

Forest & Bird North Shore Branch Annual Report May 2017 – April 2018

Officers and Committee (May to April)

Chair: Richard Hursthouse
Deputy Chair: Claire Stevens
Secretary: Jocelyn Sanders
Treasurer: Marion Fraser
Committee: Helene Willis (membership), Anne Denny (Tuff Crater), Philip Moll (Naturespace, photography, dog control), John Brown (kauri protection, Upper Harbour), Elaine Conway (calendar & diary sales), Connor Wallace (on line material), Anne-Elise Smithson, Wendy Callaway, Danny Parker (March 2018), Kerry Read (April 2018)

Christine Ovens

It is with great sadness that we report the sudden death of one of our most dedicated conservationists, Christine Ovens. Christine was a regular attendee of branch meetings, trips and planting days and lately had taken on the role of organiser of speakers for our branch meetings, a role she excelled in. Our hearts go out to Darryl, John and Nola.

Monthly talks

Christine Ovens enjoyed and did a great job of organising interesting talks for our branch meetings. The meet and greet role is shared by committee members with help especially from Nola Ovens. Christine Ball continues the supper roster coordinator role.

John Brown and Joe Greig are continuing the role of native plant of the month while Richard Hursthouse continues the weed of the month. We are experimenting with a few changes of format for our meetings including some group discussion sessions.

May 2017	AGM & Climate Change – North Shore Climate Action Group
June	Forest & Bird Youth
July	David Wharton, the Extremophiles
August	Kevin Hague – CEO – Nature in Crisis
September	Election Debate
October	James Brock – Tree Fern ecology
November	John Stewart – Pycrofts Petrel
December	Karen Field – snapper (unable to talk due to hall inaccessible)
February 2017	Sandra Murray – Waste
March	Richard Jakob-Hoff - Kakapo
April	Laura Torre – Our Extraordinary Eels

Field Trips

Trips co-ordinator – Richard Hursthouse

May 2017	Shakespear Park – Jocelyn Sanders
June	no trip
July	no trip
August	Motutapu planting – Jocelyn Sanders
September	Fernglen – Marion Fraser
October	Overnight trip – Piha Tai Haruru lodge – Richard Hursthouse
November	Shoal Bay – Philip Moll

February 2018 Geckos – Connor Wallace
March Motuihe – Helene Willis
April Fresh Water Fish – Jocelyn Sanders

Membership

	Members	Financial memberships
April 2018 (numbers)	no figures	1090 (head office changed membership rules with resulting drop in numbers)
April 2017	1478	1167
April 2016	1413	1233
April 2015	1495	1291
April 2014	953	751
April 2013	1179	953
2012	1032	787
2011		735

Our membership secretary is Helene Willis.

We pay for Kaipatiki Project to belong to Forest & Bird.

Newsletters

Rachel Lees-Green has continued to do a great job as volunteer editor of *Habitat*. She has resigned from this role which now needs filling.

Katie Catchpole has continued as our volunteer designer of *Habitat*.

Habitat and the KCC newsletter are sent to all members of the branch and KCC members.

Richard Hursthouse compiles *Habitat Extra*, our monthly email newsletter. This is normally sent to volunteer Ross Arnold who designs the newsletter in mailchimp and sends it to an updated email list of approximately 1000 – a not insignificant role!! Marion Fraser is taking on this role.

In addition we have continued our branch blog which is updated with an article each month linking off *Habitat Extra*.

Habitat printing has been fully sponsored, thanks to Garry Browne of Print Advisor Ltd, Kale Print in Tauranga, and Action Mail who fold our KCC newsletters.

Roslyn Norrie has the role of *Habitat* mailing – we still post out about 250 newsletters but are working on the mailing list to see who can move to email.

Media/Advocacy

Connor Wallace has maintained the content of our web pages, events calendar, and Meet Up sites. We are revising the content of the website. Head office is migrating the website to new software.

Philip Moll continues to update Naturespace, a website for community restoration groups, adding photo-point monitoring photos of Tuff Crater.

We get a box of each issue of the F&B magazine four times per year for distribution to various waiting rooms and café's.

Press releases have resulted in some articles in the local press quoting Forest & Bird, raising our profile.

Finance

Marion Fraser has ably taken on the role of treasurer. Head office is now helping out with managing the accounts.

Elaine Conway, with the support of Jocelyn Sanders, has organised the selling calendars and diaries but with reduced earnings year on year due to the decline in usage of these items.

Strategic Plan

We held a strategic plan review meeting in February jointly with KCC and the Youth team which resulted in some novel changes being suggested. Some of these ideas are being implemented.

Community Displays and Talks

Helene Willis held several more stalls at local markets and events and carried out 2 school visits. Helene manages our sponsorship of KCC memberships for primary schools. We are purchasing a gazebo to help manage these events.

Tuff Crater

Our Tuff Crater Restoration Project continues to attract considerable support from volunteers, funders and Auckland Council.

All eight management units are now under comprehensive weed control. Contractor John Barber has continued to work on the Heath Reserve (MU1), southern headland area (MU2), the area below McBreen/Exmouth Road (MU3), "Willow Flat" area (MU4) on the south-western end including the *Arundo donax* giant reed grass, and "St Peters" (MU5).

We negotiated for the council contractor to take on MU6, 7 and 8 on the north side. A change of contractor to Wildlands mid year has seen them take on this area and an unfortunate increase in the weed presence there. We are working on rectifying this.

Last year we again held three major planting days in June, July and August. In June 1000 plants were moved by numerous trailer loads from Kaipatiki Project the day before and then planted in the areas below Arahia St. In July we moved another 1000 plants in tough conditions from Bayleys Reserve to the Arundo bank and planted these with the help of Canon staff who also provided a great morning tea. In August a further 300 plants including 10 large grade trees were planted in various locations.

The Warehouse Group continue to allow our storage container in their car park.

Volunteer work days have been held monthly on Saturdays;

Anne Denny and Paul Pyper have shared leading the very effective Thursday morning working bees.

Total volunteer hours in 2017 were approximately 1290.

Volunteers continue to monitor a comprehensive rodent pest control programme for the area, with six volunteers managing about 65 bait stations, Timms and DOC 200 traps. Data and monitoring are coordinated by Christine Major. Data shows a consistent low rat presence. We moved somewhat controversially to a pulsing regime at the request of council. We are setting up a network of 5 bait lines in private property around the crater with the help of Jill Ewing.

We received a further \$18500 +gst grant from ASB Community Trust and continue to spend about \$30,000 per annum. We also received free herbicide, 400 plants and equipment from council.

Kate Hursthouse designed a new entry sign to replace the three which are aging and these have been installed. Katie Catchpole has designed a wildlife interpretive sign and Kate Hursthouse is designing a volcanology sign. These will be installed around the crater.

North Harbour Rotary has cleaned and restrained all four macrocarpa seats.

Shoal Bay/Devonport

We continue to monitor the Seapath/Naturepath plans in conjunction with NZTA.

Philip Moll has continued to closely monitor the bird life of Shoal Bay. He has also worked with a band of locals and council to design and set up a comprehensive predator control network on the north and east side of the bay.

Kaipatiki Local Board area

Pest Free Kaipatiki is now in full swing with leading edge local board wide predator control monitoring occurring in winter last year. Reserves are being scientifically assessed for weed presence. Several hundred thousand dollars has been raised and an incorporated society formed. PFK has contracted a restoration coordinator, an administrator and an engagement coordinator. This is resulting in real action on predators and weeds with several high profile campaigns including the DIRTY DUO targeting moth plant and ginger.

Hibiscus & Bays

Richard and Jocelyn are on a Pest Free Hibiscus & Bays steering group. The H&B restoration network is growing rapidly and includes Hibiscus Branch with their Pest Free Peninsula project.

Upper Harbour

John Brown and Connor Wallace attend the Upper Harbour Ecology Network which is going from strength to strength

Kauri Protection

John Brown has coordinated the volunteers who carry out our branch's Kauri Protection Programme in conjunction with council at Kauri Park, Kauri Glen Reserve, Leigh Reserve and now Three Streams. We have now passed the management of the Kaipatiki Local Board trigene stations over to Pest Free Kaipatiki. We are advocating urgent track upgrades and where necessary track closures to stop kauri dieback.

KCC

KCC is in very good heart with four KCC Coordinators - Marilyn Gulliver, Ann Brabant, Christine Thompson and Sharon McGaffin. They have led interesting trips (see separate report) and provided lively regular updates at monthly branch meetings.

KCC Members	Financial memberships	
April 2018		223
April 2017		225
April 2016	376	219
Feb 2015	380	220
April 2014	275	169
April 2013	342	210
2012	346	229

Resource Management Act/Tree Protection

Peter Hassell has been leading the RMA work but has resigned recently after many years of assistance on RMA matters.

We submitted on a consent to fell notable pohutukawa on Hurstmere Rd and a development on Albany Highway.

We also submitted on all four local board plans, the Long Term Plans for each local board, and the Hibiscus & Bays Open Space Management Plan.

Tree protection continues to be a major concern with most trees now unprotected due to RMA changes. We are still awaiting the outcome of the Okura Environment Court appeal. We persuaded our head office legal team to assist Long Bay Okura Great Park Society oppose this appeal. Our lawyer Sally Gepp was in Auckland for 2 weeks for this appeal.

Destructive development continues behind Karepiro Beach at Dacre Cottage. A major shellfish die off at Okura may have been partly as a result of tons of sediment pouring into the marine reserve.

Northcross Bush, which we fought hard to save, was completely destroyed recently to make way for 30 houses. Elsewhere bush and trees are disappearing at an alarming rate.

The Auckland Youth Committee

Our branch continues to mentor this committee, ably led by Connor Wallace. Head office have stepped up their support for the Youth section. Connor also works with other Youth hubs in Wellington, Nelson and Manawatu. The Auckland team have adopted Hosking Reserve as a project, starting off with some predator monitoring work. This continues to be a wonderful new initiative for Forest & Bird.

Climate Action Group

Our Climate Action Group, led by Frances Palmer, hosted a Climate Seminar at Auckland Library. They have been liaising with other climate groups, local board members and councillors to raise awareness of climate issues. Unfortunately the lead energiser, Frances has moved out the the area and this group may fold for lack of leadership.

Networking and facilitating

Richard Hursthouse has continued to attend several other meetings.

1. The Auckland Regional Chairs and Staff Meetings (about five times per year)
2. Pest Free Kaipatiki Board and Technical Advisory Committee.
3. The Conservation Engagement Group, which is working on engagement and data software.

Richard and Jocelyn attend The Hibiscus & Bays restoration network and Pest Free Steering Group

Richard and Claire Stevens attended the annual meeting in Wellington last June.

Claire Stevens attended the North Island meeting at Kapiti in November.

Philip Moll is working with local groups in Devonport Takapuna to try to manage rampant development.

John Brown is attending the Upper Harbour Ecological Network in the Upper Harbour area.

Weed Control Guide

Richard has had success with the weed guide we produced to assist with the best ways to control weeds. We printed 50,000 of these guides which are mostly sold and are working on a revision and reprint.

National Policy

Richard and Claire are on a national policy committee looking at revising and creating conservation policy. So far the committee has finalised dog and mangrove policies.

Thank you

You have a very hard-working committee, and many members who are not on the committee, who continue to put in many hours to make our branch function. My sincere thanks to everyone who lends a hand to make a difference in trying conditions.

Richard Hursthouse
Chair
April 2018