



Project De-Vine Trust and Project Mohua Newsletter #14 - Jan 2017

“Working towards environmental restoration of Golden Bay and around Abel Tasman National Park”

Hello neighbours and supporters!

This newsletter is primarily for all the landowners involved with Project De-Vine who are mainly on the eastern side of Golden Bay and over the hill from Riwaka to Marahau. It is you as landowners and pest plant controllers that have made Project De-Vine possible. The newsletter is also for the various team members, DOC and TDC staff, sponsors and supporters near and far. If you have a neighbour in the funded groups without e-mail, please pass this information along to him or her. Apologies if you have more than one copy e-mailed as many people are in several groups. With some 370 landowners in our control areas, properties change hands – if you have sold please contact us so we can update the address list and look for contact details of the new owners. Feel free to skim the contents if the details are not your cup of tea!

- It has been a very busy previous year, with many exciting new projects and contacts made. At the same time, the on-going projects are still happening and receive regular attention to keep the pest vines from re-establishing. For 6 years we have been a non-profit group under the umbrella of Forest and Bird, we have benefitted massively from their local support, insurance cover, financial administration and more recently logistics support from their head office. Since July, we have set ourselves up as an independent Charitable Trust: **Project De-Vine Trust**.
- We are now actively promoting our umbrella organisation – **Project Mohua**, started in 2014 by our volunteer staff. Mohua is the Maori word for Golden Bay also the Yellowhead bird, which was once common here until about 60 years ago. It is a coming together of the different types of eco-volunteer groups working in Golden Bay to create a “mainland island”, between ATNP and Kahurangi National Park: which encompasses the three programmes we are managing:
 - **Project De-Vine** the weedbusting programme to control pest plants in Golden Bay.
 - **StreamCare** the subsidised Riparian planting programme in Golden Bay, which our management team is now looking after, is able to offer subsidised plants with the financial support from the Tasman Environmental Trust, who administer the Cobb Mitigation Fund, and the Marine Farming Association.



Rob Lewis can grow and sell plants at a cost of \$1/plant (excl. GST) minimum 1000. It will take about one year to grow the plants once they are ordered. The best time to order is by the end of August for the plants to be ready for the next winter's planting season.

- To receive approval of funding you need to fill out an online or handwritten form (available by e-mail from admin@projectde-vinetrust.org.nz or from Rob: roblewis@snap.net.nz). Then you pay Rob the balance before he starts growing.
- **Golden Bay Trapping** – a newly formed programme to facilitate the creation of new or the enlargement of existing trapping lines in Golden Bay and work towards setting up trapping in the “halo” of the National Parks where it does not already exist.
- **Project Mohua** will also continue to support all the other independent groups carrying out trapping, bird monitoring and other environmental restoration projects in and around Golden Bay. It holds meetings twice a year in conjunction with DOC. If you wish to attend contact us to receive notification of meetings.

To learn more visit our website www.projectmohua.org.nz

Project Summary

Project De-Vine started as a small local weed busting project, to help landowners, who with invasive vines (Banana passion vine (BPV) and Old man's beard (OMB)). This has grown into a Golden Bay wide project, and recently around Abel Tasman National Park, called the “Halo”.

It is achieving landscape vine control primarily in eastern Golden Bay; some 367 private landowners (4760ha) are included in the project from Wainui Bay to Rameka Creek and further afield. 2015 saw Project De-Vine partner with Project Janszoon and Fonterra to assess and offer pest vine control on properties along the boundary of Abel Tasman National Park (about 60 with control of other pest plants that might threaten the Park) and the Fonterra supply farms (102) in Golden Bay. Supported by a grant from Lotteries New Zealand for one year in 2015 and another one for two years starting now. Second year control work is starting on 40 of those properties and another 20 or so will be visited for the first time in 2017.

Other grants received in 2015:

- DOC Community Fund and Tasman District Council to partially cover the costs of an Operations Manager and set up an office for 3 years.

Other grants received in 2016:

- Rata foundation to carry our pest vine control work in the 7th and 5th years of the properties that are in Stage 1 and 2 respectively.
- InternetNZ foundation for a database to be designed and implemented to cope with the hundreds of landowners and many species we wish to monitor. It includes an app for the team leaders to report data daily.
- TDC Special rates grant to start pest vine control work in the Ligar Bay and Tata area for about 10 weeks - to cover the costs of a team leader and expenses together with a:
- Work and Income NZ subsidy for three unemployed people to cover their wages for 6 months - this will allow us to make a good start on the pest vine control work in Ligar Bay and Tata area and visit other areas with large numbers of vines.

Sponsorship of our working bees generously provided by:

- **Cut'n'Paste**, who supply gel bottles for us to use and give to landowners who attend working bees
- **Nelson Building Society and Motueka Community Board** – to assist with the costs of running working bees in Riwaka valley

About 230,000 pest vines to date have been killed manually with many more sprayed. One third of these are in this last year alone. The vast majority are Banana passion vines (200,000+) with 20,000+ Old man's beard vines and the balance in various others. We plan to kill many thousands more to stop the spread of these rampant, forest destroying vines.

Vine weeds in New Zealand (especially BPV, OMB and Climbing asparagus) are a major threat to regenerating native forest, riparian re-vegetation projects, lowland forest on karst and the margins of National Parks and Reserves in Golden Bay. These vines are capable of smothering low canopy forest, killing the canopy trees and preventing regeneration of native species. Existing strategies for controlling these weeds have not been able to prevent their continued spread and increasing intensity of infestation.

Project De-Vine works extensively with Department of Conservation, Tasman District Council & local businesses.



This large carpet of Banana passion vines in the photos above totally smothered the trees. Now new growth can be seen pushing through the dead vine

Update on the various STAGES and other projects we are involved:

- Much of the area we work in covers landscapes that were in the too hard basket and as such were steadily getting worse. Landowners were "overwhelmed" - the most common word used by them to describe the steady increase in vine numbers and endless seedlings coming from surrounding properties. Climbing asparagus added to the list of controlled pest vines for Stages 1-3.
 1. **Stage ONE** – The upper side of Rocklands Road and Upper Rocklands Road – 16 properties

The previous funding has been used up after 4 years of control work, now in its 7th year.

Stage TWO - The lower side of Rocklands Road and escarpment properties to Rameka Creek – 31 properties. The previous funding has been used up after 4 years of control work.

We have applied and received a limited grant from Rata Foundation to carry out visits to hard to control areas for both of these groups. This is starting soon. Contributions from landowners either in kind or in donations will help to stretch out the grant. Some of the biggest properties will be covered with another grant.

2. **Stage THREE** - Pohara to Matenga Rd (start of Ligar Bay) 161 properties
This funded work is now in its third and final year. The team will be revisiting many of the properties this summer and autumn.

3. **Stage FOUR** – Ligar Bay to Wainui - 96 properties

- **Sub-group - Wainui**

Pest vine control work started in Wainui last year and will continue for a further two years with the second Lotteries funding. Contributions from landowners either in kind or in donations will be much appreciated and help to stretch out the grant.

On the east side of Wainui, control of other plants that Project Janszoon were worried about spreading in to the Abel Tasman National Park (ATNP) is starting. We will appreciate the co-operation of the landowners to deal with these, which include Wild Ginger, Wonga Wonga, Climbing asparagus and Yellow jasmine.

- **Sub-group - Ligar Bay to Tata area and to the top of the ridgeline with Wainui valley**

We have applied and received funding from TDC to carry out an initial round of vine control work in the Ligar Bay to Tata area also subsidised by WINZ (see above). We will not be able to reach all properties fully and will be asking for contributions from landowners either in kind or in donations. This will help to stretch out the grant and be much appreciated.

- Our office staff numbers in Takaka at 12 Motupipi St has increased. It is the second door on the left as you come in. A sign on the door indicates the hours the office is open. With funding from the DOC Community Fund, Tasman District Council and part use of other grants, we have been able to fund the office expenses and take on full time staff to relieve the pressure on our overworked volunteer management team.
Our team now includes an Operations Manager to oversee the logistics of keeping the teams in the field effectively, an Assistant Operations Manager to collate the field work and mapping and data downloading and thirdly, an Administration Assistant to assist with the accounting and clerical work. An accountant has volunteered to be our finance officer. A retired Conservator for the top of the south for the Department of Conservation has also joined us on our Trust Board. We are lucky that we have some very able persons to lift our work to the next level and continue the impetus that we have built up.
- The sea cliffs between Tata Beach and Ligar Bay. The indigenous trees were almost completely covered with Banana passion vines and some Old man's beard. Our team has achieved a nearly full clearance of the vines in 3 sweeps (2014 to 2016) and continue to mop up seedlings – funded by Tasman District Council and Queen Elizabeth II Trust.
- Project De-Vine has partnered with Fonterra, the main dairy company in New Zealand, to carry out free pest plant assessments on every Fonterra supply farm (102) in Golden Bay

over the next four years, on a voluntary basis. By 2030 Fonterra farms are required to plant riparian margins to improve water quality.

Vine weeds are a major threat to the success of riparian plantings. With part of the funding from Lotteries, Project De-Vine is able to offer subsidised vine control work to back up the assessment. Project De-Vine's team has also collaborated with StreamCare East, to provide a subsidised planting programme for the farmers in the Takaka River catchment. StreamCare West well established in the Aorere River catchment. This river recently won the inaugural Morgan Foundation New Zealand River Prize. Fonterra views this partnership of riparian planting and pest vine control side by side as a first for New Zealand.

- Project De-Vine has partnered with Project Janszoon, they are undertaking intensive pest plant and animal control in ATNP, to carry out free assessments on the 60-80 properties in Golden Bay, which are close to the Park boundaries, with the aim of creating a "buffer or halo zone" around the Park. Our assessors also recorded other pest plants that Janszoon were worried about spreading into the park. With funding from Project Janszoon, our control teams will be able to deal with the various outlying pest plants, as well as the vines found in East Wainui and East Takaka properties in the coming years.
- To complete the "halo" around ATNP outside Golden Bay in the Riwaka to Marahau area. We are continuing to encourage the groups there and will be running more working bees and work with local groups in Marahau and the Motueka Valley to run their own vine control initiatives. See photo below



- We are still getting many comments – “What about Takaka Hill and the Old man’s beard there!” We are close to carrying out the control work funded by the NZ Transport Agency and are expecting to start in Feb 2017.
- Project De-Vine attempts to involve everyone in the community in managing weeds. Outside of the main project areas, Project De-Vine has started “Neighbourhood Weedbusting Groups” sponsored by many local businesses, which is providing advice, demonstrating control techniques and leading working bees. This spring we have had a bad run of wet weather and will try again in the late summer. We are happy to offer advice or support to anyone wanting to control invasive plants.
- Motupipi River – Willow control. The Tasman Environmental Trust have commissioned us to produce a feasibility report on controlling the willows, clearing the trunks and readying the banks for native tree planting. This is nearly finished and work should start this autumn.

- We have recently been engaged to assist with the native tree regeneration of a large recently logged property in Ligar Bay. This is a very ambitious project and we are supportive of the owner's plans. We will provide updates as it progresses.



Climbing asparagus:

We have left this information in from the previous Newsletters to remind people about this less visible “sneaky pest”.

This vine is well established in the Pohara area and a few other settlements or isolated sites in Golden Bay. A recent visit to Waiheke Island by one of our team resulted in a tour of a reserve, which is the size of Wainui valley, where it has been systematically controlled from vast areas of deep carpets of the vine to just isolated plants left (see photos below). It has strong climbing shoots that can choke young native seedlings and kill them. We have persuaded the Nelson- Tasman Region Pest Management Committee to include it as a “progressive control” plant for the Pohara area as a test run to raise awareness of it and start to get it under control there. It is hard to kill the larger vines with their many tubers. Thousands of plants have been killed along Pohara Cliffs are over the last 2 plus years.

In Wainui, we are trying to control all CA plants found on the EAST side. There is a large infestation on the WEST side. Whilst we do not have funding to deal with this plant around all of Golden Bay, we do urge those with it on their properties to try to kill it. The birds like the orange/red berries and will move the long lasting seed quite a way. You can contact us for advice on control methods. We are using a spray method with very low concentrations of glyphosate, as ¼% or ½%, with no additives, is enough to knock it down out of bushes and trees and not harm most native seedlings, then follow up with 2% on the regrowth to kill all the tubers. Left alone, it will only get worse!



The above photos show 1/ Left - without any control of Climbing asparagus with no tree or shrub seedlings able to survive and 2/ Right – a controlled area with the left half due for repeat control and the right half recently controlled. Native seedlings are starting to come back, but hard to see in the photo.

- We send out a newsletter yearly to all involved. Updates during the year will be available on the Project Mohua website www.projectmohua.org.nz
- We receive support from Manawhenua ki Mohua through Onetahua Marae, our Golden Bay iwi, and the Nelson Marlborough Conservation Board.
- You can meet us at our office in Takaka by appointment and if possible answer any queries.

Project De-Vine has grown very fast and we hope that the continuing support from TDC, DOC, our funding partners, Project Janszoon and Fonterra and various sponsors will continue. The result is a great partnership producing effective and cost efficient pest vine control on a large scale. Thank you so much to all the volunteers who help to keep the project moving along with technical support and at working bees.

If you have any skills you can help us with, then do contact us. We can put you on our list for helping with pest vine control or planting and other activities. Our website has details of immediate needs. The media has been helpful by running articles in the various local newspapers. The Golden Bay Weekly is publishing our pest vine and trapping numbers alongside the rainfall figures on a monthly basis.

For more information, contact our team:

E: admin@projectde-vinetrust.org.nz

Alternatively, visit our website www.projectmohua.org.nz for the latest updates, volunteering and other links and data.

Our Facebook page has been re-started and postings are becoming more frequent: [project de vine golden bay](#)

Best wishes and happy De-Vining, Planting and Trapping from all the team at Projects Mohua & De-Vine

