

P.O. Box 1029
New Plymouth 4340.

North Taranaki Branch Newsletter

February to April 2011



Forest & Bird

GIVING NATURE A VOICE

Kiwi Conservation Club members enjoying a picnic



Flooring Xtra have formed a partnership with Forest and Bird nationally to supply funding for native plants. The Flooring Xtra and Forest & Bird partnership aims to plant 20,000 trees throughout NZ annually. Sandra and Murray Feek of the New Plymouth store are now members of our Branch. If you can use their services there will be more native trees to plant. Flooring Xtra and Welbourn School have been helping with the planting along the Te Henui walkway, which is almost complete now.

Please Support Our Sponsor

From the Chair

New Year greetings to all and a warm “Welcome,” to new members. I hope 2011 will be a happy and fulfilling year for you all.

Our year has started very well with someone taking on our KCC Coordinators role – Janica Amore. And we have had another member, Shirley Schofield, join us on the committee to help out with secretarial duties . Thank you Janica and Shirley. With our AGM coming up in April we’ll be hoping that we can have a good sized group on the Committee to continue the momentum of newsletters, speakers, outings, submissions, maintaining our reserves and participating in and supporting community groups and activities which are aligned with our F&B objectives. Please could we have a good attendance at the AGM especially to acknowledge the sterling work done by Murray Duke, Branch Secretary, and Colin Wright, Branch Treasurer Both will be standing down from the Committee and we are very grateful for their help over quite a number of years. The AGM is a good opportunity for the members to meet and greet and discuss ideas for the coming year’s Branch activities . There are increasing opportunities, ideas and reasons for us to be active in ‘ things Forest and Bird’ and the committee are always interested in ideas from members especially if those members are prepared to be part of carrying out the idea.

At our February 17th meeting we have Forest and Bird General Manager , Mike Britton as speaker. I have always found Mike to be an inspirational speaker who gives a clear picture of the F&B organization and the activities we, as a national organization, are involved in so I hope a really goodly number of you will come along to take this opportunity to feel part of a nationwide organization –“doing what we can to preserve the flora, fauna and natural landscapes of NZ” and to meet up with other Branch members.

The Editor of our national magazine has requested an article about our Te Henui Restoration Project for the May issue, so we will be represented there, time permitting!

A sampling of members' and Branch activities

Taranaki Biodiversity Forum

The 4th Taranaki Biodiversity Forum meeting was held in mid December. Any group, organization or individual working for or associated with biodiversity in Taranaki can come along to this forum where there are reports of projects, invited speakers on some relevant aspect and general discussion groups contributing ideas around collaboration and co-operation for Taranaki -wide biodiversity work. The numbers attending these forums are growing . All three local councils now attend, along with TRC and DOC and pretty much all the groups with biodiversity interest; s and increasingly individuals who are doing things. This is building a very collaborative feeling to biodiversity work in Taranaki and we are part of that. Within this group there are also some selected members (including F&B) who are writing a Biodiversity Strategy for Taranaki giving emphasis to co-operation. It is hoped that this strategy will be published sometime this year. Carolyn Brough.

North Taranaki Branch Forest & Bird field trip November 2010.

A group of 10 adults and 2 pre-schoolers enjoyed the hospitality of Jackie and Neil Whitehead on a visit to their dairy farm on Tikorangi Road on 21st November. We walked through two of the larger of their three covenanted bush areas, with much interest from all in their extensive methods of pest control. Two kiwi were seen near one of the areas in 2008. We had our lunch on a hill with views to the coast. A great outing with many thanks to both Jackie and Neil for the thought and care in having us visit. On the way home some of us checked out the work on the trap lines at Te Wairoa. A very good day had by all of us.

Find out more about the Whitehead's work and their property at www.kererukeep.org.nz

Marion Adlam

Forest & Bird Trip to Rangitikei Area

Labour Weekend 22-25 October 2010

Trip report by Lee McCracken

A group of 19 enthusiastic members and supporters banded together for this weekend trip away. The convoy included 6 campervans and 2 cars. Those who attended were Gary & Lee McCracken, Carolyn & John Brough, Marion & Gary Adlam, Megan & Sharad Woodhead, Alan & Jeanette Pepperell, John & Heather Shuker, Val Smith, Barbara Hammonds, Murray Duke, Bill & Rosemary Messenger, Margaret Molloy and Barry Hartley. The weather for the weekend was perfect.

Some of the group left early on Friday afternoon while others waited to leave after work and we met at Scoutlands camp just the other side of Wanganui for our first night. The earlier arrivals enjoyed a happy hour and when all had arrived and introductions were completed, Gary gave us the briefing for the weekend. Scoutlands camp is a great facility, set amidst a picturesque 4.9ha grounds on the edge of Lake Wairitoa. They have caravan and tent sites, cabins, a dormitory, conference room, lounge, and dining/kitchen for seating up to 70 people.

Saturday morning we left Scoutlands at 9am and made our way to McPherson's Bush, covering 9ha and two tracks. We were met here by Rangitikei F&B members Hugh Stewart and Chay Cotter. Hugh suggested the loop to take and members split up into groups as some preferred a slower pace to do more botanizing. A lot of damage from the floods of 2005 could still be seen in areas of the track that were close to the river. The tracks were flat easy walking and we spent an hour and a half enjoying them. We had morning tea and carried on to Sutherlands Bush, 6ha and three tracks. The bush walks here were more challenging in places with steeper climbs for a full circuit walk. A flock of cockatoos was seen flying over the area. After two hours walking and observing we had lunch, all seeking out the little shade that was on offer before heading towards Hunterville where Hugh and Chay left us. Our party was heading now for Taihape and just prior to our destination we took a detour to check out the steep gorges of the Rangitikei River. We then checked into the Taihape River View Holiday Park for two nights.

Sunday morning we were met by Phyllis Leigh and she gave us an introductory talk about the Paengaroa Scenic Reserve. Paengaroa Reserve has a remarkable concentration of rare species and the greatest

concentration of divaricating plants for any similar sized area in NZ, making it a botanical treasure trove. After lunch some members chose to return to the Reserve for further investigation. Others made their way back to Taihape to enjoy other activities on offer. These included a walk in the Mt Stewart Reserve (once covered in Old Man's Beard but now cleared and planted out) to the lookout, Taihape Museum, Heritage town walk, indulging in a much deserved ice cream and just chilling out.

We regrouped back at the campsite for happy hour and all enjoyed the hilarity of Carolyn's "Tweet or Twig" game. All were required to dress/portray a "tweet" (ladies) or a "twig" (men). Correct answers were of course rewarded with chocolate!

Monday morning once again we set off in convoy and stopped by the historic Mangaweka Power Scheme, with a short walk to the dam and photo displays of Mangaweka's history. We enjoyed a cuppa here at the Mangaweka camp on the side of the river, a lovely spot for those wishing to get away from overcrowded campsites. Our next port of call was Pryce's Bush, a 13ha F&B Reserve 25km east of Hunterville. We had lunch and once again met up with Hugh and Chay and we spent a lovely time here with flat easy walking, board walked in places.

Heading for home we stopped in at Turakina and visited Dawne Morton at Turakina Bird Rescue. After an introduction to the recovery program Dawne showed us the many injured birds recovering ready for release. These included hawks, kereru, tui and a lame kiwi awaiting a mate for breeding. She also had pukeko eggs in incubators and showed us a two day old one. A very dedicated lady doing a fantastic job, working endless hours – a real labor of love. If you know anybody who lives close by I'm sure she'd welcome some help



Kiwi Conservation Clubbers had lots of fun at Everett Park in late January. The day was organised by co-ordinator Janica Amore and her husband Quinn and thoroughly enjoyed obviously. There is now an enthusiastic team putting together a programme of events for our KCCers.

News and Views

North Island Meeting

The North Island Meeting was held in mid November at the new Forest and Bird Lodge and I attended. Any number of members from each branch can attend and some branches had quite a number of representatives. The weekend started with informal reports of their activities, from the members of the Branches attending. There were an amazing variety of activities and some very innovative ideas. To me it really reinforced the enormous hours and energy F&B people are putting into “ doing what we can” It was really hard to remember all the ideas that appealed and the offers made of resources from Branches' work. I'm going to suggest to the organizers that in future each branch produces a one page summary sheet that can be passed out to others with all the good ideas and activities and knowledge of places.

On Saturday morning Mark Bellingham, North Island Conservation manager talked about NI conservation priorities then Deputy President Andrew Cutler led the group through the next stage of forming a society strategy and asked those present to refine ideas in buzz groups. By now the Executive will be well down the track of writing the F&B Strategy which will give focus to the society work for the next few years.

Other really interesting presentations were made by Jon Wenham (the construction of Ruapehu lodge), Mike Britton (our international connections), Kevin Hackwell (Land and Water Forum & the Mackenzie High Country), Aalbert Rebergen (Wairarapa river habitat work), Alan Fleming (Kaimai Restoration Project) and Mark Bellingham (attempts to save the **fairy terns** of Northland.) All of these were most interesting and once again I'd really like to have some record of these presentations to present to our members at meetings.

Saturday afternoon there was a tramp though I didn't go and after dinner we watched a DVD called Pale Male – the story of how wild red eagles established themselves in New York city. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

The North Island Meeting is an excellent opportunity to share with other Branches and network. It's held every year and is open to any member to attend. Keep that in mind for next November when I think the venue will be Hawkes

Bay. – Carolyn

Variable oystercatchers
in Northland.



For those of you who
Barclay you might like
received a very nice
family thanking us for

sympathy at her passing and saying how much she had enjoyed her Forest and Bird outings and activities over the years of her membership.

knew Raeburne
to know we
card from her
our message of

Te Wairoa

I have checked the trap lines through January while the Conservation Corps have had their holidays. The great news is that we are not catching much. The first run in January caught 2 hedgehogs and 1 rat, and 3 weeks later the traps were empty. We have a new group starting with the Conservation Corp in mid February, the TRC will again provide training in the use and maintenance of the rat cafes and stoat traps. Our trap line needs maintenance following the recent strong winds. Some branches, ponga fronds etc have fallen across the line, obscuring it and making access difficult in places. Also young native seedlings need removing to maintain a clear line. If anyone is keen to help with this, please give me (Janica Amooore) a call on 752 0830.

We had a very successful weeding day on the 5 December. A huge thank you to all of you who came and gave a hand removing wandering willie. We filled 2 big wool sacks plus 6 rubbish bags. This has cleaned up a large amount of the wandering willie on the hill. Unfortunately there is still a lot in the swampy areas at the base of the hill. We will look to hold another big weeding day in autumn. If you are otherwise keen to help with weeding give Colin Wright a call 753 2001.

Tom & Don's

There will be a full report in a later newsletter, but Greg Simmonds is keen to help with this reserve, and has donated twenty possum traps. Work continues with trapping and maintaining the plantings and fences.

Forest & Bird Media releases:

Coastline Up For Grabs

Our wilderness coastline is under attack from the government's plans to speed up the development of marine farms. People concerned about protecting our marine environment and coastal views have only until Friday, February 11 to send a submission on the Aquaculture Legislation Amendment Bill (No 3) to Parliament's primary production select committee. The bill, introduced to Parliament in November, will loosen the rules for marine farming and encourage the industry's development through government handouts, while limiting the opportunities for the public to comment on proposals in their area. "We will lose iconic coastal seascapes, clean coastal waters and many special seafloor communities," said Forest & Bird North Island Conservation Manager Mark Bellingham. Forest & Bird supports the development of aquaculture in suitable areas but the proposed legislation lacks necessary environmental protections. Increased nutrients from fish farms can lead to algal blooms, affecting all marine life in a much wider area. "The key issues that haven't been addressed in this bill are identifying areas which should be closed to aquaculture and creating a fair process that allows the views of communities, environmental groups and coastal users to be heard," Dr Bellingham said. Marine farms need to be excluded from areas with significant marine and coastal ecosystems, marine mammal feeding and migration areas, significant coastal scenery and important recreational waters. Government grants to industry should be matched by funding to address the concerns of recreational, environmental and community groups. More opportunity must be given to the public to comment on marine farming proposals to ensure they are sustainable and environmentally friendly.

First Kokako Chicks Hatch

North Island kokako chicks have hatched in the Ark in the Park open sanctuary – the first time the threatened birds have bred in Auckland’s Waitakere Ranges for 80 years.

The kokako reintroduction has been a close collaboration between Forest & Bird, the Auckland Council and West Auckland iwi, Te Kawerau a Maki, at the Ark, which is 20 minutes’ drive from central Auckland at the Cascades Kauri Park, near Swanson. The parent birds, named Maurice and Kowhai by workers and volunteers at the Ark, were transferred from Pureora Forest in the King Country in September last year.

They had been a close couple for nine weeks before the nest was discovered on November 23 by Forest & Bird field staff. The next challenge is to keep predators away from the chicks until they fledge in about four weeks.

Pest control is carried out throughout the 2,300 hectare sanctuary and volunteers have intensified trapping efforts around the nest. Stoats, rats and cats are likely to be the major threat to the hatched chicks. Forest & Bird staff and volunteers have also been searching for any other nests built by the 22 kokako that have been transferred into the Ark. The first six kokako were transferred to the Ark from the King Country in 2009 and this year 14 more came from the King Country and two from Tiritiri Matangi island in the Hauraki Gulf.

The Ark in the Park sanctuary aims to restore some of the lost diversity of the forest and wildlife in the Waitakere Ranges. Possum control has allowed forest vegetation to recover and intensive control of rats, stoats and wild cats has enabled work to restore some of the bird life. Among other species reintroduced to the Ark are whitehead, North Island robin, and hihi (stitch bird). This has been achieved with Forest and Bird volunteers putting in more than 8,000 hours a year managing biodiversity in the Ark in the Park project area.

Fur Seal Disaster

Forest & Bird is disgusted and disappointed by news that 23 fur seals have been found clubbed to death at the popular tourist viewing spot at Ohau Point near Kaikoura. New Zealand fur seals are a threatened species, protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. They were previously almost wiped out by commercial sealing and have now only recovered in a fraction of their former range. The Ohau Point Fur Seal colony is one of Kaikoura’s leading tourist attractions, where people can safely experience wildlife from the roadside. Tourism contributes heavily to the Kaikoura economy. Forest & Bird is supporting Department of Conservation pleas for anyone with information about these cowardly attacks, to come forward.

Contact: Kirstie Knowles, Forest & Bird Marine Conservation Advocate, 04 801 2210 or 021 426 984

New Zealanders Urged To Support Wild Mohikini

Forest & Bird today launched a campaign to give New Zealanders the chance to urge Meridian Energy to withdraw its proposal to build an 85-metre-high dam on the pristine Mokihinui River on the West Coast. Forest & Bird is asking New Zealanders to send a Forest & Bird e-card to publicly-owned Meridian, asking the company to live up to its stated environmentally-friendly ideals by leaving the Mokihinui alone. (For those of you with e-mail, I have sent you a copy of this card separate to the newsletter-Dawn.) A giant-sized postcard was delivered today by Forest & Bird representatives to Meridian’s Wellington head office to kick off the campaign. (See photo page 8).The public can send their message via the Forest & Bird website or Facebook page.



Forest & Bird was joined by MPs, including Chris Hipkins, Peter Dunne and Kevin Hague, and representatives of organisations representing kayakers, rafters and trampers, who also want the river to remain in its natural state. “We are asking Meridian to do the right thing and enhance its reputation as a generator of renewable energy by leaving this non-renewable river in its wild state,” Forest & Bird General Manager Mike Britton said. **“This e-card campaign is an opportunity for New Zealanders to join with us in showing Meridian how much this beautiful river means to us.”** Forest & Bird Conservation Advocate Quentin Duthie said: “Destructive dams are old technology and are no longer acceptable on our irreplaceable wild rivers.” Meridian’s proposed dam would create a 14-kilometre-long reservoir covering 330 hectares of rainforest and riverbed along the Mokihinui River gorge in New Zealand’s largest ever drowning of conservation land by a hydro project. Until recently Meridian was the primary sponsor of Project Crimson, a programme to protect and regenerate rata and pohutukawa throughout New Zealand. Along the Mokihinui there is a profusion of rata that would be submerged by the hydro lake. The dam would threaten 16 endangered bird species, including the blue duck or whio, as well as at least two unique species of giant land snails and the critically endangered long-tailed bat. A dam would disrupt the breeding migration of an estimated quarter of a million endangered longfin eels and destroy important habitat for other native fish, including the giant and short-jawed kokopu. Forest & Bird, the Department of Conservation and others are appealing the resource consent Meridian received last year. But the company also requires the permission of DOC as landowner to drown public conservation land, or to privatise the gorge by swapping it for other land. Documents obtained under the Official Information Act have revealed that DOC intended to decline Meridian. After receiving the draft responses from DOC, the company withdrew its applications but it remains committed to the dam and presumably intends to reapply.

Contact: Quentin Duthie, Conservation Advocate, 021 558 215

Programme of Branch Activities February, March and April 2011

Thursday February 17th: Community House 7:30pm

Speaker: Mike Britton, Forest and Bird General Manager (see Carolyn's note in From the Chair) Your chance to meet Mike, ask questions and maybe put some of your views. Aalbert Rebergen, F&B Field Officer, will also be at the meeting so we have a double dose from Central Office! A great chance to find out about all the national priorities and campaigns. **We're hoping for a very good attendance for this evening.** (Carolyn)

February 18th to 20th 2011: Branch Trip to Ruapehu Lodge: Our branch is going to the new Ruapehu Lodge for the weekend 18-20 Feb 2011. The lodge is 800 metres from the Chateau Hotel on the lower slopes of Mt Ruapehu and is the perfect base to explore the Tongariro National Park and the Whakapapa ski field, or simply to enjoy the surrounding native beech forest. (cover photo) Approximately \$60 for 2 nights' accommodation plus food and travel. Contact Caroline Symons 75 7 5867 or 0274 490 013 if interested in joining in. Non-members welcome.

Seaweek :27 February – 6 March

A programme of events is being finalized among a number of community groups. DOC/Mike Tapp co-ordinate much of the community programme items. Watch the media for the final programme nearer the time. Some events already decided are -

Saturday 26th Feb: DOC Paraninihi /Whitecliffs walk

Sunday 27th Feb: Walkway Wonders trail- Community groups displays on the walkway 11am-2pm. Our branch would like to have a sea-themed display and promote ourselves at this event. Any helpers? Contact Carolyn 7582813

Friday 4th Mar: Blue Ocean Party 5pm-midnight, Inglewood. Music, food, fun for kids. Fundraiser for ocean care groups work.

Saturday 5th Mar: Waitara Beach cleanup – can we have a F&B group in support of this?

Sunday 6th Mar: Children's Day, The Landing – fun for children and some sea themed activities.

Our KCC group is also looking to arrange an outing to Kawaroa rock pools for Seaweek.

Saturday 19th March: Branch Fieldtrip to Everett Park – “Following the Glyn Church trail”
Recently Daily News gardening columnist, Glyn Church has written of native plants that can be

seen in Everett Park so with list in hand we'll see how many we can find. Meet at Rogan St car park to share transport at 1pm (\$4) or 1:30pm at the entrance to the park. Register interest with Carolyn 7582813/ csbrough@xtra.co.nz

Thursday April 28th :Community House 7:30pm;

Branch AGM

followed by speaker Pat Greenfield who will speak and show photographs on the coastal environment, mainly the Tongaporutu area. Pat has been compiling meticulous and detailed observations and amazing photographs of the coastal area for over 10 yrs and has developed real insights as to its changing nature. She has also suggested she could lead an outing to the area later in the year to coincide with nesting season.

We need a good attendance for our AGM. You will not be pressed into 'service' but for older and newer members it will be a chance to meet up with new faces and put faces to names. We will also be acknowledging the years of service that both Murray Duke , the Secretary and Colin Wright the Treasurer have given as both are standing down from the Committee this year. It would be nice to have a goodly number of members there to thank them for their work.

Nominations (with seconder) for the Committee and specific positions can be sent to the Secretary at any time. (See form below). We will circulate a list, of those received , with the reminder notice prior to the AGM . If you think you might be interested in helping out by joining the committee please don't feel shy about letting any of the present committee know – "many hands make light work."

Nomination form for North Taranaki Branch of Forest & Bird Society

I would like to nominate..... (nominee) for the position of
..... on the committee of the North Taranaki Branch of
Royal Forest & Bird Society.

Signed: (nominator)

Signed:.....(seconder)

Signed:.....(nominee)

Please complete and post/give to secretary (P.O.Box 1029, New Plymouth 4340).

Branch Committee and Contacts

Chairman:	Carolyn Brough	758 2813
Secretary:	Murray Duke	751 2759
Treasurer:	Colin Wright	753 2001
Membership		
Communications :	Marion Adlam	753 5139
Newsletter Editor:	Dawn Mills	758 3252 rjmills@clear.net.nz (for copy)
	Gary McCracken	753 9196
	Caroline Symmans	757 5867
KCC Co-ordinator :	Janica Amoore	752 0830

For Volunteering at Tom and Don's Bush

Gary McCracken 753 9196

For volunteering at Te Wairoa

Janica Amoore 752 0830

Website co-coordinator volunteer desperately needed! Contact Carolyn if interested.

New Sub Antarctic Protection

Forest & Bird today welcomed the government's decision to expand marine reserves and marine protected areas around New Zealand's Sub-Antarctic islands. Conservation Minister Kate Wilkinson announced that a marine reserve would be created covering the entire 12-nautical mile territorial seas around Antipodes Island. Of the territorial waters around the Bounty Islands, 58 percent will be made a marine reserve and Danish seine fishing will be banned on the western side and south east corner of the remaining territorial waters. A marine reserve will cover 39 percent of the territorial waters around Campbell Island and a potential giant crab fishery will be allowed in the remaining area with a review after five years. The only existing marine reserve in New Zealand's sub-Antarctic region is in the territorial waters around the Auckland Islands. "The outcome of 60 percent of the Bounties being put in a marine reserve, with trawling restriction in the remaining area, is a big improvement on the present lack of protection. "The decision not to fully protect the territorial seas around Campbell Island on the basis of a possible crab fishery that does not yet exist is disappointing. We should look at setting up similar forums for setting up marine reserves in other parts of New Zealand," he said.

Contact: Kevin Hackwell, Advocacy Manager, 021 227 8420



More fun at the KCC picnic January 29th



Forest & Bird
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