

e vibe

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



Whakatepea te kō, kia kotahi We're in it together 09 366 2000 www.arc.govt.nz

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From the editor

Auckland Regional Parks – the jewel in the crown of our ever expanding region? The Auckland Regional Growth Strategy (1999) indicates that as urban density increases homes will have less and less outdoor living space and people will make more use of parks, reserves, urban riparian corridors and beaches for their recreation. Aucklanders are indeed fortunate to have such wonderful regional parkland - much of it on prime coastal land or covered in magnificent native forest that is now protected in perpetuity for generations of Aucklanders to come.

In this issue read about some of the important conservation programmes on parks, the extensive education programmes offered to schools and the opportunities for volunteers in parks.

If you haven't visited a regional park lately why not take the chance whilst the The Big Clean Up, Parks and Heritage campaign is on.

Hilary Chidlow
Environmental Education Co-ordinator
Auckland Regional Council

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Brooks Beach, Awhitu Regional Park



What's what in Parks

Did you know that Auckland's regional parks attract approximately 8 million visits per year – more than all of New Zealand's national parks combined?

What is a regional park?

Auckland has 21 regional parks, including the Auckland Regional Botanic Gardens and Ericsson Stadium. These parks cover more than 38,000 hectares of land from Tawharanui Regional Park in the north to Whakatiwai Regional Park on the firth of Thames.

The Auckland Regional Council runs regional parks to provide residents from throughout the Auckland region and visitors with a range of outdoor and natural settings for recreational activity.

Regional parks have a strong conservation focus and are renowned for their natural and cultural heritage. A wide range of education programmes also takes place on the parks and the ARC runs one of the region's largest farming operations on regional parks. (See stories about education on parks in this issue of E-vibe.)



Awahitu Regional Park coastline.

Why are regional parks different from other parks?

The Department of Conservation (DoC) also manages parks in the Auckland region (such as Rangitoto Island), as do the local city and district councils. As its name suggests, DoC's primary focus is conservation – although there are many recreation opportunities in its national parks and reserves.

At the other end of the parks spectrum, city and district councils cater for structured recreation, providing smaller parks with sports fields and associated infrastructure, children's playgrounds, and other recreation facilities for Aucklanders in their local communities.

Parks in the future

There is no doubt that as Auckland's population grows towards a predicted two million people by 2050, open space and parks will become more important than ever. Such initiatives as the Regional Growth Strategy and the Regional Open Space Strategy will ensure that Auckland's green spaces are not lost.

But it is equally important to ensure that there are enough parks to cater for the recreation needs of future Aucklanders.

The ARC has regularly added to the parks network since its inception in 1965. This has been done by purchasing new parks (the newest is Scandrett Regional Park scheduled to open officially later this year) and extending existing parks such as Wenderholm

and Long Bay where the ARC bought land in 2003.

These purchases have been made with future Aucklanders in mind and the ARC has a strategy for future parkland acquisitions to ensure the regional parks network can cater for the region's increasing population.



Muriwai Beach.

Fascinating facts ... Regional Parks

- 28,000 students involved in ARC education programmes annually
- 20,000 people a day visiting the parks network
- 21 parks
- 9 historic homesteads
- 127 historic structures and buildings
- 1120 historic places and sites (eg pa sites, kumara pits etc)
- 500km of walking and tramping tracks
- 100km of prime coastline
- 8000 plant species
- 250 animal species
- 40 countryside and remote campsites
- 55 picnic and events sites
- 8 outdoor education camps baches and lodges to stay at.

21 Regional Parks



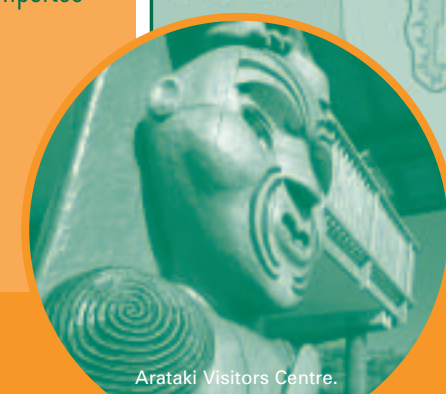
The importance of parks

Regional parks have always had an important role in recreation, conservation and education they also have an increasingly vital role to play in society.

Arguably parks generally have never been more important in society than they are now. One of the real issues confronting today's society is the fact that parks and the outdoors are not a regular part of many children and teenagers' lives. Childhood obesity and inactivity are becoming a major health concern and an increasingly serious issue in this country. Late last year at the New Zealand Recreation Association Conference it was

reported that children are becoming so inactive and obese that in future it will not be uncommon for parents to outlive their children if this trend continues unabated.

It's a sobering thought and one that brings into perspective one of the real values of parks, including regional parks, as a contributor to personal and community health and well being. The regional parks provide the settings and the facilities for people to get out and get active and by doing so improving their own and society's health and well-being.

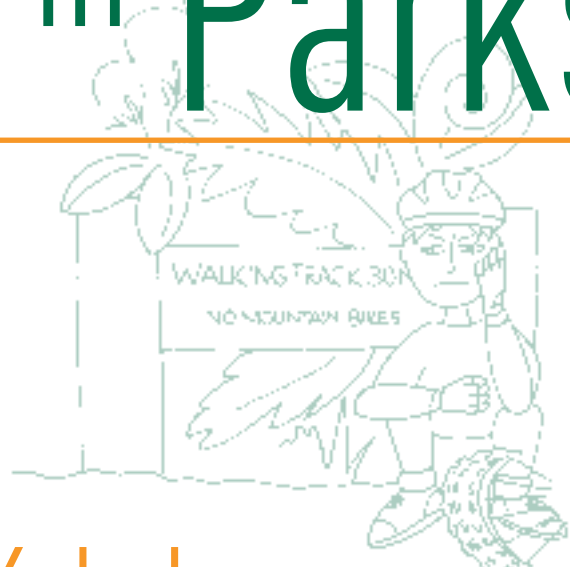


Arataki Visitors Centre.

Conservation in Parks

Auckland imposes special pressures on its heritage resources because it is the largest and fastest growing urban area in New Zealand. Auckland is also one of the main entry points in New Zealand for international travel and trade, and there is a constant risk of new exotic plant, animal, and insect pests arriving in the region. These can pose serious threats to our natural environment and economic future.

The Auckland Regional Council plays an important role in ensuring that our treasures - our taonga - are passed on to future generations of Aucklanders. Working with the regional community we aim to ensure that current and future generations of Aucklanders continue to appreciate and enjoy their unique natural and cultural heritage. Following are some examples of conservation programmes in Regional Parks.



Kokako recovery in Hunua Range Regional Park ...bringing back the dawn chorus

Hunua Range is traditionally home to the rare kokako - famed for its evocative song - and has been under intensive pest management by the Auckland Regional Council and Department of Conservation since 1994, with the aim of creating a safe nursery for kokako to re-establish themselves on the Auckland mainland.

The programme is largely successful through the active involvement of many volunteers and the dedication of people like the Auckland Regional Council's natural heritage scientist and bird expert, Tim Lovegrove. Tim is intensively involved in bird conservation programmes, including the kokako recovery programme at Hunua. His hope is that if a safe area is created for kokako to breed then they will start spreading out to surrounding areas as well.

"Our hope is that one day kokako will be present around the popular Hunua Falls so people can easily get to see this rare bird," Tim says.

The kokako are protected by gridlines of traps and bait stations set in August each year to kill off as many rats and stoats as possible before the kokako breeding season. Then when kokako nests are found a "ring of steel" is created using traps and bait stations encircling the area around the tree to prevent rats and stoats reaching the nest. This is known as the last line of defense.

So far, the work has paid off - rat numbers are down and about 30 kokako have fledged since 1994. There are now nine kokako pairs in the management area, where there was only one pair in 1994. A kokako named Cola is becoming a more popular sight now and fingers are crossed that her chicks will survive and boost the growing numbers of kokako.

The kokako recovery project is very labour intensive and needs people power. If you would like to volunteer and spend time in this amazing place (the volunteers' hut has spectacular views!)

Call Regional Parks ranger Mags Ramsay on 09-536 7012 or the Auckland Regional Council 09-366 2000 and press 2 for parks.



Kokako recovery.

Tawharanui Open Sanctuary

Paintings, sculpture and ceramics from 40 of NZ's top artists were on show (Art in the Woolshed), at stunning Tawharanui Regional Park for a week in March to raise funds for the Tawharanui Open Sanctuary project.

This project includes construction of a predator-proof fence to create a pest free haven for native plants and animals. It will be New Zealand's only mainland coastal sanctuary and the country's first integrated sanctuary where farming, public recreation and conservation of native species combine.

Last year Art in the Woolshed raised close to \$30,000 for the project and this year's version also looks set to be a big success.

Participating artists included Don Binney, Barry Brickell, Dean Buchanan, Len Castle, Claudia Pond Eyley, Fatu Feu'u, Peter Lange, Barry Lett, John Reynolds, Peter Siddell, Michael Smither, and Warren Viscoe.

All the artists donated a percentage of proceeds from sales to the Tawharanui Open Sanctuary project and a number of artists donated fabulous artworks for raffle prizes.

Work on the predator proof fence is due to recommence this month and be complete by the end of April.

Rare robins hatched at Wenderholm

Wenderholm Regional Park, just past Orewa, is one of Auckland's most beautiful regional parks, and the new home for the rare North Island robin. Until recently, the robin, also known as toutouwai, has been extinct on the Auckland mainland for over 100 years.

In 1999 Auckland Regional Council and DoC transferred 21 robins from Tiritiri Matangi to Wenderholm Regional Park. Auckland Regional Council conservation ranger Barry Green, who has worked extensively on the park for a number of years, says the transfer was a huge success, with over 150 young fledged since then.



"This is the result of 10 years of intensive work to reduce the numbers of rats, stoats, and ferrets from the park," Barry says.

To experience the robins firsthand, walk up the hill past the historic Couldrey House to the Puhoi Track.

The robins are very tame, if you brush some of the leaf litter on the track to expose small insects, there's a good chance a robin will come right up to you. For a moderate walk, you can then carry on around the Perimeter Track, which boasts spectacular views of the Hauraki Gulf and new interpretive panels describing the rich history of the area.



FREEPOST No. 143122

**Parks Volunteer
Auckland Regional Council
Private Bag 92012
AUCKLAND**

It starts in parks

... friends and volunteer opportunities

People who want to contribute to and support Auckland's regional parks are invited to join us as friends and volunteers.

Over the years the ARC has engaged people as volunteers, friends and supporters through the "Partners for Parks" programmes. These programmes have been very successful with over 50,000 person-hours of volunteer time being offered each year.

There are a variety of ways people can become involved with the Regional Parks. These include volunteering as an individual, as part of a corporate group, environmental group, sports club, or by joining a friends group.

The friends groups have proved to be particularly effective in managing the volunteer effort on the parks. They offer the opportunity for you to meet and mix with people who share similar interests in and love of the parks.

There are now a number of these operating in the regional parks:

- Friends of the Botanic Gardens
- Friends of Arataki
- Friends of Whatipu
- Friends of Couldrey House
- Torbay Historic Society (Vaughan Homestead)
- Ark-in-the-Park.
- Save Cornwallis Wharf (SCOW)
- Tawharanui Open Sanctuary Society Inc. (TOSSI)
- Shakespear Open Sanctuary Society Inc. (SOSSI)

(Note; that there is a membership fee for some of these groups)

If any of these groups appeal to you make contact with them through the ARC on 366 2000.

Lets get active and meet people

The Auckland Regional Council will continue to make it possible to join as an informal volunteer. There is no charge. Registration will give you the opportunity to participate in a variety of volunteer projects such as tree planting, weed and pest control, general park maintenance and

administrative support. You will receive a quarterly newsletter, Pohutukawa Post. Volunteer workdays usually end in a free BBQ and every year we hold a special celebration for volunteers, providing people to meet each other and the ARC staff.

Join up and have fun as a Regional Park volunteer.

Name _____

Organisation (if applicable) _____

What are your interests/skills? _____

How active are you? Very active Moderately active Low level activity

Contact address _____

Contact number _____

Email address _____ Would you like to receive newsletters by email?

Interested in joining?

You can either complete this form and post back to us or phone the ARC on 366 2000 or see www.arc.govt.nz/ looking after our parks

Top shelf views



Arataki Visitor centre view

Mt Donald McLean

See all the way to Mt Taranaki on a clear day.

Directions: off Whatipu Road, Waitakere Ranges.

Arataki Visitor Centre

Panoramic views from the decks.

Directions: Scenic Drive, past Titirangi.

Duder Regional Park

360 degree views including the Hauraki Gulf in splendour.

Mangatāwhiri Valley

Stunning vistas of the Hunua Ranges.

Whakenewha Regional Park, Waiheke Island

Views from the Pa site of the sweeping half moon beach and back to Auckland City.

Cudlip Point, Mahurangi Regional Park

Look out over the entrance to the Mahurangi Harbour and the islands beyond.

Directions: See brochure for directions to Mahurangi Regional Park. Then follow the track signs to Cudlip Point.

Pae O Te Rangi

From the top of Pae O Te Rangi farm is one of the best unimpeded views of the Auckland Region.

Directions: Take the Bethells / Te Henga Rd then turn on to Long Road, which turns into Long Rd Track (at which point most people park and walk unless they have 4WD).



Sullivan Bay Camping Ground at Mahurangi Bay

The Big Clean Up

The Big Clean Up is ARC's environmental education campaign for householders. It focuses on a different environmental issue every few months, and at the moment the Big Clean Up is all about enjoying our regional parks - Live It, Love It! The information below is about how you bring the parks back to your backyard.

Create a park in your own backyard!

Regional Parks are a fantastic way to experience nature, native plants, birds and animals. But another way to enjoy all of these things is to bring the park back to your own backyard (or school yard).

Here are some of The Big Clean Up's simple ways to create a park in your own backyard.

Plant natives

Planting native plants is good for our environment in many ways: it increases Auckland's biodiversity, encourages birdlife and it creates natural ecosystems.

- Grow plants and trees that birds like - for example koromiko, karamu, fivefinger (whauwhaupaku), nīkau, cabbage tree, kowhai, flax and tītoki.
- Mulch your garden waste and put it around your plants. Your plants as well as birds and insects will benefit.
- Because native plants are naturally adapted to New Zealand's environment, they usually don't take much looking after - another good reason to plant them in your garden.

Dont buy plant pests, and get rid of plant pests already in your backyard

Plant pests or invasive plants destroy natural areas by:

- Forming a dense mat, smothering seedlings and preventing germination
- Climbing as vines and eventually strangling or smothering trees
- Rapidly multiplying, changing the ecosystem and reducing the number of native species
- Smothering waterways - foreign water plants are quite different from native water plants and our native fish, including whitebait, cannot adapt
- Once the plants in an area change, native animals lose their home and food source and we will lose them.

Mulch your garden waste

Mulch is simply a blanket of material that you can spread around your plants and gardens. Mulch is made of organic material (grass clippings, bark chips etc) or inorganic material (stones, plastic etc).

Mulch can prevent weed growth and maintain even soil temperature.

Organic mulch also improves the soil by decomposing and spreading the organic waste in to the soil.

Mulch stops the soil from drying out which means you don't have to water your garden as often - saving you time and money.

Some of the best mulching materials include grass clippings, leaves and newspaper.

Control animal pests

Animal pests such as possums and rats cause damage to natural areas by:

- Stripping large specimen trees, such as pōhutukawa, of their leaves and flowers
- Eating fruits and flowers of plants, depriving native birds of their natural food source
- Eating eggs and young birds
- Eating native insects and snails.

Once animal pests become established the native ecosystem suffers. You can make a real difference to our native bush and wildlife, as well as to your own garden, by controlling animal pests.

So what is the best solution?

Make sure you know which plants are invasive so that you can remove them from your garden and so that you don't buy them.

For more information about animal or plant pests, what are great alternatives, and which plants attract native birds into your garden,

contact: ARC on 09 366 2000, or visit www.arc.govt.nz

Learning Through Experience

... education programmes in parks

Auckland Regional Council offers a wide range of exciting and innovative programmes in regional parks. Partly funded by the Ministry of Education, the programmes are packed with 'hands-on' experiences – just what teachers and students really appreciate - getting their hands and feet dirty in the real world!

The Regional Parks provide the ideal environment to cover concepts such as conservation, farming, plant and animal cycles, food webs/chains, photosynthesis, camouflage, adaptation, plant nutrition and reproduction, and the diversity and variety of plant, insect and animal life (the possibilities are endless). Social Studies, Art and Technology are not forgotten either - we even have an 1883 Bush Camp where students experience their heritage first hand and become workers for the day!

Visits may be one or two hour excursions, camps, sleepovers, day camps, guided discovery walks or independent field studies. Many programmes have an extensive resource, packed with background information, teaching and learning activities and ideas for assessment.

Transport subsidies

There is no need for any school to miss out on the opportunity to learn first hand what the environment is about through lack of funds. Bus subsidies are available through the Pathways to Parks programme - between 50 to 75% may be granted towards the cost of the bus, depending on funds available at the time of application.

All schools receive several copies a year of our programme booklet Learning Through Experience and our Education catalogue but if you can't find it contact:

ARC Customer Service Centre on 09 366 2000

Or download from our website: www.arc.govt.nz

click on education/Learning Through Experience



Botanic Gardens education programme



Arataki 'Bush Camp' education programme.

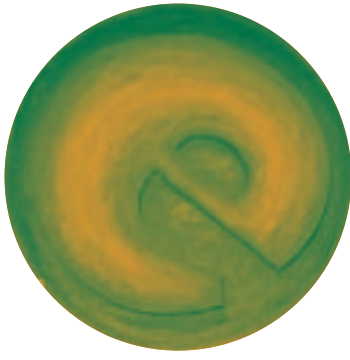


Ambury Farm education day.

'stimulating, interesting and fun'

"children actively involved all day – a **real experience** they get nowhere else"

What's on in the neighbourhood



School

an extract from the 'City Issues' series

Adding value to open spaces

- Look at your map of open spaces in your neighbourhood.
- Ask yourself—Does this neighbourhood have enough open space?
- How could the open spaces in your neighbourhood be improved? (this is called adding value)
- THINK about the different groups who live in your neighbourhood. What do they need in the open spaces? What do you want? What can be done about adding value to your neighbourhood?

You, YOU, can make things happen!

- STEP 1** – Think about ONE open space that you would like to see improved (add value to).
- STEP 2** – Find ways of adding value e.g. contact the local council for information.
- STEP 3** – Find out who in the local community would be interested in supporting you. Talk to a range of adults and people your own age to determine their views.
- STEP 4** – Find out who are the decision-makers. Who has the power to have the final say? (Local or Regional Council?). These are the people to whom you will make your presentation. Check out your local newspaper. This should provide you with valuable information about who has the power to do what.

- STEP 5** – Put together a proposal/report of what you want to see happen.
- STEP 6** – Decide who is going to present the proposal, where and how.
- STEP 7** – Present the proposal. (Remember all people have a right to put their ideas to Council).



It matters what other people think!

The Auckland Regional Council invests time and money into finding out what people think about the Auckland region – what they like/dislike and what they want in the future.

Carry out your own research Ask four people of different ages, sex, occupations and cultural backgrounds, for their comments about the following issues. Record their ideas in the spaces below.

QUESTION – STATEMENT

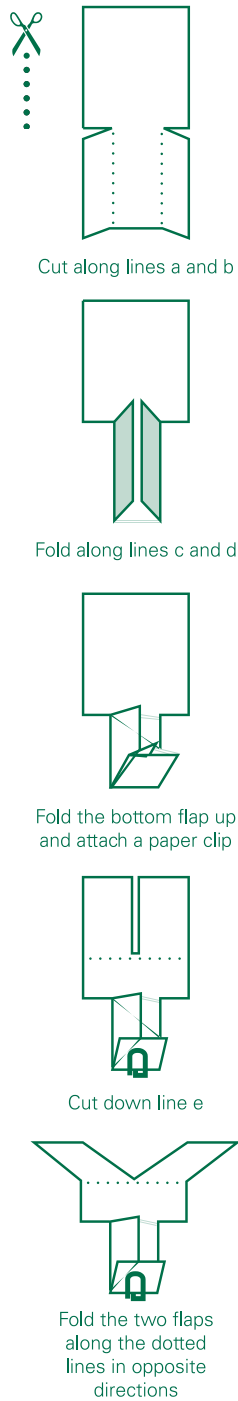
INTERVIEWEES COMMENTS

ONE: We've got enough open spaces.	1.	3.
	2.	4.
TWO: People should be able to fence off part a beach if their house backs onto it.	1.	3.
	2.	4.
THREE: Care of open spaces is the councils responsibility.	1.	3.
	2.	4.
FOUR: People should be able to do anything they like in public open spaces.	1.	3.
	2.	4.
FIVE: Dogs have rights to open spaces.	1.	3.
	2.	4.
SIX: Regional Parks should be closed to people.	1.	3.
	2.	4.
SEVEN: Older people don't need open spaces – they should be left for younger people.	1.	3.
	2.	4.

ECO craft activity

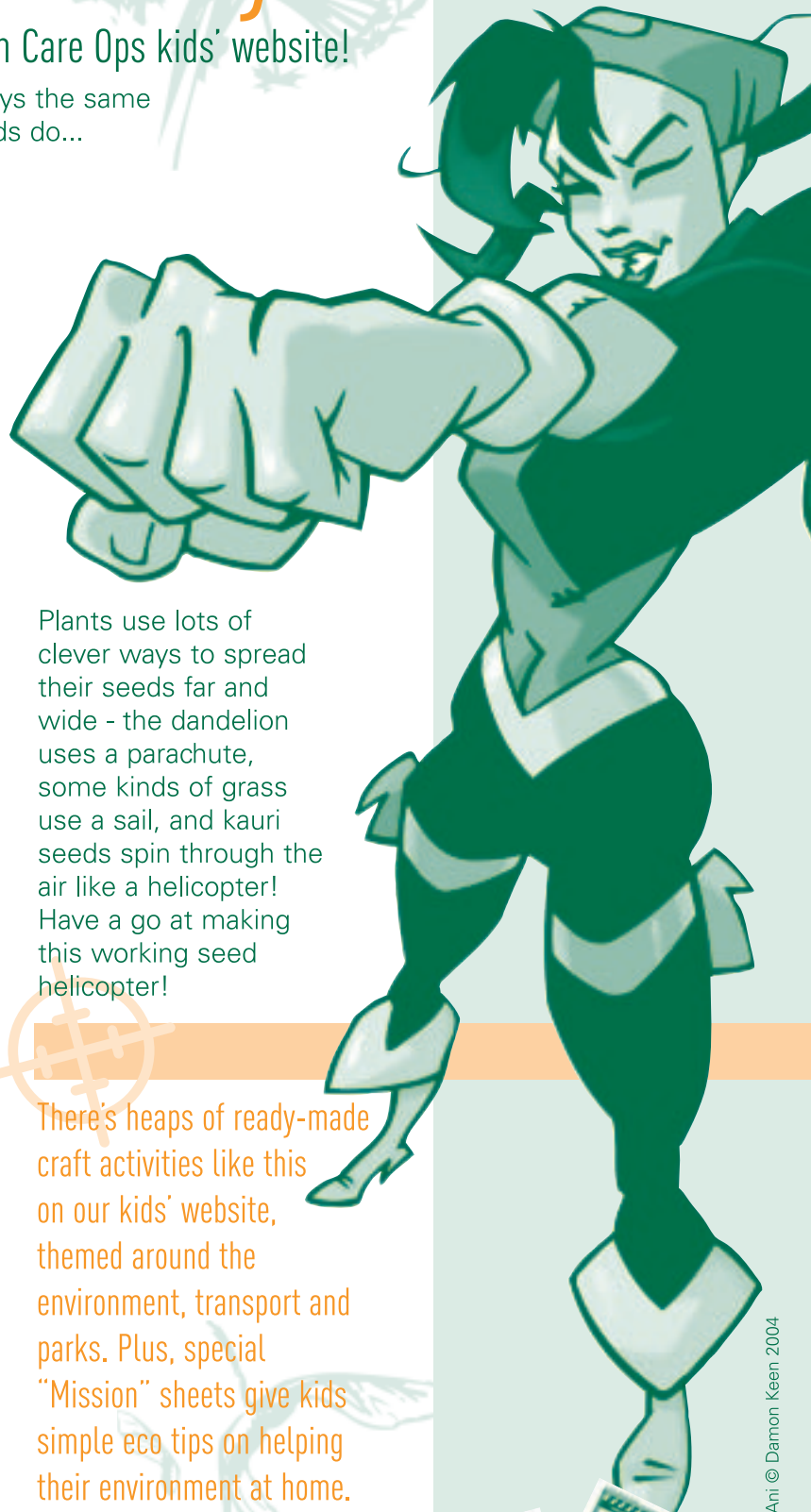
Here's a fun activity from Agent Ani's Earth Care Ops kids' website!

Make this simple working helicopter that employs the same method to move through the air that some seeds do...



Plants use lots of clever ways to spread their seeds far and wide - the dandelion uses a parachute, some kinds of grass use a sail, and kauri seeds spin through the air like a helicopter! Have a go at making this working seed helicopter!

There's heaps of ready-made craft activities like this on our kids' website, themed around the environment, transport and parks. Plus, special "Mission" sheets give kids simple eco tips on helping their environment at home.



Agent Ani © Damon Keen 2004

Funding for environmental projects

EIF (Environmental Initiatives Fund)

The Auckland Regional Council established the Environmental Initiatives Fund to encourage and assist you to care for your local environment. We support practical projects that enhance, restore and protect aspects of Auckland's natural, cultural and physical environment.

We assist schools, communities, care groups, iwi, and individual landowners to care for their environment by providing financial assistance and staff expertise.

How much money is available?

The total funding available for distribution varies each year. This is a contestable fund and successful groups usually receive grants ranging from \$200 - \$5,000.

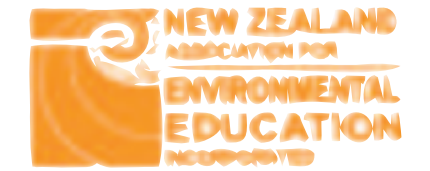
Check out our website for further details contact the EIF Coordinator, Tamara Faanana on (09) 366-2000, ext 7120 or email tamara.faanana@arc.govt.nz

(Priority will be given to schools who can clearly demonstrate learning outcomes for students; involve students in the planning and implementation of the project; and who are working towards developing sustainable practices as outlined in the Enviroschools programme.)

Next funding round – applications close Thursday August 26



Join Up!



Joining the NZAEE (Auckland Branch) offers these exclusive member benefits:

- PRIORITY bookings for NZAEE Workshops and Seminars
- DISCOUNTS for NZAEE Seminars
- YOUR OWN personal copy of E vibe News
- PLUS a host of other benefits!

NZAEE aims to provide a network and framework to promote environmental education initiatives in New Zealand; and to encourage and promote environmental education training for formal and informal sectors.

Membership Application Form

Student/low wage	\$15
Individual	\$30
School/Non-profit	\$35
Corporate	\$150

NZAEE is not a GST registered organisation.

Please find enclosed \$ _____ payment for subscription.

Name _____

Organisation _____

Address _____

Email _____

Complete and cut off this membership form. Make cheques payable to NZAEE.

Post to: NZAEE Auckland Branch
c/o Jami Williams
Sustainable Business Network
PO Box 147 263
Ponsonby

For more great activities and environmental missions, visit www.arc.govt.nz/kids

An ABC of Heritage



Cornwallis wharf.



Scott Homestead (1877)



A horse and cart contraption (called a koneke)

- A** is for archaeologists, archives and architecture
- B** is for battle sites, bridges, baches and burial grounds
- C** is for caves, carvings, crafts, churches
- D** is for dams – the kauri ones
- E** is for education – learnings from the past
- F** is for forts, flora and fossils
- G** is for gardens and gumdigging
- H** is for hotels, homesteads (and hovels)
- I** is for icons and inns
- J** is for jetty
- K** is for kai and kainga
- L** is for landing sites, landscapes and lighthouses
- M** is for memories, middens, mission stations, mansions and museums
- N** is for navigation
- O** is for old things, oral history and oratory
- P** is for pa, pits, pillboxes, and portages
- Q** is for the quaint and quirky, quarries and quagmires
- R** is for records, redoubts and rock drawings
- S** is for stories, schools, sculptures, stonefields and shipwrecks
- T** is for taonga, trails, trees, terraces and tapu places
- U** is for urupā
- V** is for voices, visitor centres and volcanoes
- W** is for waterfalls, wharves and wahi tapu sites
- X** is for the x-rated (excluded from history books)
- Y** is for you and yours – participants in history
- Z** is for your zest and zeal for heritage!

The WWF Organic Gardens in Schools Fund

This fund has been established to provide financial assistance to schools that currently have, or want to have organic gardens as part of their environmental education programmes.

Funding is available for purchase of gardening materials, seedlings and tools, wages for garden facilitators from the schools community and teaching resources for the classroom. The

purpose of this fund is to help facilitate the wider uptake of organic gardening as part of the environmental education platform in New Zealand.

Grants of up to \$3,000 will be made available.

For further information contact Wendy Barry at wendy.barry@wwf.org.nz or call on 04 499 2930. Postal address: **WWF PO Box 6237 Wellington**

Websites

ARC Kids Website

www.arc.govt.nz/kids

The ARC kids website has fantastic information and games to help students understand their environment and how to help look after it. Check out the 'Park It' mission, where kids can play an interactive game called 'Whack a Pest' defending a park against ferrets, possums and rats! Plus they can print out a mission with simple tasks to do at home or school to help look after the planet.

ARC Website

www.arc.govt.nz

The Parks pages on the ARC website have an interactive map where you can click on a park name and info out how to get there, what the park is like, where the picnic sites are etc. The webpages also have information about events, planting days and buildings/campsites you can hire for group functions.

Kiwi Conservation Club

www.kcc.org.nz/index.asp

"The Kiwi Conservation Club offers children the gift of nature, encouraging them to enjoy, understand and love the natural world". Check out their website for more details.

Meadowfresh Website

www.meadowfresh.co.nz/rainy_day/island_game.php#

'Dr Trehuggers Island Mission' is an interactive game where kids aim to conserve and bring the island back to how it would have been before there was anybody living in New Zealand.

Enjoy the parks from your desk!

www.arc.govt.nz/arc/auckland-regional-parks/screensavers.cfm

Would you like to be inspired and enjoy the Auckland regional parks network while you're at work?

Download the Auckland Regional Parks screensavers from ARC's website and enjoy great photos of the beautiful parks network.

Resources

Regional Parks Guide



ARC Regional Parks guide is a fantastic resource for information about Auckland's 21 regional parks. Call **366 2000** to get your copy of the parks brochure.

Individual Parks brochures

The ARC call centre also holds copies of individual parks brochures, which give more information about each of the regional parks. You can also get copies of these brochures by calling **366 2000**.

City Issues

Two of the City Issues booklets are particularly relevant to this topic – Open Spaces, Biodiversity and Natural Heritage. City Issues packs are in all Auckland primary and intermediate schools – or you can download it free from:

<http://www.arc.govt.nz/arc/education/education-resources/>

Learning Through Experience

You can download the Learning Through Experience booklet free at:

<http://www.arc.govt.nz/arc/education/learning-through-experience/>. It gives you information about all our Learning Through Experience hands-on programmes for schools, in parks.

Education Catalogue

Download our full Education Catalogue at: www.arc.govt.nz/arc/education/education-resources/ or call **366 2000** for a copy to be posted to you.

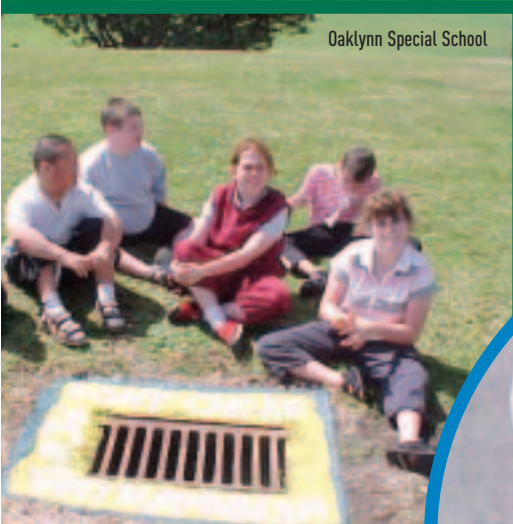


Save the drain for rain!

Paint the grate and get free paint!

Over 60 schools participated in our environmental action programme –

fantastic!



Here are some of our enviro artists in action

– check out our website in April for more photos!

www.arc.govt.nz

Thanks to our sponsors, Resene Paints and Haydon Brushes.