



SOUTHLAND BRANCH NEWSLETTER

Winter Talks and Working Days 2011

New Venue for Talks

Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hall 61 King Street Windsor 7.30pm

(except the AGM which starts at 7pm)

Look at the new Forest and Bird website for any changes to this programme or local advertising

Tuesday 10 May 2011 – AGM and talk – “Waitutu Revisited” – the aerial operation and the changes that have occurred since in the Waitutu Forest – Colin Bishop. AGM starts at 7pm.

Weekend 14/15 May 2011 – Tautuku Lodge working weekend in the Catlins (Book with Tony Bretherick 2186137 for free accommodation).

Tuesday 14 June 2011 – “Darwin’s finches and other Galapagos highlights with Forest and Bird’s Southern Field Officer Sue Maturin who spent 3 months there with partner Graham Loh studying mangrove finches, and exploring the wonderful Galapagos islands.

Sunday 17 July and Thursday 21 July 2011 - Film Night! - The Water Whisperers Movie on the Big Screen – Venue Centre Stage Theatre, Don St – SIT students free, members of the public \$2 entry. www.wickcandle.co.nz/water_whisperers_tangaroa. Look out for advertising.

Saturday 23 July 2011 – Te Rere penguin colony – main planting day – Leader Craig Carson 2130732 – bookings essential for transport arrangements. Free mini bus available.

Tuesday 9 August 2011 – Waituna Lagoon, Awarua Wetlands and beyond – what is being done to protect our international wetland.

Saturday 13 August 2011 – Te Rere working day – second planting day – Leader Craig Carson ph 2130732 bookings essential.

Sunday 11 September 2011 - Living Legends – planting at Bushy Point Otatara (for more details contact Barry Smith 2131500 or Chris Rance 2131161)

Tuesday 13 September 2011 – The Ross Sea, Antarctica - is it the last intact marine ecosystem on earth? – Peter Young – www.lastocean.co.nz

Weekend 24/25 September 2011 – Tautuku Working weekend (Book with Tony Bretherick 2186137 for free accommodation).

Tuesday 11 October 2011 – is pollution affecting cultural harvest? A talk by local iwi highlighting some of their conservation issues and successes.

Musing from the Chair

My musings have been a bit gloomy lately. Conservation seems to be one step forward, two steps back.

Certainly there are some successes. Come to our AGM on 10th May and hear Colin Bishop describe the success of the predator control by DOC in the Waitutu. However against this is the news of the reinvasion of rats on Ulva Island.

I wonder if all this is because so often conservationists are left acting as the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. Lately almost any excuse seems to show we cannot afford to keep the fence at the top of the cliff and it is being torn down. This narrow sighted and short term economic view will lead to a huge loss of ecological values for the future. Southland has its own conundrums with this. We know intensification of dairying causes deterioration of the quality of our waterways but we keep bringing in more cows. We know climate change will endanger our unique natural species, our agricultural production and even our towns. But we seriously consider digging up billions of tons of lignite, wrecking our land, water and topsoils and adding enormously to our greenhouse gas emissions.

Everybody needs to lift their vision above the short term dash for cash. If we wreck our environment we may have more money but what can we do with it?

As F&B members we need to question the direction society is heading. We need to encourage people to look more widely at what is happening around them and to act when they think what is happening is wrong.

Part of doing this is education. Education is more than testing people's knowledge of the "three Rs". With this newsletter is the programme for our winter talks. While we hope you find them an enjoyable evening I hope you will also learn something and think about the issues that are raised in the talks.

You will note that the venue for the talks has changed this year to the Anglican Church Hall in Windsor.

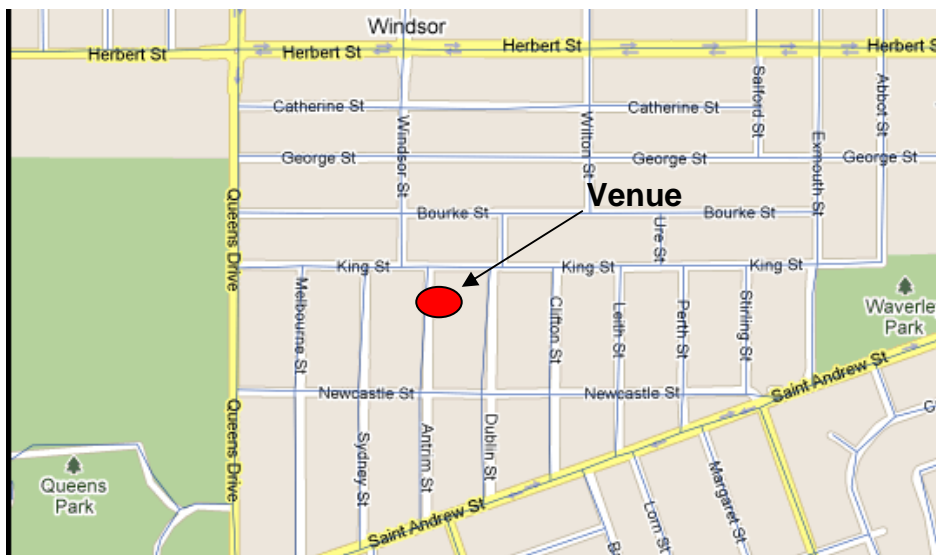
It is unfortunate we have to leave the SIT venue and I would thank them for making it available over the past years.

However education policy is now influenced by people who do not value wider community education, especially if it encourages thinking on wider issues than the next dollar. SIT (and other providers) have had their funding for community education slashed and can no longer provide the facilities at a cost we can afford.

It is election year. Perhaps we can get a government that does value community, people and the environment.

Craig Carson, Branch Chairman

Map of New Talk Venue (King Street, Windsor)



Film - Water Whisperers



Co- producers (left) Mike Coughlan and Kathleen Gallagher talk to Judith Robinson about their eco-documentary 'Water Whisperers Tangaroa', at the Invercargill premier on Sunday night 20 March 2011. Ten stories involving about 60 people across New Zealand, tell about their response to seeing their local waterways being degraded. American Indians interact with maori, along with farmers, fishermen, scientists and people who enjoy water for recreation, who all work together to make a difference.

"We wanted to explore water and the plight of water starting at the mountains and moving through lakes, rivers, oceans and the deep sea," Ms Gallagher says. "We found people who have turned this sad state of affairs around and we see them as prophets and visionaries."

Filming took nine months, finishing just before the September earthquake in Christchurch, where the couple live. The film has been shown in France and Barcelona at film festivals as well as around New Zealand, with positive responses from audiences both in Invercargill and Te Anau and a lot of discussion after the viewings.
Jenny Campbell

Seeing an eco-doco so informative, entertaining, light of touch and unashamedly Kiwi was a real treat... Four stars easy...Graeme Tuckett Dominion Post Wellington

Kathleen Gallagher award winning Director of Earth Whisperers Papatuanuku says *"This film is about the reconnection of ourselves with our lakes, rivers and oceans. We have guides already in our midst - old fishermen, conservationists, farmers, scientists local iwi and divers who are intimate with lakes river and sea life, knowledgeable about sustainable fishing practices and to restore damaged waters"*

In this beautifully photographed film ten stories of environmental redemption are told: from the Poor Knights Marine Reserve to the Hurunui and Rakaia Rivers, and including the wonderful Mike O'Donnell describing how a toxic Coromandel waterway was rescued from arsenic and effluent poisoning by sensible planting and community commitment.

Come and hear the inspiring stories from communities around New Zealand in July at Centre Stage

One Lucky Kingfisher

One lucky kingfisher was found floating in the whale pot at Whalers Bay, Sandy Point by Willy Gamble in January.

Still alive, but shivering, the young kingfisher could not get out of the deep pot. Knowing Russell and May Evans and their bird rescue centre in Bryson Road, Willy picked up the bird and took it to Russell and May's. They looked after it until 4th of February – feeding it pieces of crab almost every hour by hand!! During that month Russell and May went away and gave the feeding responsibility to Ian and Jenny Gamble – keeping it in the family!!

It was great occasion to be there to watch the release of the fully recovered bird – which flew out of May's hands back at Whalers Bay on 4th February. I had heard another kingfisher calling in the area that morning so hopefully the bird rejoined its family members. Kingfishers are quite rare in Southland, a result of a lack of clay banks for nesting so any young birds adding to the population is a very real bonus – so well done to Willy Gamble and Russell and May for saving this bird and returning it to the Southland population for us all to enjoy.

The amazing work that Russell and May do for all the injured native birds that they accept comes with this sort of dedication – it is a full time job for which they don't get paid. If you would like to help their Charitable Trust they will happily accept donations (though they will not ask themselves) – send to Bush Haven 49 Bryson Road
Chris Rance



James Pirie – a Southlander looking to the future



James Pirie at his “thinking tree” on his bush property at Waimahaka. James bought the land to protect the forest and then protected it in perpetuity with a QEII Covenant.

A Southland Forest and Bird Trip in March was lead by James through the bush block full of large rimu and rata trees, views of surrounding landscapes and back down the steep hill. It was an inspiring trip with an inspiring Southlander
Chris Rance.

World Wetlands Day 2011

Celebrating World Wetlands day in February at Waituna took on a special meaning for about 70 people who explored natural lagoons, gravel pit restoration and a Queen Elizabeth II National Trust Covenant (QEII).

Janice Kevern, Chair of the Waituna Landcare Group, which organised the event, acknowledged the significance of the Awarua Wetlands with its international recognition through RAMSAR, an organisation established 40 years ago to protect wetland habitat. Interpreters for the day added information about suitable plants to use when revegetating areas such as the gravel pit at Kapuka South and explained those benefits for fish habitat, in particular native giant kokopu and for attracting birds.

Ray Waghorn, local farmer and enthusiast for the protection of wetlands, on a trip though his property explained the way he cleans his drains so the habitat for the kokopu is not lost. Otago University Masters student, Michael Green and Department of Conservation's Andy Hicks spoke about the research they are about to embark on in the Waituna area around enhancing kokopu habitat.

There was an emphasis on the need to improve water quality by fencing streams and planting riparian strips as part of stream management, through agencies and the community working together. The availability of funding to support farmers carrying out this work was highlighted.

After a barbeque lunch and the chance to network, Gay and Ron Munro hosted the group to the wetland they had created largely as a bird sanctuary, establishing a QEII Covenant over it to protect not only the birds but also the unique plants and fish, along with improving water quality. Biological control was explained by Peter Ayson, Environment Southland's Bio Control Contractor, with the release of green thistle beetles on the day, a bonus for the area.

The day concluded with the launch of the Southland Community Nursery website (www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz) by Chris Rance, coordinator of the nursery with her husband Brian. "The wealth of information on the website will assist people who are establishing wetland areas or revegetating to improve wetland habitats," Mrs Rance said.

Gay Munro, organiser of the day enabling people to celebrate World Wetlands day in Southland, was delighted with the response and the increased awareness of both farmers and the general public to the significance and variety of wetlands locally and the need to protect them.



Ray Waghorn and protected *Donatia* cushion plants



Releasing green thistle beetles

Southland Community Nurse
185 Grant Road, Otatara
email rances@ihug.co.nz



NEW WEBSITE www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz

Lots of plant information specific to Southland, events, news
Places to visit, factsheets on shelterbelt creation, ponds, attracting birds
Forest restoration, propagating plants. Thanks to web designer Robin Sallis
and web illustrator Janet Hodgetts for designing and building a great
plant resource for Southland.

Free Native Plant Propagation Workshops
Native Plants from Cuttings

Friday 10 and 17 June 2011
10am-Noon

Book a place by phoning Chris 2131161 or emailing rances@ihug.co.nz

At the Nursery we grow all of the species that are ideal for shelter, wetlands, forest restoration, attracting native birds, school plantings – come and see us on a Friday at 185 Grant Road, Otatara, do some work and take some plants away for free!

Donovan Primary School helping the penguins

Donovan Primary endangered bird colouring competition winners, (from left) Teegan McDowell (third) watches Hunter Gough (first) present yellow eyed penguin (Marie Lockie) with a donation while Logan McIntyre looks on. Junior pupils at Donovan Primary paid to enter the contest, many out of their own pocket money, so that they could make a donation to make a difference for a bird they had learned about. Members of Forest and Bird Southland were impressed with the generosity of the students giving \$90.50 to help protect the rare yellow-eyed penguin at Forest and Birds Te Rere Reserve. The students appreciated Environment Southland staff members judging the contest and providing some prizes along with native trees from Forest and Bird and bike maintenance vouchers from Invercargill Environment Centre.



Jenny Campbell



Bucket Gardening

Ja-zel Faalologo aged 5 and Magenta Heremia aged 8, delight in creating a bucket garden at Korimako Centre, Invercargill on Sunday 10 October 2010. The Invercargill Environment Centre's event was organised in response to the international campaign '350.org' highlighting concerns about increasing carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. At the inaugural events on October 24, 2009, millions of people around the world took action to spread the number 350, considered the safe level of CO₂ in the atmosphere measured in parts per million. As part of the continuing awareness raising Sunday 10 October 2010 was chosen as the follow up day for the grassroots

campaign that aims to mobilize a global climate movement united by a common call to action. Last year, Invercargill's action included building sandcastles on Oreti Beach to show the effect climate change and rising sea levels could have on coastal communities and islands.

Jenny Campbell

Otatara Pestbusters

The Otatara area is benefitting from the dedication of Russell and May Evans in a number of ways – not content with running a bird rescue centre – Bush Haven, looking after injured tui and kereru, they have now turned their attention to widening the Otatara Landcare Group's pest control programme to private land. New signs have been put up on roads in Otatara warning of low flying kereru and recently letterbox signs have been appearing all around Otatara. The signs indicate the private properties where pest control is being undertaken by residents and Russell and May have been coordinating the provision of traps and bait to Otatara residents. Supported by Environment Southland the programme which has about 90 participants so far is complementing the Otatara Landcare Groups voluntary control of 90 hectares of conservation land and QEII covenants. Thanks to Janet Hodgetts for the sign designs. **Chris Rance**



Pomona Island Update

On 14 February 2011 a group of 7 volunteers from the Pomona Island Charitable Trust and 3 DOC field workers visited Breaksea Island on the Fiordland coast to catch Yellowheads (Mohua) for transfer to Pomona Island on Lake Manapouri. Pomona Island (262 Ha) is the largest inland island in New Zealand and, in a project started in 2005 by volunteers from the local community, has been cleared of introduced pests (stoats, possums, red deer, ship rats and mice) to allow the restoration of the habitat for native wildlife. In 2009 South Island Robins were successfully transferred to Pomona Island and Rona Island in Lake Manapouri, where they have now bred successfully. The Yellowhead transfer marks the first time that a threatened species has been translocated to Pomona Island.



A total of 42 Yellowheads were caught using mist nets at various locations over two days on Breaksea Island. The birds were transferred by helicopter to Pomona Island at the end of each day, where they were released together to allow them to form a feeding flock.

Pomona Island trustee Neil Robertson carefully removing a yellowhead from a mist net.

Photo: John Stevenson (trustee)

Breaksea Island, which is a Special Area, accessible by permit only, has been pest free since the pioneering rat eradication in the mid-1980s. It

is now home to large populations of native birds, which are rare or extinct on the NZ mainland, such as South Island Robins, Yellowheads and South Island Saddlebacks. The island is near capacity for many species which means that birds are available for transfer to other pest free areas, thus expanding the range of some of our rarest and most endangered species.

The Yellowhead transfer was sponsored by the Meridian Te Anau-Manapouri Community Fund and organised by the Pomona Island Charitable Trust. For more information on the work of the trust visit www.pomona-island.org.nz

PS. The latest monitoring visit to Pomona was on 26 February. Yellowheads were heard at a number of locations on the island but not during the 5-minute bird counts. A number of unbanded (i.e. hatched since the 2009 transfer) South Island Robins were also seen which hopefully means this species is on the way to becoming established on the island.



Adult Male Yellowhead.
Photo: Viv Shaw (trustee)

Southland Natural History Field Club

The Southland Natural History Field Club or “Field Club” brings together all those with an interest in nature and the outdoors and meets once a month (usually on every second Thursday of the month) followed by a weekend field trip, often on the same topic as the talk. If you are interested in becoming a member it costs \$20 per year (\$25 for a family) and you will receive the monthly newsletter and programme of trips. Contact **Lloyd Esler** (2130404).

A Walk on the Mild Side – Seaward Bush

I thought about doing something domestic like baking, and then remembered that I read recipes the same way I read science fiction. I get to the end and think, well, that's not going to happen, so I decided to go for a walk instead.

Down Rockdale Rd turning off into Mason Road just a few minutes from town lies Seaward Bush Reserve. No, not Seaward Moss or Seaward Downs but Seaward Bush! (Imaginative lot our ancestors). Keep a good watch out for the Reserve entrance as it is a bit of a “blink & you miss it place”, although there are often a few cars parked on the roadside which should be a clue.

Seaward Bush originally known as Otarewa Bush (The Land Uplifted), once extended from Otepunui Stream in Invercargill towards Rimu and Kapuka. 8000 ha was cleared of all its large trees before 1920 and the bush you walk through today has revegetated to its existing state which is, as you will experience quite open with most trees less than 90 years of age.

There are two circular tracks in the 104ha Reserve which can be accessed from either end of the grass clearing. This used to be a popular picnic area – and is still good for that purpose with its expansive grassy area ideal for a game of something with a ball.

We chose to take the closest entrance and complete the short walk which should take you approx 20 minutes. For botanist pace add another 10 min. The longer loop takes about 35-40 minutes. The gravelled track is in excellent condition. Immediately in the bush we were both certain we heard a kaka! What the possibility of this is I don't know. Maybe it was a tui doing a darn good imitation. Other birds heard/seen were fantail brown creeper, tui, grey warbler, bellbird & LBJ.

There is a wealth of plants here for you to test your skills on: kamahi, kaikomako, rubus cissoides, miro, parsonsia, jasmine vines, green hooded orchid, Seven and three finger, bracken, clematis rohutu (myrtle) and poly vest. (*a chocolate fish for the 1st person to tell me the botanical & common name of poly vest*)

A myriad of colourful leaves littered the ground throughout the walk. Tree fern *Dicksonia fibrosa*

long full fronted skirt and *Cyathea smithii* keeps only central stipe of the frond (the stiff bit). Take hold of a *Cyathia* frond which has distinctive scales on the base of the stipe. *Dicksonia* meanwhile has fine hairs at the base of the stipe.

Asplenium flaccidum the hanging spleenwort, umbrella mosses, hounds tongue, filmy ferns and groves of crown ferns form much of the undergrowth. Suddenly - excitement – a black orchid, it looks like a dead stick, but has a pretty white flower, it is parasitic and grows on a variety of the roots of natives.

Signs of early loggers visible in the impressive and often cavernous stumps are reminders of the large podocarps that once dominated the forest canopy. There is a huge logged totara remains, see if you can spot it. A number of stately rimu are a treat for the eye. Take note of the wonderful pole stand of 6-7 rimu whose plates of bark have their distinctive swirl, these prefer to regenerate in small groups in the forest and like a reasonable gap in the bush, beautiful straight tall majestic trees. Climbing rata entwines the host tree like a lover in its effort to reach the light.

Initially I tut tutted at the amount of possum marks on the trees until I realised that possums don't do alphabets or have initials, so the obvious answer was that one of those “people” and I use the term loosely, who rate on the intelligence scale somewhere between a sheep and a ping pong ball had carved their initials into many of the trees.

Broadleaf which has begun life up in the notch of a kamahi winds its way upward in a struggle for light in the bush. Way up high on our left was a wineberry perched on the branch of another kamahi. Young miro, giants of the future, race for the light, replacing those felled years ago. Across the boardwalked swamp area *Coprosma lucida* shining karamu and lots of vines make an interesting strangly forest. A grove of kahikatea (white pine) is found in this damp area. Young totara, flowering pate glinting in the sunshine Rimu, pokaka, little fuchsia, and a huge Hawthorne compete for space. In an exposed area *Muehlenbeckia* is making the most of the opportunity and grabbing every bit of spare space available. Poroporo were in flower (these always reminds me of potato flowers) and

narrow leaved mahoe had been defoliated by a native caterpillar.

In spring/summer rohutu are in flower, small white flower fluffy stamens and shining karamu are in fruit. There are many dead kamahi killed by the 1996 frost. Also seen were *Astelia flagrans*, whose feature is the straight upright fullness of the trees. During autumn you can see many fungi, we discovered a magnificent specimen of the red stinkhorn fungi. Fungi are an amazing species when you look closely. We even found a delightful set of

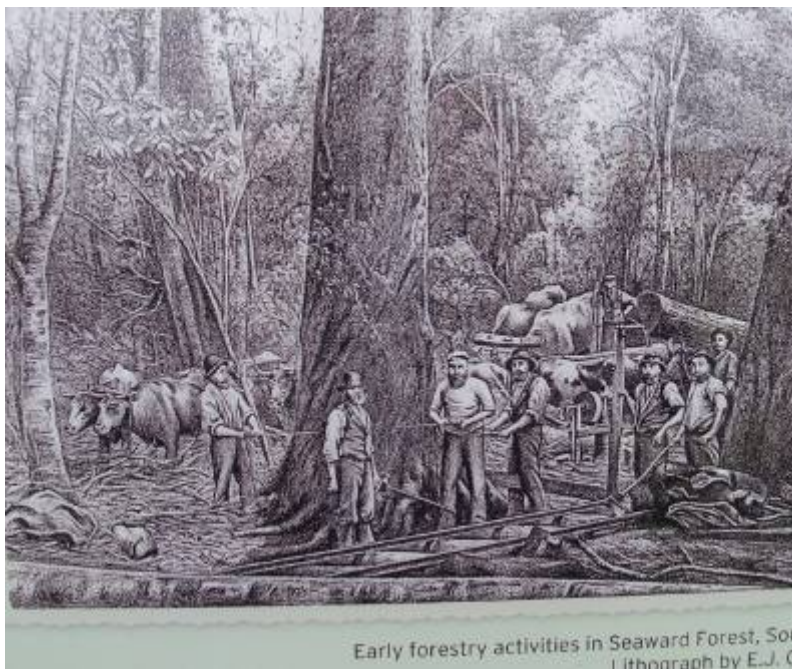
Footloose

fungi lips puckered up ready for a passing walker to give them a smacking kiss. No we didn't!

On the negative side there is a heck of a lot of blackberry throughout the reserve that could do with a good dose of something lethal.

Those of you with dogs, please please take a pooper scooper/bag with you, I lost count of the dog poo on the track!

Go to it, enjoy this delightful and popular piece of regenerating bush which is so handy to town.



An impressive fungi seen recently at Seaward Bush



Kiwi Conservation Club for Children (KCC)
– a great gift for Children and Grandchildren
www.kcc.org.nz

Aotearoa by Te Araroa

Wendy's Walk - the Te Araroa Trail – The Long Pathway

Former Southland conservation worker Wendy Hare returned to Southland in February from her home in the Coromandel – to walk back up the country! She commenced the Te Araroa Walkway from Bluff and is now up around Wanaka!

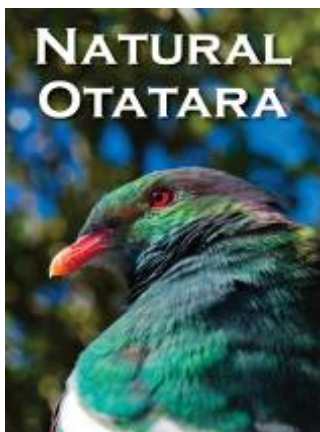
The walkway will eventually link up paths from Bluff to Cape Reinga, but at present there are some road sections and some places where no path has yet been formed.

Armed with a gps to test for future sections Wendy set off on the Invercargill to Riverton section with Lloyd Esler. They emerged at Riverton about 5 hours later and Wendy then joined friends to walk the Colac Bay section and then through the Takitimu Mountains.

The route is on the walkway website www.teararoa.org.nz and look at Wendy's blog at <http://www.blogger.com/profile/02357434798799491855>.



**Wendy and Lloyd set off
down Oreti Beach towards
Riverton**



Natural Otatara – a new field guide produced by the Otatara Landcare Group

With text and illustrations by Lloyd Esler

A must have for exploring the Otatara, Sandy Point and Oreti Beach area

\$5

From Otatara 4 Square, Dunns Road

Mid Dome – Making a difference tackling Wilding Pines



West Dome appears above the cloud bank covering the Five Rivers Plain while Sally Duston (left) and Marc Duffy work hard in ideal conditions high up on Mid Dome pulling out wilding pines on Saturday 27 Nov).

Spending a day in November on the top of the world, or so it seemed, saw 57 keen volunteers pulling out seedlings of *Pinus contorta* over about 50 hectares on the top of Mid Dome.

Even though cloud shrouded the Five Rivers Plain below, conditions on the tops were ideal for bending, pulling or cutting as volunteers scoured the hillside for large and small specimens.

“With the ETS (Emissions Trading Scheme) Legislation coming in to force since we began the eradication programme we have had to apply for exemption so we are not liable for removing trees planted pre 1990, “ Chair of the Mid Dome Wilding Trees Charitable Trust, Ali Timms said “We are waiting for the application to be approved so we can clear about 50 hectares of seeding trees on the Parawa ridge as soon as possible. The urgency is because now is the ideal time for the spray trials to work most effectively, when trees are growing most vigorously.”

Next year the Trust is hoping to spray 90 hectares, along with ground contractors clearing seedlings from 700-900 hectares.

“There are some botanical gems up there such as unique species of scree *Ranunculus*, *Raoulia* and *Aciphylla*, “Professor of Botany, Dr Alan Mark with the Dunedin group said.

“We appreciated this extremely good turnout with Department of Conservation and Environment Southland staff and volunteers from Dunedin and across Southland clearing seedlings from a greater area than expected,” Trust Project Manager Dave Miller said”. The 16 from Dunedin stayed over to do another work day being taken up by Nokomai Helicopters personnel who appreciate the work being done on their boundary.”

Jenny Campbell

Submissions Needed

Ulva Island – Resource Consent Environment Southland - Department of Conservation - Water Permit and Coastal Permit Application – D036-091 - Purpose: To discharge brodifacoum on Ulva Island by helicopter, for the eradication of rodents. Submissions close Wednesday, 27 April 2011

Department of Conservation Southland Conservation Management Strategy – Look out for advertising and have your say about the places and species that you feel are special in Southland.

Te Rere Yellow-eyed penguin Reserve Update

For photos and stories about Te Rere visit - www.converge.org.nz/fbsth/

Exciting times at Te Rere

Te Rere has been chosen as one of the sites to feature in a new Craig Potton TV series “Coast”. As a follow-up to his highly successful “Rivers” series Craig came down to Te Rere in April to film at the reserve. As Fergus was not available I went down with Craig and was interviewed about various aspects of the reserve and the film team spent time filming penguins in the moult and other penguins landing.

Recent work in the reserve has been a realignment of the access track into the reserve which is now on higher ground. This should mean a smoother ride into the site in winter.

Fergus has continued his excellent work as caretaker making regular visits to maintain our plantings, undertake predator control, checking fences and supervising volunteer groups.

During one of these visits Fergus made an exciting discovery – nesting muttonbirds (sooty shearwater or titi). Fergus found a bird initially and then after going down at night discovered burrows and more muttonbirds. We hope that our efforts controlling predators have paid off and that this colony will continue to expand. It is all the more exciting because we haven’t had to introduce species – they are now turning up on their own – a few years ago the first little blue penguins recorded and now muttonbirds – what next?

Muttonbirds would once have been a very common feature on the Southland mainland coast – now they are rare and mainly exist on islands.

The penguin count December 2010 saw 39 penguins come in and 22 go out at the Falls Creek landing and 25 penguins come in and 12 out at the Eastern Landing. A significant feature of the count was the observation of 14 juvenile penguins compared to no sightings of juveniles at last year’s December count. It is always very encouraging to see young birds that will potentially add to the breeding birds at Te Rere. **Brian Rance**

Sooty shearwater, muttonbird, titi at Te Rere – Google “You tube titi at Te Rere”



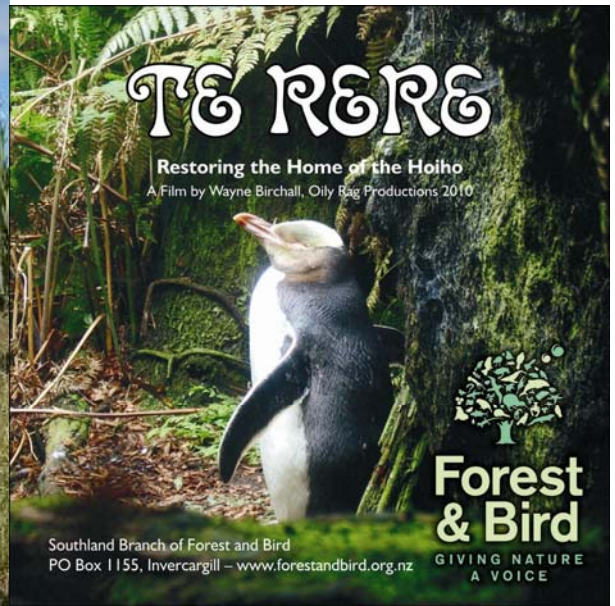
Next Te Rere Planting Trips for your Diary

Saturday 23 July 2011 and Saturday 13 August 2011

Leader Craig Carson – bookings essential 2130732 Petrol Vouchers for drivers.

Te Rere DVD – “Restoring the home of the Hoiho” For Sale – proceeds to Te Rere

Wayne (left), Brian and Fergus filming at Te Rere



The documentary charts the 25 year history of the Te Rere Reserve, through the eyes of caretaker Fergus Sutherland. It includes the story of the devastating fire that swept through the reserve in 1995, the recovery from that day, and excellent footage of the charismatic penguins in their spectacular coastal habitat. The film also documents the efforts Southland Branch have made in revegetating the reserve - the winter working bees for volunteers with the exciting 4WD journey on slippery muddy roads against a backdrop of crashing seas – much different from our April scene when the filming was done.

In April we had two clear sunny days on which to do the filming – seeing the penguins come in from a days fishing at sea and go out early morning, exploring the Falls Creek waterfall, after which the reserve Te Rere is named and looking at the vast areas of native plantings and nesting areas that have gradually replaced the farmland.

Te Rere yellow-eyed penguin reserve was bought by the Forest and Bird Society in 1988. It is managed by Southland Branch of the Society and from that time Southland Branch of Forest and Bird and supporters have made regular working trips from Invercargill to the reserve in the Catlins, planting up to 1000 native plants a year and undertaking pest control over a 25 year period. The film acknowledges the many volunteers who have helped at the site over many years and is dedicated to Ronald Ericson, a local farmer and passionate conservationist who spent many long hours planting at Te Rere.

Southland Branch is indebted to filmmaker and narrator Wayne Birchall for giving us a marvellous history of this great conservation project. Wayne is an eye surgeon by profession, living in Invercargill at the time when the film was made, now working and living in Whangarei with his wife Moira..

The Te Rere DVD is on sale for \$20 from the sales table at winter meetings (or \$25 including postage and packing if ordered from the branch or the Forest and Bird website – www.forestandbird.org.nz). If you want to support Te Rere but cant get down to working bees then proceeds will contribute to Te Rere ongoing costs.

Chris Rance

Te Rere – Restoring the home of the hoiho will be on sale as a fundraiser for \$20 on the sales table at winter meetings or from the Forest and Bird website \$25 including Postage and packing

Mossburn walkway opened Friday 3 December 2010



Encouraging locals and visitors alike to take advantage of the trig station viewpoint west of Mossburn is the reason, local farmer John Douglas worked with the Mossburn Lions Club to open up a track through his property. Working bees to make and set up stiles and put in a landmark signpost at the top brought the community together with more people able to access the Westridge Walking Trail now. Signposted access is just past the 50km sign on the Mossburn Wreys Bush Road.

Both Mr Douglas and Lions Club representative Rob McBride spoke of their appreciation of being able to use walking tracks during overseas trips and this heightened awareness helped bring this local project to fruition. "It is a great track for those needing to do aerobic work for sports training, combining that with 360 degree views across the Northern Southland plain," Mr Douglas said.

A highlight for the Mossburn School pupils, on reaching the top, was being showered by lollies from above as local pilot, George Taylor did a fly-by in his Thruster Microlight.

As guest invited to cut the ribbon on 3rd December, long term

Mossburn resident Norma Boyle spoke of the importance of walking, keeping fit and being thankful that she is still able to do that.

Jenny Campbell



10 Year Birthday Bash



Feel free to join us to CELEBRATE!!

Invercargill Environment Centre, Te Whenua Awhi, invites everyone to our tenth birthday celebration on Sunday 29 May from 3pm ish at St Johns Anglican Church Hall, Tay St, opposite Pak 'n Save.

Starting with a cuppa, some reminiscing by past members about the earlier days, then Johan Groters and Joyce Kolk from Wairaurahiri Jets as our highlighted speakers - talking about their life and, business. Then simple tea-soup and toast -provided and followed by some 'dwile flonking'!!! Now that has you guesssing doesn't it!

During the week leading up to this event there will be videos playing at the Centre, guest speakers eg about worms, permaculture, electric bike,.displays, quizzes, free refreshments eg Fair Trade coffee.

email your attendance for Sunday event please to iec@paradise.net.nz or phone 218- 4404

Te Whenua Awhi is Māori for cherishing or embracing the earth or place

*The Invercargill Environment Centre Te Whenua Awhi, 11 S.I.T. Arcade, 46 Esk Street, Invercargill, Southland, New Zealand
Phone/Fax: (03) 218 4404 Email: iec@paradise.net.nz Web: www.iec.org.nz*

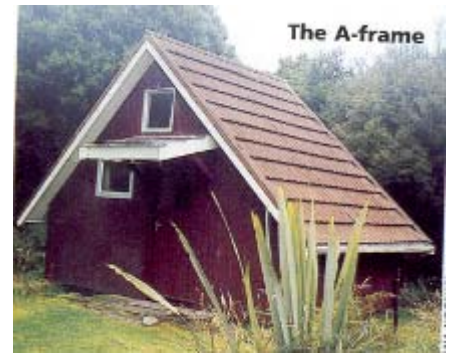
Tautuku Forest Cabins – Lenz Reserve



The Lodge



The Coutts Cabin



The A Frame

Situated on the Southern Scenic Route (SH92) 8km south of Papatowai and 90 minutes north of Invercargill, on a sealed highway, the Lodge, Coutts Cabin and an A Frame continue to be a popular place to stay. In a bush setting of 550 hectares with beaches, caves and waterfalls nearby it provides an excellent base for exploring the Catlins.

The Lodge (10 beds)

Members \$15

Non Members \$20

Coutts Cabin (4 beds)

Members \$15

Non Members \$20

A Frame (2 beds)

Members \$10

Non Members \$15

Schoolchildren \$5

Under 5 Free

These prices represent real value for money. The facilities are well equipped (all electric) with heaters (heat pump in the Lodge), microwaves, ovens and showers.

Convenient walks are the 1 hour nature walk and 3 hour long track both starting and finishing at the Lodge plus beach walks, Cathedral Caves and Lake Wilkie nearby

Another feature in the area is the Cooks Mill site on which is located a Traill tractor and bogies under cover that were used for hauling logs, this has been refurbished and upgraded by the Owaka Lions Club as a project.

Also featured are photos of the mill when it was operational that have been organized by Chairperson Mary Miller – Lenz Reserve Management Committee.

To book accommodation phone Diana Noonan 03 4158024, diana.keith@ruralinzone.net

Tautuku Trips 2011

13-14 May 2011 and 24-25 September 2011

Tautuku Forest Cabins – Coutts Cabin – A Frame in the Catlins are an ideal place to stay – Why not see for yourself by booking in for the 2009 “Working Bees” Weekend. Travel up on Friday night or Saturday morning, work on the nature walk track, weeding or working on the buildings can suit all levels of fitness. Free accommodation, pot luck tea on Saturday night and time to explore beaches, wetlands and bush walks on Sunday before returning home. Book with Tony Bretherick 2186137

The Quaky Cat – a delightful childrens book written by Diana Noonan for the Christchurch earthquake – buy one today and support the people of Christchurch.

Bushy Point - Sunday 11 September 2011 – (access from Bryson Road, Otatarā)

Living Legends is a community conservation project coordinating planting projects throughout New Zealand during the Rugby World Cup. Help our Southland project at Bushy Point, Otatarā by planting 5000 native plants. Come dressed in your favourite teams colours and welcome our visiting rugby teams – Scotland and Argentina, with our Southland Rugby Living Legend – All Black Kevin Laidlaw. A family fun day – with childrens treats, hot soup and there may even be a haggis!

Sea Lions increase exciting

Photo caption The discerning eye will see the large E identifying mark on this sea lion’s lower body as it basks in the sun on Waipapa Point beach.

“Sea lions are curious, bold, boisterous and playful, rather than aggressive in spite of appearances,” Department of Conservation (DOC) Biodiversity Ranger, Ros Cole said. “People need to treat them with respect, stay 10 metres away as a rule of thumb and keep dogs on a lead.”

Ms Cole is doing research into sea lion movements at Waipapa Point and Curio Bay, in conjunction with an Otago University PhD student. Sea lions which visit regularly are marked using bleach and water based non- toxic paint which washes off, so individuals can be identified. The public are encouraged to inform DoC of sightings with location and marking noted.

While numbers at the south coast have increased, nationally they have critical status, being more endangered than the yellow-eyed penguin. People are appreciating more regular visits to the south’s

Jenny Campbell

sandy beaches by these amazing and rare mammals, which mostly breed at the Sub- Antarctic Islands.

“It is intriguing and amazing to learn about their movements up and down the coast with research providing accurate information about the numbers involved here,” Curio Bay Camping Ground Manager, Steve White said. “I am looking forward to exploring the proposal to have a trial fence to exclude sea lions from the main camping and shop area. The public can still see them but it will prevent unwanted interactions.”

DoC is working with South Catlins Environmental Trust to organise options which could include a fence.

“Sharing our coast with these cool mammals means behaving appropriately and treating them with respect,” Ms Cole said. “Public feedback indicates sea lions are a drawcard at Curio Bay with the easy access here on the Southern Scenic Highway. It is a treat for people to see three endangered species here of sea lions, hoiho and Hector’s dolphin.”



New Restoration Project at Waipapa Point

Children of the late Ronald and Muriel Ericson, (left) Karin, Raould, grand-daughter Michelle Manning and Lars, debate who would plant the first pingao, native sedge, at Waipapa Point on Saturday 12 March as part of a special restoration project honouring the family.



A long history going back to the first keeper at Waipapa Point lighthouse, John Frederick Ericson was remembered when descendents of his family were invited to plant the first pingao, native sedge, as part of a national dune restoration project there.

The late Ronald and Muriel Ericson had lived on a farm adjacent to the lighthouse after land was purchased there by John Frederick's family and they gave up keeping the light. Ericson family members, Karin, Raould and

Lars returned as a tribute to their parents and to reminisce with local people and Forest and Bird members who joined in, planting other natives as well to help stabilise the sand dunes. With more planting intended, it is hoped this area can be restored with native plants so the public can see a natural sand dune system in contrast to the present introduced plants growing there.

Stories were told of the commitment to conservation by Ronald and Muriel with flax plantings at Southland's Forest and Bird Te Rere yellow eyed penguin colony in the Catlins coming almost exclusively from their farm. They had also had a marked influence in the running of the Lenz Reserve at Tautuku with participation in working bees a priority for them.

'The Waipapa Point beach and the sea were special places for Ronald and Muriel with the sea lions, penguins, fur seals and the dunes looked on as being theirs as they cared for passionately,' daughter Karin Ericson said. 'This is a special day and it brings back poignant memories of what a unique place this is.'

Jenny Campbell



The latest snapshot of the Dairying and Clean Streams Accord highlights the continuing failure of the dairy industry to meet the majority of targets set for 2007, Forest & Bird said today.

“We are eight years into the accord and in the 2009/10 snapshot, only two of the five targets set for 2007 have been met,” Forest & Bird Advocacy Manager Kevin Hackwell said.

“Sadly there is still a significant minority of dairy farmers letting down the majority of producers and other New Zealanders.”

The target set in 2003 that all farms should immediately comply with resource consents has still not been met by the 16 percent of farmers guilty of significant non-compliance, according to the accord snapshot released on Thursday.

“It is a real surprise that, as the level of serious non-compliance increased, the number of prosecutions by regional councils actually went down. It seems that the regional councils in the areas of highest offending are still not taking the problem seriously,” Kevin Hackwell said.

Fonterra farmers have been required to have nutrient management systems since 2007 but Primary Sector Water Partnership figures show only 28 percent of farmers had nutrient management plans by September last year.

The target for regional councils to fence 90 percent of all regionally significant wetlands bordering dairying areas by 2007 has also not been met. Taranaki is the only regional council to have met the 2007 target and most councils have fallen short of the earlier 50 percent target for 2005.

“Several councils haven’t even identified regionally significant wetlands, let alone getting around to fencing them,” Kevin Hackwell said.

The current accord between partners Fonterra, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), the Ministry for the Environment, and Local Government New Zealand expires in two years. The good news is they are engaging with other interested groups such as Forest & Bird, Fish & Game, Federated Farmers and other dairy companies to draw up a new accord.

Kevin Hackwell said despite the efforts of Fonterra and other partners, the present accord amounted to little more than a band-aid.

“The trouble is that the present accord does not deal with the core issue which is if you are putting more cows per hectare and trying to maximise milk production, then the problem is going to keep getting worse.

“The focus needs to be on measurable improvements in water quality. Despite its name, the Clean Streams Accord has never measured water quality.”

The government-backed Land and Water Forum, which includes farmers, industry, iwi and conservation and recreation organisations such as Forest & Bird, has agreed the answer to improving water quality lies with a combination of voluntary and regulatory measures.

SERN (Southland Ecological Restoration Network) – www.sern.org.nz - a Southland website about community action in conservation across Southland – have a look at the 40 projects on the site and see if you can lend a helping hand to a project in your area.



SAVE THE MIGHTY

MOKIHINUI RIVER

Help save this wild river and the creatures that call it home

Set deep within the wilderness of the West Coast, the Mokihinui River flows through an earthquake-shattered gorge that is cloaked in ancient forest. It is a sanctuary for over 20 threatened species - from our great spotted kiwi to our giant powelliphanta snail.



For the past three years, we have battled state-owned Meridian Energy to save this national treasure & whitewater haven from an 85 metre dam.

The dam will drown 330 hectares of primeval forest and river bed, leaving several species such as our endangered blue duck, longfin eel and threatened long-tailed bat homeless. Meridian was given the green light in April 2010 to flood this wild, untamed river and turn it into a reservoir. Forest & Bird has appealed the decision. We will head into court in 2012.

Meridian Energy is owned by New Zealanders, for New Zealanders. Other truly renewable-energy options exist. With political will and YOUR voice, we can help save this biologically-rich river.

Learn more about the Mokihinui at www.forestandbird.org.nz

Buy a \$100 shareholding certificate, send an e-card, join the Mokihinui mailing list, tell people on facebook, twitter. Help fund our legal campaign by buying a limited edition shareholding certificate.

www.forestandbird.org.nz

The government’s announcement that a statutory Game Animal Council will be established confirms Forest & Bird’s fears that conservation of our forests and native wildlife will be undermined.

The management on public conservation land of some herds of introduced pest animals – which include deer, thar, chamois and pigs – will be taken from the Department of Conservation and handed to the new council.

“Forest & Bird believes DOC is best placed to ensure that conservation values remain paramount while ensuring hunters can continue to play a valuable role in controlling the numbers of these pests,” Forest & Bird Advocacy Manager Kevin Hackwell said.

“Giving priority to a narrow set of hunter interests will undermine the conservation of our forests, which have been devastated by these pest animals since their introduction to New Zealand.

“Having two organisations – DOC and the game council – administering different pests on the same land is likely to lead to confusion and a poor outcome for conservation.”

The main beneficiaries of the council are likely to be elite trophy hunters rather than ordinary hunters. Overseas trophy hunters will be paying a large part of the council’s costs, so their interests are likely to dominate the management of some of New Zealand’s most popular herds.

The charging system for the new Game Animal Council is likely to prove to be the thin end of the wedge for ordinary hunters, who will find they have to pay to hunt in their favourite forest.

“The council will be an expensive operation requiring resources to do research, manage herds, and run and police a licensing system,” Kevin Hackwell said. “So if the council is to be mainly self-funded, it will be inevitable that a user pays regime will mean new costs to ordinary hunters.”

A similar council was set up in New South Wales where hunters are charged a licence fee to hunt on public and private land. The NSW Game Council was meant to be self-funded but nearly 10 years after it was founded, it continues to receive millions of dollars in government funding.

The creation of the game council flies in the face of New Zealand’s conservation laws and international commitments, which give priority to reducing the impact of introduced pests on our native ecology.

The use of any public money to set up the Game Animal Council also runs counter to the government’s stated policy of reducing non-essential spending.

“It makes no sense to spend public money to set up an organisation which will result in a worse outcome for our forests and wildlife, and the ordinary hunting community,” Kevin Hackwell said.

www.forestandbird.org.nz

Southland Branch information, talks and trips Is available on this website.

Help the Branch save money by asking for the branch newsletter on email or look at it on the website, email Chris at rances@ihug.co.nz

Email central office and give them your email address to receive E-News, Forest and Bird’s regular newsletter for members.

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Margaret Hopkins, Stewart Island (03 2191126)

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Forest & Bird
GIVING NATURE A VOICE

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SOUTHLAND BRANCH NEWSLETTER

Southland Branch
PO Box 1155
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