

UPDATE ON OKAREKA MISTLETOE RESTORATION PROJECT

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2011 has been relatively quiet for workdays with only two required to be scheduled in April and November. Unfortunately the April workday was cancelled due to bad weather leaving us with just the November workday. However with our planting programme well complete and plantings now maturing and several metres high there is minimal releasing required so only a minimal number of workdays are needed to maintain what we have already achieved.

For our November workday we were finally blessed with some good fine weather for spraying so the six of us that turned up achieved a huge amount of work during the morning. The only real releasing of plantings required was some cutting back and subsequent spraying of bindweed, which seasonally can be a problem climbing up trees. With several knapsacks in operation we were able to work simultaneously in the marginal strip and in Tikitapu Scenic Reserve following up on wandering willie and jasmine populations in particular in both reserves. A fair bit of time was spent chasing cherry saplings in Tikitapu Scenic Reserve which seems to be a never-ending task as there is a prolific seed source in the neighbourhood and the plants appear to grow very fast and are reasonably shade tolerant.

Other volunteers were able to work their way through the original plantings finding some new populations of ivy and jasmine that had appeared to have been spread by birds. Revisiting all the known jasmine sites showed how difficult this species is to eradicate. Even at jasmine populations which had had over 12 years of control work undertaken on them we are still finding live strands present, which is very frustrating.