

Backdune Restoration

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The dense wattle dominates the backdunes at Castlecliff Beach, Whanganui. Photo M. Bergin

Wattle control and restoration planting at Castlecliff Beach, Whanganui

The local Castlecliff Coast Care group at Castlecliff Beach near Whanganui are managing a large area of duneland where the mid to backdunes are dominated by exotic species particularly coastal wattle.

Although some foredune work is carried out each year to plant gaps in the sand binding vegetation to reduce localised erosion, the majority of the work by the Castlecliff Coast Care group is focused on the backdunes. Weed control is the first priority for each new area that is to be restored before any new native seedlings are planted out.

Help with the weed control and planting is provided by local schools and heavier chores done by special working parties. Along with the planting, habitat restoration for local fauna includes providing sheltered sites for skinks and insects using logs and small corrugated sheets placed on the dunes.

Wattle control methods

Graham and Lyn Pearson who lead the group's work have had very good success in removing coastal wattle of all sizes and ages using a variety of methods.

For the larger/mature trees cutting the trunks below the lowest green foliage is sufficient to kill the plant. Due to the spreading nature of the lower branches, care needs to be taken to ensure all limbs are removed. Smaller plants can be pulled out by hand.

Cutting the wattle correctly significantly reduces the need for spraying regrowth later. Cut material needs to be grouped for either burning or chipping later on. If chipped, it can then be used very effectively around new plantings as a weed suppressant and to help retain moisture during the summer months.



One of the restoration sites where wattle has been cleared and native species (ngaio, flax, toetoe) planted over successive years at Castlecliff Beach, Whanganui. Photo: M. Bergin



Community Environment Fund

The Dune Restoration Trust of New Zealand wins a Green Ribbon Award



The Dunes Trust won a Green Ribbon Award for the "Protecting our coasts and oceans" category run by the Ministry for the Environment. This is a great achievement for the trust and especially our Coast Care supporters.

Greg Bennett (Dunes Trust Chairman) and trustees David Bergin, Harley Spence and Tim Park attended the awards ceremony and dinner at parliament on Monday the 16th of June 2014 as finalises.

Calling all Coast Care Groups

Are you in a Coast Care Group or do you know of one nearby? The Dunes Trust is keen to help raise awareness of the work that your group is doing on the coast in your area.

It's free to sign up to the Dunes Trust website 'CoastCare Groups' webpage by filling in a profile on your group to share your issues and successes in your backyard.

Go to www.dunestrust.org.nz for further information about the Dunes Trust and other Coast Care Groups in New Zealand.

3-year Backdune Project Outputs

Series of Dunes Trust Technical Handbook Articles

With the completion of the 3-year project on backdunes funded by the Ministry for the Environment's Community Environment Fund (CEF), 12 articles for the Dunes Trust Handbook have been published highlighting some of the results of this collaborative work. These new articles are:

- 2.4 Zonation and succession on coastal sand dunes
- 8.1 Backdunes – an introduction
- 8.2 Ground cover species for restoration of backdunes
- 8.3 Native trees and shrubs to use on backdunes
- 8.4 Wiwi – knobbly club rush – the wonder plant of backdunes
- 8.5 Restoration of sand daphne on coastal dunes – a plant in decline
- 10.1 Human modification on New Zealand coastal dune ecosystems
- 12.1 Planting natives on sand dunes – getting started
- 13.3 Weed control options for planting natives on sand dunes
- 14.1 Monitoring on sand dunes – an introduction
- Case Study 1. Restoring degraded urban dunes – Eastern Coromandel
- Case Study 2. Establishing natives on sand dunes – Caroline Bay, Timaru

The results of the backdune project has also been summarised in a powerpoint based on updates provide at each of the Dunes Trust National Conferences held each year. This highlights the large number of sites reviewed nationwide where restoration projects are underway by Coast Care groups and management agencies.

The Dunes Trust work on backdunes will continue with Coast Care groups and agencies with plans to profile other Demonstration Areas as regional case studies, further develop community-based monitoring guidelines, and provide guidelines for restoration of difficult sites.

Copies of the Handbook articles and the powerpoint summary are available to download as pdfs from the Dunes Trust website www.dunestrust.org.nz

March-June 2014 site updates in brief...

Northland

Field trips were made to Waipu Cove, Ruakaka Beach, Tauranga Beach, Taipa, Rarawa, Ahipara, and beaches on the Karikari Peninsula. This included reassessment of transects monitoring coastal wattle growth with the Friends of Rarawa group.

Auckland

Reassessment of the large Coprosma acerosa (Sand coprosma) planting trial at Te Henga Beach, West Auckland

Horowhenua-Whanganui

Inspections of several beaches along the south west coast North Island were completed from Foxton Beach to Patea.

Taranaki

Reassessment of the Living Legends planting on the backdunes at Te Rewarewa, New Plymouth. Other sites included beaches at Motu, Opunake and Oakura.

Wellington

Several sites inspected Wellington region including Petone, Whitireia Park, Te Horo Beach, Waitohu Beach, Paraparaumu Beach and part of the Onoke Spit.

Canterbury

Further assessment completed at Caroline Bay and Otipua Beach, Timaru, where significant restoration work is being undertaken and monitored.

Dunes Trust 2014 conference visits Taranaki

The Dunes Trust 2014 conference in March was based at Fitzroy Beach in New Plymouth. It was well attended as usual by many Coast Care groups, councils, government departments, environmental groups, and university staff and students from throughout New Zealand.

Presentations were held at the Fitzroy Beach Surf Club with several field trips to local beaches in the Taranaki region.



Dunes Trust conference attendees on field trips to several sites in Taranaki region. Refer to the Dunes Trust website for further details on the fieldtrips and conference presentations.



Dunes Trust Backdune Project Contacts

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The Dunes Trust thanks the project partners for their funding and ongoing involvement in the Backdune Project. We also thank the Coast Care groups in each of the regions involved in this project.

