

ENVIRONMENT

Our Environment

Christchurch City Council's Environmental Newsletter

WILLOWS TO REMAIN A FEATURE OF PARK TERRACE

Young willows are set to replace ailing trees on the banks of the River Avon along Park Terrace.

The traditional vista of weeping willows and lawn sweeping down to the water's edge has been incorporated in a draft landscape plan after consultation with residents. A similar consultation process is likely to be adopted when the City Council develops its planting strategy for Avon River banks in the central city.

Key elements of the Park Terrace plan developed by Suzanne Weld, Parks and Waterways Planner (Design), are:

- Retention of the willow theme, with new trees gradually introduced to replace willows affected by Armillaria. This is the fungal disease that has attacked the roots of many of the 56 existing willows.
- Introduction of a small number of purple and common beech trees at bridges.
- Replacement of native planting near Carlton Mill Bridge with lower shrubs or grasses, and bank regrading to minimise erosion.
- Regrading selected areas of riverbank on the Hagley Park side to make slopes more accessible and grass easier to mow. The steep areas will be planted in low shrubs or Carex grass.

The Council invited residents to join one of two organised walks along Park Terrace in November and December. They heard experts on Armillaria, planting options, and maintenance and design issues.

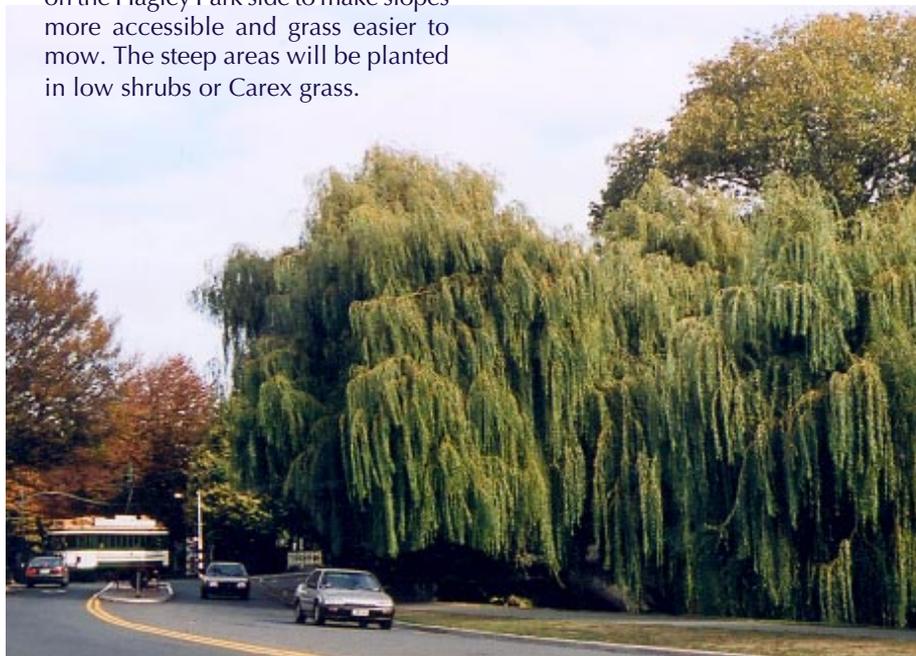
Thirty one residents who took part in the walks filled in a detailed questionnaire. Their views were incorporated in a draft landscape plan. This was then sent to the respondents who were invited to check it and make any further comments.

A planned workshop was shelved because residents' views were so clear cut.

Twenty four of the thirty one residents said the Council should continue to plant willows along Park Terrace, even though the cost of ground preparation and planting would be expensive and the life span of the trees may be limited. Kowhai and a range of European trees were suggested by those who did not want willows planted.

The draft Park Terrace Vision is expected to be presented to both the Park Gardens and Waterways Committee and full

to P2 



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CHRISTCHURCH
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Printed on Works 80gsm 100% recycled paper.

This publication is produced by the Policy Directorate.

Design & Layout: Peter Shapcott

Web page address for past issues:
<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/ourenvironment>

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Council in March with a recommendation that it be approved. A copy of the plan is on the Burns Bridge opposite Salisbury Street.

Suzanne Weld believes the consultation process has worked well. "Even if some people don't agree they can see there has been debate and consensus." At the same time residents have learnt that Council staff have to weigh up many issues when developing landscape plans, she says.

The consultation process also prompted many positive comments from residents pleased they had the opportunity to take part and happy their wishes had been "listened to".

The draft plan states that trees in Park Terrace will only be removed when suitable replacement stock is available. Replanting of young willow trees will include replacement of existing soil around each tree to a depth of two metres and to a diameter of 10 metres. The naturally occurring fungus 'trichoderma', which may retard the spread of Armillaria, will be added to the soil.

Thelma Strongman Leggat, author of *Gardens of Canterbury* and *A History of the Christchurch Beautifying Association*, supports the retention of weeping willows. She says: "I feel strongly that the willows and the smoothly grassed banks should be retained for historical reasons, and also for reasons of city identity. Without the existing mown grass banks, people passing through the area to the "cultural precinct" of the

Museum and the Arts Centre would not be able to see the water of the Avon River."

The current age of Park Terrace willows is estimated at 70 years – "surely not a short life for a tree in Christchurch," said Ms Strongman Leggat. She advocates consistent, inexpensive replacement with young willows.

Ecologist Dr Colin Meurk says no "excessively expensive" efforts should be made to prolong the lives of the willows. He would like 10 per cent of the trees along the riverbanks on both sides of Park Terrace to be kowhai, introduced gradually to replace ageing, dying trees. "If in the end the Chinese willows prove to be unsustainable then slow replacement of more of them by kowhai would be an ideal solution that would best preserve the existing character of the terrace," he said.

Dr Meurk eventually wants a further 10 per cent of trees on the Hagley Park bank to be totara and matai. More indigenous podocarps would help sustain kereru and bellbirds.

Cabbage trees and harakeke downstream of the Carlton Mill Bridge should be retained or relocated a few metres downstream if the bridge is widened. Clumps of Carex and other sedges, flax and toetoe, with some koromiko and mikimiki shrubs should also be established in appropriate zones along the water's edge of the Hagley Park side, Dr Meurk said.

Jennie Hamilton

BLUEPRINT FOR MANAGING OUR OCEANS

New Zealand is a break in the ocean, it is not a land separate from the ocean.

This view highlights the relationship between the ocean and our island nation. It was expressed by submitter Rachel Reese during an extensive consultation exercise undertaken by the ministerial committee on oceans policy, chaired by Dame Catherine Tizard.

The committee was convened by a group of six cabinet ministers who are working to develop an oceans policy for this country. Its task was to consult widely with New Zealanders to understand their aspirations, concerns, values and visions associated with the sea. The committee's findings are contained in its report *Healthy Sea: Healthy Society*, prepared to enable the ministers to define a vision and then develop and implement policy that will determine how we govern our oceans.

Although New Zealand's exclusive economic zone is about 407 million hectares and approximately 15 times the size of our land mass, we have no policy to manage our oceans. The proposed policy will provide a blueprint on how New Zealand deals with issues of stewardship, technology, economic competitiveness and marine biosecurity. For example, how to deal with the discharge of ships' ballast water which can lead to the introduction of harmful foreign species.

The ministerial committee held 47 meetings, 24 hui and received 1160 written submissions. Consultation confirmed



that the ocean is central to New Zealand's unique identity and the health of our ocean, our land and our people are inextricably linked.

A significant proportion of this country's biodiversity exists within the marine environment along our long and diverse coastline. At the same time our largest population centres are coastal, and growing. Development pressures are compounded by competing interests and users.

Most New Zealanders feel some personal connection to the sea. Many Maori especially have a strong spiritual association with the rivers and oceans and want a say on how they are managed.

The committee's report concludes that New Zealanders want an oceans policy that will set clear goals, integrate separate management processes and transparent decision making that allows for informed participation.

Policy should provide a fair way to balance competing aspirations and reflect the range of values held in relation to the marine environment. It should allow economic benefits to be realised without compromising the quality of the environment and ensure that decisions are underpinned by adequate knowledge. The policy should also promote a collective sense of responsibility.

To read a copy of the report *Healthy Sea: Healthy Society* visit www.oceans.govt.nz

Jennie Hamilton

EXPLORING OUR HERITAGE

Looking for a little inspiration for that social studies unit on early Canterbury, or perhaps a technology unit comparing old building techniques and styles with those of today? Well look no further than a visit to the Canterbury Provincial Council Buildings (CPCB) on the corner of Durham and Armagh Streets. What could be better than learning about the past while immersed in the charm of a complex considered one of New Zealand's best examples of Victorian Gothic Revival architecture?

Learning through Action, the Council's Environmental Education Programme for learning experiences outside the classroom, offers education programmes at the CPCB suitable for primary and secondary school students. Through fun, hands-on activities the programmes provide students with real learning experiences that meet achievement objectives particularly for the art, history, social studies and technology curriculum areas.

Delivered by experienced educators, the programmes aim to provoke an appreciation of and concern for our heritage. This is done through activities that challenge students' thoughts and values. This approach addresses the aims and dimensions of the Guidelines for Environmental Education providing learning experiences in and about the built environment. Students are also encouraged to take positive action for the preservation of local heritage. Two of the Learning through Action programmes are featured below.

"Provincial Government's in Session!"

Dressing and acting in role for a provincial government session set in the 1860s is a pretty exciting way for students to gain an awareness of our colonial past. That is just what this programme sets out to do. It also aims to give students an appreciation of how our built and cultural heritage provides an important link to where we have come from and where we are going.

Taking part in this programme won't all be about the past though. Students will have the opportunity to explore the Canterbury Provincial Council Buildings and learn about their significance, not only in the past, but today as the only purpose built provincial government building complex still standing in New Zealand. Students will be challenged to think of ways to preserve our past and to take follow-up actions to help keep our heritage alive.



Kathryn (left) and Nicole (right) from Discovery 1 School put their observation skills to the test with a game of Architectural Eye Spy at the CPCB.

Something old – something new!

For the majority of Discovery 1 School's year 3-5 students a visit to the Canterbury Provincial Council Buildings last year was something very new to them. Few had experienced how it may have felt to be an early provincial government councillor conducting business in the Timber Chamber and many were amused by the language of the day used in a poem about the opening of this grand room. A tour of the building revealed some fascinating facts about the history of the CPCB. Students were also treated to a few anecdotes about some of the more colourful characters involved in the construction of the buildings.

A self-guided game of Architectural Eye Spy gave them the freedom to explore the building in their own time and to find and record some of the special architectural features using visual clues. For those keen

to take more than a memory of CPCB away with them there was an opportunity to take chalk rubbings of features.

Before entering the buildings the students were challenged about their personal views on the preservation of older buildings. A shift in attitude by quite a few students during their visit resulted in the majority being in favour of preserving our heritage.

Janice Beaumont

Environmental Education Programme Co-ordinator

Heritage-related Environmental Education Programmes

For Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom at the Canterbury Provincial Council Building

Our Gothic Revival Past. Year Levels: 1-8

Focus on the architectural features of the buildings, the role of the provincial government and the roles people played in it or compare the building techniques and materials of the buildings to those of today. You can choose fun, hands-on activities to cater for all levels and topics.

Provincial Government's in Session! Year Levels: 7-10

An 1860s role-play set in our colonial past. Students take part in a provincial government session using dress and language appropriate to the times and gain an appreciation of the importance of preserving our built and cultural heritage. They will also learn about how to play a part in keeping our heritage alive.

Bookings are essential

To make a booking contact Jane Ryder by phoning 366-1100 or email: jane.ryder@ccc.govt.nz

COUNCIL MEASURING UP ON SUSTAINABILITY

Christchurch City Council uses an average of around one million A4 pieces of paper every month – the equivalent of 12 pine trees!

A voracious consumer, the Council is committed to working towards becoming a sustainable organisation. It aims to do that by co-ordinating existing projects and implementing others that are assessed for their sustainable outcomes.

The Council is also intent on leading from the front in terms of a community vision for Christchurch. First it wants to get its own house in order.

Two projects underway to achieve this are Measure to Manage and Zero Waste to Landfill.

Measure to Manage (M2M)

The Council is measuring its use of particular resources each month within the Tuam Street building and across the entire car fleet so that it can manage effects on the environment and its budget.

Eventually it wants to be able to identify areas that it can make savings in, what resources 'spike' at certain times of the year, and how it can mitigate those effects.

All information is produced in poster form and displayed in the Tuam Street Civic Offices and service centres so staff can see what resources are being used and how much is being consumed each month.

The Christchurch City Council has been collecting M2M data from Council operations for a year. Darren Moses, Project Manager for the Council's M2M project, says this now gives the Council a baseline from which to set targets for reductions in both resource consumption and overall CO₂ emissions.

The Council measures monthly consumption of the following resources:

- A4 paper
- Coal
- Vehicle fuel (diesel and petrol)
- Domestic air travel
- Electricity

Council use of these resources results in an average emission of 210 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every month. To sequester the carbon from the CO₂, an average area of 28 hectares of native forest would be required. (To put that in context the Botanic Gardens are 30 hectares.)

The extension of this project is the measurement and the therefore management of resources for the whole city. Planning is already underway.

Zero Waste to Landfill

A new system of recycling and reuse has been initiated at the Civic Offices with the aim of "zero waste to landfill". The system, based on Timaru District Council's Zero Waste Scheme, consists of:

- Removal of rubbish bins from individual workstations and placement of landfill bins in tea-rooms;
- Recycling trays which replace the rubbish bins at workstations;
- Increased paper recycling (shiny paper, magazines, card etc);
- Reusable items collected for Council crèches and Creative Junk;
- All food waste collected for use by pig farmers;
- Kerbside recycling for glass and aluminium.

This system is a winner at some of the Council libraries and service centres. In the first two weeks of the scheme, introduced at the end of last year, Fendalton Library and Service Centre reduced its waste to landfill by nearly 75 per cent.

Staff at the Civic Offices produce around 57 tonnes of refuse per annum. It is estimated that about 60 per cent of this total is paper. The Council is aiming to substantially reduce this amount over the coming months as the scheme is introduced to the nearly 800 staff in the Civic Offices.



FIRMS ENCOURAGED TO SORT OUT THEIR RUBBISH

Central city businesses are responding to a call to sort out their rubbish.

The City Council's Target Zero team, intent on reducing waste to the Burwood landfill and boosting energy efficiency, is visiting inner city retailers and offices.

So far team member Laine Phillips has personally visited more than 90 businesses. Hundreds of green recycling bins for the Council's free kerbside collection have also been distributed in the CBD.

"The places I have visited are all very happy with the Council's proactive approach on waste minimisation and the free service provided," said Laine Phillips.

Each site visit is followed by a written report on where electricity savings and waste reductions

can be made. A Christchurch waste minimisation directory provides information and contacts for recycling and related services in the area and a green recycling crate for kerbside collection of staffroom recyclables is delivered.

Businesses are also provided with a green retail or green office guide compiled by the Target Zero team to help them identify areas where they may be able to improve their environmental performance at work. Further help is available on request.

For further information please contact Laine Phillips on (03) 371 1023 or by email: laine.phillips@ccc.govt.nz

Laine Phillips
Waste Minimisation Facilitator



PROGRAMME FOSTERS NEW APPROACH IN HOMES

Do you want to live in a sustainable household – and have fun, be healthier and save money? That's the aim of the Sustainable Households partnership programme being developed in New Zealand.

Project Co-ordinator Rhys Taylor trialed the programme at Christchurch's Hagley College last term. He is one of several tutors around the country working on six topics – energy, waste, water, transport, shopping and gardening – over a four to six month period. Rhys says that once groups have the information and motivation, they can make small changes at home that can add up to big differences.

A course was due to start at Cashmere High School this month and another will start at Mairehau High School in April. Presentations to staff at Christchurch City Council may also result in an 'in-house' pilot of the programme by staff members this year.

The programme, which is supported by a quarterly newsletter, is a joint project between eight local and regional authorities, including Christchurch City Council and Environment

Canterbury. It receives financial backing from the Minister for the Environment's Sustainable Management Fund, which is administered by the Ministry for the Environment.

For the first 18 months the local authorities and their contractors will trial, monitor and review the pilot programme. After that, organisers hope to get as many people as possible involved across New Zealand.

"Sustainable Households is all about working together with shared resources," says Rhys. "Ideas and comments are welcome."

Armed with a Resource Management MSc from Lincoln University, Rhys also has first hand experience in a similar programme in the United Kingdom and is an experienced adult educator and facilitator.

If you want further details about Sustainable Households, such as a project outline or a set of Powerpoint slides, you can contact Rhys at (03) 343 6226 or email: Anneandrhy@compuserve.com



Tutors and participants of the trial Sustainable Households programme held at Hagley College

NEW COUNCIL COMPLEX TO BE SUSTAINABLE

The new library, service and learning centre planned for south Christchurch will be a "sustainable" building in terms of energy use and waste minimisation.

The combined centre, incorporating the best features of the Fendalton and New Brighton Libraries, will be built on Council land where the Beckenham Service Centre is now sited. The current building will be demolished and a new building constructed.

Christchurch City Council project manager Ian McKenzie says that during the public consultation process, the desire for the building to be "sustainable" in nature came across strongly.

"Four main themes emerged from the public meetings - access, ambience, services and sustainability. We've heard some wonderful ideas and will be looking at these closely as the project develops," he says.

While a detailed design is still to be developed, some of the sustainable principles proposed include using material with a recycled content, using timber from a sustainable source and free of harmful chemicals, and incorporating durable materials to minimise the use of applied surface finishes such as paint. Other proposals include collecting and storing rainwater to reduce overall water use and reduce storm water run-off, solar water heating and implementing a site-specific waste management plan during construction. Retaining the trees along Hunter Terrace and Colombo Street, using plumbing fittings that reduce water use and ensuring space for collecting



Architect's impression of the proposed complex

and storing recyclable materials will also be incorporated in the project.

Use of air conditioning will be minimised. Passive ventilation will be used, with high level windows providing light and ventilation and a water-sourced heat pump providing heating and cooling through the floor slab. Significant energy and operational savings can be made with this system and it will also enable the library to be opened to external decks on the western side of the building.

As well as a library and service centre, the building

will include a learning centre. A first for New Zealand, the learning centre will be made possible by Ministry of Education funds available because of the closure of the Sydenham School. It is proposed that the computer learning centre will meet the needs of primary school students and be used by community groups in the evening.

The new library will have a starting collection of 50,000 to 60,000 books, with existing library services at Spreydon and St Martins Adult Voluntary Library continuing. The St Martins Children's Library will re-locate to the new facility. It is envisaged that the combined centre will open in April 2003.

More information can be found at: <http://www.library.christchurch.org.nz/South/Planning/Planning.asp>

Tracy Edginton

Communication Co-ordinator

FUTURE PATH CANTERBURY PREPARES CANTERBURY FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS

Last year the councils of Canterbury, business and community leaders resolved to work together on a range of issues that affect our quality of life. This council-business-community partnership is called Future Path Canterbury.

The first task for Future Path Canterbury is to decide on a 50-year vision to create the region we want for our future. Creating a community vision needs community involvement. That's why you're needed to participate in creating our vision.

The Future Path Canterbury visioning process begins with a public seminar series to raise awareness of issues affecting our region - such as water, transport and economic development - and to stimulate discussion about our collective future.

You are invited to attend the seminars to become more informed about these issues. All of the seminars will be held in the auditorium of the Aurora Centre at Burnside High School (corner of Memorial Avenue and Greers Road), beginning at 7pm.

Seminars will be held on each of these topics.

- 26 February Environmental issues
- 13 March Economic development
- 26 March Planning / infrastructure
- 9 April Energy and transport
- 23 April What makes Canterbury, Canterbury?

At the end of the seminar series, work will begin on developing a series of scenarios for the future development of Canterbury. These scenarios will be taken out for consultation between July and October 2002, so residents can have their say on how they want Canterbury to be in the future. Once the consultation is completed, a vision for Canterbury will be written and adopted by Christmas 2002.

For more information about the Future Path Canterbury seminar series, e-mail: info@futurepath.org.nz or visit the website: www.futurepath.org.nz

Grant Mangin

OLD MUNICIPAL BUILDING RETURNS TO CIVIC USE

The former Municipal Chambers building on the corner of Oxford Terrace and Worcester Boulevard is being readied for its new role. At the end of July 2002, with a new fit-out, it will officially open as Our City – a return, after almost 80 years, to civic use.

The aim of Our City is to inform and educate our citizens and visitors about the city's environment and past, present and future developments. It will provide opportunities for existing agencies such as Environment Canterbury and the Christchurch Environment Centre to communicate information and issues with a local, regional and global perspective. Exhibitions, displays and seminars held at Our City will encourage the exchange of ideas and knowledge about urban development and environmental issues between residents, business, interested professionals, the Council and general public.

It is most appropriate that a centre which considers the city's past, present and future is to be housed in this building and on this site. Following the Canterbury Association's decision in January 1851 to make Christchurch the capital of the province, the association erected its timber Land Transfer Office on Reserve 10, very close to the former Municipal Chambers. Thus it was from this site that the European beginnings of the settlement of Christchurch began.

In 1868 Reserve 10 was transferred and vested in the mayor, councillors and citizens of Christchurch in trust as a site for a public building. By 1879 the Council had decided that the Land Office was too cramped to serve as Council offices and announced a competition for a civic complex, comprising a new Municipal Chambers and a Town Hall, on the Market Place (now Victoria Square). The Council abandoned the project as all the competition entries were too expensive.

By 1885 action had to be taken and the Council advertised another competition solely for the design of new Municipal Chambers. These were to be on a site at the corner of Oxford Terrace and Worcester Street, close to the old Land Office – Reserve 10.

The selection in December 1885 of architect Samuel Hurst Seager's competition entry for the proposed Christchurch Municipal Chambers provoked a storm of controversy in the city. Submitted under the motto "Design with Beauty: Build with Truth", the Queen Anne design was unlike any other building in a city dominated by the conventional Gothic and Renaissance Revival style.

Despite the controversy Seager's design was built and the Municipal Chambers opened in March 1887. The building functioned as the centre of local government until 1924 when the City Council moved into new premises in Manchester Street. In 1922 the Christchurch Municipal Offices Leasing Act was passed to allow the leasing of Reserve 10, on which the building stood. The lease of the building was subsequently taken over by the Canterbury Chamber of Commerce, which occupied the building until 1987. Part of the space was sub-leased to the Canterbury Promotion Council, now known as Christchurch and Canterbury Marketing, which occupied the building until October 2000.

The heritage significance of the building has long been recognised. Registered at a national level by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga in 1985, it has also been listed by the City Council for more than 20 years. The new use will ensure that the heritage significance of the building and its internal spaces is retained and spaces, such as the former Council debating chamber, will again echo to the sounds of public debate!

Jenny May
Director, Our City



Former Municipal Chambers, 1890s

HIGH STREET HERITAGE PRECINCT



C F Cotter and Co. 1924

Upgrading of the heritage precinct in High Street is well underway. The latest revamp focuses on the block between Lichfield and Tuam Streets, one of the most intact Victorian/Edwardian streetscapes in the city.

The central city initiative, which addresses external signage and wiring as well as the repainting of facades, is a joint project between Christchurch City Council and affected property owners.

It is essentially a continuation of work begun by the Council's heritage team about five years ago. Buildings progressively painted since then include the ANZ Chambers, Rueben Blades, Majestic Theatre, Excelsior Hotel and the former High Street Post Office.

At a meeting with other property owners, Council heritage planner William Fulton explained how appropriate painting could draw out architectural detail on the facades. "By improving the aesthetics of the street and retaining its historic character, we go a step toward ensuring the viability of the street as a community and business precinct," he told them.

Last November the heritage planner advised building owners on how to bundle cables into cable trays along the buildings, options for under verandah light fittings, potential interpretation panels and street signage. He then met individual owners to discuss colour schemes and specific details.

After the granting of consents, repair work and the removal of signage started in January and will continue during February. Painting is due to begin in early March, followed by under verandah lighting and street signage.

Another positive outcome of the project has been the reforming of the High Street Business and Community Association, chaired by Allister Cotter. "We are looking forward to being able to use this new heritage look to promote the uniqueness of this part of the central city and the individuality of the businesses here," he says. "The Council's assistance in promoting and preserving the heritage buildings in our area will be vital, not only to the long term future success of local businesses but also for the expanding residential community."

A GREEN LIST

Native treasures

If you're heading off into the bush camping and tramping this summer, why not take a book on the native flora and fauna with you and learn something about the environment along the way? Here is a small selection of the wide range of guides available at Christchurch City Libraries.

A field guide to the native trees of New Zealand by J.T. Salmon (582.16 SAL)

A field guide to New Zealand's lakes and rivers by Brian Parkinson (578.76 PAR)

A guide to the identification of New Zealand coastal plants by Andrew Crowe (581.751 CRO)

A guide to the New Zealand seashore by Dave Gunson (578.76 GUN)

The life-size guide to insects & other land invertebrates of New Zealand by Andrew Crowe (595.7 CRO)

Naturewatch New Zealand: how to experience New Zealand's native wildlife by Gerard Hutching (591.993 HUT)

New Zealand's native birds of bush and countryside (598.0993 NEW)

The Reed field guide to New Zealand wildlife by Geoff Moon (591.993 MOO)

The Reed field guide to New Zealand alpine fauna and flora by Brian Parkinson (578.753 PAR)

Which native forest plant?: a simple guide to the identification of New Zealand native forest shrubs, climbers and flowers by Andrew Crowe (581.993 CRO)

Which New Zealand bird?: a simple step-by-step guide to the identification of New Zealand's native & introduced birds by Andrew Crowe (598.0993 CRO)



Christchurch City Libraries
Te Whare Pukapuka Aa Iwi Otautahi