

## Spring/summer 2012

I warmly welcome you all as I prepare for my second spring at Eastwoodhill. After a washout of a summer we had a very dry start to winter. Clear frosty mornings and winter-blue skies framed my favourite time of year. I absolutely love the winter-green colour of the conifers, but mostly the skeletal forms of deciduous trees. A mid-winter walk through the arboretum under a full moon brings a breath taking profusion of tree form in grey-scale. Wheels turn, cycles continue, Persephone has left Hades and has come back into the mortal world...spring is here! Buds open, leaves and flowers burst forth, the growing season is upon us..."carpe diem"... and we have been busy!

The erosion project, started last year, has progressed with a further 2300 trees planted in Johnsons during July. This incorporated a continuation of last year's *Quercus robur X petraea* hybrid oak, *Alnus cordata* Italian alder with the addition of *Ostrya carpinifolia* hop hornbeam and *Fagus sylvatica* European beech.

Collection plantings have progressed with over 150 specimen trees planted geographically into eco-zones as set out in the Masterplan. Our focus is on species which we only have one of. This will ensure the continual representation of rare species at Eastwoodhill and in New Zealand.

The Westminster Abbey project is gathering momentum. We are working on the design and implementation process to formulate a scheduled work plan. Site preparation will begin this summer and we hope to conduct first stage plantings next winter. We will offer opportunities for volunteers to take part in this exciting project, so watch this space.

'Trees for Bees' scientist Dr Linda Newstrom-Lloyd from Landcare Research is staying at Eastwoodhill over the coming months. Linda and her team are conducting research on the nutritional value of selected tree pollen and its availability to bees in dearth times during early spring and late autumn.

Wintec is back supporting Eastwoodhill this October by providing much needed tree work. Having supported the arboretum for over 20 years their current focus is on large tree dismantling for Certificate in Advanced Arboriculture students. In 2011 they removed lower sections of patulas in The Core and, with the largest patula reaching 35m height, the job was not for the faint-hearted. The site was cleared and replanted with more *Pinus patula* which, over time, will re-establish the much loved spectacle of their mature canopies.

Sections of The Core are having the undergrowth opened up. This will continue throughout the summer to enhance visibility of collection trees and create space for new plantings next winter. This is part of the scheduled maintenance regime for nearly 10 hectares of un-grazed land. Our organic lawnmowers do a fantastic job of keeping wild seedlings at bay although the grazed and un-grazed areas come with their own unique management issues. Come envelop yourself in spring at Eastwoodhill – it's a place like no other!

Danny Frazer  
CURATOR