



Waiaatarua Community News

850 copies

November 2021

From the Editor

Hello everyone

What fabulous spring weather we have been having. It feels like summer is just around the corner and everything is starting to look pretty lush in the garden.

I spent time in the veggie garden weeding last Saturday and even got a little sunburnt. My chooks came to "help" me while I was working and had a great time pecking worms and bugs that I unearthed. This sort of weather means it's time to dust off the BBQ and get those lily white legs out - mine certainly are after the winter, they almost blinded me at the weekend!

I noticed a large bird in the top of one of the large trees on our property one evening just recently. At first I thought it was a kereku. It was making an odd chortling parrot-y sound and chasing other birds away. I then thought it might be one of the sulphur crested cockatoos we sometimes get here but this bird wasn't white. It then dawned on me that it was a kaka, our native parrot. I got a better glimpse of it as it moved about in the top of the tree and was able to see its greenish brown plumage and hooked beak. All the while it was chortling in a sing-song way before it decided it had had enough and flew off, displaying scarlet flashes under its wings.

I was pretty excited to see this, never having seen one in the wild before. Unfortunately it was too far away for me to even attempt to get a photo. I'm hoping our resident photographer Greg Lokes

might have more luck if he spots one (no pressure Greg). How wonderful to have this endangered parrot visiting us here in Waiaatarua. I hope it comes back to visit sometime!

We also have a large Poor Knights lily currently in flower in a pot on our deck that we've had for about 20 years. For the first time ever it is being visited by two tui. Again I couldn't get a photo as they move so fast and keep flying off, but so lovely to see these beautiful birds up close and to get a clear look at the colour and detail in their plumage.

I took a walk out at Karekare a few weeks ago and was delighted by the masses of green and golden bell frogs croaking their little hearts out in the ponds there. I adore frogs and would love to have some here at home. I'm going to have to set up a dedicated frog pond though as they don't mix well with comet goldfish - as I found out when I once put tadpoles in with them in my fish pond. If you haven't guessed already, the fish ate them. Oops.

We have a female mallard hanging about with her brood of 10 ducklings. Initially she had 13 or 14 so a few have been lost. She has done pretty well to keep the 10 she still has, probably helped by the fact I've been feeding them. They are now at the teenage stage, completely feathered but still not quite quacking. Despite the fact that they make a mess getting into the bowls of water I have dotted around for my chooks, making it greasy and muddy and drilling into the ground with their bills looking for food, I still like them.

Nature is a truly wonderful thing and I am grateful that I can get out into it. It's so good for the soul.

Cheers, Erin

Post-Lockdown get-together

Friday 10 December

Waiaatarua Hall, 911 West Coast Rd, Waiaatarua from 7pm onwards

The Waiaatarua Ratepayer & Residents Association invite you to a free flow of conversation and refreshments at the Hall, as lockdown has been tough for many of us.

In Waiaatarua not only have we had to cope with COVID-19 restrictions but we've also had rain and flood damage. This will be a good chance to share some stories and advice.

We can also tell you about some of the really positive work done by the combined resident and ratepayers groups all across the Waitākare Ranges.

Please join us for some short structured conversations and then a general catch up. All welcome.

See you there! (Covid levels permitting)

Stirring it up in lockdown

First we had teddy bears for kids to spot while out on walks. Now, we have Spoonville. The craze involves decorating spoons with faces and accessories and planting them in the front garden. Begun in Berkshire, England, during the first lockdown of 2020, the idea quickly caught on around the world.

The cute little characters above are Oratia's Spoonville family, situated outside 149a Parker Rd. People are encouraged to add to the family, and if you do there is chalk in the letterbox to increase the population (currently standing at 9). There are free spoons to take away, decorate and then return. A fun activity to do with the kids! Other West Auckland Spoonville families include that of Te Atatu, population 1111 and counting. There is even a Spoonville NZ Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/spoonsvillenz/>



Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or the Waiaatarua Ratepayers and Residents Association

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 Friday 7.00pm–8.00pm
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Advantages of being a WRRRA member?

Show your membership card at these friendly local businesses for a 10% discount (conditions may apply)

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Other special rates for WRRRA members at:

Elevation Brasserie Ph: 814 8727 473 Scenic Drive
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All members of the WRRRA who present a WRRRA card at the time of purchase at Elevation Brasserie are entitled to a 15% discount for the table across all meals. Usual terms and conditions will apply.

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Please accept my Membership to the Waikarua Ratepayers & Residents Association 2021

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To: Treasurer, WRRRA, 911 West Coast Road, Waikarua, Auckland, or leave at the library, or email these details to: treasurer@waikarua.org.nz

Bank details: 12 3051 0278313 00 WRRRA

Shout Out to the "Stone Fairies" of Waikarua

During our latest lockdown, Waikarua resident Catherine Hughes has taken her daily walk around Bush Road, Atarua Gardens and Raroa Terrace. Most mornings she spotted little painted rocks for folk to see placed in areas along the way. Each day a different one would appear. Just recently she had one placed by her letterbox (see photo).

Someone in our community is going to a lot of trouble to cheer us all up with this random act of kindness. Thank you to who ever it



is for bringing a little ray of sunshine and an unexpected smile to someone's day.

Quote of the Month

"When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it—always"

Mahatma Gandhi

Waikarua Community Patrol News

While our patrol group is not allowed to operate under level 3 or 4 Covid Alert levels, our organisation is still here and we are itching to get back out on patrol in the community once we are finally at Step 3 of Level 3.

In the meantime, we extend our thoughts and best wishes to everyone – and hope that you are all managing well.

Police Contacts – just a reminder:

111 – Emergency

105 - non-emergency (incident already happened and don't require urgent assistance). Or online at <https://www.police.govt.nz/105support>

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 – Report crime anonymously, or online crimestoppers-nz.org/report

*555 (from mobile phone) – urgent but not life-threatening driving incidents

Stay safe...and get out and enjoy the spring sunshine whenever you can.

Contact Sue Dell, Patrol Co-ordinator /Chairman (waikarua@cpnz.org.nz / 021 681 207) for more information.

Sue Dell

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE

Copy needs to be with the Editor

by 5pm on FRIDAY 12 NOVEMBER

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Fire Brigade News

Our volunteers are essential

Fire and Emergency NZ relies on volunteers in 600 plus stations nationwide, to help communities prevent, prepare, respond and recover from emergencies. As well as firefighting, our volunteers attend medical incidents, motor vehicle accidents, severe weather events and other requests for help. We also install and check smoke alarms and help to improve fire safety in our communities.

If you're a team player, would like to learn new skills and make your community safer, the Waiatarua Volunteer Fire Brigade would love to hear from you.

You can also find more information here - <https://www.fireandemergency.nz/volunteering/different-ways-to-volunteer/>

Calls since 1 August 2021

3 Aug – Tree blocking road, Scenic Drive

27 Aug – Car Accident, Scenic Drive

31 Aug – 3 Flooding Incidents, 1 Tree endangering house, 1 slip blocking drive

13 Sep – House Fire, Oratia

14 Sep – Power Line on Fire, Henderson Valley Road

6 Oct – House Fire, Titirangi

Contacts:

Always phone 111 for any fire or emergency.

To check if you need a permit to light a fire: checkitsalright.nz (or 0800 658 628)

For our Brigade

Chief Fire Officer Kevin Healy (814 9505)

Deputy Chief Officer Ian Ford (814 8871)

Volunteer Brigade Support Christine Healy (Christine.healy@fireandemergency.nz)

Christine Healy

Plant of the Month—Renga Renga Lily

The low maintenance Renga Renga Lily, also known as the New Zealand Rock Lily (*Arthropodium cirratum*), is a great replacement for the invasive agapanthus and an alternative to bromeliads.

Renga Renga lilies are clump forming perennials about 75 cm tall with soft grey green arching strappy leaves. They cope well with dry coastal areas but do best in dappled shade and when mass planted they are an impressive sight in spring and summer when they send up



tall spikes that produce clouds of white flowers that are followed by fruits and seeds that are attractive to birds.

Renga Renga can be prone to snail damage so pull off the scruffy old foliage in at the base of the plants in Autumn, dig up and divide if necessary, then maybe some food to encourage the flowers in Spring.

Cathie Wells

Advertising & Community Notices

Commercial advertisements are welcome and can be arranged by contacting Erin Kingsleigh-Smith, editor@waiatarua.org.nz, ph 021 355 009. Community Notices are free to current financial members.

Doers Networks: local, fast internet providers info@doers.net.nz

Handyman Out West: Any work undertaken. House and property maintenance, renovation and decoration eg gutter cleaning, water blasting, deck building, tree felling, painting etc. Reliable and friendly. Ph Mike 814 9708

Indoor Bowls: every Thursday at the Hall 7pm for 7.15pm start. No experience needed. Coffee and tea provided. \$3 donation to CPNZ. Ph Cecilia: 814 9660

Lawn mowing, ride on work only: Ph Grant at Top Grass Ltd. 814 9493 mob 021 024 75610

Oratia Community Church: On the corner of Parker & West Coast Rds. Fellowship meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 1pm in the church hall. Ph 813 9869 for information.

Plants, crafts etc: Various plants, shrubs and bromeliads. Assorted crafts, scarves, net fruit bags \$2, occasional cards, knitting, sewing, second hand books. All proceeds to Nepalese Educ Trust for Tertiary Scholarships. Phone Margaret 814 9859.

Table Tennis: every Wednesday in the Hall, 7-9pm. No experience needed, all equipment supplied. \$2 per week Contact Tony 814 9860, email tony.bacon@sthw.co.nz

Tiler / Stone layer: 21 years experience in the trade available for indoor and outdoor projects large or small. Phone Craig Starr 021 610 408.

Waiatarua Playcentre: Come and have 3 free visits at our bush-nestled Playcentre. We are child led, parent run and full of fun! Open 9:30am - 12:30pm Mon and Weds. Contact Ronni O'Brien 09 814 8835 or waiatarua@playcentre.org.nz or www.facebook.com/waiataruaplaycentre

We are Loud: modern music lessons —vocals, piano, guitar, bass, drums & songwriting. Group & private lessons for all ages and levels. Visit www.weareloud.co.nz or contact jo@weareloud.co.nz 0274 707 042.

Work To Do: Sort out that 'To Do' list for your House, Garden or Property. Clean Ups, Maintenance, Simple Repairs, Tree Trims, Window Cleans, Painting etc. Local and Reliable. Call Chris 027 600 3977.

Yovi's Topstitch: Alterations or sewing projects I can do at your budget, from cushions, squabs etc. Contact Yovi 021 084 36450 or yovistopstitch12@gmail.com



Friday Night is Locals Night (after 5pm)

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Weed of the Month: Jasmine (*Jasminum polyanthum*)

Originally from West China, jasmine may smell and look fantastic, but this is one very nasty weed. As a rapidly growing climber it is able to reach even the highest of established trees, smothering and eventually killing them. This is a great time of year to get into the bush to take out jasmine, before the weather warms and the bees and wasps are out in full force.

Control: Unfortunately this is one of the most persistent weeds out there, so you must be persistent in return. Firstly, if you have any on your property growing up trees, cut the jasmine at the base of the tree. It's from the ground that jasmine gets its nutrients, so cutting it will at least give your tree a rest from the smothering! Hand pull out runners and try and find where the larger main stems are. Cut these and apply woody weedkiller (a Yates product or similar) on the freshly cut stems. Ensure all usual precautions are taken (no



rain or dew for at least 4 - 6 hours). The jasmine will re-sprout for possibly years after (I still have the odd new growth 7

years after beginning my control). For this regrowth hand pull or spray the leaves with woody weedkiller (be very careful not to apply this to any natives/plant you wish to keep). For more specific herbicide help: <http://www.weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/jasminum-polyanthum/59/>

Description: Evergreen climber with smooth edged leaves and pink buds that flower into white clusters throughout the year.



Looking for an alternative? Try Star Jasmine (a native) for similar flowers and smell.

Thanks to Weedbusters for the content and images.

Rita Steel

Environmental Corner

Summer is coming!

While last updates were predicting a La Niña summer (wetter conditions than normal), all bets are off this season, given last year's La Niña summer brought drier conditions than normal. So with that in mind make sure your gutters are clear, your pipes are all working and you have no leaks in your tanks because collecting rain water becomes a priority this time of year. You can also protect any plants you've planting by ensure a good layer of mulch or cut grass etc to cover the soil (keeping it wet). Don't weed mid summer (unless you're weeding noxious or invasive species like climbing asparagus and jasmine). A layer of chickweed will protect your soil from the harsh sun.

Have you got wasps?

Are you plagued every year by wasps? In particular the yellow jacket? Wasps cause damage to property and native ecosystems and can be dangerous, so we are proud to announce we now have a FREE solution for residents of Waiaatarua and Oratia. We have funding for a wasp blitz weekend - thanks to the Waitakere Ranges Local Board. We have 8 volunteers who will be trained to set and lay 80 traps and bait for yellow jackets during their peak protein seeking phase.

If you have seen a lot of wasps on your property and would like to register for the wasp blitz weekend please email me on sciencemademedoit@gmail.com. The project will be on a first in, first served basis and take place in late summer/early autumn to ensure we get to the colonies at the right time.

Sign up now!

Rita Steel



Pedestrian Guidelines for walking/running in Waiatarua and Oratia

Even though there are fewer vehicles on the road whilst under Covid Levels 4 and 3, there are still some vehicles being driven unsafely and you still need to take care whilst out walking or running.

Where there is a footpath, use it.

If no footpath:

- Walk on the side of the road facing oncoming traffic (except on curves, where it is best to walk on the outside of the curve);
- If possible, walk off the road, or as close as possible to the edge of the road;
- At night, wear light-coloured or reflective clothing, or carry a torch to help you be seen;
- During the day, avoid wearing dark clothing;
- Don't use headphones/earbuds whilst walking—they limit your awareness of the environment around you;
- Avoid using your mobile phone.

Reporting

If you see a car being driven unsafely, take note of the make, type (car, van etc) colour and registration number and phone 111 (if an emergency) or *555 (urgent, but not life-threatening).

Non-urgent—submit a form though <https://forms.police.govt.nz/>. The offender receives a letter from the police but is not charged.

If you wish to press charges you need to lodge a complaint at a Police station.

Other ways to report

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 – report crime anonymously or online at <https://www.crimestoppers-nz.org/report>

Thanks to Diane Wood, Treasurer of the Oratia Ratepayer & Residents Association for the content.



Nature is a wonderful thing

Our resident photographer Greg Lokes took these beautiful images of a pollen dusted tui feeding on kowhai flowers.

Unfortunately as the printed issue of this month's newsletter is a black and white one the photos aren't as spectacular as they would

be in colour, but if you'd like to see them in all their glory they can be viewed online on the Waiatarua Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Waiatarua/>).

Greg also has his own Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Gregs-Eye-2180581698675099> if you would like to follow him. Currently there is mostly local content due to lockdown.

