



RARANGI LANDCARE GROUP INC.

LANDCARE UPDATE —WINTER 2006

**WWF
(HABITAT PROTECTION FUND)
HELPS IN THE
RESTORATION OF OUR
NATIVE FORESHORE PLANTS THE
HABITAT OF
RARE & ENDEMIC
INSECT SPECIES**

The survival of our endemic insects looks brighter thanks to a \$5,000 grant from the WWF. The money came from their Habitat Protection Fund which is supported by the Tindall Foundation. This has enabled us to pay Morgans Road Nursery for over 3,000 native foreshore plants. Pictured below are some of the 3,356 plants produced by Grant & Donna at Morgans Road Nursery from seed which we know can be reluctant to germinate. Planting took a couple of days thanks to Outward Bound. *(see Working Bees on page 2)*



L/R: Sand tussocks & Native daphne

*Plants funded with support from
The Tindall Foundation*



Working Bees

Thanks to help from Outward Bound students a considerable amount of clearing and planting has been done this year by only three working bees.

The first was on the 10th February which started the weed clearance in preparation for an autumn planting. Colin Davis from DOC and Nicky Eade from Marlborough District Council were on hand to explain to students and members the conservation values of our project.

Then it was on with weed clearance and some planting areas were extended.



Colin Davis and Nicky Eade with Group



Planting sand tussock



Preparing an area for planting

Outward Bound



Our helping hands on the 10th February

On 16th and 17th of April, the Easter weekend, two more groups of Outward Bound students arrived. One group arriving on the 16th while the other arrived to join us on the 17th. Prior to their arrival 3,356 plants were collected from the nursery by Landcare members. This included:

2,972 Sand tussock, 192 Coastal tree daisy and 192 Native daphne.

2 cubic metres of potting compost, paid for by Marlborough District Council, was also collected and bagged ready to go. Since most of the plants were sand tussock a decision was made to block plant these to increase their survival rate. This was additional work we had not anticipated which meant that more new areas had to be cleared of weeds before planting. It seemed almost an impossible task to get 3,356 plants planted on the foreshore in two days but with the marvellous help of Outward Bound students we did it!

Our thanks go once again to Outward Bound for supplying the energy we needed to get the job done.

20 daphne plants were held back for smaller hands at St. Mary's Primary School. (see next article).



Two Outward Bound Groups help with planting etc. on April 16 & 17.



Students planting native daphne



The class line up in front of their plantings.

PUPILS FROM ST. MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL HELP WITH THE PLANTING

A visit from a class of 26 pupils attending St Mary's Primary School in Blenheim saw the remaining 20 native daphne plants restored to the foreshore on May 2nd. The children were given the opportunity to help plant these out and were very excited about doing so. Their teacher Mary-Angela Tombs said it was the highlight of their day!

In addition to planting, the children and some of their parents were given a talk on the discovery of rare & endemic insect species living in the area and the need to protect their habitat, hence the reason for the Landcare Group's restoration programme.

The class was shown a variety of the many native plant species now restored and thriving in driftwood surrounds on the foreshore. It was explained to the children that the driftwood surrounds were necessary to provide the young plants with protection and undisturbed growing conditions until they mature.

Many questions were asked during the day one being 'who paid for all these plants'? Our Landcare Group were happy to say 'WWF with support from The Tindall Foundation'.



Pupils & Teacher in front of Landcare Group's information sign.



D.O.C. Officers Malcolm Brennan & Earleen Gunning

ANT SURVEY

An ant survey was carried out in April by the Department of Conservation looking for the Argentine ant (*Linepithia humile*), an invasive insect found throughout the North Island and in small pockets in the South Island—Christchurch and Nelson. The Argentine ant has a voracious appetite and is considered a threat to NZ natives. Small containers with a non toxic bait of sugar and protein were placed at sites along the foreshore and collected after a couple of hours.

The results:

4 sites produced ant in the Rarangi survey. They all had *Monomorium antarcticum* present. This ant is one of a few species that are found country wide. They are a small native species that is highly variable. They may be a collection of species of ant but no one to date has been able to find consistent characteristics in order to separate them.

Samples which may possibly be argentine ants have been sent from a site in town to Landcare Research for identification ...so they may be in the Rarangi area.

APPLES & PEARS FOR WORKING BEES

Our thanks to Spring Creek Orchardist Kevin Murphy for this wonderful barrow full of apples and pears. A very generous donation and much appreciated.



In our next newsletter.

Photographer/Journalist David Hansford (in photo) visits Rarangi researching information on our Landcare Group and Project for a WWF (Habitat Protection) article.

The article will be produced on the WWF website and we hope to be able to print a copy in our next newsletter.

Late news:

Our Landcare group has been invited to enter the Marlborough Environmental Awards again.

For information on the Group or this newsletter contact the editor:

Trudie Lasham 570 5073

Email: lasham@xtra.co.nz

Or John & Betty Petterson 579 5178

Supported by:



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



nz landcare trust
ngā matapopore
whenua