

Rotorua Forest & Bird Committee
P.O. Box 1489, Rotorua 3040

Jim Rofe (Treasurer) ph. 348 6636

Frances Blakely ph. 362 8480

Margaret Dick ph. 357 2024

Tania Heasman (KCC) ph. 350 2021

Delight Gartlein ph. 357 2575

Trish Hosking ph 357 4500

Sandra Goodwin ph. 362 8865

Judy Gardner ph. 345 7477

If you have any contacts with people who would be interesting and informative speakers, or thoughts about places for a field trip please let one of the Committee members know.



**Forest
& Bird**

GIVING NATURE
A VOICE

If undelivered, please return to:
Rotorua Branch, Forest & Bird, P.O. Box 1489, Rotorua 3040



Forest & Bird
GIVING NATURE A VOICE

ROTORUA BRANCH NEWSLETTER
JULY 2010—FEBRUARY 2011

MEETING AND ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

We encourage families, particularly KCC members to join us, as well as friends of members, and, where there are no group limitations, non-members are also welcome. Activities marked ^{KCC} are especially suitable for families.

We really appreciate it when members book in for field trips and other outings in advance, as it makes organisation so much easier and more enjoyable for us. Always let the trip leader know if you have any relevant medical condition, and always come prepared for unpredictable weather. For most day trips you will need to bring a waterproof parka, sturdy footwear, drink, and lunch.

Thursday, 5th August 2010

Join the Rotorua Botanical Society for a talk by Dr. Kelvin Lloyd "Botanical treasures of East Otago". Venue and time: Rotorua Women's Club on Hinemaru St., near Princes Gate Hotel. 7.30 pm. Everyone is welcome.

Kelvin works as a consultant ecologist based in Dunedin. He will give a talk, illustrated with great photographs, on the vegetation and flora of East Otago, which is not well recognised as a region of botanical interest. None the less, major environmental gradients intersect in East Otago, resulting in sharp transitions between ecosystem types over relatively short distances. Come along to a very interesting evening.

Tikitapu Reserve Pest Control Working Programme
Week of August 28th to Sept 4th - Rat tracking, prior to bait being laid - Exact days will be weather dependent **To register your interest to help:** please contact Frances Blakely, ph. 362 8480



Kiwi Conservation kids carrying out rat tracking in Tikitapu

Monday 30th August at 7.30 pm:
Screening of DoC DVD “1080:
Good News for Conservation” at
 Trish Hoskings’s home, 19 Rahu
 Road, 500m up Dalbeth Road,
 Ngongotaha. Trish’s place is directly
 off the end of Rahu Rd, down farm
 drive. This DVD presents a balanced
 view of the use of 1080.

**Tikitapu Reserve Pest Control
 Programme**

**Friday September 10th and Sunday
 Sept 12th - Baits to go out. To
 register your interest to help on ei-
 ther day, please contact Frances
 Blakely Ph. 362 8480 Meet at 9.00AM
 at 9 Acacia Road, Lake Okareka**



*Mistletoe
 Tupeia
 antarctica
 in fruit,
 July 2010*



**Conservation Week – ‘Love
 New Zealand’ (12-19 September
 2010)**

Conservation Week is about celebrating
 and experiencing New Zealand’s unique
 wildlife, natural areas and historic
 places. It’s a chance to showcase
 people’s achievements in conservation,
 inspire other people to contribute and a

great excuse to just get out there and
 'Love New Zealand'
 Local Rotorua area events this year
 include an open day event with Fish &
 Game, plantings, family fun days,
 working bees, night events, inter-
 preted walks, DOC run trips and much
 more. So take your pick, get out and
 enjoy

The Conservation Week web site will
 be updated regularly with all events
 and a full printable event calendar for
 the
 Rotorua region.

www.conservationweek.org.nz

To stay up to date, join the Conserva-
 tion Week updates email list, get in
 touch on how to 'Love New Zealand'
 contact: Rob Griffiths – Community
 Relation Ranger – Rotorua Lakes
 E-mail: rigriffiths@doc.govt.nz or
 Tel: (07) 349 8226

**Saturday 18th September 2010
 Rotorua Branch Forest & Bird
 and Van Dyks Flooring Xtra -
 Conservation Week Planting
 At Violet Bonnington Reserve,**

Paradise Valley Road. From 9 am to
 about 12 noon. Come and help with
 planting 380 native plants donated
 to F&B by Van Dyks Flooring Xtra
 and Rotorua District Council.



**Rotorua Branch of Forest & Bird
 Field Trip to Whirinaki Forest**

Twenty Rotorua Forest & Bird
 members gathered to visit Whirinaki
 Forest in February 2010. Trip guide
 Greg Steward (from Scion) has
 worked in native forest management
 for over 30 years, including the
 management of native forest for the
 potential to harvest timber in the
 future.

A selective harvesting trial was
 established in Whirinaki Forest in
 1979 by the NZ Forest Service in
 order to determine what would be
 the best practice for sustainable
 harvesting in the future and Greg is
 responsible for monitoring the on-
 going performance of the trial.
 Thirty years on we were able to view
 what has happened in plots where
 podocarps (predominantly rimu and
 matai) and tawa were removed at
 levels of 12-15%, with one unlogged
 block for comparison.

During the establishment of this trial
 great care was taken to minimise
 damage to remaining trees and to the
 soil and understorey plants while the
 selected trees were being extracted.
 Replacement rimu and other species
 were planted in the gaps created by
 the logging. These planted trees are
 clearly identifiable but those that
 have survived the intense competi-
 tion from tree ferns and wineberry
 have barely grown in the last 30
 years. Most remain under 1.5 m tall,

**Mount Ngongotahā Bush
 Restoration Trust**

Visit the website: www.ngongotaha.org
 and read the latest newsletter on this
 project.

Contact: Heather McKenzie,
 phone 07 357 2674

Email: secretary@ngongotaha.org

much the same size as when they
 were planted. Greg explained the
 reasons for the stagnation of these
 trees, and the characteristics of this
 forest to a fascinated audience. He
 was also able to describe what has
 happened in forests where up to
 50% of trees were removed - these
 stands are so destabilised that
 usually there is substantial loss of
 remaining trees in the following few
 years. The formal part of the visit
 finished with a comparison of some
 of the remaining big trees in
 Whirinaki Forest with the biggest
 kauri ever known. Trip members
 then dispersed in different
 directions to explore various nearby
 tracks in Whirinaki Forest. A great
 day!

Margaret Dick

SAVE ON PAPER AND POSTAGE

**Would you prefer to receive your
 newsletter electronically?**

If so please email:

margaret.dick@scionresearch.com

Tikitapu Pest Control Report - continued

The possum trap catch in early September 2009 was only 5.7% - a figure we would have been pleased with **AFTER** the spring baiting, a few years ago. In December 2009 the residual trap catch was 1.4% Possum numbers should be well down throughout the area as trappers have been busy in the Whakarewarewa forest and bush bordering on Millar Road properties, and large numbers of possums have been taken.

It is intended to use the combination of Pindone and Feratox again this year. The bait stations at the Okareka end of the reserve are spaced at 50m x 100m but over the past 3 years the results have been just as good in the Tikitapu end of the reserve where the stations are spaced at 100m x 100m. This year it is planned to use 100m x 100m spacing throughout the reserve. This will save on the cost of baits and reduce the weight to be carried by the volunteers servicing the bait stations.

The success of this project is reliant on our volunteers who do a marvellous job, and our sincere thanks to them for their efforts. Most of the volunteers are retired and some are finding that their age and fitness are curtailing their activities. New volunteers are always welcome and we would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to be added to the volunteers list for working bees in 2010. **Please contact Frances Blakely 362 8480 if you are interested to help.**

Violet Bonnington Reserve Report for AGM 2010

Generally speaking it has been a successful year at the Violet Bonnington Reserve. About 10% of the trees planted during the spring of 2008 died during the heavy frost of last winter. During Conservation week last September (2009) over 200 trees were planted and they, as well as those that survived last winter, are all thriving. I have released sprayed twice during the year.

Any noxious weeds have been sprayed to control them. There has been a marked reduction in the number of weeds.

A few weeks ago 4 or 5 cows got into the reserve after getting into the bush on Mt Ngongotaha. They browsed a few trees but no real damage was done.

Last September I altered the two small gates to prevent horses from being taken through the reserve to the bush tracks on the mountain. We still get mountain bikes being ridden down from the top of the mountain as those concerned can lift their bikes over the gates.

I would like to thank all those people who helped with the planting last September (2009) and look forward to planting another 300 trees during Conservation Week, on the 18th September, 2010

Jim Rofe

Wear suitable clothing & strong footwear, bring a spade if you have one. Bring a drink & a snack for morning tea. Everyone welcome, suitable for all ages and abilities. For more information contact Sandra 362 8865 or Jim 348 6636

Tuesday 21st September 2010
Rotorua Women's Club, Hinemaru St., near Princes Gate Hotel, **at 7.30 pm. Mark Dean: Native plants for Contemporary Gardens & Planting to attract native birds into back yards.**

In 1980 Tauranga teacher **Mark Dean** left the classroom to establish a plant nursery "**Naturally Native**" at Oropi. Mark had a passion for native species and what began as a "lifestyle" venture transformed into a horticultural success story. It is now one of the country's largest specialist native



plant growers employing over 40 professionals. Mark works closely with councils and care groups to provide plants for environmental restoration. He advises on native plants for the home garden and importantly those that attract birds into the back yard. A meeting not to be missed by gardeners and bird watchers. Members and friends welcome.

Tuesday 5th October 2010, Rotorua Women's Club, Hinemaru St, near Princes Gate Hotel at 7.30 pm.

Rotorua Lakes' landlocked koaro (rare & endangered native fish) **presentation by Matt Bloxham.**

Matt has worked as an Environment Bay of Plenty freshwater scientist for seven years, operating out of the Whakatane Office. The subject of Matt's talk, is that of the Rotorua Lakes' landlocked koaro. This fish species has undergone significant decline in recent years thanks to human induced alterations to their habitat and to negative impacts from fish introductions. Matt's presentation will outline some of the work happening in the Rotorua Lakes area to secure and rebuild a handful of koaro populations. He will present on proposed restoration approaches for two lake tributaries. Matt will be able to also show you images of a fantastic new koaro find in one of Lake Ōkāreka's less well known tributaries.

Assembling a "G minnow" trap used to catch koaro



Tikitapu Reserve Pest Control Programme: Saturday October 30th and Monday November 1st 2010: Top up all bait stations as required. **To register your interest to help on either day**, please contact Frances Blakely Ph. 362 8480 **Meet** at 9.00AM at 9 Acacia Road, Lake Okareka

Do you forget to come on our activities?

If you would like an email reminder please send your email address to margaret.dick@scionresearch.com

Tuesday 16th November Rotorua Women's Club, Hinemaru St, near Princes Gate Hotel at 7.30 pm.

Guest Speaker: Nicola Douglas, Area Manager, Rotorua Lakes, Dept of Conservation. Nicki is of Te Arawa Descent (Tuhourangi, Ngati Rangiwewehi, Ngati Whakaue), Ngati Raukawa and Ngati Porou. Her background is varied, having worked in Justice, Maori Radio, & for the last 9 years for DOC based in Rotorua. She is married & has 4 children.

Nicki says "As an Area Manager for DOC, I see my role as facilitating conservation outcomes for this Area and primarily through involvement of the wider community. I look forward to meeting with Forest and Bird members in November, where I will talk about **The Department's Vision - New Zealand is the greatest living space on earth - how we are working towards that in a local context and what that means for conservation and the community.**



Tikitapu Reserve Pest Control Programme

Sunday December 5th 2010 and Monday December 6th 2010 -

Clear all bait stations. **To register your interest to help**, please contact Frances Blakely Ph. 362 8480.



Tikitapu Reserve Pest Control Programme

Week of December 17th to

December 24th 2010 Rat tracking

- Exact days weather dependent. **To register your interest to help**, please contact Frances Blakely Ph. 362 8480

Tuesday 22nd February 2011

Rotorua Women's Club, Hinemaru St, near Princes Gate Hotel at 7.30 pm.

Guest Speaker: Johlene Kelly from DoC : What is Monitoring? Why Monitor? Monitoring within the DoC framework. Types of

Monitoring. Johlene works at the Department of Conservation, Rotorua Lakes Area Office. She is part of the biodiversity team and specialises in undertaking monitoring within the Rotorua Area. Johlene undertakes a diverse range of work across many disciplines including vegetation monitoring, threatened plant monitoring, freshwater work, species work and many other monitoring tasks. There will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions.

Join KCC

^{KCC} **FEBRUARY 2011, Friday 11 - Sunday 13 - MIRANDA SHORE-BIRD CENTRE**

Back by popular demand!

Members who went on this trip to the Firth of Thames to see the godwits in February 2008 enjoyed it so much we wanted to give more people the chance to go. Investigating the mud and crabs proved very popular too, so come prepared to get muddy.

You can choose to come on the Friday night or Saturday morning. Weekend activities will include a talk about the birds and the area from the Shorebird Centre staff, bird watching and exploring, investigating the mudflats and the crabs, beach walking and free time. On Sunday you can visit the Miranda Hot Pool (about 10km away) if you like.

Accommodation is in bunk rooms: \$20 adults, \$15 children. Two self contained flats are also available. We will have a shared tea on Saturday night. Bring all other food and snacks you will require - there is a fully equipped kitchen as well as a large lounge and a library.

Accommodation at the Miranda Shore Bird Centre is limited and **priority will go to KCC members.** We know this is a long way in advance and firm bookings won't be required until closer to the time, but numbers will be limited so get in quick. Expressions of interest to **Helen please, phone 346 3808.**

TIKITAPU SCENIC RESERVE PEST CONTROL PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT FOR AGM 2010

The Tikitapu Pest Control Project commenced in 2004 in the Lake Tikitapu Scenic Reserve between Lake Tikitapu and Lake Okareka. The objective is to reduce rat and possum numbers to allow the birds to fledge safely without predation, and to allow the bush to regenerate and provide host plants for the rare native mistletoes present. It also has the added advantage for visitors to Lake Tikitapu, the Blue Lake Holiday Camp and Okareka residents, of more native birds, less rats and healthier bush.

Both the Nature Walk and Mistletoe Walk have been maintained and guided walks were provided during Conservation Week and Walktober. A roster has been commenced of people who will check the walks for a month each, tidy any windfalls and litter and report any large windfalls requiring removal by chainsaw, to DoC. Pamphlets advertising these walks are supplied to various outlets in the area and the walks are on the Doc website and Rotorua walks book.

The Pest Control Project in 2009 has returned another excellent result with the same toxins used in 2008 - Pindone and Feratox (cyanide). At the start of the baiting season in September 2009, the rat tracking was up to 78% which is the percentage of tunnels with ink cards that rats had visited over 3 consecutive nights. This equals the result in 2007 and is the highest percentage since records commenced in 2004. In December the rat tracking showed **one** rat - giving a result of 2%. (Continued page 6)