



2016/17 HIGHLIGHTS

The 2016/17 year has been a big one for Nelson Nature. Here are some highlights from our work programme over the last 12 months!

WINNING THE WAR ON WILDING CONIFERS

Nelson Nature is making progress in the war against the worst threat to one of our most fragile wild places, wilding conifers on Dun Mountain.

The mineral belt around Dun Mountain is a nationally important site for biodiversity because of the rare and threatened plants and ecosystems that live in the highly mineralised soil. Wilding conifers have the potential to completely destroy this unique ecosystem by shading out the low growing vegetation and permanently changing soil chemistry.

Over the last year, Council removed wilding conifers from 500 ha of the mineral belt. This represents about 25% of the mineral belt area that has been cleared of seeding conifers. Contractors spent weeks in the rocky and exposed terrain removing thousands of trees in the most densely infested areas. We will continue this work next year, as controlling these trees now will save considerable costs in the future by preventing the ongoing spread of seed.



Can you spot the wilding pine?

NATIVE FISH PASSAGE IMPROVED

Nelson streams are home to a diverse population of native fish, including some rare species, which need our help to be able to survive. One of Nelson Nature's big efforts this year has been improving fish passage to enable these fish to follow their natural life cycle between our stream and the sea.

Some of our native fish, including the key whitebait species (inanga), lay their eggs in the streamside vegetation. The eggs are washed out to sea when it rains, and the young fish spend some time out at sea before returning to the streams to spend the remainder of their lives and produce their own eggs.

Culverts and pipes in our urban streams alter the water flow and prevent fish movement up and down stream. Over the last year, Nelson Nature has removed or remediated 28 barriers in our streams so that our native fish can live out their life cycle with free movement between the ocean and the freshwater streams. There is still work to do in this area, and we'll be working on this over the next 12 months.



Baffles added to the concrete culvert in the Brook Stream to aid fish passage.



Nelson Mountain Bike Club has held many planting days in the Tantragee Reserve area.

PLANTS, PLANTS, PLANTS...

This winter we've seen a major planting effort on both Council Reserves and private land as part of the Nelson Nature programme. Nelson Nature has provided over 10,000 native plants for community plantings on reserves, or to landowners restoring valuable native ecosystems.

These new plantings contribute to the health of Nelson's environment in many ways – by providing habitat for native wildlife, shading streams and enhancing spawning grounds for native fish, improving water quality, restoring coastal margins, preventing stream bank erosion... the benefits are great. Many thanks to the hundreds of Nelsonians who have helped to get these plants in the ground, either on their own or Council land.

STOKE RESIDENTS LOVE THEIR STREAMS

We've seen a great response from Stoke residents wanting to care for their local streams. There are now seven community groups acting as guardians of their local Stoke streams.

Each group is caring for a section of stream, through weeding, planting and/or monitoring stream health. Nelson Nature has been working with these groups, providing advice and plants, and running community events to bring groups together and helping groups tell the story of their local stream.

Poorman Valley Stream alone has five groups – Marsden Valley Trapping Group, Nelson Christian Academy, Stoke Tahunanui Rotary Club, Nayland Primary School and Nayland College. You can find out about the work they are doing on the Poorman Valley Stream Story Map (nelson.govt.nz/story-maps/poorman-valley-stream.) If you live near a Stoke stream and want to connect with your local stream guardian group or adopt your own section, please contact Environmental Programmes Adviser susan.moore-lavo@ncc.govt.nz.