



FROM THE EDITORS DESK

Catherine Walsh

Thank goodness for Autumn and its steady sunshine hours and cooler nights! I have made the most of it by heading to Gisborne for Easter weekend (yet again!) and stopping in to enjoy the beautiful Eastwoodhill Arboretum, as it begins the change into autumnal colours! This time it was a whole family affair, and it was a lot of fun introducing others to this hidden gem. I hope you all had a lovely Easter break too!

Apologies for the late send out of the newsletter. The Copy & Design family who print it for us have had a very difficult time of late. James is in hospital after a major health event and then a burst pipe this week compromised the equipment and forced them to shut for several days. So please, send them your warmest thoughts!

It is almost AGM time again, so you will find the committee nomination form tucked inside this newsletter. Please do consider giving some of your time and support, it is an increasingly important cause.



Photo: (Linda Johnson): Beautiful mini waterfall along the Cave Farm track, Whetukura.

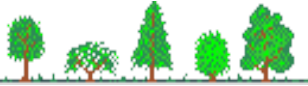


KEEPING THE BRANCH GOING

Branch activities email updates: Early each month we send out an email giving information about our upcoming branch meeting and field trip. If you do not receive these emails and would like to, or have changed your email address, please email Wayne King wayneking@xtra.co.nz

New people are welcome to become involved with the Nursery team, the Blowhard Bush team, the Pukahu Project, KCC, Field Trips, promoting the branch, and the writing of letters to MPs or the newspaper. If you have any ideas for guest speakers, please let us know.

Helpers are always needed so if anything takes your fancy, please contact a Committee member or the Secretary. Phone numbers are on the back page.



BRANCH ACTIVITIES

GUEST SPEAKERS

December: Bob Lester organised an environmental Quiz night. It was thoroughly entertaining and enjoyed by all, complimented by Christmas cake & red wine to celebrate the season.

January: Our very own Nick Sage, Havelock North Branch Secretary, gave a presentation on his recent trip to Vietnam, Cambodia & Thailand.

February: Peter Meredith spoke about the ins and outs of the Hawke's Bay Biodiversity Strategy.

March: Vaughn Cooper, our TANK rep, gave a talk titled 'this is TANK', all about the consultative process which governs the group.



ANNUAL REPORTS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Linda Johnson

The 2017-2018 year has seen the branch continue its time-honoured activities and try out some new things. Field trips continue to be offered by the Napier branch. We thank them for the effort they put in and for including us.

Thank you to the teams at the nursery, Blowhard Bush and Pukahu Project. Your mahi/work has not gone unnoticed. It is pleasing to see the direct impact on improving our environment that they have all achieved.

Thank you also to the people involved in the other activities that keep the branch going: newsletter editor, KCC, organising speakers, keeping members in the loop via the monthly email, Facebook page administration, taking our recyclables to the Environment Centre, advertising our meetings in the local paper, and ensuring that we have supper at the end of the branch meetings. A special thank you to the Committee who have worked hard and accomplished much.

We made use of our Volunteering HB membership by advert for nursery volunteers. A trickle of interested people has come through. Some have had a "try before you buy" experience and stayed which is good news.

A new member event was run for the first time. Twelve people attended to learn more about the branch, meet the Committee and eat afternoon tea at our Poukawa Stream site. After a walk through the project, they were given a handout on opportunities for involvement in the branch and a trip card to take home.

Of concern is that KCC member numbers are on a decline. No doubt there are many reasons for this. However, KCC, and indeed F&B, cannot survive without members. Please do what you can to encourage other people's interest and involvement in KCC and F&B.

"Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look what they can do when they stick together." – *Vesta M. Kelly*

TREASURER'S REPORT

Jennifer Hartley

The Financial year ended on 28th February and the full financial statement will be prepared by Brown Webb Richardson Ltd. Chartered Accounts and presented at the AGM in May.

The Branch had a surplus of \$1,778.00 this year, largely because we spent less on Blowhard Bush than expected. Our main source of income, our Bank term deposits, earned \$8,265.00 and our main expenses were producing and posting our newsletter (\$1,919) & advertising our meetings etc (\$1,022).

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Nick Sage

Membership

Branch membership as at 28 February 2018

Category	As at 28 February 2018	As at 28 February 2017
Adult	84	94

Complimentary	71	85
Life	14	5
Organisation	-	5
Senior	42	70
Student	4	-
TOTAL	215	259
NEW MEMBERS IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR	25)	44

Communication

We are currently communicating with our members directly through our email newsletters, printed newsletters and through advertisements in the Hastings Mail.

If you are not receiving our email newsletters and would like to be included please send your email address to nicksage01@gmail.com asking to be included on the email list.

If you were receiving the branch e-newsletter until 2-3 months ago and it has stopped, it is highly likely you held a Vodafone account which no longer offers email services. If you would like to start receiving the newsletters again please email nicksage01@gmail.com with your new email address.

Likewise, if you are not receiving the Forest and Bird magazine either, F&B National Office does not have your current address or your membership has lapsed. If you have not notified F&B National Office of your address change they will still be sending the magazine to the address that they currently hold for you. I can check your new details and notify National Office of any changes on your behalf, if you provide me with your current address.

We use the Head Office membership list in the mailings of the branch newsletter and any other mailings.

PUKAHU STREAM PROJECT REPORT

Co-ordinator: Linda Johnson/ report: Linda & Bob Lester (Photos too)

June 2017 saw the beginning of our new planting project on the banks of the Karamu Stream at the confluence of the Awanui and Irongate streams. Nearly 80 people participated in the planting of about 1300 plants in holes pre-drilled by HBRC staff. The extreme slope on most of the planting area has created many challenges during the year.

Monthly follow-up working bees attracted between 7 and 20 people each time, with much appreciated help from William Pike Challenge Award students from Havelock North Intermediate School and sometimes KCC members too.



We have suffered from frosts and dry periods but with recent irrigation support from neighbor Craig, we now have hundreds of healthy young shrubs ready for their second season of sustained growth.

We have had much appreciated support from HBRC staff and have suggested a modified list of plants for our second planting session to hopefully minimise frost damage and create a better nursery base to reduce losses to a minimum.

We are enjoying seeing the development proposals from HBRC and are able to provide input to establish a sustainable habitat for the future.



KIWI CONSERVATION CLUB REPORT

Co-ordinator: Linda Johnson (Photos too)

Since our last newsletter report we have had two events. In January we went to A'Deane's Bush where Kay Griffiths taught us about long-tailed bats and how to identify matai and totara by only looking at the bark. Stuart (8y) wrote "It was a hot day when we went to A'Deane's bush. It was a very long walk. My favourite part was the gigantic 600-year-old totara tree. It had spiders' webs





in its cracks in the bark. I liked trying to build a dam in the stream and cooling off in the stream. I found 13 matai trees. I saw 4 fantails."

In February, the tide and weather were right for us to spend an afternoon discovering what plants and animals live at Rocky Shore, Napier. The Northern NZ Rocky Shore Guides helped us to identify the many interesting things we found.

Over the past year, Chris Hurst and Sarah Nicoll have given valuable service as volunteer Assistant Coordinators (KCOs). Tu meke! You're awesome! Two of us attended the annual KCO training weekend in Wellington in October. We're looking for another person to become a KCO and join the team. If you like nature adventures with children, please get in touch with me.

Membership has continued its slow drop in numbers in spite of efforts to make KCC visible to the local public. This is most disappointing and Head Office has been made aware of the trend. You can help us reach new families by giving out our brochures or giving a gift membership (\$24 per family per year, phone 0800 200 064 or purchase online).

Despite the decline in memberships, attendance remains generally good. The children always go home with a smile on their faces.

You are welcome to bring a child and come on our trips. Our club events are listed on the website www.kcc.org.nz or you can email us on hastingshavelocknorth@kcc.org.nz for more information.

BLOWHARD BUSH REPORT

Relieving Co-ordinator: Christine Lawrence (Photos too)

This summer has had ideal growing conditions with plenty of rain and warmth. It has been very noticeable that the bush is flourishing when we have had to trim back plants along the tracks on successive trips to Blowhard.



Recent visits have kept the team busy with maintaining the tracks; from trimming back vegetation along the tracks, removing tree falls from the snowstorm in 2016, building steps on a track deviation, grass trimming and chain sawing fallen trees and numerous wilding pines. Whenever we venture off the track to where a pine has been spotted we always find many more; finding and removing them is an ongoing battle.

During early December, there was a 1080 drop in the region including Blowhard Bush. Subsequently we have noticed a greatly reduced number of catches in our traps, and also little bait taken from the possum bait stations. Hopefully this will last for quite some time into the future.

Despite the drop in catches we still continue with the regular monthly pest control. Over the past year, we have caught: 20 stoats, 26 rats, 7 hedgehogs (who knows how they manage to fit into the trap!), 2 rabbits or hares (don't know how they fit either), 2 mice, and 2 cats in the Timms trap. The variety of bird life is very evident, so the pest control is reaping rewards for us all to enjoy.

The last of our new track direction signs have been installed throughout the reserve, along with a new entrance sign. They look very smart. If you haven't visited Blowhard for a while, it may be time to come again and check out the new signage, as well our little piece of paradise.

NURSERY REPORT

Co-ordinator: Debbie Walton (Photo too)

The volunteer workforce at the nursery has expanded in the last few months, with 3-4 new helpers who have contributed much needed assistance since early January 2018. The team now consists of Dave Collie, Christine Lawrence and Erin Pointon (the core team who have kept things ticking along for



more than a year or two), Cherry Walton, Libby Eaton & Catalina Pinero Osorio, plus myself. Another volunteer, Elly, is job hunting in Wellington, so she is unlikely to be with us for the long term.

We've had a very busy few months pricking out seedlings and potting on, so the nursery stock is looking great. We've put aside plants for the Regional Council and the Pukahu stream project. We had lifestyle property owners donate in exchange for plants late last year - some are still to be collected. The Maraetotara Stream Trust will take the majority of the stock that is left (up to 1000 plants), and the Hastings District Council will take the remainder - all for a donation of course. Before too long the nursery will be looking empty - but that's what it's all about!

The good thing is that we are all learning together and sharing what knowledge we have of native plant propagation, enjoying ourselves while we do it. We find the DOC website has useful information, and we thank Theresa Hurst for sharing her knowledge and answering questions. We are currently sowing seeds into trays to build up the stock but if you have seedling natives in your garden, please let us know and we will come and lift them to pot on at the nursery

We are at the nursery on Tuesday mornings from 9.00 am til 12.00/12.30 pm. Come and visit us sometime! Finally, a very big thank you to the volunteers who make such a wonderful contribution.



FIELD TRIP REPORTS

NO FIELD TRIP SCHEDULED, DECEMBER

BELL ROCK, MAUNGAHARURU RANGE, JANUARY

Trip Leader: Steve & Christine Tutbury. Report by Liz Carter (Photo too)

A beautiful day and a lovely walk to start the New Year off. There were 35 members keen to take on this very popular walk, which also happens to be a fascinating area. Two members from Hastings/Havelock Nth joined us.

A nice cool breeze greeted us as we stopped at Boundary Stream carpark for a toilet call and morning tea before heading to Bell Rock carpark.

The walk got underway with a steady climb up through the beautiful bush. Tui, whiteheads, bellbirds, and shinning cuckoo chattered to us along the way, with kereru dashing amongst the trees. An hour later we were out of the bush and onto the open grassland ridge, which took us up to Bell Rock. Stunning views all around were enjoyed while having lunch. It's an area where you don't want to get too close to the edge for a peep over with your camera.

After lunch, we retraced our steps back down and through the bush to the bus. The treasures had walked up through the bush to the open grass area and enjoyed their lunch with lovely views as well. They also returned the same way they had come up.

A nice start to the New Year enjoyed by all.



KAIWAKA FARM & ESK RIVER, FEBRUARY

Trip Leader: Liz Willis. Report by Liz Carter (Photos too)



What a glorious day for a beautiful farm & river walk, it was just perfect. But, where was everyone? We only had 28 people. Two from Hastings/Havelock Nth.

Everyone headed out and across this lovely farm following the old service road for the railway line. The railway runs parallel to & just below the road, with 2 tunnels in this section. Great views all the way. We had to cross over the railway line before we made our way down to the Esk river. Will have to be very careful next time as trains will be shooting up and down.

At this stage people had to make a decision as to whether they would continue on down to the Esk river, to splash/splish their way back to the bus (getting very wet if they felt like it). Sixteen took the river option and 12 returned the way they had come.

The stones in the river were a bit slippery to start with and care was needed, but the water was very pleasant to walk in and no one fell in!

We had a lovely young male visitor from Sweden with us for the day, he said it was the best walk he has done during his stay in the North Island.

Everyone was back to base by 2.30pm. On our return to Napier we had a little bonus for the day, driving up and around the Esk subdivision on the hills. A delightful walk to a little hidden pond ended a great day!

CAVE FARM, WHETUKURA, MARCH

Trip Leader: Liz Carter. Report by Liz Carter (Photos too)

A beautiful autumn day dawned for this new adventure. The bus was full with a team of 45 members, which included 6 from Hastings/Havelock Nth. Our first stop was at Norsewood to use the toilets, then on to Cave farm where a quick and much needed cuppa was had, before departing on the walks at 11am.

The hikers got under way first. To start with they had a tricky little rock to negotiate before making their way down to cross the stream and enter the reserve; helpers were on hand. Most got their feet wet, but better to have wet feet than trying to keep them dry by rock hopping and perhaps slipping over and getting everything wet or breaking bones.

It was a challenging bush bashing meander for those following the track through the beautiful reserve. Tags were tied onto the trees to show the way but some were a bit hard to spot. Finally, we came out onto farmland, where a small cave was viewed. Then it was back into another bush area for about 20 minutes, which was a little more difficult, but all made it out with only the odd scratch here and there. In this area, we had the chance to see some very old stalactites. From this point, we followed the farm track to the waterfall.

It was 12.30pm when we arrived at our lunch destination, which was by the beautiful hidden waterfall. Everyone was keen to get into their yummy lunch boxes by then. The treasures had made their way out over the farm track to the waterfall, where we all met up for lunch together.



After lunch, we made our way back to the bus via the farm track. We left the area around 2pm. The scenery was picture perfect, with huge bluffs, rugged rock formations, lovely bush and of course the waterfalls.

To finish our day off we stopped at Norsewood to have a wander around the Wop Wops Wetlands, which is being devolved by the owners of Norsewear. It is taking shape and will be a delightful little walk. In the creek, there are a number of huge old eels that get feed every day. well worth the visit. Before we left for home, a much-needed ice cream and coffee was enjoyed.

Feed-back was that everyone had returned home having really enjoyed their day out at this most fascinating farm!



ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION SPOT

Catherine Walsh

GORSE - ULEX EUROPAEUS

Photos: (hedgecutter website) Gorse flower c3 (C.Walsh) Teirie Gorge, Dunedin.

Gorse (*Ulex Europaeus*) is a member of the pea family, whose small yellow flowers contrast with their dark green sharp/spiny leaves, making for a gorgeous display en-masse twice yearly, around Spring & Autumn, producing a deliciously delicate scent. Our warm climate causes this double flowering to occur and has enabled this bushy/hardy plant to take over, becoming labelled as a serious pest weed.

It was brought into NZ during the early 1800's, to be used primarily as shelter belt hedging on farms. As it prefers expansive, disrupted open land, agricultural areas still carry the brunt of the burden. It reduces grazing land and can become very dry over summer, causing fires to break out.



Seven different species of insect have been imported over the years, to try and biologically control the spread of gorse. This was of course, more of a complication than a solution, as has been the case with so many other introduced species. Other favoured methods of control have included slashing, herbicides and burning, but none of these approaches are successful long term, as the seeds can remain dormant for up to 50 years. This has made gorse the most expensive agricultural weed to control in NZ.

In recent years, some of the more positive qualities of gorse have come to light; it can stabilise and fix nitrogen in soil, even dry/sandy soils, provide shade and protection for native plants, supply bees with food and wildlife with shelter. It is a fine balance though, as these same qualities can cause a shift in the natural ecosystem of an area, if in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Hinewai Reserve on Banks Peninsula is obviously the right place, because they have successfully used gorse as a kind of nursery plant for some time now, to aid in the healthy maturation of many of their native trees. Once gorse is fully grown it becomes less dense and can provide protection for the seedling natives to grow, dying off once the trees are big enough to shut out the light.

Perhaps in future, seed bombs could be deployed strategically in problem areas, to eventually kill off the gorse, while at the same time increasing our native bush!

For more information visit: <https://www.hedgecutter.co.nz/tips-advice/facts-about-gorse-in-new-zealand>



UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

April Sunday 29th: Tangoio Falls & White Pine Bush. Leader: Gay Owen

April Sunday 22nd: Autumn @ the Arboretum, Guthrie Smith, Tutira (KCC & F&B combined trip). Leader: Linda Johnson. For more details & to book, visit hastingshavelocknorth@kcc.org.nz

May Sunday 27th: Maraetara Station, Bay View. Leader: Liz Carter

June Sunday 17th: Tree Planting @ Pukahu (9am-12pm). Leader: Bob Lester - bob.lester@xtra.co.nz

BYO gloves and drink. Sausage sizzle for afters.

Mid-June/July: Annual combined Branch Mid-Winter Dinner. Details to be announced.

July Sunday 22nd: Beach Clean Up (1.30-3.30pm) site to be announced.

Leader: Linda Johnson- ph 878 9705 or book in at hastingshavelocknorth@kcc.org.nz

July Sunday 29th: Ocean Beach to Waimarama & Maraetotara Falls. Leader: Karen Israelsen

August Sunday 26th: Fern Hill to Waitangi Regional Park, Awatoto. Leader: Diane Brown

For further details & bookings for all field trips that do not already have contact details provided, please contact Liz Carter on 844 9358

Committee members

Linda Johnson	Chair, KCC, Pukahu project	Ph 878 9705
Wayne King	Deputy Chair, Blowhard Bush assistant publicity/branch news email	Ph 877 7301
Nick Sage	Secretary	Ph 877 4708
Jennifer Hartley	Treasurer	Ph 870 3477
Christine Lawrence	Health & Safety + Relieving Blowhard Bush Co-ordinator	Ph 650 0716
Bob Lester	Pukahu Project assistant	Ph 877 9148
Debbie Walton	Nursery Co-ordinator	Ph 877 5907

Non-Committee members worth a mention

Dave Collie	Blowhard Bush convenor	
Bernie Bowden	Te Taiao rep	
Vaughan Cooper	TANK rep	
Ruth Harrison	Facebook administrator	
Eila Shearer	Suppers	
Liz Carter	Field Trips	Ph 844 9358
Catherine Walsh	Newsletter Editor	cattzwalsh@windowlive.com

Disclaimer: The content of this newsletter does not necessarily represent the views of the Society or the branch, and the Editor reserves the right to edit or decline articles when necessary.



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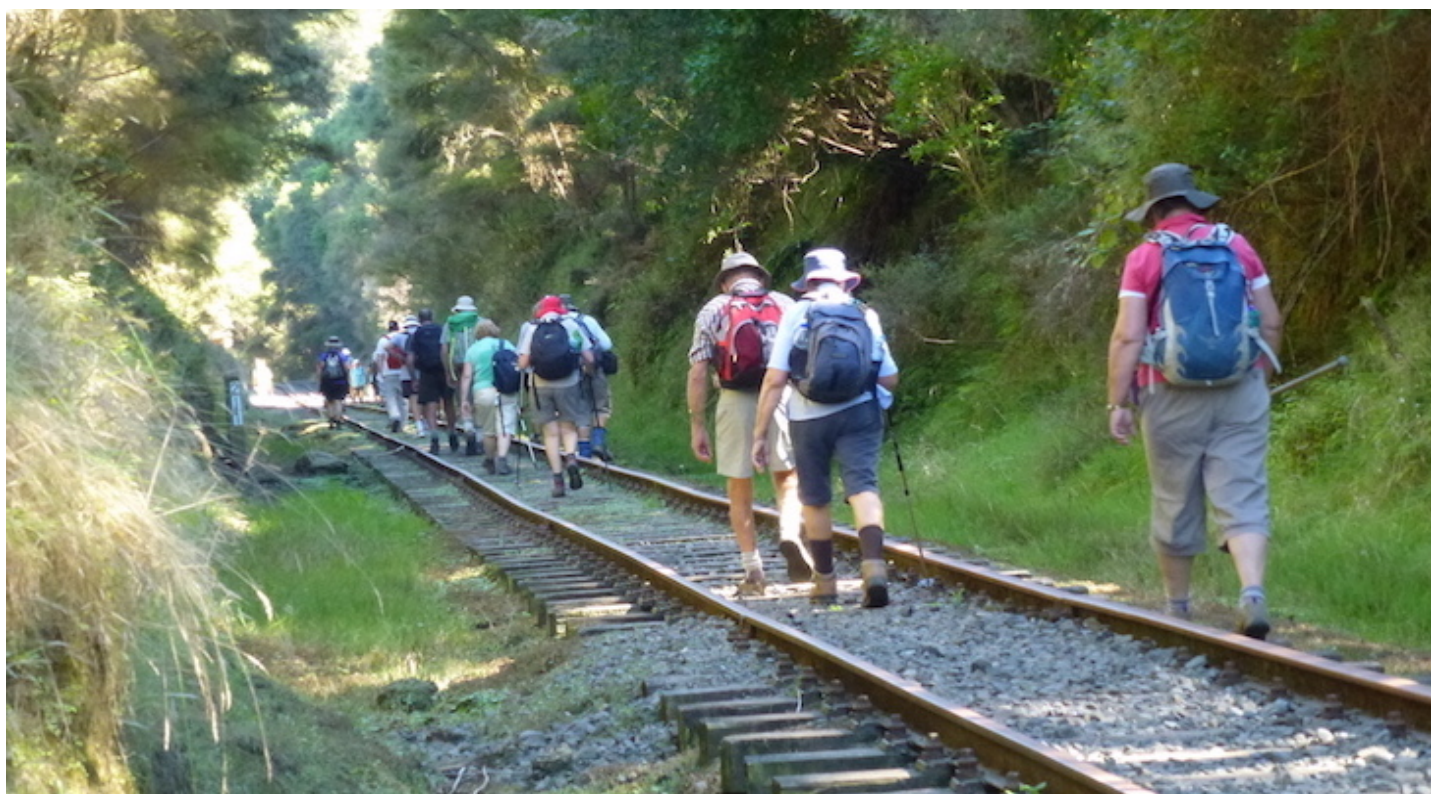


Photo: (Liz Carter) Tracking along at Kaiwaka Farm in the Esk Valley.

Forest & Bird

Hastings-Havelock North Newsletter

PO Box 8700

Havelock North 4157