



## **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

**O'Neills Bush** Walk of loop track and planting maintenance. **Waipapa Point** New DoC facilities and tour of lighthouse. Car pool from Museum 9.30am. Rance's to co-ordinate.

**Leader Gay Munro, ph 239 5827 or email [g.munro@woosh.co.nz](mailto:g.munro@woosh.co.nz).**

## **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

**Te Rere** half day penguin count.

**Leader Brian Rance Ph 2131161 or [rances@ihug.co.nz](mailto:rances@ihug.co.nz) – please book for transport arrangement.**

## **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

**Southland Community Nursery Open Day** – 185 Grant Rd, Otatara.

A Focus on Wetland Creation.

### **SERN Afternoon Field Trip – Invercargill & Environs**

A trip to explore three wetland areas - two created and one restored. *(See notice later in newsletter.)*

For further details, contact Gay Munro, ph 239 5827 or email [g.munro@woosh.co.nz](mailto:g.munro@woosh.co.nz).

## **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

Wild Rivers – National F&B campaign. Joint trip with Otago Branches to visit the **Nevis River**.

Contact Craig Carson, ph 213 0732.

## **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

**Waihopai Walk** 7.00pm. Meet on the east side of Queens Drive outside the eastern Thomson's Bush walking track entrance - plenty of parking available on the roadside.

A walk around eastern **Thomson's Bush** with discussion on restoration progress. Followed by a walk along the Waihopai Stream east to the **Waihopai Dam** and back. *(See articles later in newsletter)*

**Leaders – Gay Munro, ph 239 5827 or Sheryll Ashton, ph 214 2319**

## **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

**Te Rere** full day penguin count.

**Leader Brian Rance Ph 2131161 or [rances@ihug.co.nz](mailto:rances@ihug.co.nz) – please book for transport arrangement.**

## **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

**Stony Creek Station, Gore** – Olearia tree daisies – restoration project.

**East Hokonuis** - hear about the Gore Tramping Club projects of weed and pest control. Explore some of **Grant's Track**.

Car pool from Museum 9.30am. Rance's to co-ordinate.

**Leader Jenny Campbell, email [jennycam@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jennycam@xtra.co.nz).**

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February – Waituna World Wetlands Day Celebration** Starting at 10.00am. *(See notice later in newsletter.)* Carpool from museum at 9.30am. Jenny Campbell to co-ordinate.

**Contact Gay Munro, ph 239 5827 or email [g.munro@woosh.co.nz](mailto:g.munro@woosh.co.nz)**

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2010– Sky Dome, Te Anau Hall, Luxmore Drive** - 10.00am to 11.30am. Lunch in Manapouri – 12noon. Boat trip to **Pomona and Rona Islands** - 1.00pm to 3.00pm Cost for trip \$30 per person (\$60 per family). Gay Munro - Invercargill Car Pool co-ordinator, ph 239 5827.

**Leader - Ruth Dally, ph 03 249 6600 or email [info@fiordland.gen.nz](mailto:info@fiordland.gen.nz). *(See later in newsletter for further details of Sky Dome and Pomona Island Restoration Project.)***

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2010 - Landcare Networking Day, Bluff** *(See notice later in newsletter.)*

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2010 SERN Conference – Bringing Back the Birds. Stewart Island**, with field trip to **Ulva Island** and also SIRCET's restoration project, **Ackers Point**. *(See notice later in newsletter.)*

## Musing from the Chair

At our September evening talk we were fortunate to have Jo Ledington speaking about the work of the kakapo recovery team of which she is a member. It has been a fantastic season with kakapo numbers rising from 90 to 124. However it was enlightening to hear how much detailed day to day management is required to achieve such results.

This need for management to survive is unfortunately becoming a reality for most of NZ's native species. Kakapo are not even the rarest species on Whenua Hou with some petrels having a lower population. While the predator free status of the island assists them with their nesting they are not "stay at home" birds like the kakapo and so are vulnerable to other dangers in their wide-ranging lifestyle.

Our Society's main objective is protecting NZ's indigenous plants and animals and the places where they live. A volunteer organisation cannot manage such a task alone. Much of the Society's effort is put into supporting the Dept of Conservation and lobbying government to provide the means for the department, and be mindful of the needs of NZ's indigenous plants and animals when they are making decisions. Unfortunately this has become far more difficult since the last election. Our focus is in a number of areas.

Climate change is one and the Society supports higher emission reduction targets than the government. Climate change is an extreme danger to NZ's natural biodiversity. However NZ's native forests, grasslands and wetlands also play an important role in the sequestration of carbon. The Society is pushing strongly for increased pest control to protect the ecosystems and also assist achieving NZ's emission targets.

More and more of NZ's rivers are coming under threat from pollution and from proposals to dam or divert rivers for power production or extraction of water. The Society is campaigning to draw attention to the plight of our rivers and is holding a Wild Rivers Day on 28<sup>th</sup> November. The day's focus in the southern region is on the Nevis River which is under threat of damming and the flooding of its lower valley.

The Society is concerned that some members of the government think DoC manages too much land and would like to see it reduced. The announcement on possible mining on conservation land could be part of this and must be opposed. The Society thinks more land needs to be added to protect NZ's biodiversity but mooted changes to high country tenure review means some of the gains made over the past could be lost. Some government members seem to have failed to grasp the concept that the DoC "estate" is not a private estate but public lands to protect natural values and for all NZ'ers to cherish, use and enjoy.

I have serious concerns the present government is slipping back into decision making based on the short-term economic efficiency styles of the 1990's. In these narrow focussed processes, interests other than economic are disregarded. In fact it would appear that conservation has become a dirty word within the government. If we are to conserve our natural biodiversity, ecosystems and values, nature needs a strong voice advocating for it. Through you, Forest and Bird provides nature with this voice. Thank you for your support.

**Craig Carson**

You can save the Branch money by asking to have this newsletter sent on email. Please email Chris Rance  
[rances@ihug.co.nz](mailto:rances@ihug.co.nz)

You can also view this newsletter in colour  
or

Sign up for E-News to get more news  
from across the country

**check out** [www.forestandbird.org.nz](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz)



### A Message from the Editors:

You will see with the summer program that where possible we have fitted in with other groups involved in conservation type work. Throughout the newsletter there are articles about the different projects and places that we are going to visit. To enjoy the photos more, log on to the Forest and Bird website [www.forestandbird.org.nz](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz), where you will find the Southland newsletter electronically and be able to see the photos in full glorious colour!

## Craig Carson awarded Old Blue award.



*Craig enjoying a regular activity for him, of planting native trees at Forest and Bird's Te Rere Yellow-eyed Penguin Reserve.*

Wondering why he had received an Old Blue Award when there are so many others more deserving, is a typical response from Craig Carson of Otatara, who has worked tirelessly on many environmental issues over many years. Old Blue was the last Chatham Island female black robin which brought this species back from the brink of extinction, with a framed print photo of her presented to just a few people annually.

Forest and Bird's prestigious award was presented to Craig at their AGM in Wellington recently in recognition of the contribution he has made to Southland Branch over about 17 years as Chairman. His work in this capacity has entailed many hours of reading background papers, writing effective submissions about current environmental issues as well as speaking to them at hearings and meetings.

He regularly attends Forest and Bird working bees, involving planting native trees, weeding and tending tracks in the Catlins at both Te Rere Yellow- Eyed Penguin Reserve and Lenz Reserve, providing transport and leading groups. Pulling out wilding pines on Mid Dome is another of his passions.

In order to extend his skills in fighting for the environment he gained a Diploma in Environmental Management, working quietly but with tenacity over several years to see this achieved. Craig is hugely respected for his knowledge of local conservation issues and the commitment he makes to ensure justice is done for the environment.

*Jenny Campbell*

## **SERN (Southland Ecological Restoration Network)**

Check out the website at [www.sern.org.nz](http://www.sern.org.nz)

### **Spring Field Trip - Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

Starting at **1.00pm**, meeting at **McNeil's Waldon Pond**, 85 Mason Rd. Enjoy this wetland with native plantings near Seaward Bush. From there to the **Rance's Southland Community Nursery** (approx 2.30pm) to visit their wetlands developed in two stages - one in 1998 and the other in 2003, with extensive native plantings around both areas. Move on to the **Southern Wetland Trust's Big Lagoon** at Taramoa (approx. 4.00pm), where Tony Reiger has overseen the restoration of this significant natural wetland along the southern coastal strip between Invercargill and Riverton.

For further details, contact Gay Munro, ph 239 5827 or email [g.munro@woosh.co.nz](mailto:g.munro@woosh.co.nz).

### **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).

## Garston School environment succeeds.

Energy, enthusiasm and commitment are the marks of the Garston School students, staff and community members who have enabled the unsightly wasteland and years of dumped rubbish in front of the school house to be transformed in to a native garden.

"The project reflects our student's sense of pride in their school and community as well as their awareness and growing interest in taking action to promote environmentally friendly practices," Principal Kathryn O'Loughlin said. "It began in August 2006 as part of Conservation Week when 18 local people led by Pam Naylor worked alongside school and some Department of Conservation (DoC) staff to clear nearly 200 square metres of rough broom covered ground in a mammoth weedbusting mission."

2007 saw two major tree planting days with donations of plants and support from Milligan's Nursery, Pukerau Nursery, Five Rivers Ward of the Southland District Council, Garston Woman's Institute and Invercargill City Council. Staff from DoC and Environment Southland provided guidance and advice on how to plant as well as which native plants to use for this situation. The school received recognition from DoC for their restoration project winning the Richard Henry Award. "For months on end my front gate was the resting place for all manner of grubbers, different sized shovels and assorted wheelbarrows," Ms O'Loughlin said. "We were impressed by the children's work ethic and stamina on World Environment Day in 2008 when they spread approximately 100 cubic metres of mulch over the entire area using their barrows."

Throughout 2007 and 2008 weeding and planting continued, learning how to cope when challenges, obstacles and less than perfect weather and soil conditions were encountered. A harsh winter followed by a scorching summer saw more top-soil and mulch applied to combat the harsh temperatures and thin, rocky soil. Enjoying the bird and insect life will be a bonus as the plants establish and grow, after 1500 hours of hard work done to date.

Garston became an EnviroSchool last year gaining a bronze award as recognition of their commitment to using sustainable practices and protecting and enhancing the environment, weaving it into appropriate curriculum areas. Three girls are now half way through creating a contemplative, reflective, quiet garden under a ring of trees complete with a seat and maori carvings. Meanwhile a group of 6 children are building an eco-hut out of recycled materials. Spring will see more work in their garden and sowing vegetables.

Their efforts to date saw them win the Schools' Award at Southland Environment Awards 2009 sponsored by Graham Milligan Nurseries and Wastenet.

"As one Year 8 girl, Ella Wilkins said at the E.S. Awards, she wants to ensure that the younger children carry on the great work and bring them on board," Ms O'Loughlin said. "Another girl has already worked out how she can organise our school's whanau groups to keep up the maintenance work on the reserve. The major change in attitude has been in the area of leadership where the senior students are super aware of their power to influence others through their positive and consistent role-modelling and encouragement."



Garston School representatives (left) Ella Wilkins, Jamie Abernethy, Principal Kathryn O'Loughlin and Courtney Hume at 2009 ES Environment Awards.

**Jenny Campbell.**

### **Kiwi Conservation Club for Children (KCC)**

**– a great gift for Children and Grandchildren**

Join now on-line at [www.forestandbird.org.nz](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz)

- Single \$12 • Family \$20 (each child receives one magazine per issue)  
• Mini Set \$28 (four magazines per issue) • Class Set \$65 (30 magazines per issue)

**Kiwi Conservation Club for Children Website** [www.kcc.org.nz](http://www.kcc.org.nz)

The KCC website is a growing resource, packed with information about New Zealand wildlife and wild places. The website has been specifically developed for children, so they will enjoy the site and gather valuable information for school projects.

Information on the KCC website includes... educator resources, how kids can help the world, a glossary of conservation terms, a conservation event calendar and Fact Sheets on conservation topics, such as the Black Robin, Extinct Birds of NZ, Hoiho, Hector's Dolphin, Kakapo, Kiwi, NZ National Parks and Weta.

## News from Ruth

After 16 years running Fiordland Ecology Holidays, Lance and I have made a commitment to fully fund one final project to say 'Thank you' to Fiordland; this wonderful, unique and truly special place where we have been privileged to work, grow, love and learn in. With the success of the Pomona Island project, we are now focusing our efforts on another island that has been devastated by the introduction of introduced predators, Indian Island.



### Indian Island Restoration – Dusky Sound

Just inside the mouth of Dusky Sound lies Indian Island. Once alive with the haunting call of the kokako, the cheeky call of the saddleback and the noisy chatter of the mohua, the forest is now silent due to the destructive impact of predators. In recent years stoats have been removed from the island, and deer numbers have been greatly reduced. But the impact of the remaining rodents is glaringly evident. With the assistance of the Fiordland Conservation Trust you have the opportunity to eradicate the introduced rodents and restore to the island its abundance of bird and plant life.

Indian Island is a low lying forested island of 168 ha and is one of Dusky Sounds special sites cloaked in Maori history. It was named Indian Island as in 1773 Captain Cook first sighted the indigenous peoples of Fiordland, the Maori. Even today there is still evidence of Maori settlement and the deep storage pits used by them.

The current predator control regime that was established in 2000 consists of a perimeter of stoat traps that are checked and re-baited every six months. This is proving successful in the eradication of the stoats, but to remove the other predators from the island a winter aerial drop of poison must take place. This will be followed up with the setting, baiting and regular checking of traps to ensure that a re-infestation of rats does not take place. Because the island is 500 meters from the mainland it is unlikely that rats would re-invade by island by swimming to it.

The eradication of the rats from the island is taking place under the 'umbrella' of Fiordland Conservation Trust, this is take advantage of the systems that they already have in place and therefore ensure donations for Indian Island are spent on the eradication and not administrative costs. The one off cost will be \$70,000nz, and we are aiming at having the project finished by Spring 2010.

We have already raised \$26,000.00, this includes a generous donation of \$2,000.00 from our local Forest and Bird Branch. Thank you so much for your support.

***Ruth and Lance Shaw.***

### **March Trip to Te Anau/Manapouri – Sky Dome and Pomona Island**

**Ruth Dally writes about the Sky Dome:**

"The full dome digital planetarium is open to the public on certain nights once the season starts. It is an immense interactive experience with a voyage through time, focusing on the universe at large. Learning about what galaxies are and the solar system. This is followed by a sky tonight theme where we learn about the unique southern sky with a focus on NZ and Maori information. Constellations, planets, and deep sky objects visible at sunset along with relevant myths and legends. The dome is 360 degrees and is amazing!

Richard the owner is a young very passionate guy. This is the only sky dome of its kind in NZ. He has to erect it each night as it is so huge. It is filled with air and everyone lays on their backs so they can see the entire 360 sky above them. He points things out with a laser beam and the feeling of spinning through space is very real."

### **Pomona Island Restoration Project – from the website at [www.pomona-island.org.nz](http://www.pomona-island.org.nz)**

"Our Vision Statement - The Pomona Island Charitable Trust is strongly focused on conservation. In years to come, people will want to visit Pomona Island on Lake Manapouri to see and hear a wide range of native birds, including many endangered species indigenous to the area, in a largely unspoiled, relatively easily accessible part of Fiordland. By visiting Pomona Island visitors will be able to imagine Fiordland as it was before introduced pests became established." *Join Friends of Pomona Island and get the excellent quarterly newsletter keeping you up with what has been happening.*

## **Waihopai Walkway from Queens Drive East: A Reccie by *Sheryll Ashton* for the December outing.**

"I walked along there on Sunday and took 30 mins to walk to the dam along the north (grassed) side.

The ponding area can be seen well from the dam. There is a picnic table and a small signboard by Salford School and Environment Southland down among the plantings near the pond which took another 2 mins or so.

I took the detour through Talbot St Reserve from Racecourse Road end (some path and mostly grass) on the way back (dunite path on south side) to see various plantings and came back out on the Waihopai Walkway. All up was about 1 hr 15mins easy going.

Allowing to meander through Talbot St Reserve a little and some chat, perhaps allow between 1 hr 30 mins minimum to 2 hrs. Weather conditions (there is always a cool breeze, if not a howling gale heading back to Queens Drive) would probably dictate the walking pace and lingering time. If really wet it would be wise to take the path to avoid wet feet from the grass which can be longish in parts."

*For those planning to join us, the above gives you an idea of time. Otherwise take yourself along that way one balmy summer evening for a great walk.*

## **Thomson's Bush, Invercargill – Recent happenings**

The Parks Division has a Contractor carrying out animal pest removal from the Thomson Bush Reserve. This 33.5 ha bush remnant has suffered over the past 150 years from surrounding bush being removed and exposing the area to the elements, then competition from weed plant growth and tree canopy damage from the 1996 freeze.

New plantings to re-vegetate the area have been successfully carried over the past years with the help of community groups but this past year, the population of animal pests has increased greatly, necessitating a pest removal programme.

To date, 332 possums, two ferrets and 46 rats have been removed, which should have a marked affect on vegetation growth and bird hatchings this year.

***Robin Pagan, ICC Parks Manager***

*Join us on **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December** to hear more about the work going on in this important forest remnant in the heart of Invercargill.*

*See Trips Program – front page.*

## **Kakapo Encounter, Stewart Island 26 September 2009 – 26 October 2009**

Night trips to Ulva Island

Adults \$90 Children \$50 (aged 5-14)

Contact for booking and information [kakapoencounter@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kakapoencounter@xtra.co.nz)

or for further details check out

<http://stewart-island-news.com/kakapo.html>



**See Sirocco,  
a character of a kakapo.**

## Rod Morris photographic treat

Premier nature photographer, Rod Morris enthralled Southlanders in July with his stunning slides which illustrated his evening talk "Extinction and Discovery" about Nature Discovery in New Zealand since the time of Orbell's rediscovery of the takahe in 1948. Former TVNZ Natural History film maker and co-author of many childrens' and adults' natural history books, Rod's expertise with a camera was obvious. He spoke about the stories of many native species such as birds, gecko and weta which have been driven to seek refuge high on the tops of rocky cliffs in such places as Sinbad Valley in Fiordland because predators have eliminated them from more accessible habitats. Over 100 people attended the event, organised by Southland Forest and Bird and supported by SIT.

"In the last 60 years New Zealand has won some mighty conservation battles, but we have not yet won the war," Rod says. "The slides are an illustrated reminder that we must continue to fight, as what is at stake is too precious to lose."

He spoke about recently discovered rare native species such as a giant burrowing mole weta and a mahogany skink as well as the treasured kakapo and takahe. Unfortunately these days he says they are seen more on tee shirts and tea towels than in the wild.

Rod has been involved in many exciting projects around the world while working for the Natural History Unit in Dunedin, along with programmes for the BBC, Discovery Channel, and National Geographic Television. His filming has included Tasmanian Devils and Komodo Dragons as well as New Zealand natives such as kakapo, kiwi and short-tailed bats. At present he is a field director for a new TV series 'Weird Edens' being produced for Discovery Science.

"Remarkably, new native species of reptiles and giant insects are being discovered in Fiordland's spectacular alpine landscapes by those already working hard to save kakapo, kiwi, takahe and blue duck," Rod says. "It is important to learn about these new and unique species from Fiordland's 'Lost World' and we need to ensure predator free islands and parts of the mainland can be an oasis for them so they can survive."

***Jenny Campbell.***

### **Eco Sourced Native Plants**



RD 2, Gore  
Ph. 03 205 3801  
Fax. 03 205 3703  
A/H. 03 205 3703  
Mobile. 0274 346 174  
Email. [pukeraunursery@clear.net.nz](mailto:pukeraunursery@clear.net.nz)

The Nursery team offer:

- On-site consultation, analysis of site conditions, issues and opportunities.
- Landscape planning for large and small scale ecological restoration projects.
- Plans and Assessments of Effects on the Environment for land use resource consent applications.
- Design concepts for introducing natives into any size space, from residential courtyard gardens to commercial property, lifestyle blocks and large country gardens through to farms.
- Eco- sourced plant supply.
- Planting and construction work by our experienced construction team.
- On going management of plantings.

**Invite you all to a “Landcare Networking Field day”  
at Te Rau Aroha Marae  
on Friday, 16 April 2010 starting at 10.00 am.**

**Programme:**

- 10.00 am “Get-together” at Te Rau Aroha Marae and welcome by  
*Stuart Collie, Chairperson, Environment Southland*
- 10.15 am Morning Tea
- 10.30am Networking session and interaction between groups  
-11:30am
- 11.30am Guest Speakers – Bala Tikisetty, Catherine Beard, Richard Bowman
- 12.30 pm Lunch hosted by Environment Southland at the Te Rau Aroha Marae
- 1.15 pm Visit to Bluff Hill Motupohue Environment Trust Project
- 3.00pm Afternoon Tea  
4.00pm Discussion and Vote of Thanks – *Nathan Cruickshank, Environment  
Southland*

Please mark the event in your diary.

For further information and RSVP, please contact Nathan Cruickshank toll free 0800 76 88 45/03-211 5115 or  
Emily Osborne, Bluff Hill Motupohue Environment Trust at 0274579755

**Southland Ecological Restoration Network - 2010 CONFERENCE  
Stewart Island – 'Bringing Back the Birds'.**

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April**

Friday Evening – Social Evening with Keynote Speaker

Saturday morning – Field trip to **Ulva Island**, then a look at the work undertaken by **SIRCET** (Stewart Island/Rakiura Community & Environment Trust)

Saturday afternoon – Workshops/seminars covering predator fencing, mainland islands, species re-introduction, pest control, community/DoC relations, funding.

Sunday morning – Field trip to Dancing Star Foundation (predator fence).

**Watch the SERN website for further information & registration details.**

**[www.sern.org.nz](http://www.sern.org.nz)**

### **Identifying Southland's Natural Heritage.**

Over the past six years, Environment Southland has supported an initiative to identify, define, describe, rank and record the native habitat remnants on privately owned land in Southland. As the first part of this assessment, 3000 High Value Area (HVA) sites have been identified from maps and aerial photos as having potential importance for biodiversity on a local, regional or national scale.

During the 2008-2009 financial year, the Environment Southland Councillors agreed to fund the first assessments of HVAs. This was done through rapid ecological assessments using a surveying system developed by ES staff based on current best-practise ecological survey methods. The work done to date by the Southland Wetlands Working Party on a wetland inventory, database and significance ranking system has also been incorporated into the HVA surveying system.

In May and June this year, thirteen rapid ecological assessments of HVAs were conducted on nine private properties in the Waituna, Maitara and Longwoods districts. These were undertaken by an independent contractor, Urtica Inc, who undertook the surveys and compiled a report for each site. The reports provide factual and reliable information about the natural and ecological values present, and provide an excellent synopsis of the condition of each site, with a range of management options for the natural areas to ensure they are there for future generations to enjoy.

The reports in their final soft bound state have been very well received by landowners. Feedback has been excellent, with all parties surveyed being appreciative of the work that has been done and highly supportive of the programme overall. Several of these landowners have recommended other landowners get involved with the programme, and we expect that this will become self-perpetuating as community awareness grows.

With the first reports now available from the HVA programme, we are painting a picture of the nature and state of native habitats on private land in Southland. This will greatly assist council to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the region in the future. In particular it will provide better information on pest management needs and will assist landowners and communities to develop effective pest management programmes.

Funding to continue and expand the HVA programme for the next three years has been secured from the Biodiversity Condition Fund (Biodiversity Southland/NZ Landcare Trust application), Southland District Council and Environment Southland. In August this year Environment Southland advertised an Expression of Interest for parties interested in doing this work. 17 submissions were received from individuals and companies and currently we are reviewing these submissions prior to tendering the work to the contractors and individuals that are suitably qualified to undertake the work.

We envisage the HVA survey going to tender in the first week of September, with submissions due on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2009. Work on these projects is estimated to begin towards the end of October.

**Tim Riding, Environment Southland Biosecurity Officer (Animal Pests)**

**If you or anyone you know would be interested in having a natural heritage area assessed under the HVA program, please contact Tim Riding at Environment Southland, ph 211 5115 or email [tim.riding@es.govt.nz](mailto:tim.riding@es.govt.nz)**

**24 October 2009: 350\* SANDCASTLES FOR CLIMATE ACTION**

(\*350 parts per million is the maximum CO2 level earth can cope with)

Fun family day building sandcastles on **Oreti Beach**, approx 2 hours in the afternoon (exact time to be announced)

On Saturday 24 October, the International Day of Climate Change Action, people all around the world will make a statement that they want the world's leaders to take immediate and strong action to curb climate change for the present and the future of our planet. Build a sandcastle, and then watch it being washed away by the tide, an illustration of how powerless humans are in face of rising sea levels.

No admission fee. Spot prizes and prize for longest standing sandcastle.

**Would you like to be involved with organising this event or want more details?**

**Please contact us at the Invercargill Environment Centre – ph. 218 4404**

# Te Rere Yellow-eyed Penguin Reserve

For photos and stories about Te Rere visit - [www.converge.org.nz/fbsth/](http://www.converge.org.nz/fbsth/)

## Habitat restoration makes a difference

Yellow eyed penguins will be the ones to benefit as the result of about 50 volunteers planting 600 natives trees at a working bee at Forest and Bird's Te Rere Yellow- Eyed Penguin ( Hoiho) Reserve on the remote Catlins' coast last Saturday. This was one of several days held through the year which enables the habitat for the penguins to be improved. The reserve has been developed over 20 years with the initial habitat having very little natural native cover suitable for these birds to find suitable nesting sites. They require privacy, not liking to be seen by other penguins when establishing nests, so the on-going plantings have helped with this aspect of their needs.

Hoiho are an endangered species so enhancing habitat suitable for them increases the chances they have of breeding and so increasing numbers. A fire which swept through the reserve in 1995 devastated much of the native plant cover and affected nesting penguins but there has been a remarkable recovery with increased plantings helping.



Regular volunteers find it very satisfying to see the results of their work making such a difference with penguin numbers appearing to remain stable at about 50 in spite of the setback. Predators are another challenge for them with 40 traps checked regularly by caretaker Fergus Sutherland who is still catching stoats but rats are the main problem at present.

Volunteers travelled from across Southland and even Otago to help ensure all the plants were dug in and protected with stakes, netting and sacks to reduce weed growth and so ensure a good start. Plants were supplied by Pukerau Nursery with owner Arne Cleland ensuring the correct planting techniques were used.



The day ended with a walk around the reserve and then the thrill of seeing the penguins return from a full day of fishing at sea. They bobbed out of the sea, waddled across the rocky shore and made for their secret nest sites although egg laying is not on their agenda yet. For the young people who had not been to the reserve previously, they found it very satisfying to have completed a full working day and to recognise they had made a difference for these unique birds.

**Jenny Campbell**

## Next Te Rere Trip for your Diary

**12 December 2009 - Te Rere full day penguin count**

Leader Brian Rance – bookings essential 2131161.

**Shorebirds in the Eglinton River** The "shingle islands" project aims to improve breeding outcomes for the black fronted terns. Nesting on islands in the Eglinton River, their breeding habitat is threatened by weeds, especially lupins. There are ongoing volunteer work days organised.

**Check it out at [www.fiordlandrestoration.co.nz](http://www.fiordlandrestoration.co.nz)**

## Tautuku Lodge – Lenz Reserve

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 are at 1989 rates and 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 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 following the previous repainting of the tractor and bogies by the late Jim Ollerenshaw, whose father was the mill manager. The refurbishment was financed by the Lenz Reserve finances together with a generous \$1000 donation from South Otago Branch. Further funding is being sought from the Clutha Licencing Trust, Balclutha Freezing Works Trust and Rotary. The Mill site is listed in the latest Clutha Heritage Trail brochure and is well worth a visit. To book accommodation phone Diana Noonan 03 4158024, [diana.keith@ruralinzone.net](mailto:diana.keith@ruralinzone.net)

## Lenz Reserve celebrating 40 years on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2009

### Invercargill Environment Centre- Te Whenua Awhi Open 10-4pm, Monday – Friday.

Have you checked out our New website [www.iec.org.nz](http://www.iec.org.nz) Check out information on affiliated groups, our What's on Enviro Calendar, The Gardening page, Recycling Page, an Energy Page, Kids page and Shop page.

Come into the centre and check out new products in

store, Trade aid Chocolate, Coffee, Tea, Rice, Dried fruit, and so much more.

Our Global soap range including, Soap nuts, Shampoo soap, Massage soap, Shaving soap. If wish to receive the latest Enviro Calendar for Enviro events email [iec@paradise.net.nz](mailto:iec@paradise.net.nz).





## Southland Community Nursery

185 Grant Road, Otatara

email [rances@ihug.co.nz](mailto:rances@ihug.co.nz)

web address <http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~rances/>



### Wetland Creation – what you can do with a naturally wet area

Wet areas are very difficult to revegetate as most plants do not like to have their roots submerged for any length of time. In Southland there are many such areas and they lend themselves to working with rather than against nature. It is a case of setting aside the wet areas and either excavating a pond to give open water with planting around or planting wet areas with appropriate wetland plants.

When we moved to our Grant Road location, a very wet sheep paddock adjoined the kahikatea forest – not surprising really as the paddock is on wet peat and though drains had been put down, they were struggling to cope with the high water table and very wet conditions in winter – the sheep didn't like it much either!

We decided early on to turn this wet paddock back into a functioning wetland ecosystem including open water, regenerating shrubland and eventually its return to kahikatea swamp forest (we won't see the benefits of that ourselves!). How much easier to have left the swamp forest there in the first place.

The Southland plants we would recommend for very wet areas are as follows – flax (*Phormium tenax*), Carex species (*Carex virgata* and *Carex secta*), toe toe (*Cortaderia richardii*), mingimingi (*Coprosma propinqua*), weeping mapou (*Myrsine divaricata*), red tussock (*Chionochloa rubra*), Cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*), kahikatea (*Dacrydium dacrydioides*). The usual restoration species of Pittosporums, broadleaf, wineberry etc do not like wet feet and will happily turn up their toes if you put them in that situation. In a pond excavation situation the spoil from the pond spread around the edges will provide higher ground for those and other riparian (riverside) species such as lowland ribbonwood (*Plagianthus regius*) and kowhai (*Sophora microphylla*). Most of the species listed above provide good food sources for native birds such as tui, bellbird, kereru, waxeye, as well as open water provides habitat for kingfishers, herons, stilts and waterfowl and if you are near the estuary the rare fernbird may pay a visit. The addition of perches around wetland areas and the proximity of tall trees for perching are good features to attract birds to your area.

We will be having an open day on 7 November focussing on wetland creation – look out for details. All the species listed are available for potting up at the Community Nursery which will open again on Fridays from the end of September.

**Chris Rance**  
Southland Community Nursery.



*A white faced heron uses the perch provided over the Rance's pond, Otatara.*

# The Aussie Outback

In June Ron & I headed to Oz for a road trip that took us from Sydney to Adelaide around the deserts north of there and then back to Brisbane to visit family before flying home. 7,000 kms of driving – we'll have to plant another pine plantation to cover those emissions!

We ventured north from Adelaide in a 4wd camper to explore the wonders of the dry Aussie wilderness. We had heard of the amazing Simpson Desert and decided we'd like to go there, do that. Ten days took us up through the Flinders Ranges, up the Strezlecki Track to Innaminka (permanent population – 6), across to Birdsville (altitude 50m, amazing museum), a quick sortie over a dozen sandhills in the Simpson Desert, back down the Birdsville Track with a flight over Lake Eyre (only 40% full at that stage and rapidly retreating back to a salt bed).

The drive through the Flinders Ranges was incredible – magnificent and ancient rock formations – a geologists dream. For wildlife, this is the best kangaroo spotting country we've seen in our Oz travels. They were literally abounding. Mostly the red kangaroo with narry a mind of the tourists driving by. Our other treat was a solitary viewing of the rare yellow footed wallaby which is found on scree slopes in the Brachina Gorge. We had decided we had missed our chance of spotting any, when Ron noticed one sitting on a rock about 100m from the road like a stuffed dummy. Unless it was robotic, we think it was real as we did see it move slightly – I guess a bit like many visitors must wonder about our tuatara at the Southland Museum.



*Brown falcon*

For birdlife, the notable sightings were numerous types of eagles/falcon/kites. Our delight was to see the wedge tailed eagle, with a wing span of 2.8m – an impressive bird. The sparrow hawk or Nankeen Kestrel you would see hovering in the air, pale in colour with pinkish tones from the underneath.

The camping ground at Birdsville was beside a lagoon. A paddle in a canoe first thing in the morning revealed 4 different kinds of heron – the great egret (or white heron as we know it), the white faced heron ( another one we know ), the white necked heron (which made the latter look very much a baby) and a juvenile Nankeen night heron.

Pelicans were everywhere there was water. A long corrugated drive into Coongie Lakes from Innaminka revealed a large body of water in the midst of desert. Several pelicans were happily bobbing around on the murky waters and crows and falcons roosted in the gums emerging from the sand. Just before reaching the main lake there was a reedy wetland area where we saw a flock of grey teal – the only ducks in sight.

Waterfowl were one of our main interests, however they were in the minority. A manmade lake just south of Forbes, called Gum Swamp, had to be checked out on our way to Adelaide. Discovered on a previous trip, when it had 8 different species of ducks in residence, it was a must see this trip too. Only grey teal, pinkeared duck (zebra duck), hard heads (or white eyes) and black duck ( like our grey duck) to be seen this time.

A visit to Banrock Station near Mildura was another must do. Having heard about the wetlands here, privately owned and with Ramsar designation, we were interested to check it out. Banrock lies just south of the Murray River, however sadly 3 years of drought meant these wetlands had very little water. Of the potentially 100 acres open water wetland there remained about 1 acre. However the fascinating thing here was the presence of yellow billed spoonbills, looking like an anaemic relation to the royal spoonbill that's doing so well here in Southland.

Of parrots – several flocks of sulfur crested cockatoo were seen on the trip to Adelaide – gregarious birds in flocks of a hundred plus, generally scavenging seeds (was it?) from the ground. Corellas, again white but slightly smaller than the latter without the yellow crest, also liked to gather together with a great chatter going on at dusk in the gums by the Cooper River at Innaminka.

Gallahs were common – with their pink underside and grey tops, you would often see flocks flying along by the road. Probably the most widespread of the birds we were seeing.

Road kill is something that fascinates us. Just as we left Sydney Ron spied a dead fox on the side of the road. It was not until we were returning north again that we saw another. It seems they are more common on the eastern side.



*Road kill - better dead than alive. Thank goodness we don't have foxes in NZ!*

A great trip. Highly recommended that you join all those Aussie grey nomads to explore that wonderful country over the ditch.

**Gay Munro**

## Arawai Kākāriki Wetland Restoration Programme – Awarua/Waituna

Awarua/Waituna Wetlands continues to be recognised for its unique treasures with ongoing funding from the Arawai Kākāriki programme.



Waituna is NZ's stronghold for the threatened species, giant kokopu.

Since its inception in 2007 the Arawai Kākāriki funding has enabled the Department of Conservation to undertake several baseline monitoring programmes. These have included work on pest species, native fish, vegetation mapping and hydrology mapping. Monitoring of native fish populations will continue this summer.

Arawai Kākāriki has a strong focus on community involvement and continues to support the Awarua/Waituna Advisory Group with sponsorship funding of \$80,000 for community initiatives. To further develop community involvement in the wetland the Department of Conservation has employed a dedicated Awarua/Waituna Community Relations Ranger and a partnership has been developed with Environment Southland resulting in the joint funding of a Waituna Catchment Land Sustainability Officer.

The Awarua/Waituna wetland complex is a fragile environment making recreation in the area challenging. Development of a 4.8km walking track is underway. Once completed walkers will experience a variety of unique habitats many of which have been inaccessible in the past. The track is expected to be completed by late November 2009.

Further information on the Arawai Kākāriki programme is available online at: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

**Polly Bulling**



This will be the longest wetland trail in New Zealand.

## Waituna World Wetlands Day Celebration

### Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2010 – 10.00am to 3.00pm

**Waituna Landcare Group** and the **Department of Conservation**  
are holding a celebration at **Waituna Lagoon.**

*The Waituna Scientific Reserve was the first of New Zealand's wetlands to be recognised internationally as a Ramsar site in 1987. More recently in 2007 the Ramsar designation has been extended to make it the largest Ramsar site in New Zealand – something for Southland to be proud of!*

10.00am - **Guided walks** around the new 4.8km **Waghorn Track** on the hour.

12noon to 2.00pm - **Wild Foods Festival** \$10 per adult. Children free.

1.00pm to 3.00pm - **Helicopter rides** over the Waituna Wetlands. Cost to be advised.

In conjunction with this day a **Photo Competition** will be held.

Theme: Waituna Wonderland      Sections: Primary, Secondary and Adult.

Watch out in the January papers for further details

or contact Gay Munro, [g.munro@woosh.co.nz](mailto:g.munro@woosh.co.nz) or Polly Bulling, [pbulling@doc.govt.nz](mailto:pbulling@doc.govt.nz).

*For further details on Ramsar check out [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org)*

**Southland Branch Committee**

**Craig Carson (2130732)**

**Rob and Peggy Snoep (2169103)**

**Christine Henderson, Lumsden (03 2487605)**

**Arthur Williams (2168985)**

**Barbara Carson (2130732)**

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**Neill Robertson, Manapouri (03 2499595)**

**Marie Lockie (2178720)**

**Ruth Dalley, Te Anau (03 2496664)**

**Jenny Campbell, Mossburn (03 2486398)**

**Chris and Brian Rance (2131161)**

**Margaret Hopkins, Stewart Island (03**

**Christine McKenzie, Fortrose (03 2469526)**

**Forest and Bird Addresses:**

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[www.forest-bird.org.nz](http://www.forest-bird.org.nz)



**Newsletter  
September 2009**

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