



# Forest & Bird

GIVING NATURE A VOICE

Waikato Branch  
NEWSLETTER  
September 2011

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coming up.

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Please let us know if you now have an email address and would prefer not to receive hard copy of this newsletter (this saves us printing costs, and saves trees and it will be in colour)  
Contributions for the newsletter are always welcome. Photos should be at least 300kb. Email to [waikato.branch@forestanddbird.org.nz](mailto:waikato.branch@forestanddbird.org.nz)

For regional events calendar: [www.envirocentre.org.nz](http://www.envirocentre.org.nz)

## Mokihinui fundraising needed

Forest & Bird is gearing up to fight what is sure to be one its most expensive court battles next year when it tries to stop Meridian building a huge dam on the Mokihinui River.

We will need the fundraising support of branches to fund the court case and to put the best possible argument to the court. The T-Gear Trust has generously promised to match all funds raised by branches to help ensure we can put up a good fight against the state-owned energy company.

"NGOs like Forest & Bird rely on the goodwill of members and supporters to fight these important battles, while a company like Meridian has huge resources to chase these projects, which will make them many millions of dollars in profits," General Manager Mike Britton said.

Meridian received resource consent last year for its 85-metre dam, which will drown 330 hectares of riverbed and forest on publicly-owned conservation land under a 14-km-long reservoir north of Westport on the West Coast.

Solicitor Erika Toleman said the Environment Court hearing was due to start in June 2012 and it's been estimated four months of hearing time will be needed.

"That's a very long time for an Environment Court case. One of the

reasons it's going to take so long is that Meridian has a huge number of witnesses," she said. Meridian has engaged over 50 expert witnesses and Forest & Bird is planning to use six to eight. Others involved in opposing Meridian's case such as the Department of Conservation and Whitewater New Zealand will also produce witnesses.

Meridian will release its evidence to Forest & Bird in September and our evidence will have to be ready by February.

The Forest & Bird witnesses will cover aspects of Meridian's proposal including the ecology of the river and surrounding land, landscape and natural character, geomorphology, planning and recreation. More than 20 species of endangered birds, bats, freshwater fish and land snails will be threatened by the damming of one of a dwindling number of New Zealand wild rivers.

Some branches are running fundraising film nights featuring the Mokihinui episode from Craig Potton's Rivers TV series and A Tale of Two Rivers documentary about more environmentally friendly hydro power alternatives on the West Coast.

The value of fighting for nature in the courts was proven again recently when Forest & Bird successfully defended an Environment Court decision that paved the way for greater protection for West Coast wetlands.

## Flooring Xtra sponsorship

Flooring Xtra has decided to renew its sponsorship with Forest & Bird for another year, although there have been some changes to the way the joint project is funded. Flooring Xtra, New Zealand's largest carpet and flooring materials retailer, previously funded the planting of trees by Forest & Bird branches in conjunction with local Flooring Xtra stores. Under a new agreement, which will take effect from this month, Flooring Xtra will give Forest & Bird \$1 per metre from all carpet sold in their stores in August and September.

While there is no longer direct funding available from Flooring Xtra for branch tree plantings under the agreement, Forest & Bird branches are encouraged to continue holding plantings with their local Flooring Xtra store.

The original sponsorship arrangement ran for around two years and an estimated 200,000 trees were planted by Flooring Xtra staff and Forest & Bird branches during that time.

## North Island meeting

Interested members should be marking their calendars with the dates of the North and South Island gatherings to be held in October. The North Island gathering will be held at Pukeora Estate, near Waipukurau from the evening of Friday, October 28 to the afternoon of Sunday, October 30. Branch presentations will be held on the Friday evening with a mix and mingle session.

On the Saturday there will be presentations on Forest & Bird's major issues and campaigns, along with a field trip.

A film showing is planned for the evening. Sunday will wind up the gathering with workshops and presentations. Further details about the cost and bookings will follow in the coming weeks.

### Conservation Week

**10th - 19th September 2011**

for list of events

[http://www.envirocentre.org.nz/projects\\_and\\_events/conservation\\_week\\_events/](http://www.envirocentre.org.nz/projects_and_events/conservation_week_events/)

### Branch Contacts

Committee Members	Phone	Email	Responsibilities
Philip Hart	07 856 7992	prhart@waikato.ac.nz	Chairperson, Covenants, Councillor, Trips
Jim Crawford	07 889 7739	j.m.crawford@xtra.co.nz	Treasurer, Trips, Morgan Res.
Jim Macdiarmid	07 849 3438	macd@wave.co.nz	Secretary
Adua Geremia	07 843 3375	adage@xtra.co.nz	Membership, carpooling, Publicity
Anne Lee	07 843 6880	dvann@infogen.net.nz	
Bruce Dean	07 827 2874		Morgan Res, Maungatautari, Walter Scott
Colleen Brimblecombe	07 855 5626		Plant sale, Photography Competition
Dave Lee	07 843 6880	dvann@infogen.net.nz	
Jane McLeod	07 856 2505	jane_mcleod@slingshot.co.nz	Publicity, trips, meeting catering
Jon Wenham	07 855 0808		Conservation grants, publicity
Mary Crawford	07 889 7739	j.m.crawford@xtra.co.nz	Minutes secretary
Steve Brooker	07 850 6017	sbrooker4@gmail.com	Legal
Sue Smith	07 889 5859	slean@xtra.co.nz	Trips
Katherine Hay	07 856 1906	khay@pear.co.nz	Newsletter, Tui 2000
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Please address all correspondence to 'Secretary, PO Box 11092, Hillcrest, Hamilton'			

## TRIP REPORTS

### Sunday 10th July Wetland Walk

Our small intrepid group fortunately didn't really need all that wet weather gear (often) on this wetland trip.

First stop near Tahuna was to look out over the rift valley which forms the Hauraki Plains and has hosted the Waikato River on a number of occasions. Keith Thompson, our leader for the day, and expert in wetland ecology, gave us a rundown on the geology of the area, the formation of the Kopuatai peat dome, spread out below us and the challenges to an ecosystem such as this posed by modern agricultural practices.

Kopuatai is the largest raised bog in New Zealand, covering 9238ha, and is listed under the Ramsar Convention, which is celebrating 40 years this year. The Convention establishes criteria for identifying natural resources of international importance.

We could see the kahikatea stand on the edge of the dome, which is the only stand with its natural hydrology intact, preserved because of its location on the other side of the Waipa River from adjoining farmland.

After a short drive we arrived at Torehape Reserve, which adjoins the block where the peat mine is, but fortunately has reserve status, although no resources are being put into conserving the unique ecosystem. Drains filled with rubbish greeted us on the roadside, along with a pile of recently tipped home garden clippings. Find the path past the upturned dingy, and Torehape is more accessible than Kopuatai in July. So a short walk in our gumboots over wet sphagnum and ferns meant that we could stand alongside beautiful stands of the giant jointed rush, *Sporadanthus ferrugineus*, over two metres in height. The range of species in a peat bog would not fill many lines on a page, Wire rush *Empodisma minus*, Tangle fern (*Gleichenia dicarpa*)



*Sporadanthus ferrugineus*  
regenerating after mining

and Manuka, Baumia and Dianella. We didn't manage to spot any local fernbirds. Birds we did see and hear during the day included magpies, swallows, fantails, sparrows, spurwinged plovers.

After a short sharp shower we drove along to the nearby Peat mine. The Gamman's Ngatea peat mine is one of only five – three of them in Southland – still operating in New Zealand, though



Keith Thompson in his favourite element - talking bogs in a bog, well actually Torehape Peat Dome

peat has been quarried (or mined) here since early colonial times. The Gamman's have a licence covering 180 hectares of the 10,200 hectares Kopuatai peat dome.

Mining allows for a metre to be removed, then the area is allowed to regenerate naturally, from brush offcuts. *Sporadanthus* is regrowing well. Keith has worked with the company to help in the restoration process and told us they are doing over and above what is required as part of their license. He had also happened to bring along a drill so we could examine the ancient layers below the peat.

Thanks to Keith for what we all agreed was a most interesting day.



Puddling along in the peat mine restoration area, above and below, sample from below the peat.



**Sunday 14th August**

## **Trip to Waiorongamai - two reports**

With a cold snap promised to be on the way, this was a good opportunity to get out before the harsher weather that had been warned. The group met just out of Te Aroha, near a large ruin of part of the old gold mining battery, which gave a good clue to some of the features we would see during the walk. The walk started with a steady climb to the head of Butler's incline. Within the first five minutes, there was some threat of rain, but not enough to dampen coats or any spirits and after that the weather seemed to be largely in support of our efforts.

Following this we proceeded along Cadman Track with wonderful views of Buck Rock from different angles and a panorama of bush. At one point there was an option of following some steep mining cart tracks, adding to the workout provided. Guided expertly by Philip Hart, we were taken to and then toured through a number of mines, one in particular being fairly well off the beaten track, almost unobservable even when right on its doorstep. The tour gave an opportunity to get some idea of the network of mines within that area, on multiple levels, with occasional 'long drops' or overhead vents on one floor connected to upper or lower shafts. Quite a bonus of the walk was a Hochstetter's frog found by Kevin in one of the mines as well as cave weta. Tui and fantail were also spotted. After the mines, it was largely downhill.

After the walk, there was the opportunity to take advantage of the hot pools and café scene at Te Aroha. Overall, it seemed for the ten adults, 3 children and one dog, a great trip, made all the more interesting by the expert knowledge of Philip. Thanks to Forest and Bird for their hospitality, opening up this trip to KCC people and the others on the trip for being such good company. Well done to the kids, Finn, Daniel and Isobel for doing so well and getting so muddy. I now know that Forest and Bird people certainly know how to get about.

Kim

### **Help with a local restoration project**

Friends of Waiwhakareke hold a working day at Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park on the last Saturday of the month, gam. This is all year round so could be planting, weeding, releasing, and/or chatting. This is a long term community project - planting up 6oha surrounding Horseshoe Lake - if you haven't been to see it yet, take a drive past (Baverstock Rd and opposite the zoo) There are information signs there, and see the great results already achieved by thousands of volunteers since June 2005.

Register to go on the Friends list to be notified of working days, Moira Cursey, m.cursey@xtra.co.nz



Isabel's picture of a Hochstetter's frog in the Werahiko mine



On Sunday I woke up early and went on a trip to Waiorongamai. It was a three km walk. The first km was up. The next was not up or down it was around and around. The next was down.

Now this was the one that I'm excited about. I'll tell you all about it. We were still walking around and around, I thought this is very boring, will we ever go down. Our leader said 'This is our first mine. We have to go up a level to get to it.' Then I got excited! When we went inside it was dark and creepy. We saw a Hochstetter frog and some Wetas. I found two lumps of quartz, they might have some gold in them! On the way down the hill I raced another boy back to the car, I loved it. On the way home we went for a swim at the Te Aroha hot pools. At the end I was very tired but excited, ready to do it again!!!

*By Daniel Lynch, 8 years*

# TRIPS, WALKS, TALKS, TRAMPS

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## Sunday 11th September

### OTANEWAINUKU

#### Easy/average (+ KCC)

Al Fleming will join us for this trip over in the Bay of Plenty. We will meet Al at the carpark at Otanewainuku about 20 mins south of Tauranga at around 10.30 where we will have a short talk about the projects - Otanewainuku Kiwi Trust and the Kaimai Mamaku project. Then we will head off for a leisurely stroll (45mins) around the Rimu loop, through a 1200ha unlogged reserve, with magnificent old trees and brimming with birdlife, including 10 kokako. This is an easy walk.

Then lunch back at the cars before heading off for a 2 hour moderate walk, either to the summit or to the waterfall, depending on the day and the group.

For more info and maps go to <http://www.kiwitrust.org/index.html>  
Leaving Hamilton 8.30am. Meet at Memorial Park, River Rd to carpool. Directions: SH29 to Tauranga. Turn rt onto Pyes Pa Road, left onto Oropi Gorge Rd, rt onto Oropi Rd, left at Mountain Rd and continue til you come to the shelter. Contact Katherine Hay 856 1906 or email [khay@pear.co.nz](mailto:khay@pear.co.nz)

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## Thursday 15th September

### CONSERVATION WEEK TALK

7.30 at the Chartwell Room, Hamilton Gardens

Greg Martin, Regional Manager of DoC

Join us for Greg's annual lively roundup of all the Department of Conservation's activities for the past year

6.30 Meal beforehand - contact Jane Mcleod to book by the 9th September phone 856 2505.

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## Sunday 9th October

### TRIP - MAPARA

#### Average (+KCC)

We have booked Arapito Lodge very close to Mapara Reserve on the night of the 8th October for those who would like to get up early and go listen to kokako in the morning. The lodge sleeps 12, \$10 per night, take your own bedding and food. Bookings essential. First in first served.

Anyone else will have to get up extra early and drive from Hamilton. Leave Hamilton 8.30 to arrive at the info board in Mapara South Road at 10. Those staying overnight will be able to go and listen to the dawn chorus before breakfast before going for a walk around the reserve with those coming from Hamilton, starting at 10. Mapara Reserve is about 25 km south of Te Kuiti - take SH30 out of Te Kuiti, to Kopaki, turn left onto Kopaki Rd, and left onto Mapara South Rd, continue on until you come to a notice on the left hand side.

It is an average walk, but can be wet, boots best.

Phone Katherine 856 1906 or 021 267 2773

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## LABOUR WEEKEND

## Friday 21-Monday 24 October

### PORT CHARLES, COROMANDEL PENINSULA

#### Average

We'll be staying at Mary & Jim Crawford's plus a neighbours' batch which limits the number to 20 people. Weather permitting on Saturday we propose to walk the Stoney Bay- Fletcher Bay track which gives magnificent views of the pinnacles & Great Barrier plus Maori Pa sites. Sunday we follow the Tangiaro Stream up to an old kauri dam site. Not much left of the dam but the walk is through lovely bush and a few fun scrambles. Monday we return home via Waikawau Bay to view DoC's new reserve and dotterell nesting sites. Time available

for kayaking and lattes at the Tangiaro Kiwi Retreat if so desired ( kayaks not supplied). If anyone is taking a 4x4 please let us know. Phone Jim & Mary 07 889 7739 - bookings essential.

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## Thursday 27th October

### CANDIDATES EVENING

7.30pm

Run in conjunction with the Waikato Environment Centre. Come and hear our candidates' take on environmental issues, and what their parties plan to do about them. Be prepared to ask the hard questions. Enquiries phone Katherine 839 4452 or 856 1906 a/h

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## Thursday 10th November

### TALK -VALDER GRANT RECIPIENTS

7.30pm

Three recipients of Valder Grants, Karen Denyer, Marie Brown and Catherine Bryan, will tell us about their research projects which have received funding from Waikato Forest and Bird.

6.30 Meal beforehand - contact Jane Mcleod to book by the 9th September phone 856 2505. Average

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## Sunday 13 November

### TRIP: RANGITOTO STATION

(easy/average) + KCC

This former, unsuccessful, farm was acquired by the Native Forest Restoration Trust many years ago with financial assistance by this branch. High in the Rangitoto Range, it is regenerating splendidly, and the bird life is notable, especially kokako. For details, see the Trust's website: [www.nznfrt.org.nz](http://www.nznfrt.org.nz), which also provides information about staying overnight in the farm house (dawn chorus a feature of your stay): book early, as accommodation is limited.

For those not staying overnight, leave Hamilton at 8.00, drive to Otorohanga

## TRIPS, WALKS, TALKS, TRAMPS contd

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and at the southern end of town turn left under the railway bridge on the road to Otewa, where we will be met opposite the school at 9.00 by Arthur Cowan, who will lead the convoy from there on (current access route suitable for all vehicles). As we have to go through locked gates, it is important to be at Otewa on time.

There are a variety of walks on the property (see website), and we'll be guided by the weather as to which ones we do. Very suitable for KCC families. Billy tea and a BBQ may be available to supplement your lunch.

Leader: Philip Hart (07 856 7992)

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## Sunday 11th December

### TRIP - KAKEPUKU AND FALCONS Easy/average (+KCC)

See the captive bred juvenile falcon - Laurie Hoverd will give a talk about Kakepuku Mountain Conservation project, and the falcon programme, and we will take a walk up Kakepuku - possibly up a new track. (2 - 3 hrs return) . Lunch at the summit. Leave Hamilton at 9. Carpool from Memorial Drive. Takes 45 mins to Kakepuku Mountain Road. Meet at carpark at 9.45  
Phone Katherine 856 1906



Trick question - not a falcon -  
what is it??



7.30pm in the Waikato  
Environment Centre,  
25 Ward St,  
\$10pp

### Monday 12th September

#### River Dog (30 min)

BEST NEW ZEALAND FILM  
AWARD

BEST EMERGING TALENT  
AWARD

Director: James Muir, Oscar  
Hunter

In a remote part of New Zealand, farmers have a law unto their own. They pollute and destroy the rivers and streams unchecked. Only one man is brave enough to stand up for the river he lives by. Together with his team of working dogs Grant Muir risks his livelihood to stop the pollution and make a change for good in this isolated rural land.

#### SoLa: Louisiana Water Stories (60 min)

Director: Jon Bowermaster

Water's everywhere in Southern Louisiana ("SoLa"): rivers, bayous, swamps, the Mississippi River, the Gulf of Mexico. Everyone has a water story. Water permeates every aspect of life, yet the quality of that water and the lives that depend on it have been severely compromised — sometimes, it seems, irretrievably. When the locals call a 100-mile stretch of the Mississippi "Cancer alley", you know you have a problem. Could it be the 200-plus petrochemical plants lining the banks? Guess where New Orleans gets its drinking water? With an oil and gas industry worth USD 63 million annually, Louisiana should be one of the richest US States; instead, it's one of the poorest. Beautifully filmed, SoLa offers a warmly human and honest account of the impacts of big industry on a region.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL



### Tuesday 13th September

#### Streams (4 min)

Director: Wayne Johnson

Every little drain, creek, or stream has a source, be it bush clad mountains or hills, rural or suburban at its point of origin. Those water ways and the life within and around them is as only as healthy as what happens to them on their journey from their source as they travel on to our oceans. Streams is about those who care and who wish to restore these water ways to their former well being with community based restoration projects taking the charge to help bring them back to permanent recovery, health and life.

#### Cowboys in India (80 mins)

BEST FEATURE FILM AWARD

Director: Simon Chambers

Investigative film-making can be hard at the best of times, but when you're assisted by people who'll say apparently anything to keep you happy — or nothing when they think it'll make you unhappy — and when people you interview say exactly the opposite a short time later, how can you make a credible film? Remarkably, director Simon Chambers achieves the seemingly impossible by telling the story of his attempts to investigate a London-based corporation's mining of tribal lands in a remote part of India. By turning the lens on his own investigation and its frustrations, he shows not just the deliberate obfuscations (and sometimes threats) of those he tries to investigate but also the problems of determining what's reliable information even when he gets apparently straight answers. Entertaining, deeply affecting and thoughtful, Cowboys in India is one of this year's stand-out films.

**Wednesday**  
**14th September**

## **Grow Your Awareness** (5 min)

**Director: Ralph Lengler**

Most of us associate electricity with being a clean energy source. We also know that our electricity has to come from 'somewhere'. This viral animation wants to make us aware that this 'somewhere' means in most cases 'coal', which in carbon emissions is the dirtiest of all fossil fuels. On the example of the soon to be introduced electric car 'MINI E', this animation shows the carbon footprint of electricity for different Australian cities. Those carbon footprints are then compared to a range of petrol cars. If you live in Melbourne (Australia) for example, driving a MINI E has the same carbon footprint as a Porsche.

## **Deep Green** (101 min) BEST SCIENCE COMMUNICATION AWARD

**Director: Matt Briggs**

Too many documentaries about climate change leave the viewer feeling discouraged, even hopeless. Deep Green does the opposite. Film maker Matthew Briggs focuses on solutions, on options available either now or in the immediate future. Starting with an analysis of energy efficiency, he points out how in the last 30 years California's energy efficiency programs have kept per capita energy consumption stable while on average the rest of the US has risen by 50%. Accompanied by an international team of National Geographic, CNN and BBC cinematographers, Briggs enlists commentaries by some of the world's most articulate and thoughtful leaders —Amory Lovins, Lester Brown and David Suzuki, for example — and assesses a wide range of options from clear winners like "mining for efficiency" through electric transport, solar power and more, to clear losers like "clean coal". Well filmed and edited and with appealing touches of humour, Deep Green shows how feelings of hopelessness and helplessness are misplaced. Solutions are abundant, even if not all prove workable: what we need is the leadership and political will to implement them.

**Friday 16th September**

## **A Mongolian Couch** (12 min)

**Directors: Eva Arnold and George Clipp**

In a city of tower blocks and tents comes a unique story of energy and enterprise; Begzsuren lives with his wife and four children in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and possesses an inspiring passion to improve both his family's and his community's lot. Installing a rain water shower, changing his family's diet, planting trees, Begzsuren welcomes guests into his home from all over the world, offering these visitors aspects of traditional Mongolian culture and in exchange his guests offer insight into how they live and work back home.

## **Tide of Change** (12 min) BEST ULTRA SHORT AWARD

**Director: Amie Batalibasi**

Filmmaker Amie Batalibasi went back to visit family in the seaside village of Lllisiana, Solomon Islands, at a time when the village was affected by the extreme high tides due to climate change. Tide of Change documents the stories of the people, interwoven with the events surrounding the loss of a loved one, as the sea rises around a community on the brink of inevitable change.

## **Landscapes at the World's Ends** (30 min) BEST NEW ZEALAND CINEMATOGRAPHY AWARD

**Director: Richard Sidey**

A non-verbal visual journey to the polar regions of our planet portrayed through a triptych montage of photography and video.

Landscapes at the World's Ends is a multi-dimensional canvas of imagery recorded above the Arctic Circle and below the Antarctic Convergence, viewed through the lens of whom is realistically an alien in this environment, the polar tourist. Filmed during several artist residencies on-board three expedition vessels, New Zealand nature photographer and filmmaker Richard Sidey documents light and time in an effort to share his experiences and the beauty that exists over the frozen seas. This experimental documentary transports us to the islands of South Georgia, the Antarctic Peninsula, Greenland and Svalbard.

## **Marion Stoddart: The Work of 1000** (30 min) BEST SHORT FILM AWARD

**Director: Dorie Clark**

An unlikely activist, Marion Stoddart lived next to one of America's most polluted rivers and unexpectedly transformed herself from a housewife and mother to an environmental leader and citizen hero honored by the United Nations. The Work of 1000 is the documentary film chronicling her life, achievements, setbacks, and unwavering belief that one person can make a difference in the world.

# Car Pooling

Help protect our planet from the effects of climate change and pollution (and reduce costs) by carpooling when going on Forest and Bird trips and camps.

Anyone seeking or offering transport should ring Adua Geremia by the previous Thursday. The Hamilton departure point is at the Hamilton War Memorial in River Road (south end)

Please do offer the driver a reasonable contribution towards their petrol costs.

If you are unable to make your way to River Road, we MAY be able to organise another pickup point, but please contact Adua in plenty of time.

Phone Adua on 07 843 3375

# Cancellation of Walks

Leaders of walks: to cancel phone 027 417 2346 by 7.45am (Hardley St Radio Network)

To hear about cancellations: 0900 72 346 from 8am (small payment involved)



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New Zealand  
Permit No. 217448

