

Kāpiti-Mana Forest and Bird Newsletter

January 2024

How to save ourselves and biodiversity from climate disruption

Over the last ten years or so, we have heard many ways to save the earth from climate change.

Degrowth – changing our ‘growth-oriented, competitive’ society to a ‘degrowth, supplying needs and wellbeing’ society. Luxury, fashion, designed obsolescence, single use, and exotic foods products may not be produced or available, and not pushed by advertising. Local rather than global would dominate. GDP would not be a measure of economic progress. People would live simpler lives.

A circular economy which reduces the raw materials used to a minimum, keeps the products in use for as long as possible by sharing (e.g. leasing rather than owning) and repairing, then recycling the materials into new products.

A plant rich diet to reduce the huge inefficiencies of eating meat, from land use, degradation of land and waterways, machinery use, fertilizers, transport, even health.

Keeping coal, oil and gas in the ground forcing us to change and conserving those resources that may be needed for changes that we cannot foresee rather than using them wastefully as we do now.

Mass transport - trains and buses that are frequent, reliable, and cheap enough to persuade people not to use their cars.

Conversion of energy sources to electricity and production of electricity from renewable resources – wind farms, solar panels, electric transport, heat

exchangers, magnetic hobs. Gas, coal and oil heating and manufacturing are out. E.g., Labour’s \$90m deal with Fonterra to convert 6 factories to electric.

Conservation - the careful maintenance and upkeep of natural resources (raw materials, soil, water, air, ecosystems, plants, animals, and energy) to prevent them from disappearing.

Protection - 30 by 30 – A worldwide governments initiative to designate 30% of Earth's land and ocean area as protected areas by 2030. NZ has signed this initiative.

Restoration – the actions of individuals and groups to accelerate the recovery of an ecosystem’s health, integrity and sustainability after damage, disturbance or depletion of native species of plants or animals.

In my opinion, no one or all of these will work at the scale needed to avert disastrous events unless the governments act.

Government intervention can work in a variety of ways.

Government deals with the major polluters e.g. Fonterra and NZ steel. Costly for government and seen as major polluting industries’ handouts.

Cross subsidization – penalize high emission and subsidize low and zero emission vehicles, etc. Unpopular and elitist.

Set the rules and watch industry respond. E.g., No importation of

petroleum cars after 2030. Low cost but unpopular.

Legislate the emission's NZ will accept each year and task government agencies to determine how they will achieve the result. Support their decisions with legislation, departmental change (Remember when DoC was formed because NZ Forestry and Lands and Survey were no longer appropriate), and money.

Examples: GW may need to extend its rail reach, frequency and lower its ticket price. Petrol tax may have to include an emissions component. DoC might have to fully protect its stewardship land and vastly extend browsing animal control. Recloaking Papatūānuku (revegetation of 2.1M ha of marginal land) may need government support, or morph to a government agency. Maybe the ministry for transport should include NZ Rail so its focus is not only on roads. The cost of flights within and outside NZ may need an emission component. TVNZ may have to refuse some adverts because they promote high emissions spending. Who knows what else.

I favour the carbon trading scheme but not as it is now. Include every industry including farmers and industries which capture and sequester carbon. Pull down the cap (the amount of emissions allowed). Watch the price of carbon go up and watch industry respond. Let industry's and people's creativity loose on the problem with rewards for the winners. Let industries that don't transition to low emission methods fail. Let the cost fall where it will.

I agree with its critics that the less well-off will be hurt the most but that has, and will, always be the case in the society we have set up. The less well-off will also suffer more from climate disruption. Changes may be needed in social welfare criteria to compensate.

I prefer this method to specific government intervention because people and industry can creatively reduce carbon and it does not discriminate between carbon emitters. All are induced to act.

Some will use degrowth and restrict their carbon activity severely, some will use a circular economy by getting appliances repaired, plant rich diets will save people money, coal, oil and gas will become unaffordable and mining of it will decrease, mass transport will become cheaper and individual transport a luxury, energy use will change to electricity alone and most roofs will have solar, natural resources will be conserved because they will become valuable and the cost of exploiting them will be high, scheduled and marginal land will be protected for their sequestering properties alone and maybe those neglected and unused areas of land along rivers and streams, road and rail, and throughout our communities will be restored into carbon sequestering assets when the price of the carbon they sequester is worth the work.

Carbon trading may not be the best method but in our society financial incentives drive what happens. All the methods above are valid methods of reducing carbon. We need all of them and more. We are not in a situation where we can pick and choose. It's a "Yes and" situation, not a "This not that" one. The driver must be money and the prime decision makers must be the government. Any other course is irresponsible and reckless governance of the situation where the losses to humanity and biodiversity are so large.

It's only my opinion.

Russell

Causing Royal Havoc!

By Pene Burton Bell

On a walk in our area recently, I noticed this very pretty purple flowering plant in a wetland. Hmm, I thought, I bet it's not native, so I took a photo of it, loaded this onto iNaturalist and with the help of the app, identified it as *Lythrum salicaria* (sometimes sold as *L. Virgata*) commonly called Purple Loosestrife. A very appropriate name.



It is considered one of the most invasive plants in the world and causes huge problems throughout North America. It is a summer flowering exotic with lance-shaped leaves which can grow over two metres tall, with flower spikes of about 20cm long. These come loaded with thousands of tiny seeds which disperse easily mainly by water but sheep love to graze on it and it can get caught in their wool. Illegal sharing of seeds or cuttings may well also be involved. It grows in and next to wetlands, ditches, even on damp pasture land and spreads like crazy, displacing other plants including natives. Raupō is one victim, there are

many others. Infestations can be so dense as to cause flooding due to wetland blockages. The largest area of purple loosestrife in New Zealand is on and around Lake Horowhenua. Due to the difficulty controlling this outbreak, in 2021 Horizons Regional Council approached Landcare Research to investigate options for biocontrols and they have prepared applications to introduce two beetles and a weevil for this purpose (not yet approved). If you think you have found Purple Loosestrife, you must report it to Greater Wellington's pest plant team within 10 working days - On 0800 496 734 or at pest.plants@gw.govt.nz. They will help landowners to deal with outbreaks. I was very impressed that this team picked up on my iNaturalist observation, thanked me for reporting it, and went to the site to deal with the problem that same day! Three cheers from me!

You can find out more about this pest here: <https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2021/11/Purple-loosestrife.pdf>,

<https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/publications/weed-biocontrol/weed-biocontrol-articles/its-time-to-take-on-purple-loosestrife/>,

<https://www.weedbusters.org.nz/what-are-weeds/weed-list/purple-loosestrife/>



Pic: © Liz West: Wikimedia Commons

Have your say

Vision Kāpiti

Read Councillors 10 priorities and consider adding your ideas

<https://haveyoursay.kapiticoast.govt.nz/vision-for-kapiti>

Porirua City Council Long Term Plan

As a warm up to consultation in March, PCC is inviting people to subscribe so they get 'project updates'. Changes in government approach to three waters will mean a lot of extra unexpected cost for council which will have to fund that (along with everything else - climate change/housing etc.) somehow and this will be particularly difficult in a Cost of Living Crisis... we need to ensure our environment doesn't become the victim of cuts.

You can read more and sign up to be notified here: <https://haveyoursay.poriruacity.govt.nz/porirua-city-2024-2034-long-term-plan>

Mangaone Walkway Picnic Walk*

One of the great things about this walk is that you can do it when it's too hot for anything else, or even in the rain as it's mainly under tree cover.

The whole Mangaone Walkway is 6km, but about half of it is currently out of bounds due to fallen trees, and even when it's open it requires vehicles at each end, so this is the shorter version, but still very worthwhile.

Getting there: From Waikanae town, cross the railway line onto Elizabeth Street, which becomes Reikorangi Road, and continue about 5km. Turn left onto Ngatiawa Road (the first sealed road left after leaving Waikanae). After 1km turn left onto Mangaone South Road and follow this 5km to the road end (521-523 Mangaone South Road) where the walk begins. Take care, this section is of road is narrow in places with blind

Fire Alerts in Regional Parks

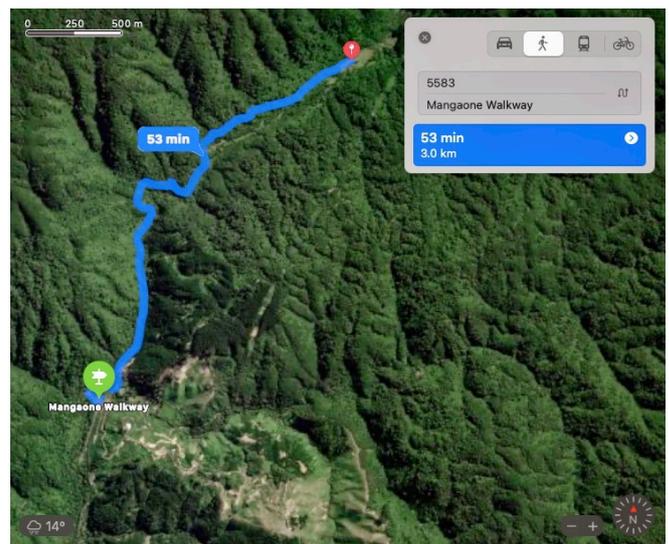
Due to the very dry weather we have been having, and the recent fire in Whitireia Park (which is under investigation), Greater Wellington has restricted access to reduce fire danger. They are encouraging the public to only use Te Onepoto Loop Track in Whitireia Park, the Waihora Loop and Māra Road tracks in West Belmont in the morning. They also encourage park users to always be aware of where their nearest exits are when they are in a park. If you see a fire, as always, please call 111 so help can get there as soon as possible.

When the weather is this hot and dry, it is wise to if/when to use mechanical equipment such as lawnmowers - try to limit it to the cool of the day.

Did you know you can see back copies of our newsletter at the bottom of our webpage?

<https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/branches/kapiti-mana>

corners, a one lane bridge and rural traffic.



Facilities: There is a toilet next to the car park but no other facilities on the track, and bring your own water etc. Keep to the track as parts of the land is privately owned. More info here:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/wellington-kapiti/places/waikanae-area/things-to-do/mangaone-walkway/>

Your first challenge to start the walk is a swing bridge over the Waikanae River (this track follows above the River to close to its source).

After a short walk up a gravel road turn left onto the track where signposted (if you go right, the track continues to Ōtaki Forks and is part of Te Araroa Trail). Here you enter Kaitawa Scenic Reserve (not to be confused with the Reserve in Paraparaumu). This section has quite a few roots and can be a bit damp but it is short, and then you reach the wooden bridge over the Waikanae River. You can swim just after you cross the wooden bridge, or continue on the old bush tramway which used to be called the Reikorangi Track. This section will give you a tantalising feel for the forest on the rest of the walk. Our branch played a role in ensuring the forest of this area was not unduly affected by overzealous trimming power line installers in the mid-70's. On walks

here we have heard and seen whiteheads, riflemen, tomtit and long tailed cuckoo amongst other more common birds, and there are rimu, hīnau, miro and many other botanical treasures to observe. All the while you can hear the river gurgling below. There are a couple of stream crossings but usually you can keep your feet dry, and the track is narrow in places. After 3km (about an hour) you will reach the end of Kaitawa Scenic Reserve at a gate onto an open area of private land. The track is officially closed from here, but if you go through the gate and turn immediately right and follow the track down to the river. There's a 2m descent that's a little tricky but doable, taken carefully. Once on the flat, choose your spot for a picnic, look for eels, apply sunscreen, have a swim and admire the rimu/tawa forest on the opposite bank. The track is about 3km and takes about 1 hour each way, without spending time at the picnic spot. Dogs are allowed on leads only. It is considered easy by DOC.

**As we've had no other contributions, this will be the last of our local walks series (but we'd still welcome contributions*

Kāpiti Weekend Volunteering Opportunities

Some of our members have baches in Kāpiti or may ultimately be thinking of retiring up this way. If so, perhaps you'd like to get to know some locals by volunteering here on the weekend.

Here are five options, I'm sure there are others too.

- Whareroa Farm have monthly working bees on the 1st Sunday of the month 9-12
- QEP Repo Restoration Group work in Two Paddocks wetland in Queen Elizabeth Park on the 2nd Sunday from 9:30
- Waikakariki Weedwhackers work on an area just south of the

railway crossing in Paekakariki on the 2nd Sunday from 9am (family friendly)

- A group work on a wetland off Wharemauku Stream near Ihakara Street on the 3rd Sunday from 1:30pm
- Waikanae Estuary Care Group work on Saturday mornings (I think it's the 2nd Saturday - most recently 13 Jan)

Details of how to get in touch with the organisers are on the Volunteer opportunity sheet at the end of this newsletter (we include it about once a quarter).

Next meeting: 21 February 2024, 7.15 - 9pm

Paul Callister will speak on Lizards in our region

At Waikanae Presbyterian Church, 43 Ngaio Road, Waikanae

Please join us for this interesting talk along with a cuppa

* Bring some coins for the koha and raffle



Banded Dotterel Chick emerging
© Wikimedia Commons (Tom & Wendy)

Your feedback on this newsletter would be most welcome as would contributions to future newsletters.

Russell and Pene

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Kapiti Coast Conservation Volunteering Opportunities

Fieldway Dunes Group (Waikanae), call Susie - 021 549 221

Friends of Waikanae River Monday 9-11.30, call Jo 022 083 1550

Friends of Wharemauku Stream 3rd Sunday 1:30pm, call Sue 027 846 5488

Greendale Reserve (Otaihanga) Meetup Tuesday 9-12, call Chris 04 904 6174

Kaitawa Reserve (Paraparaumu) Meetup Thursdays 9-12, call Tony - 027 5514443

Kāpiti Biodiversity Project, including Queen Elizabeth Park Stream Planting Group: Tuesday 9 – 12, email biodiversity.kapiti@gmail.com

Kāpiti Weekend Wetland Restoration Group (Mackays Crossing, Paekakariki), 2nd Saturdays 9:30-12:30, email jillvissercox@gmail.com

Kotukutuku Ecological Restoration Project (Paraparaumu), call Peter - 021 215 9262

Ngā Uruora Kapiti Project (Paekakariki/Pukerua Bay) Tuesday mornings & 2nd Sundays from 9, email kapitibush@gmail.com

Ngā Manu Nature Reserve (Waikanae) Monday afternoons and plenty of other opportunities. Check out <https://ngamanu.org.nz/get-involved/>

Nikau Valley Restoration Society, call Wayne 022 395 5867

Paraparaumu Beach Restoration. Check out their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100093383598502>

Predator Free Paekākāriki. Email: predatorfreepaekakariki@gmail.com

Queen Elizabeth Park Restoration Group (Mackays Crossing, Paekakariki) Wednesday 9-12. Email pburtonbell@gmail.com

Tikotu Stream (Paraparaumu). Sunday, monthly. Call Rose 027 756 2713

Waikanae Estuary Care Group (Paraparaumu Beach/Waikanae Beach) Saturday and Thursday mornings. Check out <https://sites.google.com/view/waikanaeestuary/home>

Waikanae River Trappers. Contact Alison 027 452 7425

Waikākāriki Weed Whackers (Paekakariki). Email kapitibush@gmail.com or call Andy 027 914 6598

Weggery Restoration Group (Waikanae). Call Julian 022 090 3868

Whareroa Guardians (Mackays Crossing, Paekakariki) 1st Sundays 9-12, more during planting season, email whareroa.guardians@gmail.com

Porirua Conservation Volunteering Opportunities

Friends of Battle Hill, email battlehillranger@gw.govt.nz

Friends of Mana Island, email fomi@manaisland.org.nz

Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet, checkout <https://gopi.org.nz/>

Kahotea Stream Group (Titahi Bay) Quarterly releasing, litter clean up events and winter plantings. Email kahoteastream@gmail.com

Māra Roa (Cannons Creek) Meetup Saturday fortnightly 9:30. Call Sef 04 234 7747

Mexted Stream (Ranui). Call Bill 0276770180

Pauatahanui Reserve (Porirua Harbour). Email pauatahanuireservecommittee@outlook.com

Pest Free Porirua – email pestfreeporirua@gmail.com

Taupō Swamp and Catchment (Plimmerton) email tauposwamp@gmail.com

Whitirea Park Restoration Group (Titahi Bay) Check them out on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1055760224479856>



Forest & Bird

TE REO O TE TAIAO
Giving Nature a Voice

CELEBRATING
100
YEARS 1923-2023

If you think your conservation volunteering group should be included or details need updating, please email kapitimana.branch@forestandbird.org.nz, we'd be pleased to hear from you.