

He *kōrero* nā te Kaunihera o Wairau. News from Marlborough District Council.

Chilean needle grass rust fungus approved

A rust fungus that affects Chilean needle grass could help slow the spread of the highly invasive weed in Marlborough.

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has approved the release of the fungus to control the spread of the grass which is widespread in Marlborough, with 2,615 hectares affected.

Councillor Barbara Faulls, who holds Council's biosecurity portfolio, said without an intervention such as the fungus, farmers, landowners and biosecurity staff were fighting an uphill battle against the damaging weed.

"Rust fungus (*Uromyces pencanus*) will hopefully give us the advantage of not having to search for the proverbial "needle in a haystack", as it will spread and do its job without too much human intervention," she said. "The fact that it is host specific is a comfort to landowners as well."

Chilean needle grass, a perennial South American grass, was first recorded in Marlborough in the 1940s in the Blind River area. Plants form dense clumps, excluding pasture species, reducing farm productivity with the potential to cost farmers millions of dollars in lost production. Animal welfare is also an issue as the seeds have sharp tips that can get into pelts and eyelids, causing blindness.

Marlborough District Council applied to use a strain of rust fungus, *Uromyces pencanus*, as a biocontrol agent against Chilean needle grass (*Nassella neesiana*) in New Zealand.

Council's Biosecurity Manager Liam Falconer described the release as "significant" and had involved many years of work from councils, Landcare Research, EPA and the community.

"We hope the rust will become well established in Marlborough, slowing the growth and seeding ability of Chilean needle grass and reducing harm to livestock and loss of production," he said.

"Testing shows this rust fungus can successfully slow infestations, killing the foliage of Chilean needle grass as well as reducing its growth and seed production."

Liam says that biocontrol is a long game and it may take a number of years before an impact from the initial releases is seen.

"This rust fungus is highly host-specific, meaning it only lives on Chilean needle grass and is highly unlikely to harm native plants or animals.



Biosecurity Manager Liam Falconer with an example of Chilean needle grass at the Wither Hills Farm Park

There is also no risk to people," he said.

A study has estimated the potential cost of lost production could reach as much as \$1.16 billion nationally, if the weed is left unchecked.

In recent years the EPA has approved other biocontrol agents for old man's beard, Sydney golden wattle and moth plant, amongst other pests.

Blenheim's water to be chlorinated

Blenheim's water supply is to be chlorinated to ensure it meets national regulator Taumata Arowai's standards.

The water regulator requires a residual disinfectant, which is typically provided by chlorine, and while Blenheim's water is currently treated for protozoa and bacteria, there is no chlorine dosing.

Council's Planning and Development Engineer Stuart Donaldson told July's Assets and Services Committee that chlorination would initially be done on a temporary basis at the Central Water Treatment Plant (CWTP) until a permanent dosing plant is built. There is sufficient space to install permanent chlorine dosing at the secondary water treatment plant in Springlands.

"There is currently not enough room for a permanent chlorine dosing plant at the CWTP,"

Mr Donaldson said. "Chlorine dosing would initially be at a temporary plant until the sodium hydroxide dosing plant is complete and there is sufficient space for a permanent dosing plant."

Chlorine is a safe, simple and inexpensive way to disinfect drinking water, capable of killing most common bacteria including campylobacter and norovirus. It's generally used alongside other processes such as protozoa barriers which remove single-celled parasites such as cryptosporidium and giardia.

Provision has been made in the Long Term Plan for chlorinating the supply.

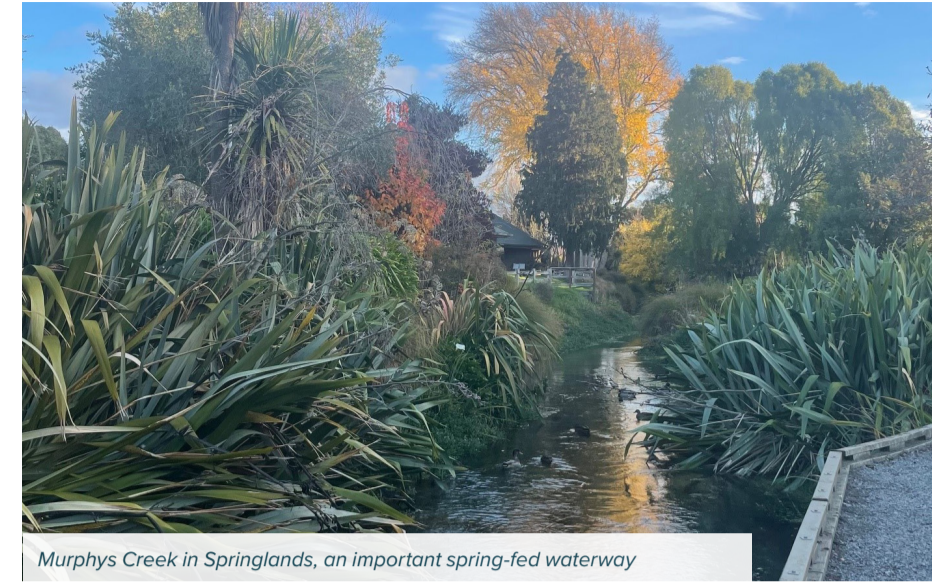
Mr Donaldson said Taumata Arowai had reinforced the need for Blenheim's water supply to be chlorinated from 31 December

this year. This was to ensure it met the Water Services Act and the Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules.

The committee recommended upgrading the existing CWTP site, which has been developed over time with the pH correction plant built in 2000 and disinfection, a reservoir and pump station added in 2012. Changing the pH correction plant from hydrated lime to sodium hydroxide will free up space for a permanent chlorine dosing plant.

Mr Donaldson added that existing equipment would be re-used as much as possible to save money.

Springlands stormwater work about to start



Murphys Creek in Springlands, an important spring-fed waterway

Work is about to start on the first stage of the Murphys Creek stormwater upgrade, meaning possible disruption for residents.

Murphys Creek is an environmentally important, spring-fed waterway running through Springlands.

Increased development to the northwest and concerns over the impact this would have on the quality and capacity of Murphys Creek, led to an overall stormwater plan to alleviate these impacts.

As part of this process, and in consultation with key stakeholders, a concept design known as Option G was agreed upon. This design will treat and divert a significant amount of stormwater flow from Murphys Creek to the Taylor River through a new stormwater pipeline.

A smaller amount of stormwater will also be diverted into an upgraded pipeline from Aston Street.

Findlater Construction Ltd have been awarded the contract for the Aston Street works, which include installation of a new treatment device and upsizing the stormwater pipe from Murphys Creek, through McKendry Park, Aston Street and across Murphys Road.

Works are scheduled to start late July and anticipated to run for three months.

During that time there will be restricted vehicle access to Aston Street for residents and no access for non-residents and pedestrians.

Matariki celebrations at Te Kahu o Waipuna



Adults and children listening to Matariki stories read by Rina Pinker

Marlborough Library, Marlborough Art Gallery and Marlborough Youth Council held a successful Matariki celebration at Te Kahu o Waipuna last month.

More than 250 people marked the start of the Māori New Year.

"It was really pleasing to see some new faces and whānau groups coming in," Community Learning and Engagement Coordinator Duncan Mackenzie said.

Following a mihi whakatau, the Queen Charlotte College Kapa Haka Group set the tone for the evening with their performance.

In the Children's Library, children and adults listened and read along to Matariki stories in Te Reo and English, read by Rina Pinker. Aligning with the whānau experience, Rina introduced her mum

Connie, who brought out her guitar and encouraged the gathering to sing waiata and move their tinana (body).

Matariki themed crafts for the tamariki, and a guided tour of Ngāti Rārua's Te Heke Whakangā exhibition in the Art Gallery meant there was something for everyone to enjoy over the course of the evening.

Marlborough Youth Council manned the BBQ and families enjoyed the kai in the courtyard and foyer.

The host organisations agreed there were great foundations for future Matariki events and were particularly grateful for the support from local iwi, Queen Charlotte College, Rina and Connie Pinker, Jules Mackenzie, Dr Lorraine Eade and Paora Mackie.

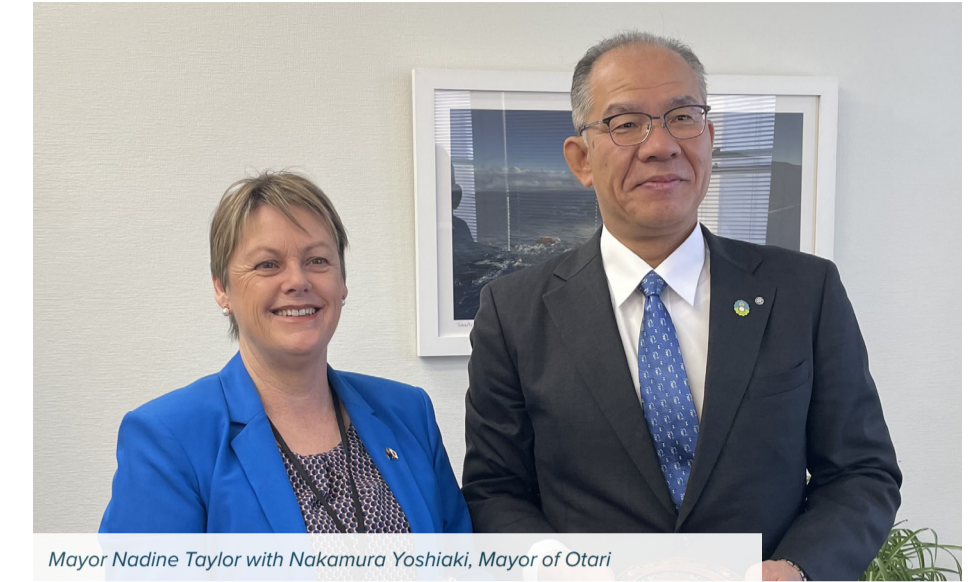
Hydrangea pruning demonstration

It's pruning time for hydrangeas and Council's gardening team will be holding demonstrations at Pollard Park next week.

Come and learn from the experts - it's also a chance to ask questions.

A pruning presentation will take place in the hydrangea garden next to the white summer house on Tuesday 23 July from 9am to 10am and 10.30am to 11.30am. It will be postponed to the following day if wet.

Japanese delegation visits Marlborough



Mayor Nadine Taylor with Nakamura Yoshiaki, Mayor of Otari

Mayor Nadine Taylor hosted a delegation from Otari Village in Japan last week. The delegation included Mr Nakamura Yoshiaki, Mayor of Otari. Otari is part of Marlborough's Sister Cities programme.

It was a warm welcome - both mayors have sons of the same age who participated in the sister cities youth exchange programme while at high school. Gifts were exchanged - including handmade cloth and whisky from the Japanese - and native wood bowls and wine from Marlborough.

Mayor Taylor said it was great to see the 33-year relationship continuing with youth exchanges planned for 2025.

"The Sister City agreement with Otari came about through friendships made at Outward Bound - Otari is home to an Outward Bound School and there are still student exchanges going on between Otari and Marlborough today."

Otari Village is a small town in Nagano Prefecture, north-east of Tokyo, which hosted the 1998 Winter Olympics. Otari is a holiday resort with good skiing and snowboarding facilities.

Queen Charlotte Drive one hour closures

On Monday 22 and Tuesday 23 July, Marlborough Roads Recovery have planned closures on Queen Charlotte Drive, from the Moenui Road intersection for 500m towards Havelock.

The closures will be in place from 9am to 3pm, with openings on the hour, every hour to clear waiting traffic.

The closures are for the installation of anchors to a retaining wall being built at this site.

Due to the narrowness of the road and for the safety of road users and our crews, a closure is needed for this critical part of the wall's construction.

Outside of these closure dates and times, works will be under stop/go traffic management. The works are expected to be completed by the end of the month.

In addition to the closures, there are three other active work sites on Queen Charlotte Drive between Cullen Point and Ngākuta Bay under stop/go traffic management.

Road users are advised to expect delays during this time.



Marlborough Sustainable Housing Trust recognised

A \$2.1M housing initiative led by Marlborough's Sustainable Housing Trust has won merit in awards dominated by projects many times its size.

The trust's Hutcheson Street homes were recognised in the Property Council's annual awards for features including Lifemark 5, for people with disabilities, and Homestar 7, which acknowledges features to reduce power bills. The three four-bedroom homes were tenanted late last year by low-income families.

Marlborough Mayor Nadine Taylor said the real winners of the merit award were the tenants.

"The houses the trust has designed and built delivered life-changing outcomes for the families that live in them. I said in opening the homes that anyone would be proud to live in them and that's now been given national validation."

"We know we have real need for more affordable homes in Marlborough and I think this award confirms the sector

has capacity to help."

Trust chair David Taylor said the award was an extraordinary achievement for an organisation with no staff and limited financial resources.

The development was an entry in the Community and Affordable Housing won by Kainga Ora for a 20-home multi-level Christchurch project.

"This is very prestigious recognition of what has been achieved by our trust on a tiny balance sheet and modest income," says David Taylor. "The development was also the foundation for our next project which will deliver five affordable rentals for our community in September."

The trust was focused on delivering affordable homes for those in need in the Blenheim area and was keen to talk to anyone who could help achieve its goals.

The Property Council awards showcase outstanding projects, developments and refurbishments from design to completion.

Public Notices

Meet your Council



Mayor Nadine Taylor leads a team of 14 elected councillors. They are responsible for making decisions and developing policies that will help shape our province into the future.

Council's vision is that Marlborough is a globally-connected district of smart, progressive, high-value enterprises, known for its economic efficiency, quality lifestyle and wellbeing, caring community, desirable location and healthy natural environment.

For more information or to contact one of your elected representatives, Ph: 03 520 7400 or go to: marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/councillors

A Cuppa with your Councillors



Sounds-based councillors are available for a drop-in chat each month.

The Cuppa with your Councillors sessions are held at Waitohi Whare Mātauranga/Picton Library and Service Centre - the next session is on Wednesday 24 July from 10am until midday.

Councillors can provide advice, information and help with Council-related issues.

Barbara Faulls, Raylene Innes and Ben Minehan are Sounds Ward councillors. Allanah Burgess is the Māori Ward councillor for Marlborough, based in Picton.

Where: Waitohi Whare Mātauranga/Picton Library and Service Centre

When: 10am to midday Wednesday 24 July

Awatere and Dashwood rural boil water notice

Water from Council's reticulation network to the Awatere and Dashwood rural areas should be boiled.

It does not currently meet the NZ Drinking Water Standards and may contain bacteria or protozoa that are harmful to human health.

All water used for drinking, food preparation or cleaning teeth should be boiled before use.

Treated water is available at the public taps on Marama Road, outside Seddon School. For further information contact Council on Ph: 03 520 7400.



Proposed road closures, navigation warnings and alcohol licensing

For the latest public notices, please go to links.marlborough.govt.nz/public-notice



Council's Harbours team - working to ensure our waterways are safe for everyone to enjoy.

Contact the Harbourmaster's Office if you need advice or information about Marlborough's harbours.

03 520 7400 | HARBOURS@MARLBOROUGH.GOV.T.NZ

Blenheim Customer Service Centre

15 Seymour Street, Blenheim 7201

Ph: 03 520 7400

mdc@marlborough.govt.nz

Mon - Tues 8.30am - 4.30pm

Wed 8.30am - 12.30pm

1.30pm - 4.30pm

Thurs - Fri 8.30am - 4.30pm

Picton Library & Service Centre

2 Dublin Street, Picton 7220

Ph: 03 520 7493

pictonlibrary@marlborough.govt.nz

Mon - Tues 8am - 5pm

Wed 9am - 5pm

Thurs - Fri 8am - 5pm

Sat 10am - 4pm

Sun 1pm - 4pm

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Council & Committee meetings

The following meetings are open to the public and anyone is welcome to attend. Copies of the agendas will be available online and at Council's Office, 15 Seymour Street, Blenheim.

Economic, Finance & Community Committee

Tuesday 23 July at 9am

Public Forum

A public forum will be held prior to the meeting at 8.30am. If you wish to address the Committee please confirm your attendance and speaking time with the Committee Secretary at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Topics are restricted to meeting agenda items or within the Committee's delegation.

Council

Thursday 8 August at 9am

Assets & Services Committee

Tuesday 20 August at 9am

Times and dates may be subject to change, please contact the Committee Secretary, Ph: 03 520 7400 for confirmation.