

Parks

Kia ora koutu,



Bubbles over Barnett Park after the planting day in June

Another busy winter season on the Port Hills has flown by. Once again, the planting days were well attended. Over 3,500 native trees and shrubs were planted by 270 enthusiastic volunteers. It is fantastic to see so many people working hard and contributing their efforts towards the restoration of native bush. The seeds for the plants are primarily collected from remnant forest areas in the Port Hills by the City Council nursery staff. The seedlings are nurtured and cared for at the nursery for the next year or so, until the plants are big enough to be planted out. For the first 3 to 4 years after planting the next stage of plant care is done by volunteers. During spring and autumn, the grass around the protective cages is cut back to maintain light and airflow to the young plants. The grass is used as a fresh layer of mulch around the plants to prevent weeds and to maintain moisture. This work helps the plants survive until they are tall enough for the cages to be removed. Spring plant care days are coming up. Details included at the end of the newsletter.

The following photos show some hardworking volunteers planting during the winter season.

Volunteers at work: Winter 2026



Bishopdale Tramping Club enjoying a sunny planting day at Greenwood Reserve



A busy group planting adjacent to established bush at Dry Bush



Ivor and Ashley working hard with ARA students at Bowenvale Reserve



More plants going in the ground at Mahoe-Nui at Evans Pass, Sumner



Tessa and Claudia enjoying an afternoon in the sun while adding to MacPac's planting at Greenwood Reserve Sumner



Further afield – Matariki planting at Takapūneke Reserve, Ōnuku by Akaroa

The United Nations has designated 2026 as the International Volunteer Year (IVY 2026). The Park Ranger Team appreciates all the mahi of the many volunteers who give up their time to plant and care for the young plants.

Volunteer Spotlight: Aiden King

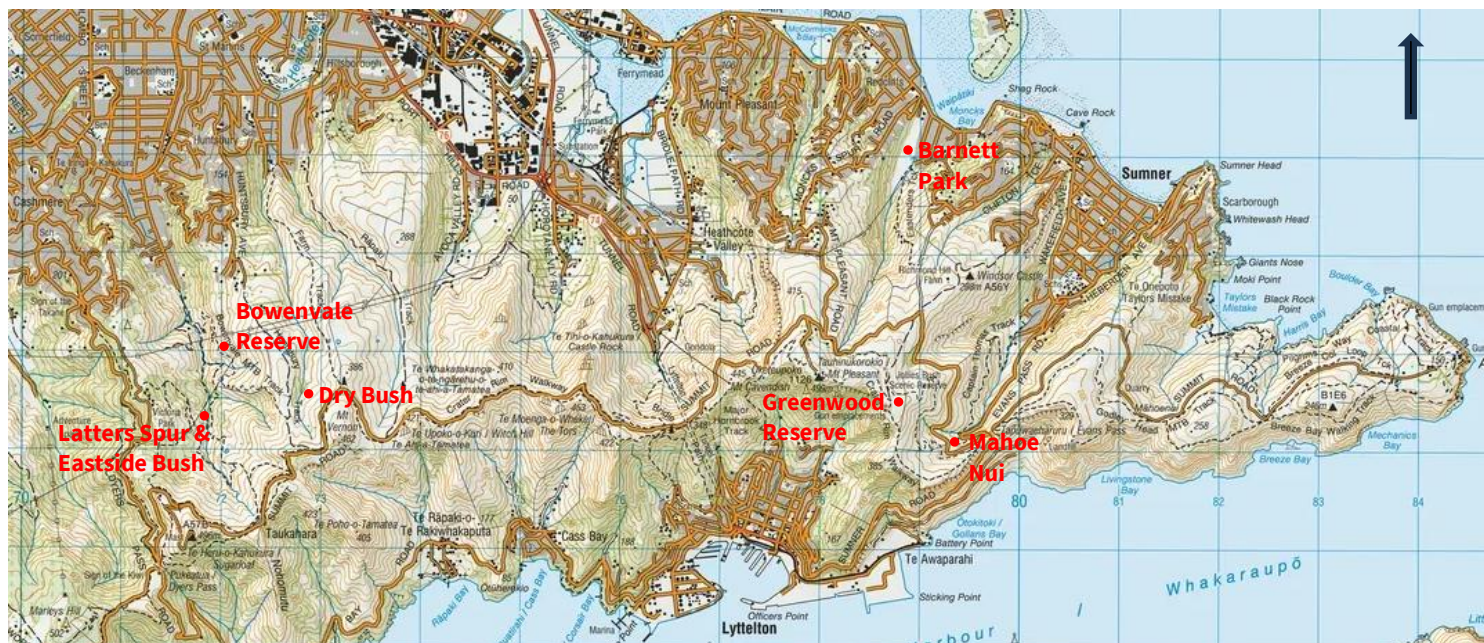
Aiden has been a keen volunteer at the Port Hills planting and plant care days for over 10 years. He also undertakes planting and wilding pine removal for Forest & Bird. When asked why he volunteers, Aiden’s response was:

“It’s an amazing feeling to look back at a planting that’s grown up and no longer needs maintenance. To know that the trees you’ve planted will live and give back to the world long after you’ve gone. That’s why I volunteer.”



Aiden cutting back grass from young plants earlier this year at Dry Bush

Map showing areas of restoration planting on the Port Hills



Keen to help native trees survive?

Volunteer plant care days run from 1pm to 3pm.

- Saturday 26th September
- Saturday 3rd October
- Saturday 10th October
- Saturday 17th October

Barnett Park

Dry Bush

Dry Bush

Eastside Bush (Victoria Park) – Followed by BBQ

Barnett Park: Meet in the dog walking paddock accessed from the gate at the end of Bay View Road, Redcliffs. Look for the park ranger truck on the opposite side of the paddock. On-street parking. Please keep access ways clear for residents.

Dry Bush: Park at the top of Huntsbury Avenue and walk up Huntsbury 4WD track to site (1.3km approx. 25 minutes), or park on the Summit Road and walk down Huntsbury Track to Dry Bush (0.8km approx. 10 minutes). Look for the park ranger truck near the cattle stop at the fenced bush. There is no parking on Huntsbury Track.

Eastside Bush: Meet in the car park behind the Victoria Park Visitor Centre, next to Park Ranger HQ.

Come prepared for all weather and wear sturdy footwear for hill work. Grass shears and gloves will be provided by the rangers, but feel free to bring your own.

For more information, please visit ccc.govt.nz/port-hills-reserves-volunteer-days or contact Fiona Fenton on 027 506 1425 or fiona.fenton@ccc.govt.nz

Thank you

Thanks to all volunteers – your contribution is much appreciated!

Fiona, Di and the Port Hills Ranger Team