

After a milder start to spring, cold squally weather in the last while has got us all longing for the sun. The tuis haven't been too fazed though, continuing to serenade quite a few lucky folk in Hamilton. Hopefully the wind, wet and cold hasn't done too much damage in gullies.

In this mail out

The focus of this mail out, as well as updating you on some gully news and happenings is the mail list itself. We'd like to take this opportunity to make sure we have all your contact details correct and invite you to also offer the opportunity to neighbours and others to join the gully restoration programme.

To conserve resources and to protect the environment, where possible we would prefer to send you information via email. Please take a minute to complete the form enclosed, fold and post back to us - and you'll go in the draw for one of four \$25 plant vouchers.

Plants for gullies scheme update

Earlier this year we provided an average of approximately 40 plants to 55 Hamilton restorers and next year we hope to do the same. Whether you're new to gully restoration and looking for some colonising plants or whether you've got a well established gully and are looking to add biodiversity with some of our rarer local treasures we look forward to receiving an application from you next year (**note that you do need to be in Hamilton to qualify**).

Tis the season to be weeding

Summer (Christmas time) is the time to hit the weeds in preparation for next steps in restoration so now is the time to plan how you'll tackle weedy areas in preparation for the June 2010 planting season.

Monitoring the activity patterns of Hamilton's bats

Hamilton city is one of the few cities in New Zealand with a resident population of native long-tailed bats (*Chalinolobus tuberculatus*). Darren Le Roux is an MSc student at the University of Waikato currently investigating bat activity in Hamilton city. Darren is intensively monitoring bat activity at two field sites. One within Hamilton city and the other on the edge of the city using automated bat monitoring detectors. These detectors non-invasively record bat echolocation calls between the hours of sunset and sunrise across different nights, seasons, weather conditions, microhabitats and other environmental variables such as temperature, rainfall and percentage of lunar illumination. Most bat species use high frequency echolocation calls for foraging and navigation and when a bat flies within the detection range of the detectors the echolocation calls are recorded with a time and date 'stamp'. The echolocation recordings are automatically transformed into a lower, more audible frequency which allows the human ear to detect them. Basically by acoustically 'spying' on the bats valuable information about their activity patterns and habitat is gained without having to catch or handle individuals. Darren says "they are telling me what they up to without even being aware of it".

p.t.o



GULLY TIPS

1. Rat rage. If rats are a problem in your gully or garden baby birds (including future generations of tui) will be grateful of an increased life expectancy. You can use bait or a mechanical trap (both of which are available from hardware stores and many supermarkets). It is most important that these traps or bates are fixed and covered so they only kill rats.
2. Possum problems. To borrow a timms trap contact Gerard Kelly, email kirsten.gerry@clear.net.nz or phone 8566563 (please leave voice message if not available). Instructions on how to safely set a timms trap to catch only possums are available on the HCC and EW websites (type timms trap into the search box).
3. Weed busting. Keen to bust some weeds? Get a group of neighbours together and apply for weedbuster funding. With this fund you can apply for small scale costs such as tools, herbicides, mulcher hire, greenwaste disposal or promotional activities within communities to get Weedbusters groups off the ground. For more information contact Wendy Mead Ph 8590835 or email wendy.mead@ew.govt.nz
4. Remember to fill in the attached form to confirm we have your correct details and email address if appropriate. You might get a plant voucher out of it and will help us run the gully restoration programme effectively for Hamilton.

Hamilton's bats continued

A previous PhD study undertaken by Andrea Dekrout found that Hamilton bats are strongly associated with the Waikato River in the Southern part of the city. The bats were found to roost in a range of old growth native and exotic trees including gum (*Eucalyptus* spp.), pine (*Pinus radiata*), willow (*Salix cinerea*) and oak (*Quercus* sp.). Old exotic trees are often undervalued in conservation management but are extremely important for urban bats and more effective management of these trees and river margins would make a huge difference to the ecology of the bats. The findings from Darren's study are anticipated to further increase our knowledge of long-tailed bat behaviour and ecology in the urban environment. Recommendations will be developed for the long-term monitoring and management of the species in and around Hamilton city so bats can hopefully have a bright future in the city.

A free evening..... Come and hear (and hopefully see) the bats for yourself with Darren on the evening of 22 October at 7.30 pm and the 19th November at 8 pm. Ring or email Tim Newton (Ph 838 6878, email: tim.newton@hcc.govt.nz) to confirm your attendance and meet at the end of Malcolm Street at the above times.

What else you can do:

Where possible avoid non essential removal of large, old trees along the Waikato River Margin and gullies. If you suspect bats could be living in your area certainly contact the Tim Newton (Ph 838 6878) for advice before removing any old-growth trees.

Fish and Streams

Urban Streams Tour 1 November 2009 : 1.30 pm — 4.30 pm

Building on the highly successful gully-themed tours run over the last decade by Tui 2000, this year's tour, run in partnership with the NZ Landcare Trust, will focus on five Hamilton streams. To help unravel the stories around each stream experts have been invited to share their knowledge. Taking the perspective of a native fish, the general themes for the afternoon will be what's in our streams, urban planning: the good and not so good, water quality, community stream restoration successes and importantly, what you can do to help your local stream.

For more info, email monica.peters@landcare.org.nz or phone 07 859 3725
To register, email envirocentre@paradise.net.nz or phone 07 839 4452

Parana Park, Memorial Drive is the place to meet. A bus will transport you to other locations and return to Parana Park at approximately 4.30pm. The tour is free.

Electronic contacts and database check

Don't forget to check and if necessary update your contact details and be in the draw for some plant vouchers.



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Assisting in the ecological restoration of Hamilton's gully systems.