

TE WAIREPO – YORK STREAM PROJECT

Have you seen the Breathe installation yet? It is currently on display at Nelson's Elma Turner Library, near the magazine section.

Breathe has been designed to tell the story of the impact of high river water temperatures on aquatic life. Water temperature is critical to aquatic health, as fish find it hard to breathe in warm water. Just a small temperature rise can prove fatal for our native fish.

Perspex fish, made from stencils by local school pupils, are connected to temperature sensors installed in York Stream. The fish light up in different colours according to the temperature of York Stream, so if the fish are red, it means the water temperature is too high to sustain aquatic life.

We can help our native fish by taking action to prevent the water in our streams and rivers getting too warm. Actions include riparian planting, which provides cool shady spots for fish to hide in, and reducing our water take from the rivers to ensure that there is enough flow in the waterway.

We've also been working to make sure our fish can swim freely up and down York Stream, which is vital for their breeding cycle. We've put baffles in to break up the current and give the fish places to rest, and we've removed fish barriers in the St Vincent Street Culvert. This will allow our migrating, native fish to make their way the full length of the stream to find better habitat, before returning to spawn in the lower reaches of the stream.



DO YOU KNOW YOUR STREAMS?

Most of us live within a short distance of one of Nelson's rivers or streams, but how well do you know your neighbourhood stream, and why should you care about it?



We're launching a new project called Know Your Streams, which will uncover the hidden stories of our urban streams. Many of our streams are hidden from view, but are they still home to fish and aquatic life? What is their history and how does it tie into the community of the past and of today? Who remembers what the stream was like 20, 40 or 70 years ago?

Our Know Your Streams project will look into the history and identity of thirteen streams across the City. The aim is to reconnect communities with their streams, by telling their stories and those of the people and wildlife that live alongside and within them. If you have a story about your stream that you would like to share with Council, we would love to hear from you. To get involved in the Know Your Streams project contact Environmental Programmes Adviser Joanna Wilson, joanna.wilson@ncc.govt.nz, phone 03 546 0229.

RARE PLANTS OF THE MAITAI – SHOVEL MINT

Did you know that the Maitai Valley is home to a number of unique and rare native plants?

Scutellaria novae-zelandiae (Shovel Mint) is one of two members of the mint family that are native to New Zealand, and is endemic to the lowland forests of Nelson and Marlborough – meaning that it is native only to these places and nowhere else in the world. *Scutellaria* was first recorded in Nelson in 1840 and in 2009 was given a conservation status of Threatened – Nationally Critical. It occurs on valley floors, amongst matai, totara and black beech forests, as well as on river banks and cliffs. The reason for its threatened status is that it has very specific habitat needs, which are now much reduced, as well as the competition from invasive introduced weeds and pig rooting.



GROOM CREEK UPDATE

The final stage of construction for the wetland at Groom Creek – the culvert that will connect Groom Creek to the wetland – is almost complete.

Once this culvert is established, we'll be busy planting thousands of wetland species in the standing water of the new ponds. These plants will begin the important job of filtering nutrients from the stream.

A community planting day is planned for the area around the wetland on the weekend of 19/20 May. Watch out for updates on our Facebook page and in Our Nelson for details nearer the time.

facebook.com/nelsoncitycouncil



EVENTS COMING UP

WORLD WATER DAY

Thursday 22 March, 4.30pm – dark, Isele Park Night Market. Activities and information to support our relationship with freshwater.

WALK THE CHALK

Saturday 7 April (Rain day) – Sunday 8 April) 1pm – 4pm, starting at Victory Community Centre. Walk along Te Wairepo/York Stream with local experts and learn more about the stream and its history and biodiversity, and what we can do to make it healthier.

GROOM CREEK COMMUNITY PLANTING DAY

Saturday 19 May (Rain day) – Sunday 20 April), from 10am at the Groom Creek wetland site, behind the Maitai Campground, Maitai Valley.