

Dear Members

Our AGM was held on the 25th May attended by 25 members who also enjoyed a great presentation by Te Papa's curator of vertebrates and ornithologist Dr Colin Miskelly. He gave an insight to his participation in seabird research programs on the French sub Antarctic island groups of Crozet and Kerguelen at the invitation of Dr Charly Bost of the CEBC laboratory (Chizé) of CNRS (Centre National de la Recherché Scientifique), France. The talk covered a lot of interesting topics and if you wish to know more about Colin and his projects, google him, or look him up on Te Papa's website. One observation he noted was the French put a lot of resource in the scientific side of conservation, but did not do much about predator control as opposed to NZ who are very good at predator control but did not resource scientific studies well.

We had a "Changing of the Guard" at the AGM, with John McLachlan standing down from Secretary. He is staying on the committee though to assist with the Forrest and Bird calendars and diary sales, and guide more recent members. He will continue also working on our projects. We sincerely thank John for his terrific contributions over the years. We would also like to welcome our new committee member and Secretary Sue Boyde who has had a great hand over from John. Alan Froggart and I have swapped roles with Alan taking on the role of Chairperson and I am now Treasurer.

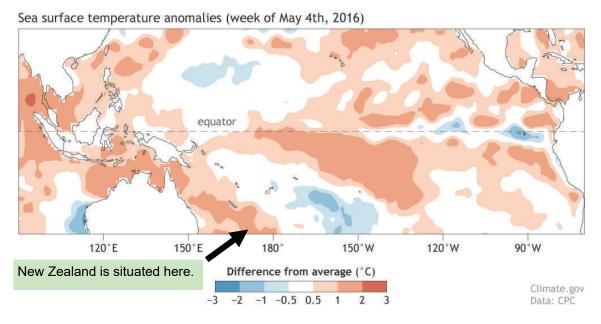
You will see from the above that we have had some great speakers this year, and I strongly recommend that you try to attend some of our monthly meetings to hear future presentations.

Regards Mark Dalmon

Global Warming and Climate Change

You may remember in the Summer Issue of this magazine, the Editor wrote it would be interesting to monitor the visible changes taking place over the next few months and years in the Kapiti Mana region regarding changing climate conditions, effects of higher sea temperatures and tides. Well, **now is the time to start because change is near!** Put a daily comment in your diaries each time you observe anything unexpected in your environment or garden. Note date, time and place, and please send your comments to me, Margaret Latimer, mlatimer@clear.net.nz. Over the seasons we may see some interesting trends.

The last 3 months have been breaking records with air temperatures way above the usual and not much rain in many parts of the country. In Kapiti Mana we have watched the rain clouds part, leaving us in a pocket of clear, warm weather with higher seawater temperatures. However this will change as Le Nino weakens in the autumn and La Nina conditions strengthen towards the spring.



Our Weather Forecasters have confidence to predict a La Niña condition because of the amount of cooler-than-average water under the surface of the Pacific. This large pool of cool water stretches just below the surface to around 500 feet in depth. During this past March–April, the average temperature in this part of the subsurface ocean was the second-coolest on record (records start in 1979). This means the weather will be wetter and cooler in spring and summer 2017.

DOC is the leading agency for protecting New Zealand native species and ecosystems from the threat of climate change, change in temperature and rainfall patterns and extreme weather events. Unfortunately we do not know how native species will respond to more climate change especially as they have already adapted to New Zealand's existing highly variable climate. Any changes our native species make in the future will be complicated by other threats such as invasive pest species and human-related habitat loss. In turn, invasive pest species may benefit from climate change and have even more impact on our native species.



In the following sections of this Kapiti Mana newsletter we are going to investigate some of the pests that predate our natural species.-Pests that are close to home.





Garden Battlefields- Margaret Latimer

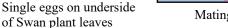
As the weather warmed up at the beginning of spring a lone, but strong Monarch Butterfly patrolled our garden. At 11.15am, 1.15pm and 3.15pm the butterfly flew purposely around our house. It hardly

varied in its routine so I decided to plant swan plants to encourage it to breed. Soon the monarchs laid the single eggs on the underside of the Swan plant

leaves. Each day I inspected the eggs and soon notice their number was de creasing rapidly. What was happening to them? Next day I was watching the plants and noticed small fly-like insects settling on the leaves near a egg. When it flew off the egg was gone. I set out to capture this pest and identify it. It was an Asian paper wasp.

Asian Paper wasp







Mating Monarchs

The small caterpillars that did hatch out soon disappeared too. They were too big for the paper wasp to eat but the ever increasing numbers of German Wasps were having a feast.



German wasp eating a Monarch caterpillar (a google image)



During the summer months a few caterpillars thrived and grew quite large but none survived to the pupating stage. This means very few Monarch Butterflies will survive to see next season. At the beginning of May large clusters of golden aphids are on the swan plants. There are aphids of different ages and young just after birth soon get established. At certain times of day if the sun is out they are being pushed around by ants who are after the honey dew which they exude.



Photo by Jacqui, Monarch Butterfly Trust



Photo by Jean and Fred. Swan plant is Gomphocarpus fruticosus and aphid is Aphis nerii.

Whatever the part of the season the aphids appear they need to be exterminated as their honey dew attract wasps. It is recommended that a warm milk solution is squirted on them. They soon disappear but the swan plants are unharmed.

A new aphid to New Zealand is also linked to the wasp problem. Tuberolachnus salignus is a large aphid that is partial to willow trees and some Popular species.

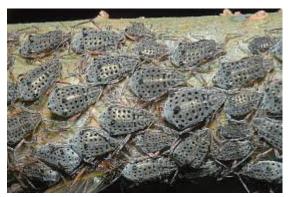


The Giant willow aphid, Tuberolachnus salignus.

The giant willow aphid was first found in New Zealand on 23 December 2013 at Western Springs Park, Auckland by Stephen Thorpe, an entomologist. Since then surveys have revealed it is well established throughout the country with only Central Otago and Mackensie county free in march 2014. It is a cosmopolitan species and is one of the largest aphids known. It feeds on the sap of young branches of the host trees. When in large numbers the aphid causes drastic growth reductions. In New Zealand this pest could pose problems where willows are used for flood protection and in shelterbelts. The only predators seen attacking Tuberolachnus spp .are some Ladybird spp. But they may have been more attracted to the honeydew residues. Other insects attracted to the honeydew are the wasps which can be a nuisance in public areas.



6mm in length—large aphid.



A cluster of Tuberolachnus spp. Sucking sap

Report Written by Peter MacIntyre and John Hellstrom, Sapere Research Group for DOC.

Wasps are such a nuisance that in 2015 the Department of Conservation (DOC) published an assessment of the economic impact of German wasps and common wasps across industries, society and the natural environment in New Zealand. This report estimates that introduced wasps cost New Zealand's economy more than \$130 million dollars a year, with the biggest economic impacts on farming, beekeeping, horticulture and forestry workers.

This assessment was based on a literature review. Information was collected from previous studies and from affected sectors in New Zealand to estimate the total costs of wasps, ie the costs that could be avoided and the opportunities that could be gained if wasps were not present in New Zealand.

New Zealand has some of the highest densities of German and common wasps in the world. Wasps have huge social and biological impacts; they are one of the most damaging invertebrate pests in New Zealand, harming our native birds and insects.

This study found that wasps also have a major financial impact on primary industries and the health sector. This includes:

- more than \$60 million a year in costs to pastoral farming from wasps disrupting bee pollination activities, reducing the amount of clover in pastures and increasing fertiliser costs.
- almost \$9 million a year cost to beekeepers from wasps attacking honey bees, robbing their honey and destroying hives.
- wasp-related traffic accidents estimated to cost \$1.4 million a year.
- over \$1 million each year spent on health costs from wasp stings.

on top of the direct costs, almost \$60 million a year is lost in unrealised honey production from beech forest honeydew which is currently being monopolised by wasps. Honeydew is also a valuable energy source for kaka, tui and bellbirds.

Creating a Kapiti Mainland Island

For many years groups of like minded people have fought to keep to populations of pests and predators under control on the Kapiti Coast.. The following section of this newsletter has brought together reports from Paul Callister, Michael Stace, Robin Chesterfield, Diana Kiernan, Terry Parminter and others, on the status of control and the establishment of a Mainland Island on the Kapiti Coast.

The concept of a 'Mainland Island' was first thought of when funding was obtained from the Ministry for the Environment (MFE) under the umbrella of the Kapiti Coast Biodiversity project. Three major restoration groups form the core of the project. These are the Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park (QE Park), Whareroa Guardians Community Trust Inc (Whareroa), and Nga Uruora Kapiti Project (NUKP). Each group has for a number of years been undertaking a range of pest control programmes in their areas. NUKP's volunteer pest control

started in the late 1990s; QE Park's programme began in 2008; while Whareroa Farm's pest control scheme commenced in 2013. There are also other groups and individuals involved in pest control in, or nearby to, the 'Mainland Island'. These include the Paekakariki "Rat Pack' and local farmers. Dr.Paul Callister said "in some ways this is the Kapiti's coast's version of Zealandia, except we are trying to do it without an expensive fence. We are using trapping methods, but with the same aim of bringing back birds such as Kaka and Kakariki while protecting other flora and fauna"

serve, Perment to lev-

The Nga Uruora Kapiti Project (NUKP) has stated the groups' aims very clearly. They are:

- To reduce mustelid, possum, feral cats, ratand hedge-Kakariki—from Zealandia hog populations in Queen Elizabeth Park, Whareroa Farm rekins farm/Middle run and the Paekakariki-Pukerua Bay escarpels sufficient to support expanding native bird populations, including creating a suitable environment for the expected arrival of kaka and kakariki.
- To reduce mustelid, possum, feral cats, rat and hedgehog populations in Q2 park and Ames Street Reserve to support the nesting of blue Penguins
- To create 44 hectares of 'rat free sanctuaries' within key native forest areas to create safe nesting sites within these prime forrest areas
- Based on recommendations arising from the lizard and weta surveys, to create pest control "hot spots" to reduce pests to levels so that lizard and weta populations will persist and expand.
- To support the efforts of local residents in Paekakariki to create a 'rat free' town.
- To encourage the expansion of animal control into the urban areas of Raumati South and Pukerua Bay
- To work with local farmers, such as the Waterfall Road based Kotukutuki Group, to support pest control in neighbouring areas.

The creation of the Kapiti Mainland Island is an ambitious project. A grant of \$294,000 has been awarded to the Kapiti Coast Biodiversity Project by the Ministry for the Environment (June 2015) based on a pitch by a collective of conservation groups working together. The small groups have already put in a lot of work into pest control and replanting but with more funds for traps and more volunteers, they hope to join up the gaps in the forest corridors.

Following this section the newsletter gives accounts of the worked done by local groups.



Ferral cats and sometimes domestics cats are a big problem.





Working together for the environment

Community Groups such as Forest & Bird, Councils, and DOC do a marvelous job in the process of restoring the natural environment.

The Kotukutuku Ecological Restoration Project (KERP) group recognises the interconnectedness of neighbouring properties.. For example if the Kiernan land has a goat problem, then before long Whareroa Farm Park has a goat problem. If the Parminter property has a particular weed problem, then before long Kaitawa Reserve has the same weed problem. And vice versa. For the sake of the natural environment it is important not to think in isolation and work together

Overview of the Kotukutuku Ecological Restoration Project (KERP) Diane Kiernan

Our group is voluntary. It is focused on two privately owned bush properties (the sister properties).

Jim O'Malley is the Project Coordinator. The owners, coordinator and some of the volunteers are members of A Rocha Wellington, (Kapiti Subgroup). A Rocha is an international organisation that encourages churches to be good stewards of God's world.

One area of bush is at 95 Panorama Drive Paraparaumu. This is the Parminters' property. This property backs onto the Kaitawa Reserve. A second area of bush is at 118 Waterfall Road. This is the Kiernans' property. The vision of the group is to enhance the ecological, biodiversity and landscape values of private bush blocks in the area. This contributes to an ecological corridor between Kapiti Island, Kaitawa Reserve, Whareroa Farm Park, and the Maungakotukutuku Valley.

To restore our environment to a level where species are no longer in decline is an enormous task. It is a great thing to encourage more private land owners to be involved in the process of restoration. The contribution of private landowners may connect islands of native bush that may not otherwise get connected.

.The Kiernan Property has recently been granted \$10,223 from the Department of Conservation's, "DOC Community Fund". We are grateful for this and for DOC's technical expertise.

Are we making a difference?

Because the sister properties are already bush covered, in ten years time they will look very much as they do now. The group felt that to remain motivated we need to know whether or not we are making a difference.

Therefore to assess the ecological health, before predator control and during predator control was considered important. Baseline monitoring was carried out using surveys of beetles in pitfall traps / light traps and malaise traps. Predators are being monitored using tracking tunnels and wax tags. There are also five minute bird counts and weta counts. Existing vegetation is being monitored using the Quick Plot Method.

Are you an Entomologist willing to identify beetles? This project is needing a volunteer Entomologist. Would you please ring Peter Kiernan 021 215 9262?



Eco Gecko Consultants are monitoring Lizards. After twenty two hours of intensive search in pitfall traps, under closed-cell foam tree wraps and by spotting in daylight and at night two forest geckos and one common skink were found on the Kiernan property. Once the group has a good track record in predator control it intends to seek permission from DOC to reintroduce some species, that have been lost to the immediate area. Perhaps the snail *Powelliphanta* could return.

DOC 200 traps are used for controlling rats, hedgehogs and mustelids, they are laid out on a 100m x 50m grid with 50 metre spacing on the perimeter. Mouse and rat bait stations are laid out on a 50m x 25m grid. Feral cat, cage traps are laid out on a 200m x 200m grid. Also on the Kiernan property, the Wellington Regional Council carries out possum control using bait on a 100m x 150m grid.



Article by Terry Parminter

In 2007 we purchased a 5.4 ha bush block adjacent to the Kaitawa Reserve, accessed from Panorama Drive and sloping north and east from a ridge of the escarpment above the Wharemauku Stream. The bush is 20—30 years old and dominated by pioneer species including Mahoe, Kanuka and Pittosporum tenuifolium. These species are successfully shading out the gorse which established itself following pasture grown for livestock farming.

When we bought the land we were keen to encourage a wider biodiversity of plants, birds and lizards. However this proved to be a challenge! The block is mostly steep land with skeletal soils, and is very exposed to the wind. We knew there were rats, possums and other unwanted predators present, so our first step was to start a programme of weed and pest control.

In 2008 we had a 1.5 meter netting fence erected around three sides of the property, deterring large mammals, dogs, some cats and some possums. It is still possible for pest animals to enter along the Wharemauku Stream where there is no fencing. However the trapping programme in the Kaitawa Reserve helps to keep pest numbers down on this boundary. Regenerating weeds along the boundaries and bush margins include banana passion fruit, honey suckle, ivy, pampas grass, gorse, trandescantia and blackberry. We spray these regularly with glyphosphate and metsulfuron-methyl. Trees such as flowering cherry, buckthorn, and karo are cut and painted with picloram, while smaller plants are pulled by hand.

The district council has assisted us with materials for pest and weed control over the past few years. Currently we have three kill traps for possums with a synthetic lure. While these were regularly triggered initially, for the last two years we haven't had any possums on our property that we have been aware of. We have almost 30 bait stations for rats and mice filled with brodifacoum – pellets in winter and blocks over the rest of the year. We check the bait stations every couple of weeks and pick up any bait on the ground to reduce the risks to non-target species. The baiting programme is monitored with tracking tunnels in place for 2-3 nights. Often we see less than 5% rat tracks in the tunnels, with most prints from mice. Hedgehogs are caught in four Possum Master kill traps, these are now mostly young ones coming onto our property during autumn. We have six DOC-200 kill traps baited for mustelids with meat, fish and eggs cycled through the year.

We have seen the bush respond to all the pest control, especially on the lower slopes near the stream. New seedlings have begun to emerge and flourish, including titoki, kohekohe, tawa, nikau, kahikatea, tree daisy, wharangi, and clematis. We have also seen increased numbers of tui, which are now successfully nesting on the block, and a wider range of other birds are also now to be found, including bell birds and shining cuckoo. Invertebrate numbers have grown including tree weta and stick insects, and we also find common skinks. It seems likely that birds from Kaitawa Reserve have increasingly moved into our bush block, bringing with them useful native bush seeds to assist the regeneration of the bush. We work closely with Peter and Diana Kiernan, our near neighbours (as birds fly) and members with us in the local branch of A Rocha.





Pest Animal Control in Queen Elizabeth Park

A total of 45 DOC 200 stoat traps were placed in three trap lines in Queen Elizabeth Park (QEP) in February 2008. A number of Timms traps (for possums) were already in QEP although checking these traps was somewhat sporadic in view of the demands on staff time. Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) is responsible for the management of QEP and it supplied the DOC 200s, decided on their placement and provided the lure. Volunteers were responsible for checking the traps. This arrangement continued for some years. *Trap lines are usually set either as a grid or to follow natural features. The lines in QEP comply with the latter practice and there are a line of traps along, e.g., waterways, paths or around wetlands. "Erayz", a commercial product, is the lure used most frequently. It consists of rabbit blocks oven dried to the consistency of beef jerky. Eggs are used in the traps near houses so cats are not lured into them. Information about traps and trapping supplies can be seen on waitakererangeshalo.org.nz/traps.*

Approximately another 60 traps were supplied by GW by 2010 and further traps lines were established. About one or two traps fall off the quota each year, mainly because they disappear, although the odd one or two has an encounter with passing machinery, so that by early 2012, there were about 100 DOC 200s being serviced along with about 15 Timms. A number of traps are secured to fences or posts but this is not always sufficient. On one occasion, two traps securely posted were opened and the traps removed. The number of Timms also shows a steady slow decline. In early 2012, about 65 Doc 200s were surplus to requirements in the Battle Hill Regional Park and they were used to establish further trap lines in QEP. By late 2015, volunteers were checking approximately 160 DOC 200s and 12 Timms along lines which focused on the wetlands, waterways, and the boundaries of QEP.

Trapping in QEP was reviewed in 2015 when funding became available through the Kapiti Coast Biodiversity Project (KCBP). The dune lands between Raumati South and Paekakariki are part of GW's Key Native Ecosystem and GW was keen for rat and possum control in this area. Bait stations were suggested at one stage but the suggestion from Paul Callister (leader of pest control aspect of KCBP) to install Goodnature self resetting A24 traps was enthusiastically endorsed. Although GW has put a number of bait stations in QEP over the past four years, they are well away from the popular dog walking paths. The use of bait stations in the dune land would require extensive signage and warnings – which would have been unsatisfactory.

The opportunity was also taken to reorganise the Timms trap line and make a number of changes to the lines of DOC 200s. In the past few months, a line of 20 A24s and 18 Timms have been put in place in the dune lands starting by the public toilet at the end of the Esplanade in Raumati South, through to the Lookout at the Paekakariki end of the park. In addition, two new lines of DOC 200s – one along part of the cycleway and another around some retired farm land - were put in place. Traps are on hand to make two further lines – one when the expressway is completed and another when the park boundary across Perkins farm is settled. All these traps were funded by KCBP, along with a number used to restore traps which had either disappeared or had reached their use-by date. Current trap numbers in QEP:

DOC200 180 A24 21 Timms 19 Fenn 1

It must be noted, first, that the traps are checked fortnightly between January to June and three weekly from July to December. Secondly, a domestic mouse trap is placed in each DOC200. Thirdly, the A24s have a counter attached but it is not possible to record whether it is a mouse or rat which has triggered the trap. The number of A24 "hits" are not included in this list. Lastly, stoats live in bush country while weasels live on the edge of the bush and open land. Consequently, the topography of QEP is weasel territory rather than stoat country and this is reflected in catch numbers.

Pest animal kill in Queen Elizabeth Park from February 2008 to April 2016:

 Stoats
 55

 Weasels
 328

 Rats
 906

 Hedgehogs
 524

 Mice
 1241

 Possums
 21

Thank you Michael Stace for this in-depth report.



POSITION OF TRAPS IN Queen Elizabeth Park



Pest Control at Pauatahanui Reserve

May 2016 Robin Chesterfield

Until 2013 Pest Control at Pauatahanui Reserve mounted to 10 DoC 200 traps for stoats and bait stations for rodents. From 2013 the use of bait stations ceased to align with Doc's pest management policy. Bait stations were converted to house rat traps and additional rat traps were installed . There are now 24 DoC 200 Traps and 10 Victor rat traps in use. Catches for 2014 were 24 Rat and 5 Stoat, and 2015 41 rat and 12 Stoat. There are no possums in the Reserve. Cats are not monitored at this stage. There appears to be a lot of movement of stoats along riparian strips into the Reserve, and this year young stoats are being caught in late autumn.

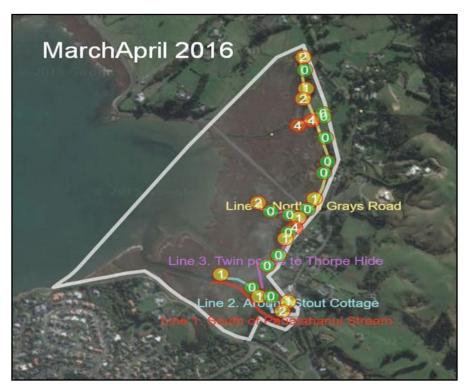
Volunteers attend to the traps at three day intervals from December to April and each fortnight other months.

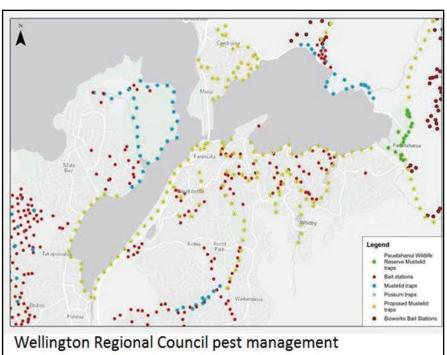
The https://www.trap.nz/ online database is now used for recording trapping data. The March April results are shown on the next page in graphic form.



PESTMANAGEMENT

Pest Control at Pauatahanui Reserve cont







Weasel with egg. DOC photo

The Wellington Regional Council has been building up pest management around the whole Porirua catchment. The proposed traps shown in yellow will provide a useful first line of defence for the Pauatahanui Reserve.

To measure the effectiveness of the Pauatahanui Reserve predator control 50 ink pad tunnels have been monitored during the past year to indicate the percentage of rats, mice, stoats skinks and hedgehogs. This information will be used as part of the process of determining whether fern bird translocation to the Reserve can proceed.



Fern Bird - DOC photo





Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve restoration project - Waikanae Estuary Care Group

Located at the rivermouth of the Waikanae river, the Waikanae Estuary comprises 75 hectares in total – 65 on the south side (administered by the Department of Conservation), and 10 on the north side of the river (administered by the Kapiti Coast District Council). More species of seabirds visit or reside in the estuary than in any other area on the Wellington coast, including at risk birds: royal spoonbill, white fronted tern, grey duck, shore plover, fernbird and godwit.

Being such a desirable place to live, swamps were drained for housing in the 1960s, resulting in loss of specialised flora and fauna habitat. Conservationists, notably Sir Charles Fleming, helped to establish Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve in 1987 to protect the remaining area. From the 1990s increasing neighbouring subdivisions on this coastline have hemmed in an ecosystem designed to move, and allowed weeds to take hold. The area has high recreational use.

The Waikanae Estuary Caregroup was established in 2004 by a group of locals concerned about the 'forgotten' weedy wasteland on their doorstep. The aim is to restore the estuary to as close to its natural state as possible, and to help strengthen an important link in the bird flight path connecting Kapiti Island to the Tararua Ranges. They have been guided in their planting by plans designed by ecologists Dr Geoff Park and Isobel Gabites, and assisted by the Kapiti Coast District Council and Department of Conservation.

A lot has been learnt along the way. Initially plants were bought for the project, however it soon became apparent that we needed to grow our own: to ensure plants were in fact ecosourced; to ensure most genetically robust plants were planted; to be able to harden plants in a shadehouse adjacent to the estuary; and to keep costs down. The group's shadehouse is run by a team of volunteers who meet weekly and grow plants from ecosourced seed, which get planted out over the winter months. To date approximately 49,000 plants have been dug into the ground. The estuary is a challenging environment to plant as it is extremely windy, salty, and even experiences frosts. It also hosts a wide range of introduced invasive weed species including: blackberry, Japanese honeysuckle, periwinkle, bindweed, buckthorn, boneseed, boxthorn, pampas, gorse and convolvulus. Keeping plantings weed free is the group's biggest challenge. Trapping is also a very important task for the group to do. So far this year we have caught 5 stoats, 2 weasels, 28 rats, 12 hedgehogs and 2 mice.

It is extremely satisfying seeing plantings mature and natural ecosystems being restablished. We welcome all helpers; weeding and planting dates are notified in both the estuary kiosks and local papers.







Was held on the 21st May in the Wairarapa. The main presentation was given by Dr. Mike Joy, and was enjoyed by all.

HELP WANTED!!

The time to sell our Forest & Bird calendars and diaries will come up in August again.

The list for deliverers in the WAIKANAE and PARAPARAUMU areas has been slowly getting shorter to the point where the branch has to ask whether it is still feasible to continue with the sale. The Porirua areas (Camborne, Mana, Whitby, Plimmerton and Paremata) were not serviced last year due to a lack of volunteers. The calendar sales are our main source of income and also tend to foster a spirit of community amongst our members.

Come on members, it is not difficult - you get between 10 and 20 calendars/diaries delivered to your house and you have about two months to sell them. If not everything is sold at the due date, don't worry, the branch will be grateful anyway. You as deliverer will meet some very friendly people and many are "old customers" who are eager to place their orders for next year - well, most of them.

INTERESTED ? Please email or phone **Lore** or any committee member listed at the end of our Newsletter.

MORE HELP WANTED:

Two members willing to sell up to 15 Forest & Bird calendars/diaries, during August & September, to existing members living in the following areas 1 Raumati Road to Menin Road and 2. Michael Road to Guildford Road areas in Paraparaumu..

Whats involved? Firstly ring and take orders; then arrange delivery, and collect the money. If willing to help please contact John McLachlan – 904 0027

Fern Identification with Dr Leon Perrie, Te Papa. Club Outing

Item and photographs by Alan Froggatt





The ten branch members who attended the fern identification session on the Mangaone walkway with Leon and his wife Laura also from Te Papa on Saturday morning 14 May will long remember it. The weather forecast proved to be wrong and sun shone. Leon proved to be a passionate and talented teacher and we learned a lot. "That's amazing" was often heard from his fascinated audience. The way we previously looked at a fern has changed forever.

Those of you who were not able to attend but are interested in ferns may wish to look at the following Online Guides: http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/topic/3584 or New Zealand tree ferns: http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/topic/2024.

OR if you want help with fern (or any) identifications upload photographs of your unknown to NatureWatch NZ: http://naturewatch.org.nz.

OR by his invitation you could email your photographs to Leon: leon.perrie@tepapa.govt.nz



Hen and chicken fern



Silver fern



Kiokio-Blechnum spp.



New Zealand Bellbird, korimako, makomako, mockie or bell bird

Photographs and Item by Alan Froggatt

Bellbirds are the most widespread and familiar honeyeater in the South Island, and are becoming more com-

mon over much of the North Island excepting from Waikato north. They are found in native and exotic forests, scrub, farm shelter belts, urban parks and gardens. Their song is a welcome sound in mainland

forests which otherwise may have little bird song.

There was a recent event alongside the Kaitawa reserve in Paraparaumu where ten young birds were seen and heard in a tree learning to sing. Although they have a brush-like tongue which is used to reach deeply into flowers to reach nectar they also feed on

fruits and insects. Importantly they have an ecological role in pollinating the flowers of many native trees and shrubs. Subsequently when feeding on the fruits that result from this pollination they have a role in dispersing the seeds and so assist in regeneration of our forests. They breed in spring and summer. Most nests are in a fork under dense cover, from near ground level up to around five metres. They usually have clutches from 3-4 eggs. The females incubate and both parents care for the young who appear to feed almost exclusively on insects.





Penguins at the End of the World by Gillian Corder

Standing erect and majestic in the warm summer sunshine on the steeply shelving gravel beach at the end of



the world the King Penguins were everything I had hoped for. Waddling about in their family groups, the unearthly bleating, or penguin chatter fills the air. Rope barriers separate us from the group of penguins but Ian and I are happy to sit quietly on the wooden bench and just watch these squabbling, strutting comical birds. There are four other visitors here today but soon they leave and we are on our own. We have arrived at Parque Penguino Rey on the western (Chilean) side of Tierra Del Fuego. The colony is small but relatively accessible when compared to the colonies of the Sub Antarctic Island of South Georgia or the Antarctic continent. These wonderful birds belong to the second largest species of Penguin standing 70 to 100 cm tall, weighing up to 16 kilograms and this is thought to be the only breeding colony on the American continent.

The history of the colony is an interesting one, in that birds appear to have only recently been discovered living and breeding here and over the last 10 years the colony has grown from 16 breeding pairs to around 100 birds. The site is being carefully managed as certainly among naturalists there is an understanding if these birds are disturbed by over eager photographers and eco-tourists they could leave just as easily as they arrived. While this species is not endangered and indeed at an estimated total population of around 2 million, not threatened it is nevertheless a rare and special privilege to be so close to these wonderful creatures. Getting to the Penguin Park was a crazy wild summer adventure driving across the remote sparsely inhabited windswept steppe of Tierra Del Fuego on gravel roads in our rental car, but what is life without a few crazy adventures.

Membership Matters

Volunteering Opportunities

Kaitawa Reserve Paraparaumu:

Thursdays 9am to midday. Would you like to help? Please contact John McLachlan on 04-904-0027

Greendale Reserve, Waikanae: Tuesdays 9 am to midday. Would you like to help? Please contact Phil Palmer on 04-293-6639.

Do you have computer skills? Would you like to help the branch? Please contact John 04 904 0027

To deliver up to 12 newsletters, twice yearly, April & November, in Raumati, between Raumati Road and Menin Road. and in Paraparaumu between Arawhata Road and Highway One

Someone willing to undertake five minute bird counts in Kaitawa Reserve.

Available for purchase - limited numbers of bird feeders and weta motels at \$20 each. Photo. Contact for these matters - John. 04 904 0027."

SOCIETY CONTACTS

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WEBSITES

Forest & Bird: www.forestandbird.org.nz

Kiwi Conservation Club: www.kcc.org.nz

NZ Ecological Restoration Network: www.bush.org.nz



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