



Weedbusters!

www.weedbusters.org.nz

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**Working together
to protect New Zealand**

Despite the rain, Wellingtonians gave the latest 'Plant Me Instead' book a red carpet welcome.

Weed alternatives a Wellywood hit

Intermittent showers and blustery southerlies failed to deter the enthusiasm of the many families and individuals who exchanged their garden weeds for a native plant in Wellington's civic square recently.

The weed swap was part of the official launch of a new 'Plant Me Instead' book which offers gardeners environmentally friendly alternatives to more than 70 weeds or potential weeds in the lower North Island.

Around 500 native plants were taken home by people who brought along such garden nasties as tradescantia, wild ginger, artillery plant, Mexican daisy, montbretia, Cape ivy, mile-a-minute, greater bindweed, and old man's beard.

One or two admitted to a slight pang of regret as they ripped out agapanthus, elderberries, ivy, jasmine, and arum lily, all of which have



DOC's John Sawyer and Woody. Photo: Sue Galbraith.

the potential to 'jump the garden fence' and replace native plant species in the wild.

The lower North Island 'Plant Me Instead' is available from bookshops and garden centres in the Wellington region.

- Sue Galbraith, DOC

Santa Weed's Gisborne gig



Sarah Bassett with Woody. Photo: Jill Hudson

Woody Weed was a hit at the Gisborne Christmas parade, as he took to the streets with his minders to meet the locals.

The parade has been described as 'the best in years' with the sun shining down on over 47 floats and the thousands of spectators who lined the streets.

Woody was in good company, with DOC staff also looking after an assortment of adult-sized wetas, birds, fish and seahorses, and kiddie-sized frogs, mermaids, trees and forest fairies!

- Heather Miller, DOC

Regional Weedbusters Awards 2006

Weeds are a significant threat to New Zealand's natural environment, and the success of weed management requires a coordinated effort between government agencies, non-government organisations, community groups and individuals.

Weedbusters Awards are about recognising the dedication and commitment of community groups, organisations and individuals in the fight against weeds. The awards pay tribute to 'local heroes' who give their time to enhance the environment, and who help raise awareness of weed issues within the community.

Volunteers may participate in anything from weeding activities to field days, to information sessions or strategic planning exercises.

Educational groups that endeavour to educate a new generation are being recognised, as well as industries or organisations that show commitment to educating, raising awareness and participating in sustainable weed management. Weed management might be only part of a project, but it will be an important part none-the-less.

Everyone who volunteers their time to weed busting is eligible for an award, and anyone can put forward nominations.

If you know and value the efforts of a group or individual then make sure you nominate them; or if you feel that you or your group has been putting in good work, don't be shy – please feel free to nominate yourself.

Nominations close 31 March 2006.
For more information, visit the
Weedbusters website at
www.weedbusters.org.nz



Art by Tim Galloway

Award categories

The regional Weedbusters Awards 2006 will be run throughout New Zealand.

There are five award categories:

Public Land

Awarded to volunteers and community groups for commitment and dedication in weed management initiatives on public land, including protected areas.

Private Land

Awarded to individual landowners, volunteers and community groups for commitment and dedication in weed management initiatives on private land.

Education

Awarded to an education group (e.g., a school, scouts, guides, Lions) to recognise the group's contribution to education and raising the awareness of weed issues amongst students and/or the community, and where possible for active participation in weed management initiatives.

Industry/Organisations

Awarded to an industry or an organisation to acknowledge dedication and efforts in sustainable weed management and/or educating and raising awareness of weed issues.

Excellence

Awarded to volunteers, community group, industry/organisation, or an individual for excellence in and commitment to weed management. Nominees for the Excellence Award may be taken from the other four Weedbusters Award categories.



In the thick of it...

Happy New Year!

Weedbusters swings into 2006 by issuing a challenge in the form of the regional Weedbusters Awards, run throughout New Zealand for the very first time.

Those who volunteer their time for conservation efforts are usually pretty laid back about what they do, and prefer to hide in the bush rather than bask in the spotlight.

This seems to be doubly true for those who bust weeds.

The regional Weedbusters Awards is a chance for weedbusters all over New Zealand to stand up and receive the recognition they deserve for a job well done.

The ultimate challenge for Weedbusters, of course, is to get people busting weeds for 12 months of the year, not just when there are awards at stake!

The good news is that many of the existing Weedbusters groups are doing just that; although individual members might come and go, the groups themselves continue with the project from season to season, acknowledging the long-term nature of weed management.

I'm looking forward to seeing all the awards entrants and hearing about the Weedbusting projects that are being undertaken around New Zealand.

It's going to be a great way to start 2006!

Carolyn Lewis
National Weedbusters Coordinator

Northland Weedbusters write...

More Northlanders have been thinking about weeds and Weedbusters this spring, thanks to the efforts of the Department of Conservation, NZ Landcare Trust and Northland Regional Council.

Whangarei District got swinging in October with DOC's Bream Bay Open Day at Ruakaka. Hundreds of people turned out to spend a fun day taking part in the kids' flax workshop, competing in the sandcastle competition and conservation quiz, planting trees, and learning about weeds, Weedbusters, and dune environments on guided walks.

Woody had a ball with the kids and gave away heaps of our cool T-shirts.

Some residents have joined forces to control wattles, pines, privet and gorse in the dunes, and are looking for more hands to make lighter work of this project.



Lyn Davison (DOC) and Woody Weed talk to locals

Fun continued at the Whangarei Heads School Show Day, where four Whangarei Heads Landcare groups and DOC took the opportunity to arm the many local families with weed and animal pest control DIY know-how.

(cont'd back page)

Auckland's weedbusting winners

Rangitoto College was among the big winners in the inaugural Auckland Regional Weedbusters Awards held in 2005.

Rangitoto's JGI Environment Group was commended on its commitment to education and raising the awareness of weed issues amongst students and the community.

The group has been meeting every second Sunday for a weeding bee in an area of their school grounds they are transforming into a native plant sanctuary.

So far they have removed 80% of the wild ginger there, and will tackle the pampas over summer.

Once completed, this sanctuary will provide the school with an outdoor education resource.

The group hopes that by improving the school environment, other environmentally-friendly practices can be promoted.

They also hope that a sense of community in the school will develop through the involvement of other students in this long-term project.

Other winners in the awards were Motutapu Restoration Trust (public land), Simon Grant and Stephen Cole (private land), Karekare Landcare (excellence - group) and John McKenzie (excellence - individual).



Rangitoto College's Jenny Kim (Year 10 student) and Sarah Wakeford (teacher)

Northland Weedbusters write... (cont.)

Whangarei Heads is blessed with beautiful bush reserves, and locals are keen to keep new invaders, like mile-a-minute (*Dipogon lignosus*), fork-leaved hakea, Himalayan fairy grass, chocolate vine and mickey mouse plant, out of the area.

Landowners around the Heads are concerned about and keen to control the common culprits: ginger, ivy, pampas, agapanthus, jasmine, moth plant and lantana. And speaking of culprits, Woody Weed was up to his usual antics on the day, but kept under control by the Weedbusters team!

This was all happening the same weekend as the Whangarei Garden Discovery! Northland Regional Council complimented the wonderful display gardens with their weed control expertise and a competition.

Staff discovered that many of the garden-goers were already up with the play on common garden nasties, including Taiwan cherry, butterfly bush, cotoneaster and lantana.

They also found novel ways to lure passers-by into their weed lair: 1. A cute and playful Jack Russell ready to play ball, and 2. Taste testing (using lemonade fruit)!

Liz Sherwood, DOC
Northland Weedbusters Coordinator

Want to win a \$50 Gardening New Zealand voucher?

You can go in the monthly draw to win a
\$50 Gardening New Zealand voucher.

Simply enter the 'Name This Weed' competition at

www.weedbusters.org.nz



Climbing asparagus
(*Asparagus scandens*)



Tuber ladder fern
(*Nephrolepis cordifolia*)



Mile-a-minute
(*Dipogon lignosus*)



Periwinkle
(*Vinca major*)

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and all regional councils and unitary authorities

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