



Community Newsletter from the Committee of the Mahurangi East Residents & Ratepayers Association (MERRA)

September 2026

www.scottslanding.org

Celebrate a Local



We would like to celebrate two of our locals. Chris Russell hates rubbish and has been collecting rubbish on the roadside of Ridge Road for years. This year he hurt his shoulder and hasn't picked it up for 3 months. And people are starting to notice the rubbish, especially at the top of Ridge Road. He's planning on getting out there again with Helen, his wife. Chris and Helen also built a shed, that they called Rosedale and it's used for MERRA Committee meetings and many other local activities. Chris has been on the MERRA committee for years and is in charge of looking after our pest weed supplies. Chris and Helen commit so much of

their time and energy and really care about our community. They are part of the fire team and help out at everything from the annual picnic to looking after the Scotts Landing sign. This is a small acknowledgement and thanks on behalf of the Scotts Landing community.

If you have a local neighbour who you would like to celebrate, let us know at maprevell@gmail.com

Community Resilience



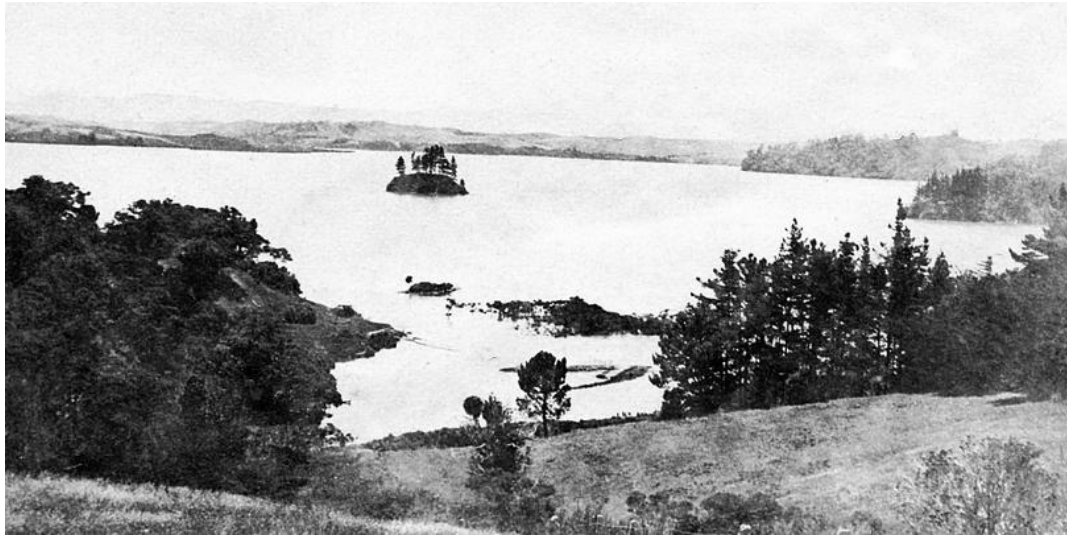
One of the best things you can do in a small community like ours is get to know your neighbours. We have had two serious incidents this year where people have hurt themselves badly. Both involved machinery. One where a ride-on-mower chopped into a person's big toe and another where a skill saw blade almost severed a thumb. Ow! Both very quick and painful and it was the neighbours who helped in both occasions. A big well done and thanks to the quick thinking neighbours who helped in both incidents. Here are some ideas from Neighbourhood support. Click on the link below for more.

Ideas and resources for connecting with your neighbours

- **Look Out:** Help keep your community safe by looking out for your neighbours. If something doesn't look right, let someone know or get help. Check in with your neighbours after bad weather events and natural disasters.
- **Reach Out:** It just takes a wave! Say 'Kia ora!' or introduce yourself. Take around some baking or excess from your fruit trees. There are many ways to make your street welcoming for everyone who lives there.
- **Help Out:** Little things can make a big difference! Have a chat with someone who lives alone, clear the drains in your street before a storm, bring in the mail for a neighbour who is away or share resources with neighbours after bad weather events and natural disasters.
- Share excess fruit from your trees, eggs from your chickens, flowers or veges from your garden.

<https://www.neighbourhoodsupport.co.nz/know-your-neighbours>

MERRA remembers John Waugh



The MERRA Committee would like to acknowledge the passing of John Waugh. John died on the 16th of June just shy of his 85th birthday. He researched and worked tirelessly to set up our Scotts Landing website with many of the historical vignettes and photos also contributing to the Scotts Landing Historical Trail. Having left the community about 8 years ago John still showed a keen interest and we are very grateful for his contribution. The photo above is from the 1940's and is included in his thorough and interesting article about Grants Island in the Scotts Landing Website.

<https://scottslanding.org/grants-island/>

Labour Weekend Weed Bin



MERRA would like to thank everyone for their continued support by paying their **subscriptions** and giving generous donations. The money is used to buy pest control supplies, hire bins for weed removal, to buy supplies to update walkways and other on going costs of our community. Above is the picture of the weed bin on Charles Street that has been well used by residents in the past. MERRA is organising another one for Labour Weekend. Part of the cost of the bin is being paid by The Mazda Foundation which we really appreciate. A big thanks to Chris and Helen Russell for having the bin on their property as well.

Pest Weed focus - boneseed daisy



Time to start looking at those weeds taking over your property. Pile them up somewhere so you can put them in the bin on Labour weekend. Above is a photo of a **boneseed or bitou bush**. I found one growing in my garden this week! It looks like a lovely yellow daisy but it has a thick tree like stem and grows quickly taking over any plants in the area. Notice the leaves are different from normal daisy leaves.

What damage does it do?

Rapidly replaces virtually all native species under 2 m and prevents new native plant seedlings from growing. Takes over disturbed sites faster than native species, and creates heavy shade.

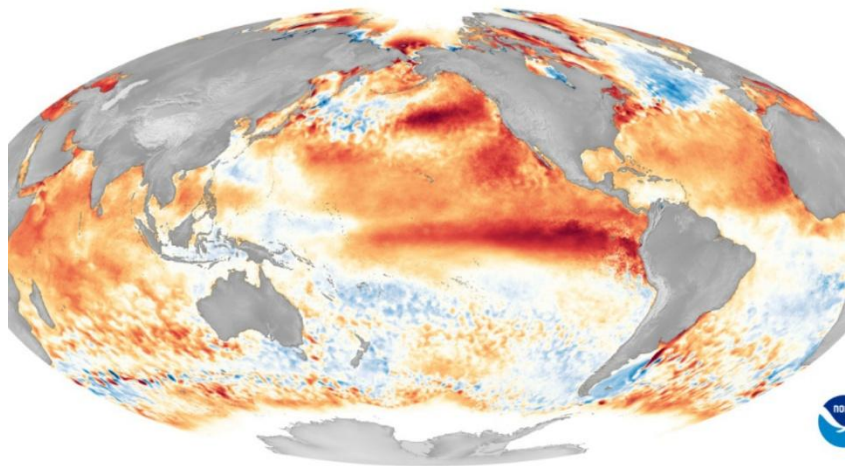
What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Physical removal - Pull seedlings, dig out larger plants.
2. Cut and paste (all year round) - Cut the stem/trunk as close to the ground as possible and cover the entire stump with herbicide as soon as possible after cutting. Apply either glyphosate gel (120g/L strength) or metsulfuron gel (10g/l strength) or picloram gel (43g/l strength) to the entire cut stem.
3. Foliar spray (Seedlings only) - Apply Glyphosate (360 g/L active ingredient) herbicide (20ml/L) plus organosilicone penetrant (2ml/L) to cover entire plant. Note: Non selective. Avoid overspray onto desirable plants.

CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and directions for the purchase, use and storage of the product, are followed and adhered to.

Get in touch with Chris Russell if you need any paste or other weed killing supplies. Phone: 027 4933881

El Nino is here – Are you ready?



A warmer, windier and drier summer is on the cards for Auckland – especially in the east. Now is a good time to prepare for it.

That means potentially less rain, higher temperatures, stronger winds and increased wildfire risk. Now is a good time to think about how your household would cope if conditions became hot, windy and dry.

Check tanks, gutters, hoses etc that may have deteriorated over winter. Since we all rely on tank water, now is the time to decide if your current storage is enough, or if additional tank could improve your water security during dry periods.

Small changes can save a lot of water. To make your tank water go further, a few everyday habits can make a big difference:

- keep showers short (five minutes) and turn taps off while brushing your teeth
- choose water-efficient appliances where possible
- only run washing machines and dishwashers with full loads
- collect water while the shower warms up and use it on the garden
- check for leaks, because even small drips can waste thousands of water over time.

Help defend your home and property from wildfire and start doing these things now:

- Keeping your grass short around your home and other buildings on your property
- Keeping gutters and areas around decks clear of dead leaves, debris and pine needles
- Removing highly flammable plants close to your home and other buildings on your property
- Making a plan to plant low flammability plants before next summer
- Move anything that could burn (mulch, flammable plants, leaves, needles and firewood piles) away from wall exteriors, decks or porches.
- Ensure wooden fencing is not attached to the house.
- Check the wildfire risk regularly, and think about when you do particular activities to reduce the risk of an accidental fire.

Spring Rat Trapping



Thanks to everyone who has been setting their traps, checking them and recording their catches. Spring is here and that means warmer weather, nesting birds and increased rodent activity. Our native bird's nests are very vulnerable to mice, rats, stoats and weasels. So keep up the good work.

If your trap is getting bit quiet then change your bait, move it to another spot and make sure that it is working properly. Remember to wear gloves. Good baits for spring are high protein, so peanut butter, nutella, mayonnaise, or meat lovers paste. (made by Goodnature)

I'm borrowing the NZ Autotrap from MERRA at the moment and found a dead rat today underneath it. It's a self resetting trap and it uses mayonnaise. So that's a win for the birds in my backyard.

Happy trapping.