience of feeding them but also to honour the intrinsic right for these creatures to simply be safe in their chosen home. Naturally I was keen to help! Jock was keen for a 'no fishing' sign (there is a NSCC bylaw that protects all animals from harm). I was keen to share the amazing story of the eel to an already-interested public. So we developed a riff on both of these themes (at left, apologies for the quality, it is a photo of a print-out!).

I'd love to see more of these signs across the region! It is my vision that our freshwater fish become more recognised in this country – they have fascinating stories to tell and have had to put up with a considerable amount of adverse pressure on their habitat and their personal safety.

In particular, the eel is one of our unsung natural icons. What New Zealander doesn't have a memory of tossing white bread to eels or squealing at the imagined brush of their slippery skin against their own while swimming in a river? The longfin eel is wholly ours, nowhere else does it exist, and it is magnificent. It is also now a threatened species; the numbers of juveniles arriving at our streams from where they spawn has dropped 75%. It has no level of protection from commercial fishing and I was very saddened to see many longfins in a tank at the Auckland Fish Markets the other day.

Forest and Bird are currently running a campaign to call for the longfin eel to be protected. Check it out online and sign their online petition: <http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/saving-our-environment/freshwater-/lifeline-longfins>

Happy reading!

Megan

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1. Stream of the Month

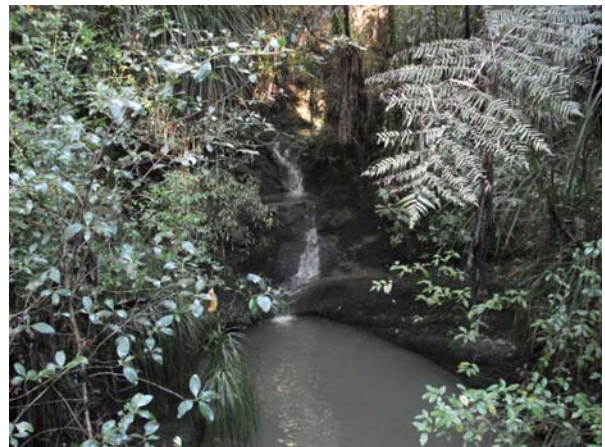
Waiurutoa Stream

The Waiurutoa Stream is 4.6 kilometres long with a contributing catchment of approximately 151 hectares. The catchment contains a significant area of bush reserve (Tui Glen Road Reserve, Kauri Glen Scenic Reserve, Cecil Eady Bush, and Turner Reserve) which encompasses almost the entire stream course. Kauri Glen Scenic Reserve has been a reserve since 1907. Although milled for kauri, some large trees of 200 to 300 years in age remain.

Northcote College have been monitoring this stream in earnest since 2006. The latest macroinvertebrate sampling indicated a stream of high to moderate quality with discoveries including spotty stonefly, woody-cased caddisfly, koura and dragonfly.

The usual fishy suspects populate this stream – longfin and shortfin eels, common bully, banded kokopu are numerous in the upper channels and inanga are numerous in the lower reaches. Local fish monitoring aficionado Kit Hustler is gearing up to explore this stream's fish life soon, extending the thorough work he has carried out in the contiguous Little Shoal Bay catchment, so there is high potential for more species to be uncovered.

<http://www.northshorecity.govt.nz/Services/Environment/StreamsHarbourLake/Pages/WaiurutoaStreamAssessment.aspx>



2. News

Details for the historic 2010 elections in Auckland

Triennial elections for elected members of the new Auckland Council's governing body and local boards are to be conducted, by postal vote, on Saturday 9 October 2010.

The elections will be conducted under the provisions of the Local Electoral Act 2001, the Local Electoral Regulations 2001, the Local Government (Tamaki Makaurau Reorganisation) Act 2009 and the Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009.

<http://www.northshorecity.govt.nz/YourCouncil/Elections/Elections2010/Pages/default.aspx>

New Environmental Protection Authority announced

The Government has announced the establishment of a new stand-alone Environmental Protection Authority to perform environmental regulatory functions.

Minister for the Environment Nick Smith said "New Zealand needs a strong, independent regulatory authority to ensure the protection of our environment at a national level. This reform is about bringing under one roof a wide range of environmental regulatory functions and providing stronger national direction to the environment roles of regional and district councils.

"These changes provide a strengthened framework of an Environment Ministry focused on policy, an Environmental Protection Authority responsible for efficient regulation and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment as an independent auditor."

For the full article: www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new+environmental+protection+authority+announced



Environmental
Protection Authority
Te Mana Rauhi Taiao

See also the Current Environmental
Protection Authority website:
www.epa.govt.nz

3. What's on

NSSC community planting days **July – August**

Join the North Shore City Council Parks Department or one of the many volunteer groups and assist them with their planting days or working bees.

They are great family events and fantastic opportunities to help your city's environment and make a difference to your local community. Please wear sturdy footwear and bring along your own gloves and tools if you have them.

When: Sundays 10am – 12pm, venues and dates below.

Date	Planting Event Location
July 4	Standish Reserve, Glenfield
July 25	Bayview Stredwick Reserve, Torbay

For more information on these and other planting days on the Shore this season go to:
<http://www.northshorecity.govt.nz/OurCommunity/EnvironmentalEducation/Parks/Pages/CommunityPlantingDays.aspx>

Kaipatiki Project planting days July - September

Once again, the Kaipatiki Project is planting trees in the beautiful Eskdale Reserve Network in Birkdale/Glenfield – and they need your help.

When: Saturdays 9.30am – 12pm. Free barbecue for all planters.

Date	Planting location
3 July	Eskdale Reserve, opposite Speedy Crescent, Glenfield Road, Glenfield
7 August	Eskdale Reserve, opposite Speedy Crescent, Glenfield Road, Glenfield
4 September	Eskdale Reserve, next to electricity substation, Eskdale Road, Birkdale

Bring your family, mates, school, church, club... and a spade if you have one!

Enquiries: 482 1172 or email cwiapo@ihug.co.nz

For more information:

<http://www.kaipatiki.org.nz/files/Kaipatiki%20Project%20Community%20Planting%20Days.pdf>



Merc's *The Sea Around Us* Winter Lecture Series 2010 June - July

When: Friday Evenings, 7:30pm, June and July

Where: 1045 Beach Road, Long Bay, Auckland (in the hall at MERC)

Admission: Adults \$6; students and pensioners \$5; Friends of MERC \$2 (and/or gold coin donation to Sir Peter Blake MERC's Disadvantaged Fund)



Lectures in June/early July:

June 18th - Discovery of the 1851 Wreck of the French Corvette "L'ALCMENE"
Noel Hilliam, Founding President of Dargaville Museum.

June 25th - Ocean's, Waves and Ice: the mindset and stories of an extreme adventurer.
Jamie Fitzgerald, 2003 (with Kevin Biggar) world record winner of the 5,000km Trans-Atlantic Rowing Race.

July 2nd - Life on the Bow with Team New Zealand

Joe Allen, yacht coach and past winner of the Around the World Yacht Race and the Americas Cup.

July 9th - The Scow "Jane Gifford": her history and restoration.

Peter Thompson, Builder, Chairman of the Warkworth Riverbank Enhancement Group and Founder Trustee of the Jane Gifford Restoration Trust.

July 16th - A Kiwi on Seabirds: marine ornithology in the extinction isles.

Dr Matt Rayner, Foundation for Science Research & Technology post-doctoral fellow based at NIWA and a research associate of the School of Biological Sciences, University of Auckland.

July 23rd - Whales of the Hauraki Gulf

Dr Karen Stockin, Coastal Marine Research Group, Massey University.

For the full programme go to: <http://www.merc.org.nz/winter-lectures.htm>

Matariki June 24 – July 24



Celebrate Matariki, the Maori New Year, during Auckland's Matariki Festival.

Heralded by the rising of the star constellation known as Matariki, the Maori New Year signaled a time for connecting with, and giving thanks to the land, sea and sky. It was a time for the community to come together to farewell those departed and acknowledge the year gone by. Matariki is also a time to turn to the future, welcoming the new generation to the world and planning for the year ahead.

Matariki is a special time for all New Zealanders to share, a time to come together and celebrate our unique Maori heritage, nature, creativity and expression. I'm going to celebrate by planting garlic!

For more information go to: <http://www.matarikifestival.org.nz/>

This year's Auckland wide Matariki celebrations feature a raft of North Shore events including a matchbox art exhibition, Maori games workshops, a Kapa Haka photography exhibition, video art and a body painting exhibition

For North Shore events go to:

<http://www.matarikifestival.org.nz/events/default.asp?keyword=&eventdate=&eventlocation=North+Shore+City&eventcategory=&submit=Search+events&status=search>

4. Of Interest

Landcare Research Garden Bird Survey 2010 26 June – 4 July

Members of the public are again being asked for help in spotting birds in their gardens. Instructions, a bird identification poster, and survey form will be available on the website soon.



The house sparrow was the most abundant bird in kiwi gardens for the last two years. The silvereye was the most abundant (and second overall) native bird. Proximity to bird sanctuaries meant that even threatened native birds have been spotted in backyards – hihi (stichbird, left) in backyards near the Karori Reservoir in Wellington and kakariki (red-crowned parakeet) in Torbay and Glenfield gardens (most likely having flown in from Tiritiri Matangi).

This could be a lovely way to spend an afternoon during the last week of term!

<http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/biocons/gardenbird/index.asp>

5. Link of the Month

Following the Gulf Oil Spill

Current estimates put the amount of oil being discharged from the broken well at above 1,050,000 US gallons per day... that's equivalent to the water from one and a half Olympic-sized swimming pools per day! There are over 400 different species of animals living in the area affected by the spill. 270 sea turtles and 36 dolphins have been found dead within the spill area. I struggle to find the adjectives to adequately describe this situation so here are some interesting links for you to peruse. I'll let you come up with your own adjectives!



If you can't quite imagine the magnitude of this environmental disaster, check out this website which uses Google Maps to superimpose the current extent of the spill onto your local area: <http://www.ifitwasmymyhome.com/>. As you will see the spill is so wide it's difficult to place it anywhere within the land boundaries of the North Island!

The NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) has been on the scene of the BP spill from the start, providing coordinated scientific weather and biological response services to federal, state and local organisations. The following link is updated daily:

[http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/topic_subtopic_entry.php?RECORD_KEY\(entry_subtopic_topic\)=entry_id,subtopic_id,topic_id&entry_id\(entry_subtopic_topic\)=809&subtopic_id\(entry_subtopic_topic\)=2&topic_id\(entry_subtopic_topic\)=1](http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/topic_subtopic_entry.php?RECORD_KEY(entry_subtopic_topic)=entry_id,subtopic_id,topic_id&entry_id(entry_subtopic_topic)=809&subtopic_id(entry_subtopic_topic)=2&topic_id(entry_subtopic_topic)=1)

And check this out, evidence of the eel's tough and curious nature:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/video/2010/jun/10/eel-deepwater-horizon-oil-leak>