

Living on Waitakere's West Coast

Whatipu, Karekare, Anawhata, Piha, Bethells/TeHenga



DESIGNED BY NATURE

The power of the wind, waves and rain shape not only the land but also the plants that fight to survive here.

There is little escape from the forces of nature here – yet this coast is 'mecca' not only for those who live here but for the thousands that visit.

It is a place of contrast and extremes... expanses of fine black sand, lush forest, rocky outcrops and gushing waterfalls, moving dunes and serene wetlands.

Unique

To this area are the following plants.

West Coast Kowhai which grows typically on bluffs. This kowhai is scented and can also be grown in a pot.

Waitakere Daisy (Clemisia major var, major) which grows on rocky sites and on lowland.

Waitakere forget-me-not (myostis petiolata)

Waitakere Rock Hebe. This attractive low growing Hebe grows only in Waitakere and is the City's rarest plant.

Some of these are threatened plants. Rescue them by planting them on your property, nourish them, and by sharing their seeds with your neighbours.



LIVING LIGHTLY ON THE LAND

House design. Timber houses on poles or piles are generally less obtrusive in this environment.

Treating sewerage adequately on site is essential to maintaining water quality in the streams and lagoons. For on site alternatives to septic tanks call 839 0400.

Note: EcoWater pumps out your septic tank every three years and pump outs are charged as a rural sewage charge on your rates.

Controlling stormwater on site is good practice here. Use swales (shallow grassed ditches) and plantings in low lying areas prone to flooding.

Driveways are better gravelled, or semi paved (rather than sealed) as this helps absorb stormwater (runoff).

Catch the rain – See The Sustainable Home Guidelines for rain harvesting tricks.

Sand drift – Create a natural shelter belt to cut the power of the wind. You can use flax, mapou, toetoe, or karamu for this purpose.

Looking to the Future

The Waitakere City Council is advocating environmental protection through the use of covenants. A contribution to the cost of covenanting and a rates rebate is offered to those protecting significant or vulnerable natural sites through covenanting. For more information contact phone 839 0400.



What to plant?

It's a struggle here for most plants so be sure to cluster together new plants and plant them in places where they have a chance to thrive. You're likely to have most success with eco-seeds. Either collect your own seeds and propagate, or patronise West Coast and Waitakere nurseries that eco-source.

What to plant where?

Dunes: for binding shifting sands: plant pingao.

Stable sand: try spinifex, pohuehue and native spinach.

Stable dunes: kawakawa and cabbage.

For dry cliff faces: toetoe, astelia, rengarenga lilies, Waitakere rock daisy or puka (*Grisilenia lucida* only).

Low growing plants suitable for lawns – Mercury Bay weed, reurenu (*Selliera radicans*) and shore pimpernel.



For open and bare patches and fire damaged areas plant: flax, kawakawa, pohutukawa, manuka, kanuka, mahoe, haupara, pohuehue, coastal karamu.

For hedges: Hangehange, mapou, mamangi, and karo

Vines: Try Akatia (white rata)

Shrubs: Koromiko, flax, taurepo, mapou, taupata, mingimingi, coastal or shining karamu, hangehange.

Trees: Pohutukawa, kowhai, nikau, ngaio, manuka, whau, cabbage tree, akeake, kanuka and kohekohe.

The exotic

If you like exotics go for non-invasive ones like gardenia, rose, carnation and lavender. These not only add colour but sweet aromas.

Bird Lures

To attract native birds plant: flax, horoeka, kowhai, nikau, five finger and pohutukawa.

Fire

Fire spreads fast and fierce. Be prepared. Avoid fires during the peak summer season and check fire bans by phoning 839 0400 (24hrs).

Keep a hose at the ready during the summer and have plants that resist fire around your home. Pampas is a fire hazard because of the paper dry dead fronds at the base – try to be rid of it.

Weeds

Please don't spread weeds by introducing them to your garden. Replace pampas with toetoe and try the rengarenga lily in place of agapanthus.

Get rid of your ginger, honeysuckle, jasmine, cape ivy, Mexican daisy and sweet pea shrub (Karekare), and willow (at Bethells/Te Henga).

Mercury Bay Weed is a good alternative on lawns to kikuyu and buffalo grass.

To identify the worst weeds phone the Auckland Regional Council on 366 2000.



pingao

The Waitakere City Council offers assistance to those clearing (invasive) weeds on their properties.

Telephone 839 0400 for information on access to free:

- Weed bins
- Weed bags (only for ginger)
- Plants to replace weed infested areas and
- Rebates on weed control contractors

Dogs....

Are a problem for wildlife and other beach and track users. Please keep your dog on a lead or very close by you.

Piha people! Please keep your dogs away from the penguin colonies especially during the nesting season.

Free and useful advice & information

- *The Green Network flyer*
- *Eco-sourcing flyer*
- *Slip Sliding Away on erosion*
- *Streamside Planting*
- *WCC Community Assistance Co-ordinator*
- *District Plan Guides*
- *QEII National Trust (Revegetation Guides)*
- *The Good Plant Guide (ARC)*
- *A Guide to Planting and Restoring the Nature of Waitakere City*

Telephone 839 0400 (24hrs).

Other Brochures in this series

- Living by the Waitemata Harbour
- Living in the Bush
- Living in the Waitakere foothills
- The Waitakere Gardening Guide (for people living in Urban Waitakere).

Waitakere Welfare

Interested in the welfare of the West Coast? Find out about the work of:

- Keep Waitakere Beautiful
- The West Coast Plan Liaison Group
- The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society
- Royal Forest & Bird Society
- Friends of ARC Parks
- Project Crimson
- Land Care Groups at: Bethells/ Te Henga/ Karekare/ Piha
- The WeedFree Waitakere Trust

For contact details telephone 839 0400.

This is a Green Network Project

The Green Network links natural areas with each other – creating a network of gardens, parks, streams, reserves, roadside plantings and coastlines. The Green Network gives you more places to play, connects you with the country side, gives birds and other wildlife access to your neighbourhood and encourages them to make their home here in Waitakere.

