



Friends of Mana Island

Work Party Report October 3-5 2025

Trip co-leaders: Philippa Doig and Colin Munn

Participants: Annemieke Hamilton, Andrea Wilson, Helen Law, Suliana Teasdale, Sam Keeley, Robin Chesterfield, Brie Stewart, Bernie Salmon, Stephen Marsland, Monika Nowicki, Tim Borrer.

On a rainy forecast we ended up with 13 volunteers in total. In the future we might ask the Volunteer Officer to ask people if they can be last-minute replacements for those who have been accepted but pull out on the Thursday or Friday before the work party. In spite of the weather we achieved a lot, remained in good spirits and got very wet and muddy.

Friday night

Colin, Tim, Philippa, Robin, Brie, Sam and Helen had a walk around the back of the wetland in the vain hope of seeing kiwi but Annemieke, Stephen, Monika and Andrea had success on two fronts: They checked the sound systems and determined what needed to be done on Saturday and they were lucky enough to see several kiwi high on the island. Later there was a hilarious game of Kākerōri, a new card game developed by Annemieke.



Kākerōri

Saturday daytime

Seabird Sound systems and Cook's Scurvy Grass

Annemieke, Helen, Stephen and Monika dug in three cables for the two sound systems which are now both operational again. This team checked 202 burrows: 101 at the Fairy Prion site and 101 at the Fluttering

Shearwater site. They found 36 Fluttering Shearwaters in burrows and could see that some birds were sitting on eggs. They also checked the Cook's Scurvy Grass propagation site and found that many seedlings had been nibbled. The suspects were pukeko or takahe. At the White-faced Storm Petrel site they cleared burrow entrances in pouring rain but had a moment of sunshine for their lunch.



Fluttering Shearwater in its burrow



Sound system work in the rain

DOC trap location and removal



Brie searching for a
DOC trap

Suli, Andrea, Brie and Sam set off with the objective of finding DOC 200 and DOC 150 traps which were marked by GPS. There were 90 of these, scattered all over the island and they needed to be located, extricated from the bush and piled beside the track for later collection by the DOC vehicle. By Sunday lunchtime they had found them all – an excellent result. They also checked out the lighthouse keeper's garden and were lucky to see fernbirds and find some bird's eggs.



Collecting and moving DOC
traps

Track clearing

Colin, Bernie and Robin started on the wetland track and Philippa, Sam and Tim started clearing the Tirohanga track from the Weta Valley track junction back towards the Lockwood. By the end of Sunday all these tracks had been well cleared. Andrea also worked on the wetland loop track on Sunday and made a huge difference on her own.

Packing fadges

When it got very wet Colin, Philippa, Bernie and Robin continued work repacking and closing fadges of cut yellow pipes (in the shelter of the shed) with the intention of taking them off the island on Sunday. Luckily Suli had a ute parked at the Marina and was willing to do a tip run on Sunday afternoon. Then this team worked on track clearing and when the rain eased off a little they headed up the island to remove yellow pipes.



Dallas and Geoff collected up the DOC
traps

Yellow Pipe removal

The team of Colin, Philippa, Bernie, Tim and Robin climbed the hill to locate and remove yellow planting pipes from trees that had outgrown the need for protection many years ago. They moved into what they thought was a new area to search for yellow pipes. This was a more difficult task than for previous work parties because the pipes were few and far between and the team worked very hard in difficult, wet conditions to find the occasional tree that needed rescuing. As Dallas pointed out, the trees that had been missed on a previous sweep were freed of their pipes and so the final clearing of that area was useful.

Sam needed to go for a run, so we clearly weren't working him hard enough! Suli went diving for kina and came back with two. Unfortunately, we didn't have committed kina enthusiasts among the group but several people tried them for the first time. Suli claimed that the sea wasn't cold but nobody believed her!

Saturday night

The seabird team led by Annemieke, Stephen and Monika went up to check the seabird sound systems and found that both were working well. In the meantime, there was another lively game of Kākerōri in the Lockwood.

Sunday

Track clearing

Tim, Sam and Philippa worked on the Tirohanga track below Weta Valley, cutting well back from the marked track.

Weeding

Colin and Robin located and dealt with tree lucerne at the two sites cleared on a previous workparty. This was noted in the weed book as well as the pink ragwort (*senecio glastifolius*) which was found and removed as various teams worked on other tasks.

First Aid packs

Bernie and Andrea did a fantastic job of sorting through the First Aid packs to rationalize what we need to keep, discard, resterilise (thanks, Andrea). We now have a clear strategy of maintaining at least 4-5 small field packs and keeping the large St John packs in the Lockwood for treatment of a more serious injury once the injured person is back. Andrea's medical knowledge was invaluable for this task.

FOMI Cupboard

Bernie tidied and sorted the FOMI tool cupboard so that we were able to make decisions on what needed to be kept. It is now much easier to see what is in that cupboard and some things like clean rags are all in one bag.

Cook's Scurvy Grass

Suli and Brie devised a new system for protecting the seedlings and cuttings of Cook's Scurvy Grass and headed up the hill to install new protection.

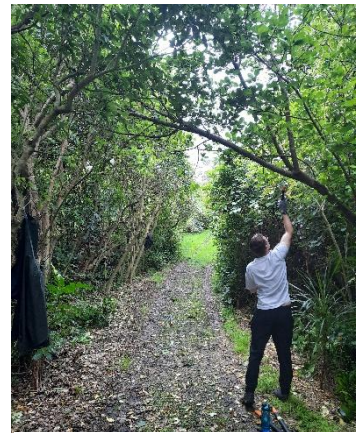


Suli and protected Cook's
Scurvy Grass

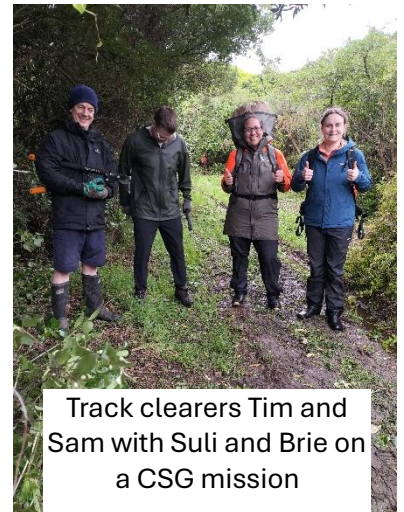
Lighthouse Keeper's Garden

Annemieke, Helen, Stephen and Monika cleared around the outside of the bank surrounding the garden. One corner on the right as you enter the garden seems to have been filled with scrub and may need to be cleared on a future work party.

We all had lunch at the Lockwood at around 1pm as there was talk of needing to leave the island early to avoid a strong southerly that was forecast. The team did a fantastically rapid and thorough cleanup of the Lockwood. In the event we were picked up at around 2.45pm by the Charmaine Karol and got back to the Marina early.



Sam clearing a track



Track clearers Tim and
Sam with Suli and Brie on
a CSG mission



Brie and new netting to
protect Cook's Scurvy
Grass

Rubbish disposal

Annemieke, Suli and Philippa went to Porirua tip to empty out two fadges of yellow pipes. Thanks so much, Suli, for using your vehicle to do this.

Our thanks to Geoff and Dallas for all their help and support during the weekend and to Glen Cooper for transporting us and our large fadges of rubbish with unfailing good humour. Biggest thanks of all to a brilliant team who worked cheerfully, at times in the rain, and all weekend in wet conditions.



Standing: Bernie, Stephen, Suli, Brie, Sam, Annemieke, Coin, Robin

Front row: Philippa, Andrea, Monika, Helen, Tim

October 7 2025