



**URBAN ARK
MANAWA TAI AO**

Nature in the city

Welcome to our March newsletter

With 2 lockdowns behind us, here's looking forward to a few months of positive biodiversity gains ahead. In this month's newsletter ...

1. A big welcome to UAMT Facilitator Phil Simpson!
2. ...and to our volunteer, Thomas George
3. Dates for your calendar
4. Trail cam activity along Oakley Creek
5. eBird abundance animations
6. Remove those moth plant pods now
7. Submit for nature

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Nau mai to our new Facilitator, Phil Simpson

Phil joined Urban Ark - Manawa Taiao last month and will be working alongside Paul.

Phil studied Zoology and Botany back in the 1980s and after a period collecting catch-effort data on Russian, Norwegian and Korean fishing boats off the New Zealand coast has enjoyed a long and rewarding career in photography. Having always maintained a keen interest in the environment and an enthusiasm for new challenges, he recently completed a Post-Grad Certificate in Environmental Science at AUT.

Phil had hit the ground running, working with Sustainable Schools to encourage primary, intermediate and secondary teachers in our operational area to make restoring native biodiversity a significant part of their activities.

Phil is also focussing on activating a 'Maungawhau Ecological Halo' around Maungawhau/Mt Eden. The plan is to encircle the summit with intensified predator trapping and encourage the planting of bird-friendly native trees and shrubs, to provide safe habitat across suburban gardens, business premises and local streets. Stand by for trap and tree giveaways in the area!

If you're interested in any of these projects, are involved in a relevant community group we don't know about or just want to say hi, contact Phil on phil@urbanark.nz or 021 509 292.

Welcome aboard Thomas

Phil Simpson's arrival coincided with a new volunteer, Thomas George, joining us in the office. Thomas has just completed a post-grad Diploma in Environmental Science at the University of Auckland and is looking for work in the biodiversity field, particularly related to conservation and sustainable development. Having arrived from India a year ago, Thomas is keen to gain some on-the-ground experience and strengthen his CV.

We're loving having him alongside us here at Urban Ark, helping us with data collection and analysis, and getting traps out around the groups. To get in touch with Thomas use thomas@urbanark.nz and 022 329 8649.





Dates for your calendar

Check out website [Events](#) page for other events.

[Pollen Island Walk & Beach Cleanup](#) – Saturday 20 March. Seaweed brings a rare opportunity to set foot on Motu Manawa Pollen Island, the heart of a marine reserve right on our doorstep. Appreciate the birdlife and pick up some litter as you go. Donations appreciated.

[Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga](#). The keen folk down at the Creek are back to their regular working bees. The propagate plants at their nursery on Wednesdays (9am–noon), run working bees Fridays (9am–noon) and are often out on Sundays. Email info@oakleycreek.org.nz to get on their mailing list.

[Love Your Maunga ki Maungawhau](#) – Saturday 20 March, 10am–4pm. urban Ark will be there promoting the new Maungawhau Ecological Halo.

[Alberton Market](#) – Sunday 11 April 10am–2pm. Urban Ark will be there.

[Wellpark Reserve Weeding Bee](#) – Saturday 10 April. Come and help restore the Edgar's Creek wetland.



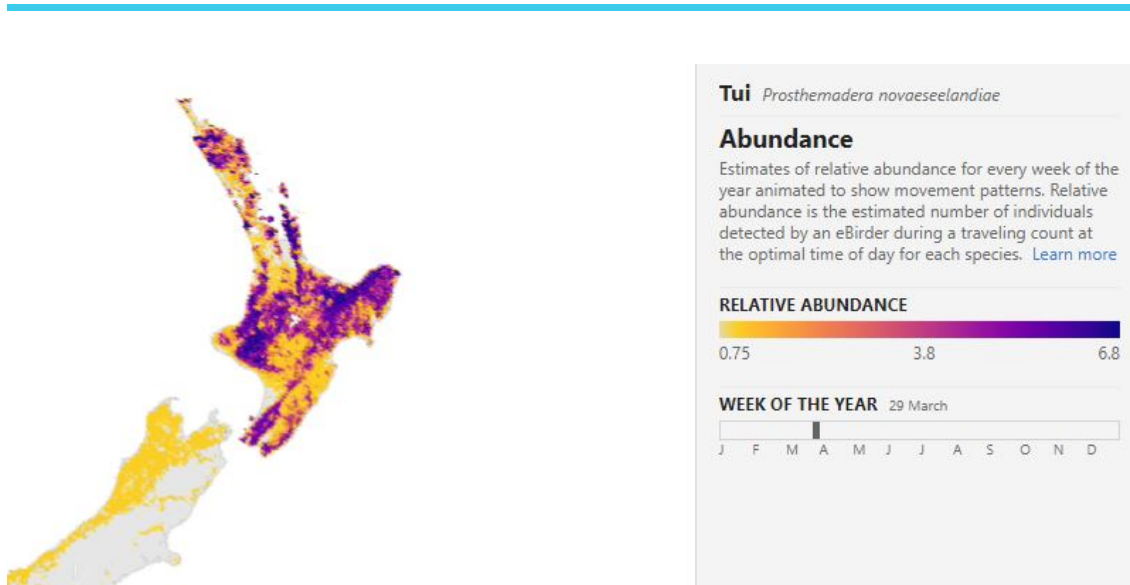
Trail Cam in action

The Urban Ark trail camera has been given a good workout over the last three months. Rosemary Philips from Friends of Oakley Creek Te Auaunga has been deploying the camera round their southern trapline leaving the camera out for a week at each site with it set to record night activity.

They hadn't been catching many rats or possums for ages and were beginning to wonder if they'd got them all. The camera allowed them to see that there were still plenty of pesky possums around to try and catch, and identified a number of neighbourhood cats plus the resident pheasants.

Armed with this new knowledge they're going to deploy some different bait and see if that will change the trappers' luck.

The Urban Ark trail camera is available for groups to borrow. Contact [Paul](#) if you want to borrow it.



Where are the birds?

For a while now, popular birding site eBird has featured animations showing the migratory habit of birds. Up until now that has mostly been American and European species, but a recent upgrade now shows a few New Zealand birds. Check out how the populations change over the year for [tūī](#) and [kōtare / kingfisher](#).

For other NZ species they're currently only showing the year-round abundance of, for example, [Titipounamu / rifleman](#) and [kākā](#).

For the full animation experience, watch the migration patterns of the [barn swallow](#).



Remove moth plants before the pods form

Moth plants are nasty spreaders. When pods ripen, hundreds of seeds can spread over a wide area. The trick is to catch them before the pods form. Now is a great time to spot them as the pods are getting bigger but haven't yet split. This climbing vine is often growing on fences, up walls and on other plants. For more information see Auckland Council's [pest plants page](#), and visit the Society Totally Against Moth Plant (S.T.A.M.P) on [Facebook](#).

If you've know of a moth plant and don't have the time or knowledge to remove it, at least pull the pods off.

Te Tahua Pūtea Tau 2021-2031
Puka Whakawhiti Kōrero
Te Tahua Pūtea Whakarauora

**10-year Budget
2021-2031**

Long-term Plan
Consultation Document
Our Recovery Budget

**AK
HAVE
YOUR
SAY**

Submit for nature

Here's your chance to influence the direction of Auckland, call for more jobs for nature and support anything promoting native biodiversity. Sure you're just one voice, but politicians listen to individual voices. And the more of those voices there are, the more influence we can have.

The [Consultation Document](#) runs to 90 pages, but it isn't too dense. The [Feedback Survey](#) is mostly multi-choice questions with an option to add you own comments. The survey is open now until noon on 22 March 2021. Why not do it now?



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Our mailing address is:

Urban Ark - Manawa Taiao
99 Motions Rd
Western Springs, Auckland 1022
New Zealand

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