Awhitu Coast Care News-December 2024

Awhitu Coast Care celebrated its fifth birthday in November…with the harbour coastline ,and the west coast (which now has swept Karioitahi into the Awhitu zone),it is only the team work of supporters which allows us to tick along …So a huge thank you to all who assist …potting up ,planting and weeding our coastal edges ;attending Coastal Restoration Trust conferences and field trips ;collecting the endless plastic detritus which litters our beaches ,with Seacleaners uplifting the stored “big stuff ”annually ;the Sustainable Coastlines Litter Intelligence surveys at Waimatuku /Hamiltons ’Gap…and ,the Shorebird Minders ,who attend courses ,and diligently supervise the nesting attempts of dotterels and oystercatchers.(Stop press-the Hudsons Beach pair have hatched one chick…all fingers crossed for survival and fledging!)

We showed the 1997 film “Grandma ”,the story of a Royal albatross matriarch ,banded in 1937, who has contributed many chicks, which survived to maturity, to the Taiaroa Heads / Otago Peninsula Royal albatross colony .The film covered the techniques-banding and weighing chicks ,and supplement feeding those requiring assistance to thrive-even then ,parent birds were having to fly further ,and be at sea longer ,to find sufficient food for sustaining themselves ,and their chicks…Savouries and a delicious cake followed, then a short meeting for future event planning .Firstly, with the endorsement of Auckland Council ,we will organise portable signage for setting up wider “zones” either side of shorebird nests, with the current signs-and-tapes still to be set up around the nest .Auckland Council are also supplying bulk Dotterel leaflets ,to be delivered to the letterboxes of bach communities ,to raise awareness amongst bach owners and holidaymakers of the presence of our shorebirds…delivery people required!

The proposed Waikato Offshore Wind Farm will actually have a large area within the Auckland zone of interest, ie Karioitahi, and northwards ,with a plan by Blue Float to underground the generated power directly to NZSteel ,via an unspoilt area of the coast north of Karioitahi Beach ..I am trying to locate information on the effects of offshore turbines on seabirds from overseas where offshore farms have been established for some years-many of our seabirds are declining in numbers, and face many threats ,so it is worthwhile identifying whether this proposed windfarm will be an additional risk factor…

The proposed Coastal Walk ,timed to fit in around Seaweek ,and Aucklands ’Moana Festival which runs throughout the month of March, is in the early planning stages-we will keep you posted with details as the Walk takes shape…Also in March-The Coastal Restoration Trust have set the dates for the 2024 Conference/Field Trips /Workshops ,which will be 20-22 March ,based at the Maketu Marae, Kawhia…to book a place-google the Coastal Restoration Trust pages, and click on the Conference link…as always ,the prices for volunteers are very reasonable…