



Shakespear Open Sanctuary Society Inc

Newsletter No 8

November 2008

Shakespear Open Sanctuary Society

PO Box 790 Whangaparaoa AUCK 0932

Phone and Fax: 09 424 5055

Email: Info@sossi.org.nz

Website www.sossi.org.nz:

Recent Events in Shakespear Regional Park and Sossi

- **August 21st**. Opening of rerouted Kowhai Track
- **31st August**. Sand dune planting at Te Haruhi Bay
- **9 September** Press release 'Hihi drop in on Shakespear Regional Park
- **September 14th** Presentation at Woolshed by Matt Maitland, Tossi and Sossi Co-ordinator as part of Conservation week activities. 'Threatened reptiles, a pest free peninsula, returning wildlife to the Whangaparaoa'
- **October 18th, Nov 1st and Nov 29th** Sossi presence at School Gala's . .
- **December 2-4 2008** Sossi presence with ARC and Tossi at Wazz-up at Auckland Zoo.

Events to Note:

- University of Auckland anthropology department and ARC have an application to the NZ Historic Places Trust for archaeological/cultural disturbance associated with fence construction and to undergo a research investigation. They will also hold a Summer Field School in February 2009 to undertake some investigative field work on the fence route. The NZHPT consent has yet to be received.
- Sossi presence at Shakespear during summer holidays (See later in newsletter)

Important dates in 2009

May 17th 2009 Shakespear planting day.

May 18th - 29th 2009 Shakespear park closure for pest management.

New members required.

Sossi is in the process of putting together a number of applications for large amounts of money in order to fund the building of the Predator Proof Fence and the bigger our membership, the more likely these are to be successful. We would therefore encourage current members to try and get family and friends to become members.

Increasing awareness of Shakespear Regional Park Project at School Gala Days

SOSSI in association with the ARC had a presence at Dairy Flat School's recent annual Agriculture Day on 18th October. We had a roomy tent with lots of displays, including a section of the proposed pest-proof fence, plus promotional goods, however our emphasis was to increase awareness of SOSSI and what is planned for Shakespear Park. This was the first of several similar outings for SOSSI to local schools with the aim of raising our profile and to 'spread the word' around the region. Other schools also visited included Silverdale on 1st November, and Stanmore Bay school on 29th. Contact with the schools was made by committee member Fiona McKenzie. For the children there was a 'Rat Trap' game which was very popular and drew many over to the tent on this family oriented day. The stuffed pest animals and native birds were also a great draw



Stuffed Predators on display



Children playing Rat Trap Game at Stanmore Bay School Gala

card for the children. While parents heard about the proposals for the predator proof fence the children enjoyed the exhibits and the Rat Trap Game.

A number of new members were gained for the association who were most interested in the fence proposal.

Update From Matt Maitland Open Sanctuary Coordinator

We are progressing well with our plans for making Shakespear Open Sanctuary a reality. This year is focused upon obtaining all the necessary consents required to allow us to begin fence construction in the 2009/10 year, and remove pests in winter 2010. O'Connor Planning has been assisting us to prepare our consent applications, which we hope to lodge in the New Year. These cover varied aspects relating to both fence construction and animal pest eradication. ARC in partnership with University of Auckland have also jointly applied to the NZ Historic Places Trust for approval to undertake earthworks in and around the few archaeological sites along the fence route in this culturally rich environment we have been unable to avoid.

The most frequent questions I am asked are 'where will the fence go?' and 'what will the fence look like?' The pest proof fence route has been drawn on to the aerial picture in this newsletter. Not shown is the Army Bay area, where the fence will, after encircling the Waterfall Gully car park, come down the Navy access road and along the eastern edge of the Army Bay car park to the boat ramp edge. Reasons why the fence takes such a windy route across the park are many: to reduce impact on cultural heritage sites; limit visual impact; retain existing vegetation; and to manage vehicle and visitor movements. Quite a complex juggling act!

To give an idea of how it will look we have asked Landscape Works to produce a photomontage of the (Tawharanui) fence against the landscape. Most of the fence is screened by vegetation or landscape features. We hope to have this photomontage available for public viewing shortly.

It is always a privilege to work alongside your hardworking committee, and recently this has been out and about in the community at school fairs and agricultural days. This has been a great chance to enlighten and inform the public of the project and what is involved. All spoken to are supportive of the idea, and many take the chance to directly support the work of SOSI.

At the recent Ecological Society of NZ conference I was awed by the volume and quality of research undertaken at Tawharanui Open Sanctuary, and such varied subjects too: cuckoos, avian malaria, mice, and reptiles to name a few. It is wonderful that the research community, mainly postgraduate students, can add value to what has already been achieved there. I can attest that much of this work has direct benefit to our ability to manage conservation in New Zealand. We're planning an evening in late summer to celebrate research and success of the Open Sanctuary programme, presented by the researchers themselves. This will be a great opportunity for members to get a glimpse of what Shakespear will become. Stay tuned for details....



Matt Maitland at Stanmore Bay School

Kind regards,

Matt Maitland. I can be contacted at matt.maitland@arc.govt.nz or 09 426 1200

The Proposed Route of the Pest Proof Fence at Shakespear Regional Park



Re-routing of Tiri Tiri Track at Shakespear Regional Park



Auckland Regional Council and New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) had a handover ceremony August 21st 0930-1130 for the new track through the top of Kowhai Glen. Commander James Kerry with other naval personnel, ARC staff and Cr's Sandra Coney and Christine Rose attended. SOSSI committee members included Allan Parker, Heather Bell and Shirley Pearce.

The track no longer goes close to the Ministry of Defence land, but instead passes through the patch of bush known as Kowhai Glen bush which previously was not open to the public. The way leads down hill on a well graded metalled track leading into the bush. The largest trees include Taraire and Puriri, and there are many silver fern and mamaku. The track through the bush is metalled throughout and is easy walking for young and old and exits back to the pasture a short distance from the diversion to Pink Beach. The navy paid for the work to re-route the track

Although the bush section of this track is shorter than that on the Heritage Trail it adds a welcome cool section to the Tiritiri track which will be appreciated by walkers especially during the warm summer months.

The Whangaparaoa Naval Training Centre and Farewell to Kerry Dornbusch

Hi to all of the SOSSI Members. My name is Kerry Dornbusch and I have been the Whangaparaoa Naval Training Centre (WTC) Manager for the Last 3 years. I am a Chief Petty Officer Weapons Technician and have been in the Navy for over 24 years. Prior to taking up this posting I have served on various HMNZ Naval Ships Southland, Canterbury, Wellington and Commissioning Crew for Te Mana. I have also been posted to most of the Shore establishments but by far my favourite Shore Establishment has been managing the WTC.

For those of you who are past Defence Force Members my role was traditionally known as the “Whangaparaoa Range Warden”. My role here at the WTC is to manage the day-to-day running of the Range with work varying from maintenance of the buildings and grounds to coordinating groups visiting, maintaining working relations with neighbours and overall responsibility for safety and security of the WTC and personnel using the facilities.

The WTC borders onto Shakespear Regional Park and measures approximately 130 Hectares of mostly regenerating native bush, cascading over a series of ridges and steep gully's. On our land we have several Firing Ranges that are utilised by the Navy and wider Defence Force for Small Arms weapons practice and as a general area that we can put our Trainee's through their 'paces'. The WTC is extremely useful to the Navy due to its relatively close proximity to the main Naval Base in Devonport. We usually see Trainee's up here at various stages in their careers from “boot camp” type activities in their initial training, to career progression courses that require rigorous sustained physical type activities to test their mettle. This area is perfect for that as we are far enough away from neighbours so as not to disrupt them with noise of squads of people 'doubling' around as is prevalent in the Devonport area. Thanks to our fantastic relationship with the Ranger's on Shakespear Park (Steve, Bruce and Phil) we are able to utilise the areas in the Park to further 'test' our Trainee's on the Park's tracks for cross country running and other similar activities.

Whereas our land will not be open to the general public when the end of the Peninsula becomes an Open Sanctuary, we are still committed to the Open Sanctuary organisation and I feel we can provide a useful 'sanctuary' type area. By the nature of our activities we must exclude the public for their and our safety. This basically removes most of the conservation challenges that land open to the general population provides. Currently we have a thriving population of native Moko Skinks under the watchful eye of Dr Keith Corbett, our local Herpetologist, and Shakespear's hard working Park Volunteer Dave Craddock whom between them passionately protect these small animals. We have one of only two known colonies of the native Moko Skink on Mainland NZ. I feel privileged that they have chosen our land as a stepping-stone to re-colonise our country. Keith and Dave's efforts have seen this colony successfully being coaxed into Shakespear Park and hopefully further a field in the future.

I have been involved with the Open Sanctuary Plan for the past 3 years alongside Matt Maitland (ARC Open Sanctuary Coordinator), Alan Parker (Sossi), Steve Burgess (ARC) Nerena Rhodes (Navy JLSO) and various other members of other organisations. A huge amount of progress has been made with a timeline stretching over the next few years. I am excited about this Open Sanctuary here at the end of the peninsula and look forward to seeing all the flora and fauna associated with a predator free sanctuary establish here in the near future. Unfortunately my time is at an end here at the WTC and I am being posted back down to Devonport to take up a Base Engineering Role in the New Year. Chief Petty Officer Physical Training Instructor Claude Wehi is taking over as Manager here at the WTC in Jan 09. He is no stranger to this place as he has been my Assistant Manager for the past 2.5 years and can ably keep the ball balanced. I will be keeping an eye on things through SOSSI Newsletters and hope to see all of you at the opening ceremony in the future.

Toitu Te Whenua. Whatungaro Te Tangata.

Hihi Visit Shakespear Regional Park.

Male and female Stitchbirds (*Notiomystis cincta*) have been sighted by a member of the public within Shakespear park.” Hihi are the latest rare visitors from Tiritiri Matangi joining the kakariki, bellbird and pateke (brown teal) all of which are regionally rare” says Matt Maitland, Auckland Regional Council(ARC) Open Sanctuary Coordinator.

Hihi are one of New Zealand’s rarest birds. Once found throughout the North Island and off shore islands, by 1885 they had vanished from the mainland and all but Little Barrier Island. They have since been introduced successfully to TiriTiri Matangi, Mokoia and Kapiti and also to the mainland sites of the Karori Sanctuary and most recently to” Ark in the Park” within the Waitakare ranges. However the only self sustaining population occurs on Little Barrier Island

The hihi male is recognized by its black head, upper breast and back, bright yellow shoulders and breast band a white wing bar mottles tan to grey-brown body. The female is smaller and an olive to greybrown colour. The birds which are a similar size to the bellbird can be distinguished upward tilted tails especially when alighting on a branch. The typical call is a strident tzit. The nineteenth century ornithologist Sir Walter Buller described the call resembling the word “stitch”.

Hihi are honey eaters, but unlike most honeyeaters builds its nests in cavities located in mature or semimature forest trees, a fact established by Guthrie-Smith while researching the birds on Little Barrier island in the 1920’s. The nest is complex with a stick base topped with finer sticks and lined with fern scales, lichen and cobwebs. Recent DNA analysis has shown that hihi are the sole representative of a separate New Zealand bird family whose closest relatives may be the wattletails which include Saddleback, Kokaho and the extinct Huia.

Threats to the survival of hihi in New Zealand have included habitat loss and the introduction of cats and rats. They also appear to be vulnerable to the effects of diseases which may have been introduced to New Zealand along with domestic birds.

Volunteers needed for Shakespear Open Sanctuary promotions

There are literally thousands of park visitors across the Summer. Many of these do not know that Shakespear is soon to become an Open Sanctuary. In order to raise public awareness and support for the sanctuary, we need to get this message to the visitors that already enjoy the park.

To do this, we are planning to erect semi-permanent displays in the old woolshed, and have this manned by SOSSI members on some of the busiest days across the summer period. The idea is that we would be there to talk to people about what is happening and what they can do to support the project, e.g. membership, volunteering, spreading the message. We think we would capture most of the visitors if we had a SOSSI presence from 11am to 3pm. Depending on numbers of interested volunteers, we would like to have the display open and manned on Saturdays and Sundays running from the middle of December to the end of January. Offers to help on alternative days and times readily accepted.

How can you help? By putting yourself down to help man the SOSSI display. A couple of hours on one day might be all you can manage, or you might want to be there once a fortnight. Whatever you can offer would be greatly appreciated. To find out the days and times available, email info@sossi.org.nz or call me on (09) 4285986

I look forward to meeting more of you across the summer down at the woolshed!
Melanie Cash Sossi Committee member.

Sossi Cotton Tee Shirts .

How about considering these as Christmas presents for friends and family?.

\$25.00 each

Sizes

Sizes

Youth	Shorter & smaller sleeves than Small- same width.
Small	36"-92 cm
Large	44"- 112cm
Medium	40"- 102cm
Extra Large	48"- 122cm

And for family members who have everything... how about considering a donation to the Fence Post appeal? We will provide you with a certificate (as shown below) that you can pass on for Christmas.



These can be obtained by emailing : Info@sossi.org.nz with your request or mailing to

Shakespear Open Sanctuary Society

PO Box 790 Whangaparaoa AUCK 0932

