



Several Taradale reserves covering the Western Hills offer good connectivity for keen walkers, though you need to be quite fit if you're undertaking more than one track at a time.

Maggie's Way (Te Ara o Matareta) opened in August 2016 and is named in memory of Margaret (Maggie) McCoward, a local Taradale resident who, with husband Basil, was a keen walker.

The construction costs were partly funded by a generous bequest from Mr McCoward's estate to the Napier Rotary Pathways Trust and the project was supported by Napier City Council. A sign commemorating the McCowards' contribution is sited at the shelter by the car park at the start of the pathway at Ōtātara Pā.



Of course, the dominant feature of the landscape behind Taradale is Sugarloaf Hill, which can be accessed by driving up to the top of Cumberland Rise, followed by a steep climb to the trig 127 metres above sea level, or via Lance Leikis Reserve at the top of Tironui Drive.



A third option is to join Halliwell's Walk off Church Road between the south side of the Church Road Winery and No 104. Once climbed, the views from the top are 360° and spectacular; well worth the effort of getting there.

A very pleasant, shorter walk can be enjoyed by driving up Kent Terrace and joining Maggie's Way there. If you turn right, there's a choice of walking up as far as a picturesque little lake which has an



easy track around it, or continuing past it to re-join Kent Terrace and walk back down the road. If you're feeling energetic, you can continue on the limestone path and on up to the top of the hill.



Mary Halliwell, whose family previously owned the land and gifted both Sugarloaf and Lance Leikis Reserves to the community, told me that the dam was in the middle of the farm and was a perfect spot to take a break when mustering cattle. She recalled that, more often than not, Bruce, the old huntaway dog, could be found lolling around in the dam, instead of working! Times were difficult after Mary's husband

Keith died and she found this was a peaceful, secluded and sheltered spot for reflection. When Mary subdivided the farm, creating Tironui Drive and the surrounding lifestyle blocks, she said that she wished to keep this area as a reserve for the people and she's glad she did. Now everyone is able to enjoy it.



FROM THE ARCHIVES: Here's an interesting photo Mary sent me which shows Tironui Drive being carved out of Sugarloaf farmland by contractors Beattie Bros in 1995.

Keith Halliwell, who died in 1979, had purchased the 500 acre Sugarloaf farm from his grandfather, who was known as 'Hellfire Halliwell' (apparently, he chased the milkman down the main street of Taradale on his horse after a run in!). To pay death duties, Mary started to subdivide the farm. Between 1981 and 2020, Mary completed the Kent Terrace and Cumberland Rise subdivisions, followed by Pukekura Place and seventeen Tironui Drive lifestyle blocks which sold for \$150,000 - \$275,000. When IRD wanted a further \$250,000 in unjust land tax, Mary gambled the farm, took them to court with her QC, Tony Molloy and, four years later, won! Halliwell v IRD changed the course of accounting and legal laws in the Commonwealth. The Halliwell Estate plans to donate a seat on Sugarloaf to commemorate the Estate's contribution.



SAFE (Save Animals From Exploitation) is New Zealand's leading Animal Rights Charity. Its recently elected Board Chair is former Green MP, Gareth Hughes.

Following The High Court ruling that the Minister of Agriculture, Hon Damien O'Connor and his advisors from the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) acted illegally when they failed to phase out farrowing crates and mating stalls for sows, SAFE is campaigning for the government to appoint a Commissioner for Animals. The commissioner would oversee NAWAC, advocate for animals, ensure that NAWAC is accountable and provide external oversight and accountability to MPI, with the main purpose of upholding the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

SAFE says, "If New Zealand wants to consider itself a world leader on animal welfare, then it's clear that NAWAC needs oversight from an independent commissioner who reports directly to Parliament."

To find out more and support this great initiative, head to:- <https://www.safe.org.nz>



WHAT'S IN THE WATER? Tauroa Reserve was the venue for a recent Stream Health Monitoring and Assessment Kit (SHMAK) workshop organised by NZ Landcare Trust's Nathan Burkepile and attended by Havelock North Stream Restoration Project members along with Tauroa Reserve Care Group volunteers.

Project lead, Dr Nicky Solomon (pictured left with Nathan) told me that the SHMAK kits were put together by NIWA to allow for monitoring the health of waterways.

Nathan showed the group how to assess various aspects of the waterway, from the temperature, to levels of phosphate and nitrogen, to the animal life forms. "This is where I lose everybody's attention," Nathan said, as the group became obsessed with spotting creatures in the tray of water and plant debris scooped up from the stream! Although phosphate levels were much higher than ideal, nitrogen levels in the stream were okay, and the variety of water-creatures indicated that the stream was in reasonable health. Next month's newsletter will have details of an up-coming community meeting.



TURTLE TALK: This is a screen shot from an ABC News video I saw on Facebook, showing thousands of olive ridley turtles navigating their way up a beach in Costa Rica to excavate nests and lay eggs. Females can travel thousands of kms to return to the same beach where they themselves hatched to lay their eggs.

These turtles are best known for synchronised nesting in mass numbers, a phenomenon known as 'arribadas'. The eggs are laid in conical nests about forty five centimetres deep, laboriously dug out by the turtles using their powerful hind flippers. On average, each female lays 100 - 110 eggs and hatchlings appear 45 - 65 days later, but there is a very high mortality rate.

Several of the largest olive ridley nesting sites are located on the coast of India near Gahirmatha in Odisha. The coasts of Mexico and Costa Rica also attract high numbers and, of course, they are found in many other tropical and sub-tropical locations around the globe. In 1991, some 600,000 turtles were recorded as nesting along the coast of Odisha in one week, but since then numbers have declined significantly and the species is now rated as 'vulnerable'.

Fun Fact: The sex of baby turtles depends on the temperature of the sand. If incubated at 31° - 32°C, only female hatchlings will be born; if incubated at 28°C or less, solely males will emerge and 29° - 30°C will produce a mixed clutch. I wonder how global warming will affect this delicate balance?



PICTURE PERFECT

Ron Jackson took this great shot of a white-capped mollymawk soaring effortlessly while on a bird-spotting boat trip off the Hawke's Bay coast.

The largest of the mollymawks, they are a typical, medium-sized albatross and are seen frequently from Hawke's Bay south, scavenging around commercial and recreational fishing boats. They have a DOC conservation status of 'Declining'.

Mainly eating fish, squid, krill, salps (tiny free-swimming organisms found in warm seas) and offal from fishing vessels taken from the surface, unlike gannets, they rarely plunge or dive for food.



Sadly, they are the most common albatross species killed by New Zealand trawlers. Most significant mortality occurs in the oceans off South Africa, where an estimated 20,000 birds are killed annually by the South African longline and trawling fisheries.

Their main breeding grounds are the Auckland Islands, especially Disappointment Island (91,000 pairs). They are mostly biennial breeders, not breeding the year after successfully raising a chick.



WAITANGI REGIONAL PARK has been transformed from a neglected coastal wasteland to an energised, cultural destination where people can learn about Māori navigational history, enjoy a walk or a picnic and marvel at the amazing planting which has evolved thanks to a positive collaboration between the HBRC and the community. Here is a link to a short video with some fantastic drone footage to let those of you who haven't visited recently view the enhanced landscape. [Atea A Rangi Waitangi Regional Park on Vimeo](#)



As part of its Environmental Protection Programme, the HBRC has also been busy restoring land around the Tukituki Estuary.

The coastal site is located between the townships of Clive and Haumoana and is part of the Waitangi Regional Park plan. It is described



as a site of ecological significance, home to an eclectic variety of birdlife and wildlife.

A mosaic of mudflats, sedgeland, estuarine wetlands and open water make for a great habitat for birds. The drone shot was taken after old, invasive silver poplars and pest weeds were cleared to make way for around 10,000 carefully chosen natives. Some willows remain to help prevent erosion.



Teaming up with the NZ Landcare Trust (NZLT) and with Plant Hawke's Bay and Habitat Biodiversity and Pest Management Limited providing and planting a range of native plants (funded by the 1 Billion Trees Fund) - along with pest management, the aim is to improve the ecological integrity of the river mouth.

Nathan Burkepille, who is NZLT's Regional Representative for Hawke's Bay, provided the HBRC with some advice early on in the project and said that, "Our lowland rivers and the associated habitat around them have been heavily degraded. This project will reduce the impacts of the degradation and bring back native biodiversity to the lower Tukituki River."



CONGRATULATIONS! Throughout its twenty-year history, the Maraetōtara Tree Trust has been recognised for its outstanding efforts to enhance the water quality in the Maraetōtara River by fencing and extensive riparian planting. Its latest achievement is to come second in the prestigious Supreme Award at the Cawthron New Zealand River Awards: 'Catchment with most progress toward improved river health'.

Since the Trust was formed in 2002, working with the HBRC, farmers, community groups, schools, iwi, contractors and with the support of a long list of generous funders and sponsors, a staggering 170,000 native trees and flaxes have been planted. Read more at: <https://www.cawthron.org.nz/new-zealand-river-awards/maraetotara-catchment-community/>

MANY HAPPY RETURNS!

Staglands Wildlife Reserve & Café, nestled in the picturesque Akatarawa Valley near Wellington, offers visitors a unique and exciting opportunity to connect with nature in a beautiful, natural environment. This year, the reserve celebrates its 50th birthday.



John Simister, who founded the sanctuary in 1972 said, *"It is my belief that an enormously rewarding and lifelong appreciation of wildlife can be kindled by a brief, intense encounter with an animal or a bird. Staglands is my attempt to provide that encounter in an environment that is as good as I can possibly make it."*

Staglands
Wildlife Reserve & Café



Over the years, John has certainly achieved that, sculpting 25 acres of bush, farmland and water into an idyllic, natural home for unusual, iconic and endangered species. Most recently, a new gold standard walk-through Kea Aviary has been opened, the perfect way to kick-start the 2022 anniversary celebrations.

When I asked what visitors could expect to see, Marketing Manager, Wendy Robinson, recommended checking out their recently updated website:- www.staglands.co.nz It's a really cool site with lots of awesome information and

photos of the huge variety of birds and animals which you will encounter during your visit.

Discover The Forest Wetlands, home to a variety of waterfowl, The Stables where lots of young animals are being reared, go through the Toe Toe Aviary to the Old Bush Settlement - and there's a Secret Garden to experience... plus so much more.

One of the overall aims of Staglands is advocacy, by ensuring that all New Zealanders have access to their native wildlife, in as natural surroundings as possible. By creating an interactive, memorable experience, the wildlife park hopes to inspire visitors to become more involved with the environment.



2022 promises to be a very special year for Staglands. Wendy tells me that the team has lots of exciting plans in the making, which they will share in the coming months. What a great opportunity to visit this family-friendly, unique piece of paradise.

I looked on Trip Advisor and it describes Staglands as a 'must see' attraction, suggesting that visitors allow two to three hours for their visit. With a café on site and so much to take in, that could easily stretch out to even longer. Enjoy!



POT OF GOLD: Another \$10,542,000 recently came to Hawke's Bay from the government's **Jobs for Nature Programme** to fund conservation efforts in the region. Included in this, is funding towards restoring the Ahuriri Estuary, pest control in the Northern Ruahine Ranges, restoration of the Te Ngarue and Arapawanui awa, conservation projects between Te Hauke and Waihua and further funding for Te Wai Mauri Limited for its Kaitiaki Rangers to undertake community conservation projects.

While not receiving funding directly, The Cape Sanctuary at Ocean Beach will benefit from the \$2.04 million given to Te Ngahere Limited (a company set up to restore and protect NZ's biodiversity and native environment). Manager, Rachel Ward, told me that the sanctuary is a worksite for the wonderful Te Ngahere team.

"We have four staff allocated from their business for three years, so this will help us massively with maintenance and weed control, as well as upping and expanding predator control," Rachel explained, describing it as "a really cool partnership."



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



*If you're lucky, a dog will come into your life,
steal your heart
and change everything!*

