

May Newsletter

We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors we borrow it from our children
Chief Seattle

Over the past year and a half RiverCare Group Te Wai o Pareira has had the privilege of running an education programme at Matipo Primary School. This programme, run in collaboration with Wild About Te Atatu facilitated by Lila Kuka (RiverCare) and Bronwyn Smith (Wild About Te Atatu), aims to connect tamariki with their local place by taking them out of the classroom and into nature.

We have been using Tawa Esplanade as our teaching space. There is much to learn there as we restore the reserve with the help of our community. Just a short walk from the school, students have been helping us answer questions such as; how are the 800+ indigenous plants we have added to the reserve helping the awa? How does adding diversity to the plant life in the reserve affect soil biology and boost invertebrate numbers? How many indigenous birds do we see when we are there, and why?

The activities that students were involved in vary by age group but include; searching for and identifying invertebrates, creating a green score or habitat assessment for the reserve, and Wai Care testing of the stream water.

Last year we could only offer this programme to a few classes but this year we have managed to extend it to the whole school. We are so excited about this, as it means that around 400 children have had the opportunity to participate in activities which help them to engage with their local environment.

We look forward to inviting the children and their whānau back for community planting days in August when harakeke plants that Matipo School students have propagated, will find their forever home in the whenua surrounding the stream.

We see this work as fitting into our wider strategy of engaging and educating the community about Te Wai o Pareira and the challenges she faces. All our work with the children is designed to help them understand that they have an important role to play in restoring nature.

We want to show them some of the problems but then empower them to take action and make changes. After all, the damage to the river and the streams which feed into her is so great it will not be solved in one generation. We hope that the love for nature that the tamariki gain from being immersed in and taught about it will carry them through their lives, and that they will become part of the solution.

Community Meetings

Join us for two important community meetings, in July and August

Restoring Tawa Esplanade

As part of our commitment to restoring Tawa Esplanade Reserve, our group is now responsible for the maintenance of areas we are planting.

This little reserve has the potential to be a stunning place for our community to be in nature, so who better to care for it than us?

We want our community's hard work to thrive and be a success, but we need more people to help. Please!

Because of this shift to maintaining as well as restoring, this year there is less planting to do, so if you have the desire to do something positive for your local environment, come along to the next maintenance day at Tawa Esplanade on June 25 from 10 am to lunchtime. No experience is necessary.

Do the mahi, get the treats - we will be putting on a proper lunch for this one - kai always tastes better after some good graft!

Register your interest by emailing lkuka@rivercaregroup.org

[Up coming events](#)

Te Atatu Views article

Check out this great article written by our team member Chris Ballantyne for the Te Atatu Views publication. The article is how aging wastewater infrastructure, intensification and a changing climate are contributing to flooding and sewage overflows.

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