

A network of volunteers prepared to help maintain and enhance the historic and indigenous natural features of the reserve and adjoining slopes.

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Newsletter Number 17: Dec 2025

1. *Passing of Russ McStay.*
2. *Nesting Falcons/Karearea*
3. *Track maintenance – 29th Nov & 13th Dec 2025 Working bees*
4. *Track maintenance – next Working Bees 2026*

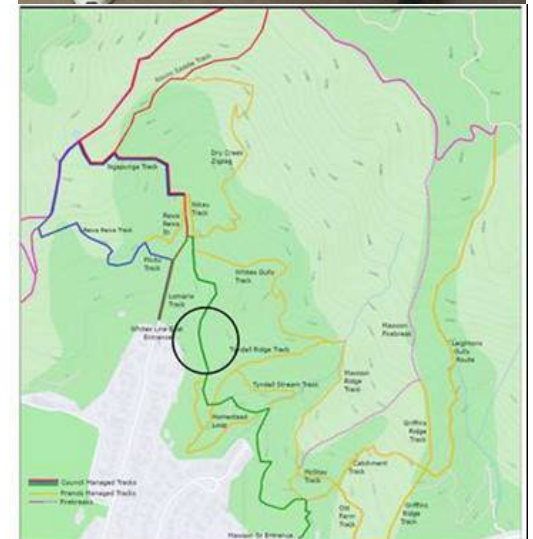
1. With sadness we wish to advise our first group coordinator Russ McStay passed away at Hutt Hospital on Monday, 8 December 2025, aged 95 years. In accordance with Russell's wishes, there was only a private family farewell.
<https://www.legacy.com/nz/obituaries/thepost-nz/name/russell-mcstay-obituary?id=60282086>
 Russ was our 1st group coordinator 2005-2017, organising working bees for track maintenance, weeding and then spraying of climbing asparagus. Prior to that he was active trapping possums before the brodifacoum baiting program started. In recent years, Russ enjoyed reading our newsletters about our continuing efforts in the reserve from his retirement home.



2. Nesting Falcons/Karearea.

- The falcons/kārearea are still nesting close to the Haywards Track near Whites Line East. They are very active at fending off anyone who tries to use that part of the track.
- The latest NZ Falcon newsletter reports Falcons are also active elsewhere around Wellington and NZ

[New Zealand Falcon Survey Newsletter #26](#)



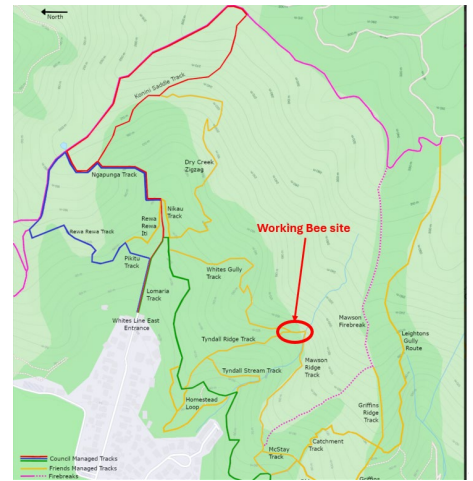
3. Track Maintenance – 29th Nov and 13th Dec

At the junction of the Tyndall ridge track, Whites gully track and the Mawson Ridge Track (see map), we are bypassing a very boggy section which is very steep, wet, and unstable. The new bypass will join the Mawson Ridge track ~20m up the Whites Gully Track

❖ Our working bees 29th Nov and 13th Dec have continued this bypass work

❖ Check out the photos below and the video:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/JQKQbZgrr5M>



4. Next working bee(s)

We'll likely plan more working bees for Feb/March to complete this section and tidy up the Tyndall track. We'll send out an email closer to the time

*Thanks for all the help this year, Merry Xmas and see you in the New Year,
Regards Bill & Martin*