



Forest & Bird

GIVING NATURE A VOICE

Upper Hutt Branch Newsletter

April/May/June 2011

PO Box 40 875 Upper Hutt

April Meeting - the AGM!!! Reminder of new venue - Hapai Club

'New People for a New Year'

Date: Wednesday 27th April 2011

Time: 7.30 pm

Place: Hapai Club 879-881 Fergusson Dr
Upper Hutt

Topic & Speaker: Rod Boys - Upper Hutt City
Council's BRAND NEW Sustainability
Officer

He has conducted research of sustainable
treatment processes for waste and is
also a voluntary co-ordinator for
Conscious Consumers.

- This is your opportunity to sow some
fertile conservation seeds!

May Meeting

Date: Wednesday 25th May 2011

Time: 7.30 pm

Place: Hapai Club 879-881 Fergusson Dr
Upper Hutt

Speaker: Paul Swain - Greater Wellington
Regional Council

Topic: This will be a general question and
answer forum with a focus on water in
our region. There may also be some
discussion of the potential
amalgamation of Councils

We would really like to give Paul a
list of questions prior to the meeting
so that he can come to the meeting
prepared. It would be great if
members could please think of
something you would like asked and
send your question/s to Roz Brown or
one of the committee members.
Thanks



June Meeting

Date: Wednesday 22nd June 2011

Time: 7.30 pm

Place: Hapai Club 879-881 Fergusson Dr
Upper Hutt

Speaker: Simon Maud - Hutt City Rotary

Topic: Establishment of the Hutt River Trail

Simon was the prime mover and shaker for this
project and is very knowledgeable and
committed to the river.

From The Chair A Time For Spades and Pens!

At this time of year, many of us are standing with a pen in one hand and a spade in the other! I'm anticipating that some will be wielding one more than the other and, in some regards, I think the ones with the spades may have the easier job. For while we're starting to get into this year's planting season, with ~5,000 plants at the Branch nursery eager to get in the ground, we're also well into a period of local and regional planning. Later this year, we exercise our voice on who sits in the Beehive and makes decisions on what's best for our environment, our threatened flora and fauna and the wild places they live in, at a national level. Seriously, this is a time for all members to speak up and be the Voice for Nature.

The Upper Hutt City Council is currently seeking community feedback on two consultation documents, the 2011/12 Annual Plan and the 2012/22 Long Term Plan. Both of these need the community to advocate for environmental protection, conservation of threatened habitats and enhancement of the environmental habitats that the residents of Upper Hutt should be demanding of their city. This is a fight for money - let's be right upfront about that! The Council is proposing to [yet again] defer the habitat improvement study (~\$96K) for reasons of "the economic climate" while prioritising improvements to Maidstone Park at a cost of \$3.8M. I know what's best in the long-term interests of Upper Hutt and the legacy I'd like to leave my children. This work has the word "defer" permanently branded on it. I also brand it with the byline a "Decade of Delay"! How long do we have to wait for our city leaders to take the district-wide protection of our indigenous habitats seriously? We've already seen a swell of public movement and protest at the state of the Hutt River and the constant cycle of taming and abuse we've subjected it to over countless years. It's time to speak out.

Similarly, the Council is also promising to complete work on notable trees and changes to tree protection rules - for all those who have contacted F&B frustrated at the loss of trees and the lack of protection, now is the time to make your voices heard; the Council has dragged this work out over an inexorably long time.

Greater Wellington is also consulting on the Regional Plan at present.

This is an opportunity for us to ensure that voices for the environment and conservation to be heard regionally; again, it will be a fight for money. I urge you to take an interest in these matters, write a submission, speak at the hearings, and pressure Paul Swain, our regional councillor, on those matters that are important to the objects of this Society.

This month, the Branch is also doing some planning for its future as we hold our AGM, elect a new committee and look back on what we've achieved over the past year. I invite all members, especially those new to Upper Hutt Branch, to join us at the Hapai Club on the evening of 27 April to share those achievements.

It's likely that we'll be all "consulted out" over the next few months.

Unfortunately, however, if we do nothing to advocate for what we want, we might get nothing in return. Don't leave it to others, hoping that they will save the environment for you - be the Voice for Nature in your own communities. Our natural environments, those places we cherish as part of our natural history and the plants and animals that live in them, will be the better for it.

Barry Wards, Chairperson & National President

The Passing of a Piece of Forest Tom Goudswaard

The Upper Hutt Branch would like to acknowledge the recent passing of Tom Goudswaard. He was a longtime hard working member who also represented the Branch on the Pauatahanui Inlet project. He will be missed Our sympathies to the family.

Friends of the Hutt River (FOTHR)

In recent weeks you may have noticed letters and articles in the Leader about the Hutt River. The Greater Wellington Regional Council has applied to itself to take more water from the Hutt River for three years while strengthening and enlarging work is undertaken at the Te Marua storage lakes.

The summer flow in the river at the present rate of water extraction already leaves the river with insufficient flow for it to remain free of toxic algae in the summer. E-coli levels at certain parts of the river climb beyond accepted levels as well.

If the consent is approved, this will reduce the water flow by ONE THIRD from its current level!

The river has value as a resource beyond taking water for the Greater Wellington Region. It is valued by many people for recreation and for its beauty. People want to walk, exercise their dogs, swim, raft, ride, fish, paint and create sculptures, picnic and have fun by the river. Kayaking is no longer possible as the flow is already too low.

A group of caring Hutt Valley people were so concerned about the GWRC's application to take more water that they got together and held two public meetings, one in Lower Hutt and the following week one in Upper Hutt, to see if

the community felt the same way. They did. Forty people attended the Lower Hutt meeting and sixty came to the meeting at the Upper Hutt Public Library. The people attending came from a wide range of interests. Out of these two meetings a Care Group has been formed.

There are other Care Groups in the Region, Friends of the Otaki River, Friends of the Waikanae River, Friends of the Owhiro Stream. Their support and guidance will be useful to FOTHR as it gets underway.

One of the strengths of FOTHR is that it has brought together several diverse organisations. There are people from Forest and Bird as well as Fish and Game, Rotary, Sustainable Towns and simply private caring individuals. There is a handy acronym TEAM Together Everyone Achieves More that is nevertheless true. The combined voices of organisations carry more weight and make politicians take notice.

A number of individuals and organisations have put submissions in to GWRC about the application for water removal. FOTHR will co-ordinate with those people wishing to speak to their submissions so that the same message is clearly expressed. It will also work on media releases.

What can you do?

It is important that the river stays a focus for everybody even during the winter. A good way to do this is to write a Letter to the Editor of your local paper. These letters can highlight positive aspects of your interactions with the river. And they can question what Upper Hutt City Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council are doing.

You can also come to our next three Branch Meetings where the speakers will have information and be available for questions about the Hutt River and its catchment area.

To join, please contact Pat van Berkel
Tel: 528 8072

Saving New Zealand's Long Finned Eel

Upper Hutt Branch member Lynne McLellan recently spent a special day at Mt Bruce with her grandson Jamie's class from Opaki School. The special occasion was a collaboration between Stephanie Bowman from Shenandoah in Virginia and Forest and Bird and other educational organisations to inform people about New Zealand's long fin eels which are in jeopardy from commercial over fishing.



Stephanie became involved with eels when she realised that eels from her home rivers had already become extinct. She discovered on a trip to New Zealand that our eels were heading down the same path. Stephanie is an artist, author and teacher who is in NZ at her own expense traveling around the country presenting a road show. Children and parents are entertained with an illustrated story, puppets and games followed by a co-operative sewing session on a tapestry to highlight the plight of long fin eels. Jamie's class was the first class in the country to take part.

Other highlights from the day were local kai provided by a parent, paua fritters, water cress, maori potatoes kamo kamo, tawa berries and cat's eyes (a shellfish). Many of the children were intrepid and tried the new experiences. I can say that Tawa berries are delicious. This was followed by feeding the large eels resident at Mt Bruce.



Stephanie's enthusiasm and commitment were much appreciated.

You can go to www.bowmansart.com to find out more. You can also go to F & B's website www.forestandbird.org.nz/saving-our-environment/freshwater-/lifeline-longfins to sign a petition about limiting commercial fishing of this endangered species.

Potting Up Days

These have now come to an end until next spring. ☺ Please contact Sue Miller on ☎ 526-7440 for further information.



The Red Beast!

Thanks to Richard Northmore, we now have a Red Beast (trolley) to provide the brawn. It lifts (with the aid of a bit of foot-pumping), it carts, and it generally takes the hard work out of manoeuvring 25kg bags of potting mix. This takes the "ouch" out of the spine, and keeps the potters feeling a LOT better. The

best looking beast ever.

Richard has also been hand-crafting scoops for potters (in the photo at right) to replace the thinner janola brand.

[Forest and Bird is pleased to report that Richard's operation has been successful and he is now on the mend. ☺]

Mawaihakona Stream



The Barton Street entrance to Trentham Memorial Park is now looking greener and much more highly decorated than it was just a few short weeks ago. The potters and acolytes have added sedges, flaxes and rushes to the new island and surrounding banks.

These plants will help to maintain the health and beauty of the stream.



A working bee was held in the days following, to

mulch around the plants.

Working Bees at Hull's Creek

During the winter months this is the last Saturday morning of the month from 9am to 12pm

April 30th, May 28th, June 25th, July 30th,
August 27th, September 24th

If a working bee is postponed due to bad weather, the following Saturday morning is used as an alternative planting day.

If we have your email address you will receive a reminder about the date and area of the planting site earlier that week.

As our planting area along Hulls Creek extends about 2km, we access the areas from one of four different parking sites depending on which area we are working in on that day.

Please contact Sue Miller on ☎ 526-7440 if you would like any further information.



Forest & Bird Local Branches

F&B Lower Hutt Branch meeting:
Meets 1st Thursday of the month

F&B Wellington Branch Meeting
Meets 3rd Thursday of the month

Kapiti Branch Meeting
Meets 4th Wednesday of the month

Other Groups

Wellington Botanical Society
Meets 3rd Monday of the month 7.30 pm
www.wellingtonbotsoc.wellington.net.nz

Web Watch

Forest and Bird has a great website with heaps of interesting information. It now includes past copies of our newsletter.

www.forestandbird.org.nz

Also check out:

Kiwi Conservation Club

www.kcc.org.nz

NZ Ecological Restoration Network

www.bush.org.nz

NZ Plant Conservation Network

www.nzpcn.org.nz

National Wetland Trust

<http://www.wetlandtrust.org.nz/latestupdates.html>

Newsletter Deadline

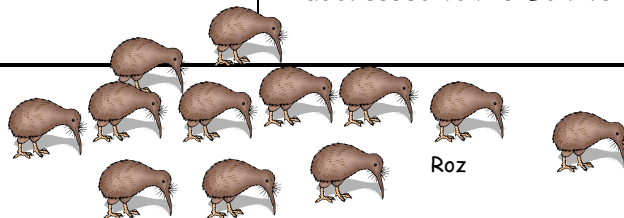
The deadline for the next newsletter is:
30th June 2011.

Please send any items to Lynne or Penny, preferably by email (so we don't have to wear out our fingers typing!) **Thanks ☺**

Editors' Note

Thanks to our contributors this month, Barry Wards, Lynne McLellan, Margaret Craigie

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Forest and Bird as a whole. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. Any errors or omissions are regretted. Correspondence should be addressed to P O Box 40 875 Upper Hutt.

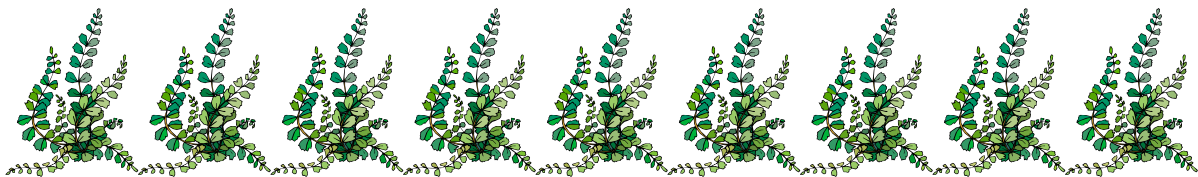


2009 Branch Committee

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Adam Langford	04 973 7302	Committee	
Heather Blissett	04 526 3668	Committee	
Georgie Dobson	04 526 5119	KCC	ralph.georgina@extra.co.nz

Calendar of Events

Month	Date	Time	Event	Contact
April	Wed 27 th	7.30 pm	Upper Hutt Branch AGM Hapai Club	Barry Wards 04 970 4266
May	Wed 25 th	7.30 pm	Upper Hutt Branch Meeting - Hapai Club	Barry Wards 04 970 4266
June	Wed 22 nd	7.30 pm	Upper Hutt Branch Meeting - Hapai Club	Barry Wards 04 970 4266
July	Wed 27 th	7.30 pm	Upper Hutt Branch Meeting - Hapai Club	Barry Wards 04 970 4266
Monthly	The fourth Saturday of each month	9am - 12pm	Working Bee, Hulls Creek	Sue Millar 04 526 7440
Weekly	Next Spring	9am - 11.30am	Potting up, Upper Hutt Depot	Sue Millar 04 526 7440



The February Kaitoke BBQ

Any guesses as to who these four souls might be?

The year started off with a fizzing and a sizzling. Nothing gets achieved on an empty stomach.

