

Kauri Rescue Newsletter, August 2019



Funding for 2019-20 Confirmed

We are delighted to announce that the Kauri Rescue project is being funded by Auckland Council from 1 March 2019 for a year to work with landowners in the Auckland Region on treating and monitoring their kauri trees infected by *Phytophthora agathidicida* (kauri dieback). For the previous two years the project was funded by the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge. The team is excited to extend our positive working relationship with Auckland Council, who have provided inspection and detection services for the project from the outset, into a full blown partnership. Auckland ratepayers with kauri are benefiting greatly from this arrangement.



New Participants join the project

During the first 2 years over 500 people contacted the project about kauri dieback issues. Of these 250 wanted an inspection of their trees and 50 were recruited as project participants to begin treatment, treating over 800 trees. Since January 2019 the project has handled 112 enquiries, enrolled 26 new participants and treated over 450 more trees on private land. New participants John and Sarah Peacock (below) have been making great progress on their large bush block at Muriwai, west Auckland.



Weather news

The wet weather is preventing us from getting out in the bush at the moment as it is too risky for spreading the pathogen but we will be ramping up our field activity again as soon as it starts to dry out.

If you'd like to help us treat and monitor trees on private land we'd love to have you join our team of Ambassadors. Supporting landowners with large properties to treat their trees is an increasing feature of our work. If you'd like to join the team sign up here:

<http://www.kaurirescue.org.nz/contact.html>

mātauranga Māori-led Research brings hope

The Kauri Rescue team featured at the recent Phytophthora Symposium in Auckland where team leader Dr Ian Horner made a presentation and the team featured in a poster.

In a paper presented at the Symposium and published last week. [New research](#) by Dr Monica Gerth from Victoria University of Wellington (photo below thanks to [curiousminds.nz](#)) suggests kānuka may actually help halt kauri dieback. Her team found that compounds extracted from kānuka have the ability to halt kauri dieback by paralyzing the zoospores that infect kauri roots. "If the spores can't move through the soil, they can't infect kauri, which could spell hope for our forests," the authors said.

Researchers identified four native plants: kānuka, karamū, kawakawa and nīkau that produce anti-Phytophthora compounds. The knowledge used to select these plants descends from Te Whare Wananga o Ngāpuhi who were key members of the research team.

Extracts of the plants' leaves and roots were tested for their ability to inhibit the disease pathogen and showed the kānuka leaf was the most effective at inhibiting germination and completely eliminating the germination of the pathogen zoospores. Overall, the results from the study emphasise the value of using [mātauranga Māori](#) in the response to kauri dieback, the authors said.



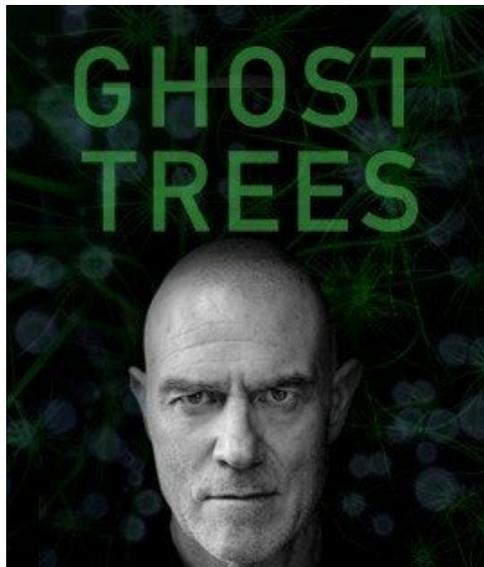
Ghost Trees inspiring art

Kauri Rescue participant Gary Stalker has written a play that will be performed in the Going West Books and Writers Festival this September.

Ghost Trees is story that draws on science, imagination and the indefatigable love for things lost. It is one man's struggle to cope with the loss of his partner to cancer and a search for answers. He finds the devastating effects of kauri dieback on the trees surrounding his house symptomatic of a deeper malaise – climate change, species extinction, increasing isolation, and loss of identity.

Playwright Gary Stalker looks for meaning in these events and finds an extraordinary connectedness between all living entities. Delving into the world of the *Phytophthora* that is killing kauri, Gary takes you on a journey where the past, present and future merge together. Unable to move forward, he is caught at the intersection of multiple realities; a strangely poetic place, of magical thinking - a place where matter meets spirit and conversations happen with the departed and the large kauri that surround his home.

Ghost Trees runs from 9-14 September at the Arataki Centre. You can book tickets here: <https://www.iticket.co.nz/events/2019/sep/going-west-ghost-trees>



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