

River Estuary Watch

River-Estuary Care: Waikouaiti – Karitane

JULY 2016

Historic Waka Landing Site Restored

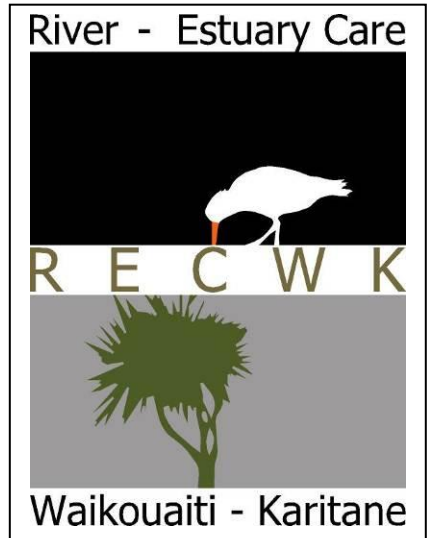
Earlier this year a youth wananga/seminar took place in Karitane with support from the Ministry of Youth Development. Their chosen goal was to restore the old waka landing site at the junction of Coast Road and Merton Station Road.

Under the guidance of local kai mahi the group, all in their teens and early 20s, worked on paddling and water safety skills, cleaned up the beach and completed Oamaru stone carvings. Finally, they voyaged up the river to the landing site to plant it out with harakeke, toi toi and kowhai. The carvings were mounted on individual pou (support posts) in a V formation to symbolise the flight pattern of the flocks of migratory birds that visit the estuary each year.

The young people felt they had made a strong connection to the area and plan to establish a picnic area with an interpretive sign. They have named the site "Ta Whakaea Hou", meaning "To breathe new life."



Thanks to Georgia-Rae Flack for the information and photos



Learning and Planting with Karitane School



We spent a great morning out with the Karitane School kids, parents and staff along the Waikouaiti River Estuary in late April. 40 keen people out for a morning of learning and planting.



We started by joining Sophie Allen, a freshwater scientist working with the Working Waters Trust, just by the road bridge on Coast Road at the intersection of McLachlan Road. That's also the site of the new carved sculptures marking a significant Maori waka landing site.

Sophie had set fish traps overnight and we all got to see what she caught. This exciting exercise pushed experiential learning to a new level, especially when the school kids came eye to eye with the very large tuna (eels)

found in Sophie's traps! She also caught estuarine triplefins, a colourful species of native fish, and described lifecycles, ecosystem connections and the cultural significance of important fish such as the tuna (eel) and the inaka (whitebait). This was the second time Sophie had been in the field with the Karitane School looking at freshwater and estuaries and discussing how we think about our waterways and how we should care for them.



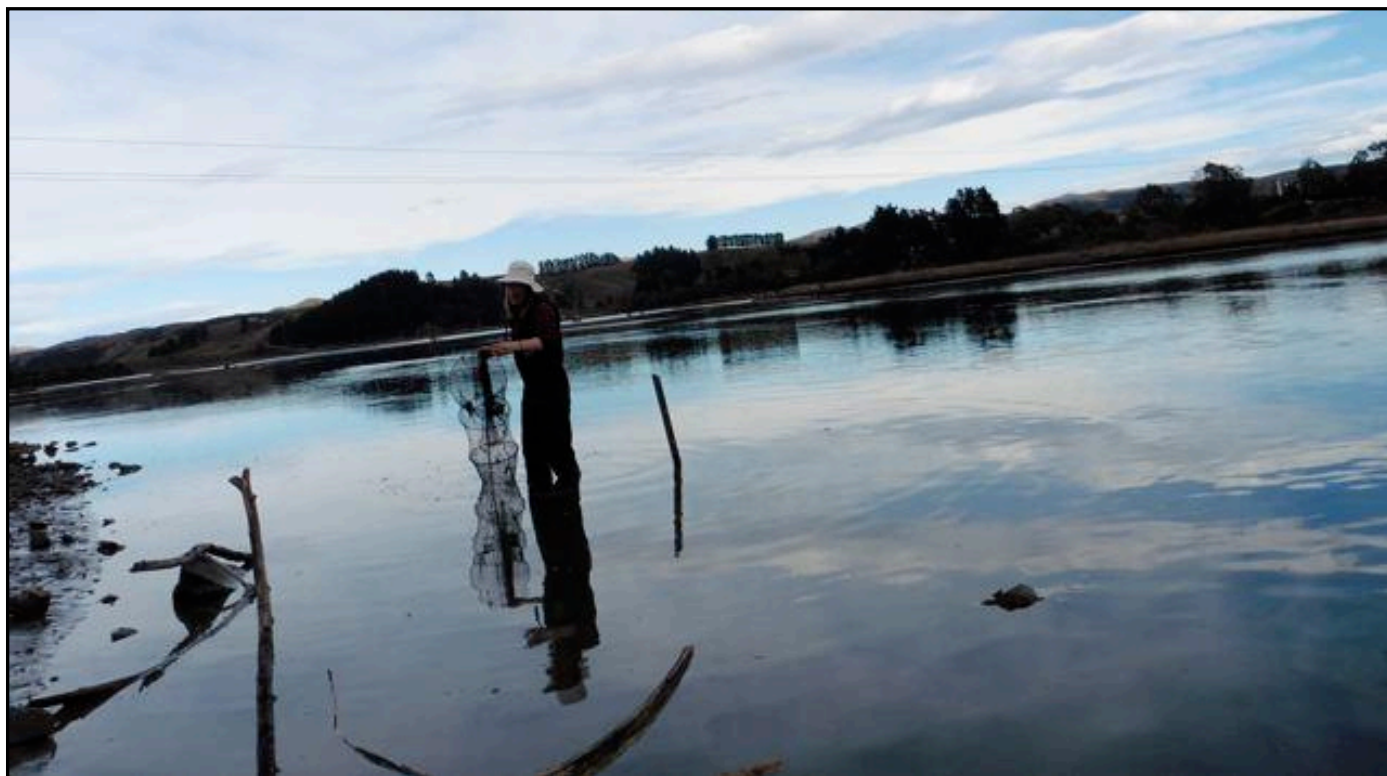
We then went over to part of the Merton Tidal Arm of the estuary where the Karitane School community had planted LOTS of native plants in 2010. Joel Vanderburg talked with the kids about habitat restoration, showed them how tall those plants had grown and got them started on their planting for the day. Many thanks to Margaret & Hamish McFarlane & Rob Riall for their hard work weed trimming the day before to make work easier for the (shorter) planters from the school! They planted 100 good size plants to fill in the gaps on that site. Because that site is visible from Highway 1 they will be able to track the progress over the next years.

It was fun to realise that Ryder Skelton who set the record for being the youngest “planter” in the field in 2010 (as an infant in a carry seat) was now a Karitane School kid wielding a spade!

Sophie Allen: Working Waters Trust

Nic Philip: Karitane School

Patti Vanderburg: River-Estuary Care: Waikouaiti-Karitane



Many thanks to Working Waters Trust for a generous donation to River-Estuary Care: Waikouaiti-Karitane for our projects.

Then and Now – 1916-2016



*A scene near the Mouth of the Waikouaiti River, Otago,
showing Karitane Peninsula in the distance*

(Photo sourced from the ODT)



A Shady Story

This isn't just another one of those shady stories. This is one of those wholesome, any age, whole family kind of sagas that makes us all smile (at least most of us).

You might remember that over the years River - Estuary Care: Waikouaiti – Karitane (RECWK) has planted tens of thousands of native plants along the river and estuary. You might also remember that our efforts more recently are shared with those of Hawksbury Lagoon Group, Kati Huirapa Runaka ki Puketeraki, and East Otago Taiapure. Obtaining the thousands of plants collectively planted by these groups has required donations of many generous people and the ongoing successful application for numerous grants.

In recent years the efforts of a few skilled individuals (and a few who know virtually nothing but are good at following orders) have resulted in the successful local propagation of more and more plants, i.e. from seeds and cuttings we have been able to grow quite a few native plants for planting activities. Consistent with



these successes we decided to propagate many more – perhaps most - of the plants which will routinely be needed by these groups.

The fruits of this decision began to ripen with the provision of generous grants from the Otago Fish and Game Council and the Waikouaiti Coast Community Board. So it is we can now thank not only these two organizations but also a host of other community members who have donated funds, time, skills, and material to make possible the construction of – are you ready for this? – a brand new fully enclosed 4 metre by 10 metre shadehouse. It sits on the location kindly provided by Kati Huirapa Runaka ki Puketeraki. Already a number of plants are growing within this structure, even while shelving is being constructed and an irrigation system is to be installed.

So as this shady tale draws to a close we once again thank these groups and individuals for continuing to make possible the habitat restoration efforts along the Waikouaiti River and Estuary.

*Joel A. Vanderburg
Habitat Restoration Project*

Working Together for Habitat Restoration

Volunteers spent 4 days in our community, in residence at Puketeraki Marae, adding their energy, strength and good vibes to our ongoing habitat restoration efforts. This season 11 keen volunteers joined lots of community members for a day planting on the Deb McNamara/Shane Riley Farm just off State Highway 1. The farm, Highlander Stud, is breeding sport horses and Boer goats. 15 acres of this 100 acre farm have been covenanted with the QEII Trust. The landowners have been carrying out a large habitat restoration plan on the slopes above a significant inlet of the Merton Tidal Arm of the Waikouaiti River Estuary. Stunning progress is evident with the lowland forest native bush restoration.



On the day we had 38 people in the field for a full-on planting exercise. As the terrain was steep and the soil hard and dry after our extremely dry season it was hard going for the planters. Thanks to a great bunch of people with brilliant ideas about how to pull off the planting exercise some people soaked the plants in troughs and did a bit of pruning to ensure better growth, some people transported hundreds of plants over to the sloped planting site, and those with goatlike skills worked with grubbers and spades on the slope getting the plants in. Yummy homemade food and socialising during breaks



made for a good day all around. The effort resulted in about 500 good size plants going in – watch for that area to grow over the next few years as you pass by on State Highway 1.



Volunteers finished up with a visit to Orbell's Crossing to take part in regular water quality monitoring with the Wai Ora project. Thanks everyone for a positive and productive day!

Working Together for Habitat Restoration *continued*



Patti Vanderburg: River-Estuary Care: Waikouaiti-Karitane

To become a friend of the River and Estuary Care: Waikouaiti—Karitane	Phone or email Brad – 03 4658334 or brad126@xtra.co.nz
Should you wish to kindly make a donation	<p>Online:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enter our name: Waikouaiti-Karitane Rivercare Group Inc) (this will appear on your statement) ▪ Enter our bank account number 060942 0190792 00 ▪ Enter your name and reason for payment e.g. donation to friend of Waikouaiti-Karitane Rivercare Group (Inc) (this will appear on our statement) <p>or post donation to 1333 Coast Rd Karitane</p>

River-Estuary Care Waikouaiti - Karitane

Active since 1999 – Incorporated in 2001

Coastal Otago Conservation Award for 2005

Objectives

- To restore balance to Papatuanuku (Mother Earth).
- To have a well-informed community about our river and estuary.
- To have our community participating in sustainable resource practices.
- To have a healthy, productive river and estuary ecosystem (fishing, biodiversity, general health).
- To promote an understanding of the inter-relatedness of our river and estuary ecosystem with adjacent ecosystems.

Anyone interested in supporting the above objectives may join!

Would you like to help with a project this year? Then contact

- Newsletter – Hilary Yeoman ph 465 7687.
- Revegetation project – contact Andy Barratt ph 021 890 048.
- Education, information and advocacy project – contact Patti Vanderburg ph 465 8113.
- Birdwatching – contact current convener Allan Kilner, phone 465 8411.

Produced with assistance from the Otago Regional Council

