

# **Bushy Point Restoration Project**

Annual Report 2016/17 (1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017)



#### 2016/2017 - Summary of Progress

- Planned and managed with DOC and Environment Southland the Living Legends planting day 100 people on the public planting day Saturday 10 September 2016.
- Planted 1400 locally grown native plants and covered with combiguards for rabbit control.
- Maintained the previous 16 years plantings
- Managed major pest control operation (6km of trap network over 90 hectares) with volunteers
- Maintained entrance area and public walkway
- Continued weed control (particularly gorse)
- Continued grazing horses and balage management.
- Managed a calendar of monthly working afternoons for weeding, putting combi-guards on, track work, planting.
- Reporting to DOC on major three year funding Community Conservation Partnerships Fund (CCPF).
- Eco-challenge event at Community Nursery and Bushy Point 11 December 2016
- Managed with Environment Southland the Southland Girls High School break out days with year 7 students 20-21 March 2017.

#### **1.** Aim of the Bushy Point Restoration Project

The aim of the Bushy Point Restoration Project is to restore a 14 hectare area of rough exotic pasture between two remnants of nationally significant native totara forest to provide a habitat linkage for native birds and to enhance existing forest remnants and other ecosystems. Also, to raise public awareness of the importance of native forest remnants and to provide a practical long term ecological project for residents of Otatara and Otatara and Invercargill schoolchildren to be involved in.

The project is progressively turning the area of exotic grasses into a functioning, selfsustaining native ecosystem with features and educational opportunities that can be enjoyed by the public of Otatara and Invercargill for the future.

The project is managed by the Committee of the Otatara Landcare Group, an Incorporated Society established in 1999.

#### The Mission Statement of the Otatara Landcare Group is:

- To focus attention of Otatara residents and others on the natural features and ecological values of the Otatara environment, especially native forest and wetland flora and fauna.
- To promote and, where possible, facilitate the protection, restoration and creation of such features in the interests of scientific appreciation and intrinsic worth and to encourage community appreciation of these values.

#### 2. Administration

- Annual Plan completed for 2016/17 including compilation of trapping statistics
- Annual accounts separate Bushy Point income and expenditure. Audited accounts to 31 March 2017 presented to the OLG AGM on 25 May 2017.
- Submissions to Invercargill City Council and Environment Southland Annual Planning process.
- CCPF DOC Funding Reporting costs relating to caretaker and tracks, pest control bait and replacement traps and interpretation, plants, covers and maintenance, project admin and public liability insurance, contribution to Bush Haven bird rehabilitation costs.

#### 3. Caretaker

- Caretaker Barry Smith spent 108.8 hours working at Bushy Point during the year
- Main jobs included: plant area maintenance, releasing and weed control, tree planting, supervising balage and fertiliser application, track maintenance, preparation for Living Legends planting positioning plants, track preparation, post hole digging, toilet arrangement and activity on the day etc
- Liaison with landowners, grazers, Invercargill Rifle Range, DOC, Local Authorities, schools and report writing.
- Caretaker Barry has been a key figure in ensuring the new initiatives have been successful and key ongoing management tasks and liaison is undertaken.
- Main user of the Mulcher Mower machine for track work, weed control and maintenance of Living Legends year 2 planting area.

#### 4. Restoration

- Plant maintenance and weed control continued.
- Living Legends main planting public day Saturday 10 September 2016 100 people attended.

- Preparation spot spraying of Living Legends 2016 area by contractor and release spraying of the previous years plants.
- Maintenance of the Living Legends 2015 area
- Growing of 1400 Living Legends plants by Linda and Ray Jackson at the Community Nursery
- Combi-guard plant covers bought and used to cover plants for rabbit control.
- Five Minute Bird Surveys by Lloyd Esler undertaken annually funded by ES
- Rat and Mustelid monitoring continued at Bushy Point by ES.
- A monthly calendar of working bees and events was continued by Sally Duston and has successfully introduced new people to Bushy Point.

#### 5. Animal Pest Control and Monitoring

Continued intensive pest control operation continues taking in the whole of Bushy Point area (90 hectares). The rat, mustelid and possum control at Bushy Point is aimed at protecting the nesting fernbirds, kereru, tui and bellbirds as well as other birds, lizards and insects and plants.

- Maintained 8 trap lines through Bushy Point covering over 6 kilometres of track, containing 90 rat bait stations 49 possum traps, and 14 stoat traps. Bait stations are set at 50 metre intervals along each track.
- Approximately 276 voluntary hours spent on pest control in 2016/17 by Ian Gamble, Sally and Gordon Duston, Kennedy Family, Darren May.
- Trap lines continue to be serviced on average every second week by volunteers with the following result since start of trapping. Although possums have been markedly reduced, stoats continually reinvade and rat poison continues to be taken.
- In addition, a trial area of Good Nature self-setting traps (2 possum, 4 rat) has been established.

Possum Count of Catch	Year											
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Grand Total
Total	99	74	26	17	17	10	6	12	13	10	4	288

Possums caught by calendar year were as follows (note 2017 up to March 2017):

Count of Catch	Year											
												Grand
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Ferret					1					5	2	8
Stoat Adult Female	1	1	5	2	2	1	4	1	3			20
Stoat Adult Male	2	3	2		3	1	6					17
Stoat Juvenile Female								2				2
Stoat Unknown	10	9	11	8	1	9	6	5	11	7	4	81
Weasel	1	3		1	1	1	2		1			9
Grand Total	14	16	18	11	8	12	18	8	15	12	6	138

Mustelids caught by calendar year were as follows (note 2017 up to March 2017):

- Statistics and maps can now use 10 years of data to establish trends in bait take and trap catch at Bushy Point. Information on trapping is collected in the form of spreadsheets and this information is available for further analysis.
- Trapping results are now also recorded on the Trap NZ website.
- Rat, mouse and stoat monitoring by Environment Southland continued with the results below.



- Lizard artificial covers, weta motels and seedfall traps are still in place but monitoring by Environment Southland has ceased.
- Bird count stations have been set up and are monitored by Lloyd Esler for Environment Southland every November. These counts are done in association with Mores Reserve, Bluff Hill, and Omaui Reserve.

#### Email 24/02/2017 : Subject Bushy Point Feb Rodent Monitor and Bird Count Results

#### Hi team,

Attached are this month's rodent monitor results as well as a pivot table of the bird monitoring results from December.

As per usual the rodent monitoring came back very positive with only one rat tracked in the totara block. In all the years of monitoring, we still haven't tracked a single rat in the line coming out from the nursery! The only mice tracks were on the same card as the rat tracks so mice have dropped right away too. However I did notice that in many places along the lines the Pied Piper bait stations were tipped over and so the bait had got wet and gone mouldy. Not sure why this is happening but as we discussed, it might be word pegging them in to the ground to stop this happening.

The bird counts didn't reveal anything new this year but I think this is largely due to the fragmented nature of the bush blocks. I thoroughly enjoy being out there in the bush because of the good numbers of friendly birds but the five minute bird count method doesn't really seem to reflect that in the data. Due to the habitat, Bushy Point still has the greatest numbers of fernbird out of all the monitored sites which is an excellent feature of the reserve.

Let me know if you have any questions on how to use the pivot table or I can just make you a selection of useful graphs for you if you like.

Looking forward to my next visit to the reserve!

Cheers,

#### **Tom Harding**

Biosecurity Officer | Environment Southland Monitoring & Information Management P +64 3 2115 427 | M +64 21 784 965| F +64 3 2115 252 | E: tom.harding@es.govt.nz | www.es.govt.nz Corner Price Street and North Road, Private Bag 90116, Invercargill 9840



#### Bird Monitoring all species



#### **Bellbird Results**



- Although the bird results will take years to show meaningful trends there have again been some interesting observations by a number of people:
  - Fernbirds appear to be extending territories regularly seen on Rances pond and in the Bushy Point restoration area (it would be good to establish bird count stations in the restoration area as there were none set up in this area at establishment)..
  - Spoonbill and kingfishers seen at Bushy Point Pond.

- Flock of brown creepers regularly seen on JKL lines and at Rances
- Shoveller and Scaup nesting at Rances 2017

Thanks to Shaun Cunningham and Tom Harding and Richard Bowman Environment Southland and Colin Bishop Department of Conservation for ongoing support and advice with pest control in 2016/7.

#### Wider Otatara Pest Control – Otatara Pestbusters

Otatara Pestbusters (encouraging pest control on private land by their owners), was continued throughout 2016/17. This project (a sub-group of the Otatara Landcare Group) steered by Russell and May Evans now has 200 members, most doing pest control. The project builds on the 90 hectares of control at Bushy Point and has been supported by Environment Southland and Invercargill City Council funding which has enabled the group to supply traps and bait at a subsidised price. Each person actively engaged in pest control receives a letterbox sign and regular newsletters.

Since 2013/14 Invercargill City Council Reserves at Otatara have been brought into Pestbusters and traps are being serviced by volunteers in those locations.

In 2012 negotiations began to include Otatara South Scenic Reserve into intensive pest control. Department of Conservation funding for 2014 has ensured that this reserve has been intensively trapped for possums, stoats and rats in 2015/16. Thanks go to local resident Peter Simpson for spearheading the pest control in Otatara South Scenic Reserve and now Chris and Jane Bowen – supported by Pestbusters, in particular Russell and May Evans.

#### 6. Weed Control

- Gorse, broom and blackberry control continued, particularly at the Bryson Road entrance thanks to Brian Denny.
- Weed control of entranceway continued.
- Release spraying of Living Legends 2015 plants by contractors.
- Hand weeding of plants by volunteers each month organised by Sally Duston.
- Spot spraying of areas in preparation for Living Legends 2016 planting by contractor.
- Bushy Point is a national "Weedbusters" site.
- The mulcher mower utilised for gorse control
- The OLG continues to run an annual Chilean Flame Creeper night at Bowman Bush on 30 January 2017.

#### 7. Infrastructure

- Bushy Point Track mowed as required, track improvements made.
- Track around pond maintained.
- Posts and track markers for self-guided activity trail
- Posts for new track alignment and interpretation
- The mulcher mower utilised for trackwork

- Redundant fences removed
- Muddy part of the track beyond the pond need attention and a longer term solution

#### 8. Interpretation and public access

- The Bushy Point walkway continues to be used by individuals and groups.
- New Pest Interpretation Sign printed and installed
- Living Legends planting with 100 people attending main public planting day 10 September 2016.
- Doggy do bags provided at the entrance to the Bushy Point Track.
- Geocaches including a multi geocache were placed in Bushy Point in 2015
- Monthly workdays organised at Bushy Point throughout 2016/17

#### **General Information and Advocacy**

- Otatara Pigeon Post Newsletter published and delivered to all Otatara residents February 2017, OLG website updated regularly with events.
- Hosted Southland Girls High School year 7 two day visit 21-22 March 2017.

#### 9. Volunteers and Public Involvement

- Number of hours for the year 1065 hours (over 13076 hours in total for the project).
- School visits Southland Girls High School Break out days 21-22 March 2015 and SGHS science classes and Otatara School.
- Average of 6 people per monthly working afternoon
- 8 Pest lines (over a 90 hectare area) maintained every 2 weeks by a group of dedicated volunteers.
- A range of "small jobs" (tool sharpening, track work, weed control) put out on email for people to do in their own time, with good results.
- Orienteering event planned for Bushy Point was relocated to Donovan Park.
- Family Eco-Fun Day held 11 December 2016.

#### **10.** Grazing/pasture management

- Horse grazing has continued in 2016/17.
- No sheep grazing, but balage taken off.

#### **11. Funding**

Successful funding applications were submitted to:

- ES Pest Control funding \$4200 including Pestbusters Otatara South.
- ICC Pest Control funding \$3500 including Pestbusters Otatara South

• DOC Communities Fund CCPF - \$22478 including Living Legends 2016/17 plants and maintenance, Bush Haven and Otatara South

#### **12. Expenditure and Income**

- General expenditure for Bushy Point 2016/7 was \$17288
- Public Liability Insurance was \$497.77
- Pest Control Expenses were \$2053 (incl Otatara South Reserve)
- Total grazing and balage income for Bushy Point 2016/17 was \$3839.92

#### 13. Key Tasks for 2017/18

- Preparation for Living Legends Event 9 September 2017
- Release spraying 2016 Living Legends plantings
- Preparation spraying for 2017 Living Legends plantings
- Weed control, as required, for previous 15 years of plantings
- Continued track maintenance look at solution to muddy sections
- Continue to work with schools at Bushy Point, in particular Southland Girls High School, Otatara School, James Hargest and other schools for Living Legends School planting.
- Weed control particularly gorse paddock and broom on boundaries
- Maintain all pest lines every 2 weeks from spring, employ pulsing of bait.
- Continue work to extend pest control over wider Otatara area
- Continue Otatara Pestbusters initiative as this will reduce pest invasion into Bushy Point.
- Submit final report to DOC's Community Conservation Partnership Fund.
- Continue with the monthly calendar of events.
- Consult Environment Southland on the health of the New River Estuary
- Report on annual pest audit for DOC Pest permission

#### 14. Acknowledgements

Thanks to the Department of Conservation, Environment Southland, Invercargill City Council, surrounding landowners and volunteers for their efforts in making 2016/17 another very busy and successful year for the Bushy Point Restoration Project.

Barry Smith Chair Otatara Landcare Group 12 December 2017

#### **CCPF Funding Summary**

#### Year1

1	Caretaker Costs for track, plant maintenance, general weed control	\$4000	
2	Animal pest control bait and replacement traps	\$12806	
3	1000 Native eco-sourced plants and protectors and maintenance spraying	\$10518. 5	
4	Pest Interpretation panel	\$1720	
5	Project Admin Costs and Public Liability Insurance	\$1855	
6	Native Bird rehabilitation	\$2000	

#### Year 2

1	Caretaker Costs for track, plant maintenance, general weed control	\$4000
2	Animal pest control bait and replacement traps	\$4106
3	1000 Native eco-sourced plants and protectors and maintenance spraying	\$10518.5
4	Pest Interpretation panel	nil
5	Project Admin Costs and Public Liability Insurance	\$1855
6	Native Bird rehabilitation	\$2000

#### Year 3

1	Caretaker Costs for track, plant maintenance, general weed control	\$4000
2	Animal pest control bait and replacement traps	\$4106
3	1000 Native eco-sourced plants and protectors and maintenance spraying	\$10518.5
4	Pest Interpretation panel	nil
5	Project Admin Costs and Public Liability Insurance	\$1855
6	Native Bird rehabilitation	\$2000

Year 1

Installment 1 - \$22,286.50 - 30 September 2014 Installment 2 - \$12,613.50 - 15 March 2015

Year 2 Installment 3 - \$11,239.00 - 30 June 2016 Installment 4 - \$11,239.00 - 12 December 2016

Year 3 Installment 5 - \$11,239.00 - 3 July 2017 (submitted) Installment 6 - \$11,239.00

#### SGHS Breakout 20-21 March 2017, Otatara School 23 March 2016

# Pesky pests and worrisome weeds



Southland Girls' High School year 7 pupils Paige Watkinson, Amaria Harrison and Fairlayne Pennicott look into a weta hotel at Otatara's Bushy Point yesterday as part of the school's Community Break Out activity. About 70 students took part and investigated pests in the bush area. Acting head of Junior school Jane Bell said the students had been helping with planting and weeding with the Otatara Land Care group and Environment Southland. ROBYN EDIE/FAIRFAX NZ 633926798





## Living Legends September 2016





### **Rodent Monitoring lines at Bushy Point**



#### Map of Bird Count Locations at Bushy Point 2016/2017





#### **New Pest Interpretation Sign 2017**



### Eco-Fun Day 11 December 2016



Brian Rance, Manu Stowe, 5, Tui Stowe, 2, and Chris Stowe learn how to plant at the Otatara Landcare Eco-fun day yesterday. PHOTO KAVINDA HERATH/FAIRFAX NZ 633495641



#### General Advocacy - Natural Otatara Booklet, Kereru Road Signs, **Otatara Pestbusters, Otatara Pigeon Post Newsletter**







#### **PIGEON POST** Issue 53 February 2017

Hello folks, welcome to Pigeon Post, the newsletter of the Otatara Landcare Group. In this newsletter we bring you news of the latest happenings in our area and snippets of information about our past and ideas about improving our environment

Your committee: Chairman Barry Smith 2131500 Secretary Chris Rance 2131161 Treasurer Glenda Graham 2131397 Pigeon Post editor Lloyd Esler 2130404 Please contact the Otatara Landcare Group if you have questions, ideas or problems relating to the Otatara and Sandy Point areas, or if you want to help - otataralg@gmail.com.

AGM - Wednesday 17 May 2017 at the Otatara Community Church Hall, Oreti Road 7pm followed by slide talk - 'Walking to Puysegur Point' by Nathan Cruickshank

#### Membership of the Otatara Landcare Group

The Landcare Group is a Charitable Trust supported by members and volunteers. If you would like to support the work of this group or become involved in projects to enhance the natural values of the Otatara Area please consider joining or making a donation – the Bushy Point project alone costs the group over \$10,000 a year and it is a public space available for everyone to enjoy. Life membership just \$50, annual membership \$20

The OLG organises monthly events – <u>http://www.otataralandcare.org.nz/news-events/</u> and also manages the Bushy Point Restoration Project so you can be involved in a very hands on project - <u>http://www.otataralandcare.org.nz/bushy-point-restoration/</u>

#### Life membership just \$50, annual membership \$20

Subs or donations can be deposited directly into the OLG bank account 03 1355 0805312 00 but please make sure they are labelled with your name and olg subs as references. Please email (otataralg@gmail.com) or send cheque to our treasurer Glenda Graham – 33 Rakiura Parade, Otatara – please put your name address phone number and email address.





APRIL	
Friday 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon (ph Chris 2131161). www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz (park at 183 Grant Road car park)
Saturday 2	Sport Southland Family Fun Day at Daffodil Bay
Sunday 10	Bushy Point work day – 1pm-3pm (ph Sally 2131403)
Sunday 17	NATIVE PLANT SALE – 1-3pm Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road
MAY	
Friday 6, 13, 20, 27	Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon. (ph Chris 2131161) (park at 183 Grant Road car park) <u>www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz</u>
Sunday 8	Look for <b>fish in the Otatara Scenic Reserve</b> with Maurice Rodway, followed by a <b>"grand traverse" of</b> <b>the Reserve</b> lead by Lloyd and his gps! Meet 1pm Otatara Hall, Dunns Road ph Sally 2131403
Friday 13	<b>Apple Pressing Workshop</b> – Southland Community Nursery – 1pm-4pm (park at 183 Grant Road car park) <u>www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz</u>
Sunday 15	Bushy Point Planting Day 1pm-3pm ph Sally 2131403
Wed 25	Otatara Landcare Group AGM – 7-9pm – Otatara Church Hall, Oreti Road followed by speaker Pete McClelland on Queen Charlotte Islands British Columbia
JUNE	
Friday 3, 10, 17, 24	<b>Southland Community Nursery,</b> 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon. Friday 10 and 17 will be CUTTINGS WORKSHOPS please book a place (ph Chris 2131161). (park at 183 Grant Road car park)
Monday 13	<b>Chatham Islands Illustrated talk night – Lloyd Esler and Brian Rance.</b> Venue Otatara Community Church hall Oreti Road. 7.30pm. Gold Coin Donation.
Saturday 18	<b>Matariki Night Celebration and BYO Supper to share</b> at Community Nursery Education Centre – 7pm- 9pm - park 183 Grant Road (ph Chris 2131161). <u>www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz</u>
Sunday 26	Bushy Point Work Day 1pm-3pm ph Sally 2131403
JULY	
Friday 1, 8	Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon (ph Chris 2131161). Nursery closed for winter after – reopens 23 September.
Sunday 17	Bushy Point Work Day 1pm-3pm ph Sally 2131403
AUGUST	
Sunday 7	Orienteering Event at Bushy Point (ph Sally 2131403) START 11.30am-1pm
Saturday 13	<b>Kiwi Conservation Club Children's Exploration Trip</b> – Southland Community Nursery Education Centre – 2-4pm. Leaders Chris Rance 2131161, Bronwyn KCC 2130017
Sunday 14	Bushy Point Work Day 1pm-3pm ph Sally 2131403
SEPTEMBER	
Saturday 10	Last Living Legends Big tree planting day for families at Bushy Point (ph Barry 2131500) REPLACES Monthly WORK DAY

Date TBC	<b>BEE Workshop</b> - All you want to know about BEES – Southland Bee Society. Venue Southland Community Nursery Education Centre
Friday 23	Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon (ph Chris 2131161). www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz
OCTOBER	
Friday 7, 14, 21, 28	Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon (ph Chris 2131161). www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz (park at 183 Grant Road car park)
Sunday 16	Bushy Point Work day 1pm-3pm (ph Sally 2131403)
NOVEMBER	
Friday 4, 11, 18, 25	Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon (ph Chris 2131161). www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz (park at 183 Grant Road car park)
Sunday 6	Kiwi Conservation Club Childrens Exploration Trip – Southland Community Nursery Education Centre – 2-4pm. Leaders Chris Rance 2131161, Bronwyn KCC 2130017
Sunday 13	Bushy Point Work day 1pm-3pm (ph Sally 2131403)
DECEMBER	
Friday 2, 9, 16	Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon (ph Chris 2131161).
	www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz (park at 183 Grant Road car park)
Sunday 11	Eco-Fun Day at Bushy Point and Southland Community Nursery 1pm-3pm (ph Sally 2131403) (park at
	183 Grant Road car park) and pick up your eco-pack from the Education Centre. Also Bushy Point work
	day 1-3pm for those averse to having fun!
Wednesday 21	Trig Walk Bushy Point (Leader Barry Smith 2130500) – 6pm
JANUARY	
Monday 30	Chilean flame creeper removal, Bowman's Bush, Ruru Ave – 7pm-9pm (ph Randall 2130851)
FEBRUARY	
Friday 3, 10, 17, 24	Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road - volunteer mornings – 9am-noon (ph Chris 2131161).
	www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz (park at 183 Grant Road car park).
Fuiders 17	
Friday 17	Native Plant Seed Collecting Workshop – 1-3pm Southland Community Nursery, 185 Grant Road (ph Chris 2131161). <u>www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz</u> (park at 183 Grant Road car park).
Sunday 19	
	Chris 2131161). www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz (park at 183 Grant Road car park).
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Monday 20, Tuesday 21	Southland Girls High School Breakout days at Bushy Point, volunteer help always appreciated (ph Chris 2131161 evenings). This replaces our March Bushy Point working day so feel free to come and help. All
	help appreciated – start 9.30am-2pm – entry through Barrys at 173 Grant Road, Otatara.