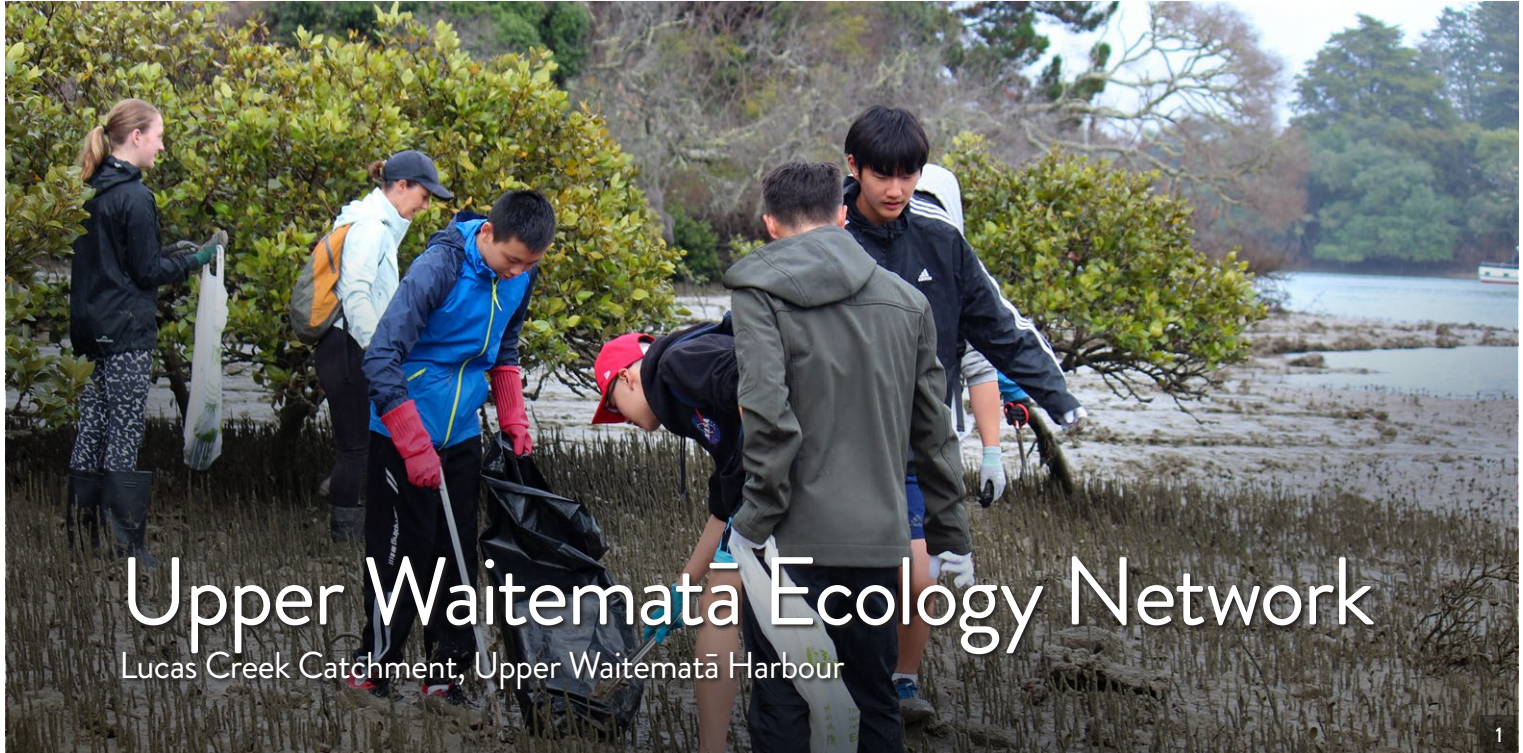


Catchment Group Story

Auckland/Tāmaki Makaurau | OCTOBER 2024



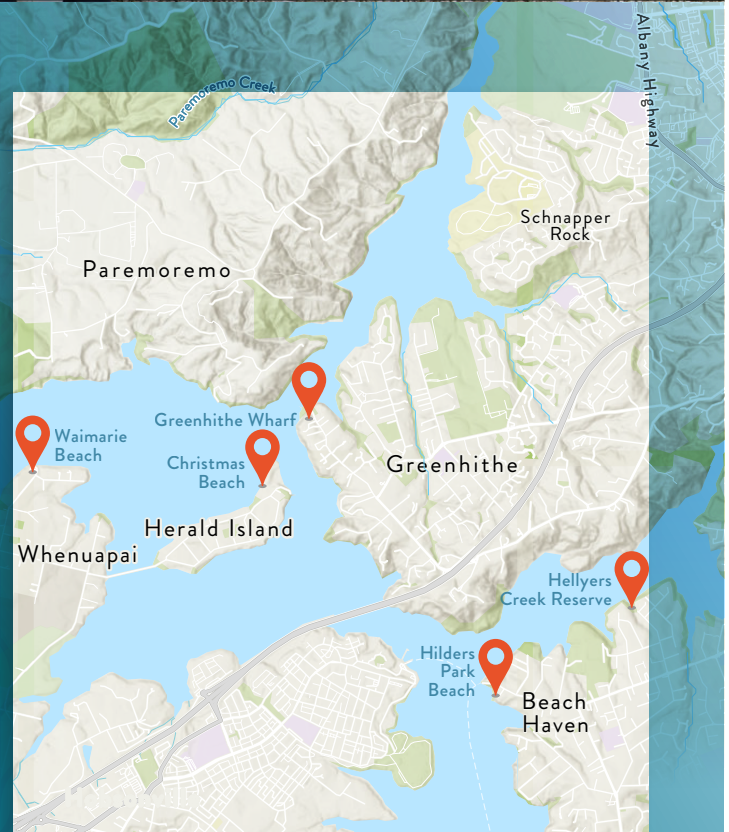
Upper Waitematā Ecology Network

Lucas Creek Catchment, Upper Waitematā Harbour

The Upper Waitematā Ecology Network (UWEN) is a well-established collective of community group members and partners, all sharing a common goal of preserving and enhancing the ecological value of the Upper Waitematā Harbour. The broader Lucas Creek catchment feeds into the Waitematā Harbour, and it was a UWEN volunteer's vision to pilot a large-scale coastal cleanup event on both the water and land.

This ambitious event highlights the passion of UWEN and its members, showcasing the value of an ecology network that successfully brings together community members across a large harbour for the love of te taiao. Moreover, this event was held to honour the kaupapa of Sea Week, which is coordinated nationally by the Sir Peter Blake Marine Education and Recreation Centre.

The scale of this event was a major step for UWEN and sets a new standard for the level of community engagement this group can achieve.



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We went out in between the rain clouds, on a mission to find rubbish and clean up the environment.

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We're so blessed to have Amy and her team to organise this event!

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Upper Waitematā Coastal Clean-up Event



Overview of Clean-up Sites

Five key clean-up sites were established across the Upper Waitematā, with 'Wai Connection' primarily assisting the Upper Waitematā Ecological Network (UWEN) and their community partner, Greenhithe Community Trust, at the Greenhithe Wharf site.

The event saw widespread participation at other locations:

- » 2 sites in Beach Haven, organised by Friends of Shepherds Park and The Cleanup Crew.
- » 1 site in Whenuapai, managed by Living Whenuapai.
- » 1 site on Herald Island, led by the Herald Island Environmental Group.



Health & Safety Support

'Wai Connection' provided essential health and safety support, including:

- » risk assessments
- » safety briefings
- » hazardous waste protocols.



Greenhithe Wharf Clean-up

Kayak Clean-up

At the Greenhithe Wharf site, participants enjoyed a unique kayaking experience. Thirteen kayakers launched from the public wharf using kayaks funded by 'Wai Connection' and provided by Auckland Sea Kayaks (ASK). Guided by ASK experts, they paddled safely around Lucas Creek, collecting rubbish along the way. A volunteer with a safety boat ensured a safe and enjoyable clean-up for everyone on the water.

On-foot Clean-up

In addition to the kayak clean-up, 54 on-foot participants, including Tauhinu Sea Scouts and local schoolchildren, braved the weather and mud to pick up rubbish, filling nearly a whole skip bin in the process.



Support & Activities

Event Support

'Wai Connection' and the Upper Harbour Local Board provided essential support, alongside local businesses Ecopod and Barfoot & Thompson.

Activities

At most sites, participants enjoyed a sponsored BBQ, and at Greenhithe Wharf, The Recreators hosted an upcycling workshop where participants learned to weave bracelets from recycled materials.



Event Documentation

The 'Wai Connection' team, along with a UWEN volunteer, captured the event through videography and photography. These visuals provided participants with memories, and helped UWEN showcase their work to the community. The content will also support future funding efforts for clean-ups.

PHOTO CAPTIONS – Front page: 1. On-foot participants using tongs to pick-up rubbish stuck in the muddy bed of Lucas Creek. **Page left:** 2. Upper Harbour MP Cameron Brewer doing the mahi alongside his whānau. 3. Participants gathering around for the all-important safety briefing. 4. The ASK crew also got stuck in to retrieve rubbish while on the water. 5. Clean-up participants getting treated with a sponsored BBQ to reward them for their efforts. 6. The Recreators hosting their awesome upcycling bracelet weaving workshop. 7. 'Wai Connection' crew member Sophie Journee with the catch of the day, a road cone found in Lucas Creek. **Back page:** 8. Kayakers got to explore the beautiful manawa and clean-up rubbish. 9. Kayakers and the safety boat preparing to head out onto Lucas Creek to pick up rubbish. 10. The Tauhinu Sea Scouts getting signed in for their clean-up mahi.

Next Steps



Looking Ahead: 2025 Event

UWEN is excited to plan the 2025 Upper Waitematā Coastal Clean-up event, with hopes of continued support from Wai Connection.

Expanding Focus to Freshwater

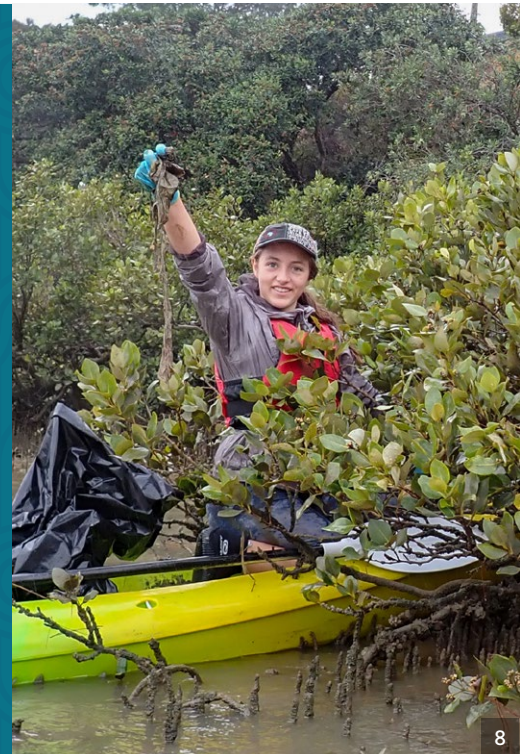
In addition to coastal activities, UWEN is increasingly interested in freshwater values and plans to engage in:

- » Stream health monitoring
- » Spotlighting in local awa (rivers)
- » eDNA investigations

These activities will be carried out in collaboration with Mountains to Sea, further enhancing their environmental efforts.

Strengthening Community Connections

UWEN is a key part of the Upper Harbour community in Tāmaki Makaurā, and they continue to help bring together different community groups across multiple catchments that feed into Lucas Creek/the Upper Waitematā.



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To learn more about the Upper Waitematā Ecology Network, or how 'Wai Connection – Tatai Ki Te Wai' is supporting them, please contact:

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