



Newsletter

PEOPLE CITIES NATURE

September 2022

RESEARCH LEAD MESSAGE

Professor Bruce Clarkson



Kia ora koutou katoa

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the first quarterly update for our new research programme 'Restoring Urban Nature'. With this new tranche of funding, we are carrying on the 'People, Cities & Nature' brand to continue the strong relationships and engagement that we have built over the last five years. However, our new programme seeks to explore many new research questions and has a much wider reach than previously. I want to thank you all for your patience as we have been rebuilding our processes and staffing

because of staff changes and the impacts of COVID. I am particularly pleased that Dr Rachel Nepia has been able to join us as the new Research Programme Manager. It is also rewarding to note the early progress being made on some of our research projects as outlined in the first annual report we have submitted to MBIE. I am looking forward to catching up with all of you, as soon as possible, as we return to more normal travel arrangements and the freedom to meet face to face.

Ngaa mihi nui, Bruce

HIGHLIGHTS

- Special session at the NZ Ecological Society 2021 Conference '*People and Nature in Cities*'
- Bioethics seminar by Prof Yolanda van Heezik
- 27 End-user meetings
- New website up and running





NZES Conference

In November of 2021 Dr Stephen Hartley organised and chaired a symposium on 'People and Nature in Cities' at the annual conference of the New Zealand Ecological Society. This symposium brought together fourteen researchers from institutions around the country to share research related to urban ecology.

Topics ranged from biodiversity in cities, roads and lawns, to architecture, mammal control, politics, and pests.

View research abstracts here <https://confer.eventsair.com/nzes-2021-conference/programme>.



Bioethics Seminar

In May of 2022 Professor Yolanda van Heezik was invited to present an online webinar as part of the Otago Bioethics seminar series. Her presentation on 'What makes a biodiverse garden?' Yolanda introduced the topic of biodiversity in residential settings, and discussed the

development of a biodiversity tool for application in urban centres. Yolanda and the team on Research Aim 1.1 have been working with Auckland Council, Wintec and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to assess implementation of the biodiversity tool and refine aspects of tool design.

See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aa7ZghDstPE&t=2s>

New Recruits

This year we have welcomed to the programme nine new Masters students. They will be working at Otago University and Victoria University of Wellington and contributing to Aims 1.1 and 1.2.



Dr Craig Liddicoat has also been recruited as a Post-doctoral fellow, based at Flinders University. Craig brings 15 years of experience in soil and data science and will be contributing to research on beneficial microbes in urban restored ecosystems under Research Aim 1.3.

In July 2022 we brought on a new programme manager, Dr Rachel Nepia. Rachel has a PhD from the University of Waikato in pollination networks and plant reproductive ecology. She comes from experience in research management and science communication.

Visit www.peoplecitiesnature.co.nz/our-people for bios.



Website Upgrade

The site www.peoplecitiesnature.co.nz, has been upgraded to a new platform. The new website provides a stylish hub for information on both our past research, and our current research plans for the next 4 years.

Please refer to this website for information on our research programme, our team, our research outputs, and upcoming events. For any suggestions on additions to our website please email peoplecitiesnature@gmail.com.



Permanent plot at the Waiwhakaiho project

Ngāti Tawhirikura Collaboration

As part of the 'Jobs for Nature' programme announced by conservation minister Kiri Allen, projects around New Zealand have been offered funding to contribute to conservation programmes that will produce local jobs. Ngati Tawhirikura is one of the organisations that has received funding to undertake an ambitious four-year project restoring the native connection between Taranaki Mounga to Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (Tasman Sea).

Restoration of the Waiwhakaiho ecological corridor began in July 2021. They are using locally grown plants, and involving their iwi in the on-the-ground mahi (work) to provide social and economic outcomes as well as ecological benefits.

Professor Bruce Clarkson has been collaborating with Marie Gregory-Hunt (Ngā Māhanga a Tāiri) to share knowledge about restoration succession and monitoring. So far they have set up two new permanent plots for monitoring, and are trialling planting methods using traditional knowledge of rongoa and companion planting.

Read more about this project at <https://projectcrimson.org.nz/projects/fl-agship-projects/>.

IN THE NEWS

1000minds (2022). Published online May 2022. **Ecologists create new tool for scoring biodiversity of private gardens** <https://www.1000minds.com/about/news/garden-biodiversity>

Breed M. (2022) **The Wilderness Myth**. ABC Radio Big Ideas: Soil, 14 Apr 2022. <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/the-wilderness-myth/13837440>

Breed M. (2022) **Drones and DNA tracking: how these high-tech tools are helping nature heal**. The Conversation, 28 June 2022. <https://theconversation.com/drones-and-dna-tracking-we-show-how-these-high-tech-tools-are-helping-nature-heal-185140>

UPCOMING EVENTS

21 September: Ngā Pou Tuata ō Kirikiroa wānanga - the first of a four-wānanga series based in Hamilton on the topic of maramataka and mātauranga in restoration

27-28 October: O Tātou Ngāhere Conference: Regenerating our landscapes with native forest – Symposium at Te Papa

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Cando-Dumancela C, Davies T, Hodgson R, **Liddicoat C**, Peddle S, Watson C, **Breed MF**. (2022) A practical guide for restoration ecologists to manage microbial contamination risks before laboratory processes during microbiota restoration studies. *Restoration Ecology*. doi: 10.1111/rec.13687

Mohr J, Harrison P, Stanhope J, **Breed MF**. (2022) Is the genomics 'cart' before the restoration ecology 'horse'? Insights from qualitative interviews and trends from the literature. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*. doi: 10.1098/rstb.2021.0381

Watson C, Gardner M, Hodgson R, **Liddicoat C**, Peddle S, **Breed MF**. (2022) Global meta-analysis shows progress towards recovery of soil microbiota following revegetation. *Biological Conservation*. doi: 10.1016/j.biocon.2022.109592



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