



# KORIMAKO

# FOREST & BIRD

## Lower Hutt Branch Newsletter – MAY 2009

**Chairman's Chat** - Well another year rolls on by, almost, and it is time for our **Branch Annual General Meeting**. This will be held at the next meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May. The earlier date is because the Society now requires all branches to have the same financial year.

Among other things we will be looking for support from our members to nominate new people to our Committee. A "fresh set of eyes" and new ideas is a must if the Branch is to continue to succeed in involvement in useful environmental projects, and provide quality guest speakers at monthly Branch Meetings as we have done in the past. Time input is minimal, with the Committee meeting only once a month, on the last Thursday of each month. You can make a difference!.

This has been a busy year for the Branch. Work continues on projects such as the revegetation of Matiu/Somes Island. After more than 20 years of regular planting trips the rewards can already be seen with the Department of Conservation recognising the significant input of the Branch in restoring the island vegetation to a point where several rare and endangered animals have been released. Work also continues in planting at Pauatahanui, and at the Pencarrow Lakes. Your Committee has been active in providing submissions to the likes of the Hutt City Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council on matters concerning park management plans and disposal of council owned fee simple land, as well as more national issues such as policy on

clean streams. Looking forward, we are in discussions with DoC about possible new projects on Matiu/Somes Island.

We are constantly on the lookout for new members. Gaining new members for Forest & Bird not only helps the activities of the Branch, but also supports the tremendous work of the Society as a whole in a wide range of conservation issues such as preserving some of our High Country; opposing damming of the Mokihinui; stopping "shark-finning"; and creating "clean streams". By increasing membership we can ensure that our voice is stronger, and can be heard more clearly by politicians and the like, when it comes to issues concerning the preservation of our natural environment and wildlife. Next time you are looking for a gift for someone why not give a Forest & Bird membership?

Forest & Bird will hold its **National Annual General Meeting** in Wellington on 27<sup>th</sup> June in the Victoria Room, at the Mercure Hotel, Willis Street. Members and guest speakers will tackle the most urgent conservation issues and challenges we face today. All members are welcome to attend.

Finally, have a look at the revamped Forest & Bird web-site. A mine of interesting and useful information on the activities of the branches and the Society as a whole. We are in the process of updating the Lower Hutt Branch section, so

please keep your eye on this and give your Committee feedback..

Kevin Bateman

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 7 MAY**

Election of Committee.

Speaker: Melody McLaughlin – *Kiwi in Rimutaka Forest Park*.

Speakers for the August, September and October meetings will be advised as soon as possible.

**PLANT SALE – SUNDAY 2 AUGUST** starting at 9.00am. Could helpers please come along before 9 o'clock. Finger food welcome.

**Set up day is Saturday (1 August) starting at 12.30pm.** Lots of help needed,. Please bring along your plants during the afternoon.

Contact: Barbara De Ste Croix  
'phone 566 1055.

**Remember** there are lots of pots on the table at the back of the room at the monthly meetings – please help yourselves.

**Thank you Cliff Mason** – Dr Cliff Mason has moved to Lyttelton. For the past few years he has found speakers of exceptional quality. We thank him for this and wish him well in his new abode.

**Matiu/Somes Island** – Last November a group of six members met with DoC staff and a paper prepared by Peter Russell (DoC) entitled “Recommendations for secondary planting under (planted) forest and shrub land canopies on Matiu/Somes” was outlined. Thirty sites/plots scattered throughout Matiu, mostly within reach of the loop track have been identified as suitable for planting recommended species. These sites to be monitored to assess results and enable methods for future plantings to be refined and the environment maintained as necessary (eg pruning to maintain adequate light levels).

An outline of the proposed “Adopt a Plot” scheme is to be prepared on a sheet that can be distributed to interested volunteers, F&B members and others. DoC will no longer purchase plants in root trainers. The first trays of seedlings (plugs) they have on order should be arriving in the near future and we will bag these on as in past years. Several selected species may still be propagated by members from seed or cuttings provided.

The Branch has undertaken to maintain the nursery and to assist during the planting season. Work parties averaging eleven members have been held for each of the past six months. Weeding, mulching and general maintenance work in the nursery and field work in the ex workshop and house paddock areas releasing successional plantings to maintain adequate light levels have kept us all busy.

Work parties are likely to be held once a fortnight once nursery work increases and the planting season gets underway.

Alex Kettles

**Pauatahanui Wildlife Reserve** – At last DoC, the contractor, and the helicopter, came together to move the Estuary Hide from the stream bed onto its foundations at the end of the track. Plimmerton Rotary have done a few repairs and painted the hide.

We were disappointed that there was no platform to allow easy access to enter the hide. DoC, however, have promised us that one will be built. The hide is in a safer place now and away from the stream edge, where it was subject to flood tides, which washed away the surrounding earth. It is a great location to observe lots of bird life.

On a recent beautiful day I observed that there was “standing room only” for Pied Stilts on the shell island in the South Basin.

In the Inlet itself a growing flock of Royal Spoonbills, perhaps thirteen, gathered around a fresh water stream outlet, together with a number of Black Swans. A little way off a flock of noisy Black Backed Gulls, while a White Faced Heron caught and ate a small flounder near the water's edge. I like to think by maintaining a

healthy reserve, we are contributing in a meaningful way to the life of a healthy inlet.

On Sunday, 18 October, we will be celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> year working on the reserve. It was September 1984, in conjunction with the Wildlife Service, we started regular workparties to develop the reserve. Since then ponds have been excavated, viewing hides have been built, walking tracks and car parks made, gorse and thistles removed and planting carried out and a hundred and one other tasks necessary to maintain this asset for public use. We often get complimentary remarks from visitors.

Ron Freeston

**Membership** – With this newsletter is our chance once again to welcome new members to the Lower Hutt branch.

Some of you are new to Forest and Bird and others are those who have moved into the area in the last six months.

Karyn Grant, Helen Frost, Shelley Davis, Lorna Manson, Derek Wilshire, Amanda Woolley, Joanne Fellows, A Nahkies, Kerin Welford, Joan and Lindsay Wilson, Alison McIntyre, Marian Loader, Chris Jones, Jacinta Walkey, Stephen Cornille, Alex Rodger and Karen Trotter.

If you have joined since the end of February, your name will not have come through from Central Office, but, of course, the welcome is extended to you all. Once again all membership categories are represented which means that we are a real mix. As well as new members it's good to see rejoining members back on the list.

The Branch invites you to take part in any of the events and meetings you see in the programme. Everyone is encouraged to take part and do as much as they feel able to do.

There will be some interesting speakers at Branch meetings in the next six months so browse through the attached winter programme and feel free to join us. You can, of course, attend any event listed and there are contact numbers provided.

If you are unable to get to the meetings, the plant sale (Sunday 2 August at the Waterloo

School Hall, Hardy Street, off Waiwhetu Road) is always a great way to introduce yourselves. There are always committee members available to answer questions and the bonus of bargain plants.

Hope to see you soon.

Alison Sinclair (Phone 569 4252)

**KCC** – Christmas and the new year have been a quiet time for KCC. We had no takers for our trip to Boulder Hill at the end of the year which was disappointing as it was a perfect day and our camping trip to Kaitoke had to be cancelled because of rain.

I would really appreciate any ideas you have that you think may appeal to families.

Karen Baker

**Forest and Bird House** – Staying overnight in F&B House on Matiu/Somes Island is becoming more and more popular. Saturday nights are booked out several weeks in advance and Fridays are also busy. Most weekday nights are available at short notice except for November, December and January when bookings are heavy.

The Information Sheet and Booking Forms for F&B House are available from [www.forestandbird.org.nz](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz) and from the Accommodation Officer.

Income from the house is being spent on improving the accommodation and refurbishment of the interior. A water supply filter has been installed and carpets are to be laid in the bedrooms. These two items have been organised by DoC as part of upgrading all the houses on the island.

The Branch committee has resolved to refurbish the interior using voluntary labour. Two volunteers are working on stripping wallpaper and repairs to ceilings at the moment.

We need more volunteers to paint walls, window frames and ceilings, and for other work over the winter, particularly in the bedrooms before the new carpet goes down. Volunteer workers can stay in the house without charge, ferry fares will

be paid and all materials and paint brushes etc will be provided.

Could someone please volunteer to coordinate the work as I go overseas at the end of April. In the meantime, would anyone who could help with the refurbishment please contact me.

Bill Draper - Accommodation Officer for F&B House - Telephone 569 2542  
e-mail wgdraper@draper.co.nz

Members may be interested to know about the **Berhampore Nursery Open Day on Saturday 16 May 10am to 2pm**. "Bring back the birds" – plant sales, talks and stalls.

**World View** – "Assuming a continuing world-wide dependence on fossil fuels, the atmosphere concentration of CO2 will be nearly 700 parts per million by the end of the century although by 2040 it will not have passed 500 ppm. (The pre-industrial concentration was 250ppm and we are now 387 parts per million.)  
Glynn Dyer in "Climate Wars" 2008

The Earth was once covered in ancient forests. Today a staggering eighty per cent have been either destroyed or degraded, and half of that has been in the last thirty years. Illegal and destructive logging, industrial-scale farming and, increasingly, climate change all threaten the remaining tracts of forest that have stood for thousands of years. Countless species face extinction and entire communities are being displaced. If current rates of deforestation continue, some of the last areas of ancient forest could be lost within our own lifetimes"

Economic growth can't go on and on. In general politicians (and economists) see no limits to economic growth, despite warnings from rational scientists that the current global economy is killing the planet.

Unfettered economic growth is driving air and water pollution, climate change, peak oil, deforestation, massive biodiversity losses and, arguably, the current economic crisis. Scientists warn that Earth's biosphere cannot support the current global economy, let alone an economy that continues to expand.

Dr George Preddy – DomPost 17.11.08

**A few statistics from the Department of Conservation** - Each year DoC spends \$18 million eradicating weeds. \$26 million on pest control and \$36 million protecting and breeding endangered species like kiwi, kokako, whio and kakapo on land and islands it controls.

Apart from its offshore island reserves DoC also has six mainland islands – managed areas, such as the Boundary Stream, near Lake Tutira, which it defends and restores, mainly through bait stations and traps around the area rather than erecting a fence.

DoC assists community-run sanctuaries by providing technical support when they transfer and breed species and carries out pest control on any public land (some sanctuaries are a mix of public and private land) under sanctuary control.

#### **Wildlife Sanctuaries you may care to visit -**

**Karori:** 225 fenced hectares. \$14 for visitors. \$60 for Kiwi Night Tour.

**Brook Waimarama:** 715 hectares near Nelson, with a fence still being built. Admission is free.

**Bushy Park:** 92 hectares near Wanganui. Fenced. Open to paying visitors.

**Maungatautari Ecological Island** (near Cambridge): The largest at 3,400 hectares. Fenced through a Department of Internal Affairs grant. Free admission.

**Rotokare Scenic Reserve:** 230 hectares in south Taranaki. 8.4km fence. Admission is free.

**Orokunui Ecosanctuary:** 250 hectares near Dunedin. Open to paying visitors.

**Tawharanui Peninsular:** 530 hectares north of Auckland. A partnership between the Auckland Regional Council and a voluntary group that fundraises to run the restoration project. No charge for admission.

From DomPost "Your Weekend" dated 4 April 2009