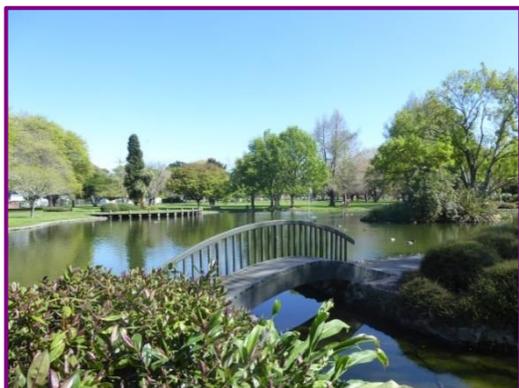




Three local parks which were first awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award in 2019 are Cornwall Park, Flaxmere Park and the Havelock North Village Green. The award recognises parks and reserves across the world which provide high-quality and innovative recreational experiences for their communities. Here in New Zealand, judging is carried out on behalf of Green Flags International by Recreation Aotearoa.



FLAXMERE PARK was named New Zealand's Active Park of the Year in 2020 following a multi-million dollar upgrade.

The attractive seventeen hectare park is a popular venue for community events and to enable performances to be held, there is a concrete pad stage, complete with electricity points.

The range of facilities available to all ensures that the park is a sporting and recreational hub. There are walking and cycling tracks, sports fields, a nine-hole disc-golf course and NZ's first kī-o-rahi field. This is a traditional Māori ball sport that is a combination of netball, handball and tag rugby.

Perhaps the star attraction for local tamariki is a super-size 7.4 metre climbing net tower in a large and varied playground. Adults, wanting to increase their fitness, are also well catered for with five outdoor exercise stations located within the park.

CORNWALL PARK covers over eight hectares and is Hastings' oldest and most established park. It is home to the district's premier cricket ground, a formal rose garden, the John Holt Memorial Display House, a number of historic trees, the King George V Coronation Monument, the Osmanthus Chinese Gardens, an attractive pond which is home to a large number of ducks, an aviary and a premier playground completed in December 2019. Playground equipment includes a splash pad, swings, a 10 metre high climbing tower with rope bridges, mini-trampolines, slides and monkey bars.



The park, with its mature trees providing shade during the hot summer months, is a popular venue for outdoor events including 'Christmas in Cornwall Park', weekly 'Summer in the Park' concerts during January and February and 'International Cultures Day'.



THE VILLAGE GREEN in Havelock North completes the trio of Green Flag parks. Its premier playground, including climbing frames, swings, extensive water play feature, slides, xylophone and roundabout makes it a very popular destination for families. It's also a great venue for outdoor events.

There is a large grassed open space, picnic tables, a skate park and an attractive pavilion with an extensive paved area. This is the former Havelock Village Green Cricket Pavilion, a historic building which was originally located close to the village pool at the Duart Road end of the green. It was relocated to its current site and refurbished during 2016/17.

To find out more about these fabulous, award-winning parks and other lovely parks and reserves in the area, head to <https://www.hastingsdc.govt.nz> and search 'Reserves'.



UNSUNG HEROES: If you're visiting Duart House in Havelock North and wonder who keeps the various flowerbeds around the historic homestead looking fabulous, let me introduce you to the two green-fingered volunteers who have worked tirelessly over the years to help council contractors maintain the extensive gardens.

Joan Ruffell (left) and Maggie Brown often put in up to ten hours a week planting, weeding, pruning and clearing the large beds of colourful annuals, perennials and roses - and they do so with a real enthusiasm. Last winter they planted 300 perennials supplied by the council, while Joan has maintained the lower native areas for the past five years. For larger jobs, such as mulching, up to seven volunteers can turn up but Joan and Maggie are there all year round, come rain, hail or shine.

GROWING GARDENERS: Greendale/Tamatea Scout Group has established a native garden area in Anderson Park just beside their den, with support from the Napier City Council, Plant Hawke's Bay and using mulch from Jim's Tree and Stump Removal. It's very handy for their members aged between five and sixteen to access, for both regular maintenance and training purposes. "We wanted to undertake a project



that, not only gave the boys and girls a sense of achievement and pride, but also gave back to the local community that help us so much as a group," says Cub Section Leader, Callum Fisher.

This was a vision Callum and fellow Cub leader Chris Comber discussed around a campfire over a year ago. "The theme we have come up with for the garden is 'Ki uta ki tai' (from the mountains to the sea)," he says. "I think this covers what we do as scouts nicely, as we spend time in our beautiful bush as well as looking after our beaches." One of the parents, Chris Bryant-Toi, a tutor at the EIT, has designed a sculpture for the garden. It will incorporate a small clay tile from each youth member and leader with a pressing of something from our bush to our sea.

Callum explained that they are hoping this will be something where, in the future, the youth can bring their children and proudly say, "I helped plant this garden and that's my clay tile."



Ross McLean, who I know as Dot the miniature schnauzer's human dad, is a bioscientist who carries out research into alternative food sources for honeybees. Bees are just so important for their role in pollination of fruit trees and crops. For the past four years, Ross has been researching the use of minerals concentrated from seawater as part of a novel diet for honeybees, to help make them healthier and more resistant to pathogens like the varroa mite. Now, a dietary supplement has been developed containing marine minerals which has had positive effects on honeybee health, as measured by increased brood numbers, increased worker bees and increased honey yields. To learn more, make a beeline to:- www.beevigorproducts.com



TE WAI MAURI TRUST and Ngāti Pārau held a very successful wānanga for around forty rangatahi and whānau at Waitangi Regional Park last month.

It's a priority for Ngāti Pārau to engage in activities that restore the mauri of the Tūtaekurī awa and some 1,000 native reeds and sedges supplied by Plant Hawke's Bay were planted around the water's edge. The extension to the Waitangi wetland is one of six projects supported this year through the contestable Biodiversity Hawke's Bay Grant (applications for next year open in December). Follow BHB's FB page and website for details.

This restoration work will help to restore fishery habitat in the wetland and estuarine area and contribute to the goal of restoring the area into an abundant mahinga kai.

Click on <https://baybuzz.co.nz/waitangi-wananga/> to find out more about the Trust's great work.

PICTURE PERFECT

This stunning drone shot taken by HBRC's Stevie Smidt, a dab hand with the aerial camera, provides an amazing bird's-eye view of members of Forest and Bird's Napier Branch during their annual Waitangi Regional Park planting day last July.

The HBRC worked with Forest and Bird, KiwiRail, Fish & Game, the Waitangi Shooters Association and DOC, along with the Ātea a Rangi Educational Trust to transform the neglected wetlands on the railway side of SH 51 at Awatoto.



For newsletter readers who aren't local, the outline of Hawke's Bay's iconic Te Mata Peak behind Havelock North where I live, is in the background and, looking seaward, you can see the coastline heading out to Cape Kidnappers where there is a world famous gannet colony and golf course.

The restoration of these wetlands is a great example of what can be achieved when a council does the heavy-lifting and is then supported by boots on the ground in the form of willing volunteers, happy to help get thousands of plants established to enhance the ecosystem and increase biodiversity.



The Conservation Company in CHB has been project manager for on-going research into the 'Nationally Critical' rated long-tailed bat. These tiny flying mammals, so rare that they are only one step away from becoming extinct, are being monitored in A'Deane's Bush and in tiny bush remnants close by.

As a result of some being caught in nets and fitted with specially made transmitters, delighted researchers found eighteen communal roost trees, where bats in the colony give birth and congregate with their young.

Fun Facts: A baby bat is called a pup. To avoid predators, a mother bat will shift her pup to a new roost nearly every night. Adult bats can fly at 60 km per hour.



Friends of A'Deane's Bush held a very successful planting day at the end of September. Some 300 trees were planted as well as maintenance work completed in the area of the carpark.



A separate planting day was held soon after, when students from Sherwood School, an Enviroschool in CHB, turned out to help. Under the supervision of Kay Griffiths from The Conservation Company, the children not only put in lots of plants but also learnt all about the benefits of how the various native plantings will improve the environment and encourage biodiversity.



Rotary Havelock North members recently made and then donated some sturdy benches to the Te Mata Park Trust.

"The Trust is delighted with the addition of four new bench seats in Te Mata Park, made possible thanks to the motivated team of Charlie Fergus and Colin Wake," says Trust Manager, Emma Buttle.



"Park user surveys highlighted that more well-placed furniture would be a welcome addition. The Rotary team willingly gave up their time and resources to install these new seats, and we are immensely grateful for their generosity." Emma also said that the new seats would mean that people can stop and enjoy the spectacular scenery, whilst catching their breath.



TAINUI TAONGA THREATENED: Back in 2008, Hastings District Council's Parks and Reserves managers failed to implement multiple recommendations made to protect the former Hikanui Pā site in Tainui Reserve, Havelock North, which were included in an archaeological report by Auckland firm CFG Heritage Ltd.

Recently, the Council engaged Archaeology Hawke's Bay to produce an updated report on the sadly neglected site.

What Council got from heritage consultant, Dr Gaylyne Carter, was scathing criticism. She reported that the historically and culturally significant site was suffering from on-going neglect

and unchecked damage, that Parks and Reserves staff needed training in archaeological awareness and recognition and that the Council had allowed the area to deteriorate for many years. She documented that an urgent protection and rehabilitation plan for the Pā site and Terrace V21/245 must be a top priority - to delay this would mean further desecration of the vulnerable, wahi tapu site.

Thank goodness for Dr Carter's knowledge and expertise and also thank goodness she had the guts to record HDC's lack of cultural competence and negligence in very plain English. HDC has no excuse.



In 2019, I wrote to councillors, alerting them to the fact that managers had ignored the 2008 report. In March 2020, I penned a Talking Point article for the *Hawke's Bay Today*, headed 'Pā deserves more attention'. I pointed out that the Pā site was badly neglected, being damaged by unauthorised tracks everywhere and that mountainbikers were riding all over it. My concerns were ignored. Council has consistently stonewalled me since then and has made no effort to protect the site, which is why the area has deteriorated further.

Council cannot ignore Dr Carter's report and they cannot ignore Māori scholar, Dr Antony Cole. His presentation confirmed that Hikanui Pā, along with Tainui and other Havelock North reserves, have high heritage status and cultural significance. On a scale of 0 - 10, with 10 being a very high score, Dr Cole rates them as a 9 or a 10. The Council has misjudged their importance.

Minister Kiritapu Allan has been advised of HDC's neglect of this culturally important site and Heritage New Zealand told me that HDC has recently been issued with an Archaeological Authority for tree felling at Tainui Reserve, based on Dr Carter's archaeological report and recommendations.

FUTURE FOREST: Richie Hill, the arborist whose expertise helped save the Keirunga Oaks from being clear-felled by HDC in 2019, was commissioned by the Council to provide an arboricultural report on Tainui. In what is a detailed and outstanding report, he identified that the old pines and other exotic trees on the former Pā site were also damaging it and that the logical solution was to remove them all and replace them with a native forest.



Old pines are damaging the former Pā site

In total, Richie recommends the removal of 433 trees from Tainui, mainly old pines, and he says that they too should be replaced with a native forest. What an amazing, exciting and forward-thinking plan, requiring the input of a number of experts.

Imagine how the currently neglected reserve would look in fifty or a hundred years' time. It would be an established haven for native birds and wildlife and, with the former Pā site protected and preserved, a cultural destination. These reports and others on Eskdale Park and Frimley Park can be read at:- www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/RMPs2021 (Scroll to Havelock North Reserves Presentations).

If you're aware of a conservation champion or something relevant going on in Hawke's Bay, please let me know and I'll be happy to follow it up:- jessicamaxwell2017@gmail.com



**"Some people talk to animals.
Not many listen though. That's the problem."**

A.A. Milne

