



# Forest & Bird

GIVING NATURE A VOICE

## Waikato Branch NEWSLETTER February 2018

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#### Give us your email!

Please let us know if you have an email address and would prefer not to receive hard copy newsletters. This saves the branch in printing and mailing costs - money better spent on conservation projects.

Also we can update you about date or venue changes easily. Contributions for the newsletter are always welcome. Photos should be at least 300kb. Email to [waikato.branch@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:waikato.branch@forestandbird.org.nz)



<https://www.facebook.com/forestandbirdwaikato/>

### Chair Report 2018

Waikato Branch has been busy as usual, with annual activities, visits and trips. The year started with a display and children's activities thanks to Elizabeth Barker at World Wetlands Day at Rotopiko. The Branch also had a site at the Waikato Show in April with information about pest animals, and supported the Predator Free Hamilton stand next to us.

Labour Weekend camp was well attended at Ngatuhua Lodge in the Kaimais, with over thirty people including three generations from two families, and we will be trying again this year to get to Lions Hut in the Ureweras at Easter. Monthly walks have been reasonably well attended, and we have been treated to some interesting destinations, Rotoma, Te Whetu in the South Waikato, Waitawheta Valley, Waiorongamai, Mokaihaha, Hunua ranges, and local gullies. We hope more members will come on our monthly walks this year.

The plant sale at the beginning of May was very successful, raising over \$4800 for urban pest control. We are very grateful to the Corrections Waikeria Prison nursery who donated hundreds of well grown plants. Thanks also to Full Bloom and Growing Spectrum who were very generous once again. Plants not sold at the sale day were sold via Trademe.

We were also treated to some interesting evening talks, starting off with a Climate change presentation from Forest and Bird staff member Adelia Hallett, presentations from Valder grant recipients, our usual update from DoC, and Mathew Lillis talking about his engineering project in Vanuatu.

Our site at Fieldays was supported by Head Office and the Face to Face team were there. Thanks to those who volunteered on our stand and to Neale Blaymires of Triptraps for sharing his stand with us.

Working bees and pest control have been in evidence at our reserves. Walter Scott now has an active pest control network set up. Thanks to Neil Fitzgerald, Errol Balks, Keith Holborow and the Crake family, who have done such a great job monitoring and baiting, with a result of zero pests. Track markers have also been improved, and other maintenance carried out, when needed, by Bruce Dean and other committee members.

We also had a meeting out at the Morgan Reserve with the local farmer and Brian Habberfield-Short and Ian Bradshaw to check on the state of the reserve. At a later working bee in October the track was rerouted away from the kauri to try and prevent infestation from Kauri dieback. Brian has installed a boot cleaning station at the stile.

The committee was contacted to have a look at the Caldwell Reserve behind Countdown in Peachgrove Rd as there was concern about the state of it. This small patch of now sizable trees was planted by Athol Caldwell in the 1940s and 50s, and adjoined their half acre garden. Athol was a foundation Waikato Forest and Bird member. As a committee member he advised the Valder sisters about gifting Walter Scott Reserve to Forest and Bird. The committee organized a working bee in the Caldwell bush and we extracted large garden bags full of weeds and rubbish. The area is owned by Countdown and we feel rubbish collecting is their responsibility.

In October we supported a visit from Kelvin Hastie, NEXT Predator control Community

Champion from Wellington, who spoke at the Gardens on how he started the community groups down there. Predator Free Hamilton will be following some of his recommendations for getting community involvement with trapping in the city. A trap library is being established in Hamilton at Go Eco (Waikato Environment Centre).

There have been changes this year with regard to the National Office. Not only a new CE and Board Chairman, but also an attractive new office in Wellington. Kevin Hague, who is now firmly established as Chief Executive, attended our July committee meeting, along with our new Central North Island Regional Manager, Rebecca Stirnemann. Kevin outlined areas of action that will be addressed in future: campaigns, more diverse membership (especially the young), closer relationship between Head office and branches and raising revenue. The success of the Forest and Bird campaign to promote environment as an election issue was highlighted at the North Island meeting in Levin in November which was attended by committee members.

We are pleased to have Rebecca on board, and look forward to working with her. Her background includes working with honeybees, bats, reptiles, birds, mangroves, fish and trees in New Zealand, Australia, New Caledonia and Samoa. She has experience in the RMA field gained through consulting work determining environmental implications associated with large development consent applications, which will be useful for her role at Forest and Bird.

KCC has also had a busy year under the enthusiastic leadership of Briar Taylor-Smith. The KCC group helped to plant and release trees at Ed Hillary Hope Reserve with the Native Forest Restoration Trust. Another trip there was postponed due to bad weather. Briar represented KCC at the Enviroschools kids day out at Lake Karapiro and took the kids on a bug hunt and has more trips planned for this year.

My thanks to the hard working Waikato committee members, who have organized events, volunteers, camps, catering at meetings, and maintained our reserves. We also appreciate the input and enthusiasm from our members who do come on trips, to talks evenings or attend working days and events.

We do understand that some folk are happy to just pay the membership, and that is a vital part of being a member of a large organization which has the capacity to challenge poor environmental decisions by local or national government. Sadly some members have decided that that is not how they want their funds spent and decided not to renew membership. But it is important to understand that while there are many environmental NGO's now undertaking voluntary work, few have the capacity or funds to take the necessary action on the big issues and to lobby the powers that be in Wellington, which Forest and Bird is able to do.

So members, keep paying your valuable membership, read the magazine and become familiar with the battles which are being waged on our behalf and for New Zealand's natural world, whether it be for establishing badly needed marine reserves, protecting rivers, keeping coal in the ground and preserving important ecosystems, or campaigning for reductions in carbon emissions. New Zealand may be a small country but our ecological problems are immense. We all need to support our organisation to continue this work.

Katherine Hay

## Forest & Bird heading to Environment Court to defend Te Kuha

Forest & Bird is appealing the decision to grant resource consent to the proposed Te Kuha open cast coal mine, near Westport by West Coast Regional Council and Buller District Council.

"We're taking this to the Environment Court, because this place is too special to dig up for a coal mine," says Forest & Bird Chief Executive Kevin Hague. The mine would remove part of an intact forested mountain, clearly visible from Westport.

The site is home to great spotted kiwi and a host of other species threatened with extinction, including South Island fernbird, West Coast green gecko and the largest known population of the rare forest ringlet butterfly. Part of the proposed mine is also within the Buller Gorge outstanding landscape.

"We are appealing to prevent an open cast coal mine from removing these very special plants and animals, and destroying an important landscape."

"The mining industry claims the economic benefits outweigh the environmental costs, but in fact the benefits are overstated and the costs much higher than suggested," says Mr Hague.

Stevenson Mining Ltd still needs access arrangements from the Buller District Council and the Department of Conservation. Approximately 12 ha of the proposed mine's footprint is on conservation land, with the remainder on a Buller District Council water conservation reserve.

In October, Forest & Bird argued in the High Court that the Crown Minerals Act does not override the Council's obligations under the Reserves Act to maintain the natural features of the reserve. A decision is expected soon.

### To our walkers and campers -

*Please note:* for health and safety reasons we ask everyone coming on trips or camps to let the leader know their emergency contact details and any relevant health problems before the trip.

While we do take a PLB and first aid kit we expect that members will take care of their own personal requirements.

## Public urged to stay out of the forest

“Stop visiting the Waitakere Ranges forests until it’s safe for our kauri, or risk losing them forever” is the plea from leading conservation organisations, who are urging the public to respect a rāhui by local mana whenua Te Kawerau ā Maki, and help stop the spread of kauri dieback disease.

The Tree Council, Waitakere Ranges Protection Society, Forest & Bird and the Friends of Regional Parks are asking the public to support the temporary closure by staying away from bush tracks and forested areas within the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park until essential actions are taken to protect kauri.

A rāhui, which is being placed over the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park by Te Kawerau ā Maki from Saturday 2nd December, restricts use of or access to an area or resource by unauthorised persons. This restriction of access to the public allows the environment to heal without human impacts, and provides time for planning and remedial work to be undertaken in a controlled and safe manner. The rāhui will not restrict access to beaches, public land adjacent to beaches, private land or public roads.

According to The Tree Council’s Secretary Mels Barton, Auckland Council has not acted fast enough to stop the spread of the disease since alarming reports in August. “Auckland Council reported that the spread of kauri dieback in the Waitakeres had more than doubled from 8% 5 years ago to 19% of kauri infected now. Urgent action such as widespread upgrades of tracks and cleaning stations had to be made as well as the closing of tracks around healthy kauri, but this has just not happened.”

President of the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society John Edgar says that infection is definitely being spread mainly by people, rather than wild animals. “The majority of the infection is along the track network and worst in the areas with heaviest foot traffic, which is why it is so important to restrict public access.”



**Bioblitz day at Rotopiko** - interested young KCC-ers learning about fungi from Peter Buchanan from Landcare.

### Go visit GO ECO

(formerly Waikato Environment Centre)  
www.goeco.org.nz



Mon-Fri: 10am - 4pm Sat: 9am - 1pm

Go Eco is now in Frankton, in the old PO building on the corner of Commerce St and Kent St.

There is a great new shop, perfect for finding interesting and sustainable gifts or refilling your detergent and other bottles.

There is also a meeting space which groups can use, just book with Kelly on 839 4452.

Kaivolution is also operating out of the premises, (as seen on TV) continuing to rescue food from landfill and supplying those in need.

Committee Members	Phone	Mobile	Email	Responsibilities
Katherine Hay		021 267 2773	khaypear.co.nz	Chairperson, Newsletter.
Philip Hart	07 856 7992		prhart@waikato.ac.nz	Secretary, Trips
Bill Vant	07 856 2505		vantbill@gmail.com	Treasurer
Adua Geremia	07 843 3375		aduageremia@yahoo.co.nz	Membership, Publicity
Bruce Dean	07 827 2874			Morgan Res, Walter Scott
Jane McLeod	07 856 2505	021 146 7789	jane.mcleod64@gmail.com	Minutes secretary, Publicity, Trips, Meeting catering contact.
Jon Wenham	07 855 8852		jonwenham@gmail.com	Conservation grants, Publicity
Julie Dorofaeff	07 8435430	022 408 2163	jfdorofaeff@xtra.co.nz	Rosters
Miles Barker	07 856 3778	027 673 8660	mbarker@waikato.ac.nz	Valder Grants
Kevin Collins	07 859 2606	021 341 749	kevcollins20007@yahoo.com	Submissions, newsletter
Diana Aquilina		027 531 4059	diana_aquilina@hotmail.co.uk	
Briar Taylor Smith	021 293 4832		briar6@gmail.com	KCC

Please address all correspondence to ‘Secretary, PO Box 11092, Hillcrest, Hamilton’ or waikato.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

**Please - Let us know if you have changed your email address!**

## TRIP REPORTS

### 11TH JUNE GULLY RAMBLE



Keith and Jeanette Holborow followed by Leo Koppens in Tamahere gully

A large group of Forest & Birders gathered in Tauwhare Rd on a crisp winter's morning to look through the Tamahere Reserve under the escort of Leo Koppens. Leo is one of the core of hardworking volunteers who formed the Tamahere-Mangaone Restoration Trust – the trust aims to restore the neglected 4.6 ha reserve to its native state, a daunting task involving the removal of a wide variety of weeds and introduced trees. Volunteers have built several boardwalks and bridges over the Mangaone Stream and swampy flats to make the gully accessible for visitors and volunteers. A steep path leads down from the road to the stream and wetlands and swings back up the side of the gully making a circular route. We saw some of the 96 kahikatea growing there – possibly up to 400 years old. The group has also undertaken new plantings of native shrubs and trees, with variable success. (See <https://www.tamahereforum.co.nz/tamahere-reserve/> for more information and how to sign up to help with this very worthy project.) In 2016 Leo was nominated for the Volunteer of the Year Award in recognition of his hard work.

A brief diversion took us to the Allan Turner walkway (another of Leo's projects) to admire the new swing bridge that goes over the Mangaharakeke Stream. The bridge connects the end of Woodcock Rd with Fuchsia Lane and is well worth a visit – for the view from the bridge and trying out the short walkway that goes down to the stream.

Next on the itinerary was the Bruce McKay's Te Inanga Gully Garden near Queenwood, named for the Ngati Wairere pa that existed here from about 1700 AD. It is also named "The Garden of Earthly Delights" – aptly named as the pathways down into the gully from the back lawn have a wonderful array of delights: large pottery sculptures, tall tree ferns, the sound of water trickling into the grotto, flights of steps in different materials. Bruce and Russell Armitage began planting native trees, shrubs and ferns under the existing canopy of exotics, removing the latter when possible, and selecting species tolerant of the dense shade or more open

areas. The gully garden is cool and peaceful, and seats of pottery, tiles and stone have been provided at key points for visitors (and family) to sit and enjoy the ambience. We queued up to spot the cave weta in a small grotto, its legs poking out of a small hollow. Kahikatea without holes in their leaves and a large gingko giving the gully a splash of yellow were other highlights.

The third gully we visited was the Mangaiti gully in Rototuna, where the Mangaiti Gully Restoration Group has been busy over the last six years removing weeds, restoring native vegetation and undertaking predator control. Rex Bushell escorted us around the features of the gully: newly-cut tracks, boardwalks, a shade house for nurturing seedlings, and a small bridge that is supported only on chains allowing the bridge to ride out floods. The first stop was a fenced off area with a Corokia hedge, to protect some copper skinks from cats. Puriri moths are found in the gully - the group is careful to replace the moths' favoured habitat of privet and willow with an indigenous substitute, lacebark. Weta and morepork nesting boxes have also been installed. Check out Rex's blog: <http://gullyrestoration.blogspot.co.nz/>.

The trip was an enjoyable family day out, the opportunity to see what can be done to restore our local gullies – albeit with a lot of hard work, something we all recognised and acknowledged.

*Lynne Williams*

### WALK - SUNDAY 9TH JULY TUI DOMAIN TRACK IN TE AROHA



A small group of enthusiasts started off from the Te Aroha Domain in grey conditions and soon had the pleasure of the rain enhancing the foliage, creeks and Tutumangao Falls (above).

From there we scrambled across the stream bed and followed a wire rope up to Noel's Look-out.

For an excellent guide to this beautiful and interesting area go to: <https://motowalknz.com/2016/02/21/tui-domain-track-te-aroha/>

Thanks Raewynn and Geoff Foreman for checking the state of the track several times prior to venturing out with us. We thoroughly enjoyed the day, and the geyser blowing on our return was an unexpected bonus.

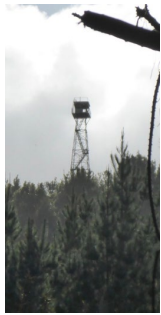
*Jane McLeod*

## TRIP REPORTS

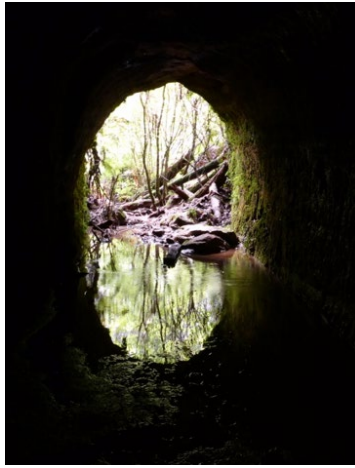
### TE WHETU 13 August

Another great outing with Robin Black from Hancock Forest Management who once again treated us to a tiki-tour of interesting sites around the Te Whetu area.

At our first stop we walked through exotic forest and up to the Urewera Pā site, where evidence of occupation is easily still visible.



Then on to the Tramway tunnel built around 1916, and about 400m long, which was used to transport logs to Te Whetu mill. Drove past the Fire tower, now not used or climbable, and due for demolition, to the nationally significant lake for lunch. This area contains several rare and threatened bird species including Spotless Crake (Puweto) and NZ Dabchick (Taratimoho).



We visited the old Te Whetu school site, where the pool is still in evidence, but the school building has been moved to Tokoroa.

And finally a walk through the redwoods, which proved to be useless as a timber tree in NZ but excellent for movie making, as Pete's Dragon was filmed there. Thanks for Robin for another very enjoyable day.

*Katherine Hay*



### WAITEKAURI 10TH SEPTEMBER

We met at Waikino railway station on a rather overcast day, and expected not to stay dry all day.



We drove up the road to Waikato branch's Morgan Reserve in the Waitekauri Valley, where locals have been undertaking some predator control on our behalf and many young seedlings are growing in the reserve.

From there we drove up to the head of the valley to inspect the remains of the latest Golden Cross mine, and looked at the remediation taking place now that the mining there has finished. Drainage pipes could be seen along the roadsides.

Then we ambled over the saddle to the coach road part-way down into the Maratoto Valley through bush, with remnants of mining operations along the way. Lunch was rudely interrupted by a sudden hail shower, which also filled the spiders webs hanging beside the paths.

*Katherine Hay*



### LABOUR WEEKEND CAMP OCTOBER 21 - 23

We met at the locked gate on Omanawa Road on Saturday morning; 29 people from all stages of life.

The camp was well set up, with an interesting array of solar and hydro generation to provide power, as it is off-grid.

Saturday afternoon we headed out around the loop walk, coming back along and through a stream bed, a tributary of the Ngatuhua Stream, which some found to be a bit challenging and wet. *Olearia rani* was in full flower in a clearing, and *Clematis paniculata*, and *Alsueosmia* were sighted further along.

Next day the forecast wasn't perfect, so there were two alternatives. Everyone started on the Te Rereioturu Falls track crossing the very safe swingbridge across Ngatuhua Stream, just opposite the lodge. We returned to

## REPORTS Continued



Frankhams Rd track half way along, where half our number turned back to the lodge and the rest of us carried on to cut across to the Falls, which are on the Opuaki River, down what turned out to be a fairly steep descent, and tested our nerves on a fairly fearsome looking ladder. Brave souls that we are, we all made it and were rewarded with falls boosted by recent rain. Then back the way we came, up to Frankham's Rd and home through not so inspiring scrub in the rain.



Thanks to April for the following contribution, just one of many experiences on our camp at Ngatuhoa Lodge...

### The Water Hole

(A story by April Hartmann, aged 11)

My shaky hands grabbed hold of the top rope, and my teeth chattered in the cold as I shuffled my numb feet across the bottom one. I could hear a roar, but I didn't know whether it was the rushing stream bashing against the rocks, or my brain screaming at me, trying to convince me to go back. I edged closer and closer to the spot I'd promised, regretting my decision with every step. Finally I stopped, and sat down on the bottom rope, the harsh wind smashing across my face. I took a deep breath and let go of the top rope.

I felt myself falling through the cold air, my hair was in my face and I couldn't see anything. And then it hit me. No, not an idea of how I could've gotten out of this mess, I mean, the

water hit me. I was engulfed in icy water, as my foot scraped across a sharp rock. I couldn't feel anything, and it took me all my strength to hold back a scream. I looked up towards the surface of the water, and with a big kick off the rock, I swam upwards.

I gasped and spluttered for air as I emerged out of the freezing water. I clung to the nearest rock to catch my breath, and my shaking hands grasped around a helping hand, as I was pulled out of the water. I sat on the rock, gasping, coughing, as people around me called out "Are you OK?" I merely nodded, because my jaw was too numb to move. Finally I rose up to my feet, and, after regaining my balance, I grabbed hold of the rope and ventured out to do the exact same thing...

### MOKAIHAHA WALK (with Waikato Botanical Society) SUNDAY OCTOBER 8TH

Undeterred by a somewhat unattractive departure time of 5am and rotten weather (rain), fifteen souls headed into the wet dawn at Mokaihaaha Ecological Area, approximately



20 km east of Tokoroa. Around 2137 hectares in size, the Ecological Area is the largest surviving block of a once extensive mixed podocarp-tawa-kamahahi forest which blanketed the crest and western fall of the Mamaku Plateau. The Department of Conservation and the Mokaihaaha Kōkako Trust and volunteers are undertaking possum and rat control in the Ecological Area to help safeguard the resident native fauna. This forest is home to a range of threatened fauna including a significant population of kōkako which occupy a core area of approximately 850 ha in the north-western corner of the reserve.

This area of forest has never been logged, so the podocarps rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*), matai (*Prumnopitys taxifolia*), miro (*Prumnopitys ferruginea*) and kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*) still dominate as emergent giants from a mixed canopy of mainly kamahahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*), tawa (*Beilschmiedia tawa*) and tawari (*Ixerba brexioides*). Hinau (*Elaeocarpus dentatus*), black maire (*Nestegis cunninghamii*), pigeonwood (*Hedycarya arborea*) also feature strongly. The forest understory also supports a healthy diversity of plant species including mahoe (*Meliclytus ramiflorus*), putaputaweta (*Carpodetus serratus*), poataniwha (*Melicope simplex*), pate (*Schefflera digitata*), five-finger (*Pseudopanax arboreus*) pepperwoods (*Pseudowintera colorata* and *P. axillaris*), a range of Coprosma spp. and tree ferns (*Cyathea smithii*, *C. dealbata*, *Dicksonia squarrosa*, *D. fibrosa*).

Almost every trunk and fallen giant also abounds with a rich diversity of epiphytes and climbers (supplejack – *Ripogonum scandens*, bush-lawyers – *Rubus spp.*, native jasmine – *Parsonsia sp.*, rata vines – *Metrosideros spp.*), filmy ferns (*Hymenophyllum spp.*), mosses, liverworts and lichens.

As the contour of the area is relatively flat we had to be careful not to become too botanically distracted in the dull light and falling rain; relying on marked bait lines to eventually guide us back to our starting point on the western boundary of the reserve. The trip was not only enjoyable from a plant perspective; much to our delight it was the rare treasure of kōkako song that accompanied us early into our walk. Over the course of the day robin, kaka, whitehead, grey warbler, morepork (and even a black-backed gull) also made themselves known.

Thanks to Katherine Hay (Project Coordinator Mokaihaha kōkako recovery project) for organising the trip and keeping an eye on the wandering botanists!

*Catherine Beard*

## HUNUA TRAMP 12TH NOVEMBER

This was one outing I was looking forward to as the Hunua range area offers some very scenic viewing with well manicured tracks. Well this is Auckland's back door step and we do have to look after those poor souls who inhabit the big smoke. Toss in the chance of a potential kōkako hearing or sighting in the special management area and it was all on.

Passing through the pleasant village of Clevedon one was tempted to stop and check out the buzz of the Sunday Farmers' market but more pressing things were afoot ..

Meeting at the parking area at the start of the track we had been in convoy as special gate access had been organised by our enthusiastic leader Keith, who was very familiar with the area being a volunteer for the kōkako project. Meeting a number of pig hunters on the way in we had a surprise when a hunter on a push bike with a small trophy over the handle bars rode past coming out accompanied by a couple of proud looking canines.

On our first foray into the bush we soon came across a very impressive kaka box high on a tree trunk. The apparent residents call was heard nearby and who could blame him, it was a flash looking residence to be sure. Further in on the well defined track we became aware of the extensive trapping programme that was being carried out with even high tech radio attachments on some trap boxes that could be monitored. Bill, one of the more observant of our group, requested an explanation from the experienced trapper Keith who explained that the small plastic bags of bait in the traps were a measured amount and kept direct handling and human odour off the rodents 'pop corn' who were happy to chew into their tempting feast.

Up to the top lookout tower for a panoramic 360 degree vista for our lunch break. This is the highest point in the ranges, and the Hauraki Gulf, Manukau Harbour and



Firth of Thames and even the Waikato came into view. Alas, kōkako were dozing but other bird sighting and an afternoon tea with research people studying Hochsetter frogs at the suitably named 'Chateau Kōkako' research hut in the area meant we had had a great day out with some of us stopping for an obigitory icecream back home down the Miranda Coast to home base. Thanks Keith for your expert guidance on the very enjoyable day out.

*Bob Cuming.*



## Kea worse off

Our beloved Bird of the Year is now internationally endangered. The kea has been upgraded from 'vulnerable' to 'endangered' in BirdLife International's reassessment of the threat status of birds for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

"Every year, kea nests are destroyed by introduced predators like rats, stoats, possums, and feral cats," says Forest & Bird Chief Conservation Adviser Kevin Hackwell.

"Kea who don't regularly interact with people really benefit from large-scale aerial predator control."

Following a study that found that only 2% of kea nests were successful, aerial applications of 1080 by Department of Conservation in 2015 resulted in nest success increasing to 27%. "However, those kea that are fed by tourists and some locals tend to try novel foods, and sadly, they are particularly susceptible to eating the poison baits used to kill predators."

"One of our greatest conservation challenges is to stop tourists and others from feeding kea. We can best help kea by never offering them food," says Mr Hackwell.

There are now only 3,000 - 7,000 kea left.

Kea are also impacted by climate change as warming temperatures could limit their habitat range in alpine environments.

\* Join us for a catered meal on Talks nights, 6.15pm. Bookings for dinner prior to the talk to Jane McLeod by the previous Sunday \$15.00 per person, phone 856 2505 or email jane.mcleod64@gmail.com

### WALK - 11 MARCH

#### TAUKANI HILL AND PIVOT ROCK AT KARANGAHAKE

Meet at 9.00am, at main Karangahake car park in the village.

Easy to Moderate. Bring torches.

We will walk to the start of the windows walk at Karangahake and then bush bash about 10m to a very old and hidden track that remains in good condition.

The track takes one to the top of Taukani Hill which is on the opposite side of the Waitawheta River from Mt Karangahake. At the top we will explore some old mine sites, an old house site, and the places where there were two cable ways dropping material to the Ohinemuri and Waitawheta rivers. Finally we will walk around to the the famous 'pivot rock'. Party will be lead by Bob Jordan and Kevin Montague who have made a number of trips into the area over the last 12 months.

Contact Philip Hart if you are wanting to come on this trip prhart1940@gmail.com or phone 856 7992

### TALK Thursday 15 MARCH NZ'S INVERTEBRATES

7.30pm Chartwell Room, Hamilton Gardens Pavilion.

Dr Briar Taylor Smith (our KCC co-ordinator) will talk about NZ's invertebrate diversity focussing on NZ's weta and how she has been sharing her love of bugs with Waikato children.

\* Meal - See box for details

### WALTER SCOTT COMMUNITY DAY 25th MARCH

(This is our event for Go-Eco's EcoFest 10 - 25 March)

10.30am

Come along and hear what our neighbours and volunteers are doing about pest control, and how you might be able to be involved, and have a walk around the bush before a delicious lunch at 12.00 noon. Please bring

## Events Calendar

6 - 8 APRIL

### WAIKATO SHOW - TE PAPANUI

Waikato Branch will have a stand in the forest section about pest animals at the Show. If anyone would like to help please contact Julie Doroffaef jfdorofaeff@xtra.co.nz or 022 408 2163.

WALK - 14 APRIL

### WAIRERE FALLS - Kaimai Ranges (average/hard)

Leave Hamilton at 9.00am.

Meet at the carpark at the end of Goodwin road, off Old Te Aroha road. 10.30 am. Enjoy a walk to the head of the falls. There are many steps and a steepish, but fairly easy climb to the top. We will take our time and botanise. Bring lunch, warm clothes and good rain gear!

Leader: Katherine Hay, khay@pear.co.nz, or 0212672773

## AGM

Thursday 19th APRIL

7.30pm

Speaker: Anton van Helden, Marine Advocate for Forest & Bird.

Anton is a wonderful speaker, and will be drawing on his amazing range of talents to get serious messages across about whales and sound and how that is impacting on them.

Anton worked at Te Papa Museum of New Zealand for over 23 years as Collection Manager - Marine Mammals.

Along with his cetacean expertise, he is also an accomplished illustrator, musician, entertainer, improviser and magician - it will be an interesting evening, don't miss it!

\* Meal - See box for details

plates (empty) and cups.

Please RSVP to Jane McLeod by Wed. 21st, ph 856 2505 or email jane.mcleod64@gmail.com if you are coming for catering and cancellation purposes (and provide contact phone number).

To get to Walter Scott:

80 Scott Rd, Puketotara 3876

Intersection of Scott and Pekanui Roads off Pirongia-Kawhia Road.

Drive up Scott Rd to the carpark on the left. There are no toilet facilities there.

## EASTER CAMP

30 APRIL - 2 MAY

TE UREWERA NATIONAL PARK +KCC

Join us out in the wilds of the Ureweras at the Lions Hut, up the Waimana Valley, 2143 Matahi Valley Rd, Te Urewera. We could also call in at the Tuhoi Centre at Taneatua on the way.

Cost is \$10 per person per night, children \$5 with the branch subsidy plus food (all up usually about \$70).

We will have a range of activities. All meals except Friday night supplied and shared cooking as per usual.

**Book early:** \$20.00 per head to 88 Nixon St, Hamilton 3216 or direct payment into Forest and Bird Waikato branch account 06-0369-0036337-00 Reference: Name and ECamp (or similar) and phone/text Katherine on 021 267 2773; email: khay@pear.co.nz

## NATIVE PLANT SALE

Saturday/Sunday 5/6 MAY

9 - 12 noon

88 Nixon St, Hamilton East.

If anyone is interested in helping out with the plant sale, either collecting plants from nurseries, or on the morning of the sale, please email the branch.

waikato.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

WALK - Sunday 13th MAY

AONGATETE, KAIMAI/MAMAKU

Leave Hamilton by 8.30 to arrive at the public carpark in Wright Road, near the Education Centre about 10.15.

We'll most likely do the longer loop track about 4 hours and moderate difficulty - there are stream crossings and some steeper bits, so good footwear is essential.

Leader Jane McLeod phone 856 2505 or email jane.mcleod64@gmail.com

WALK - Sunday 10th JUNE

PUKEMOKEMOKE, TAUHEI

Nice easy walk, not too far from home.

The 40ha Pukemokemoke reserve, just 20 minutes north of Hamilton includes nine sites of interest, which are marked along the track; There is also a great 360 ° view from the top. Leave Hamilton 10am and turn right into Whitikahu Rd and into Tauhei Rd to arrive at the carpark about 10.30am. Leader Katherine Hay 0212672773 or khay@pear.co.nz



## Events Calendar continued

### FIELDAYS - 13-16 JUNE:

Volunteers needed for our stand. Please let Julie Doroffaef know if you are able to help on our stand at Fieldays.

jfdoroffaef@xtra.co.nz or 022 408 2163

There will be two people on morning and afternoon - we give you a pass, and then you are free to check out Fieldays. Just involves chatting to people, telling them about the branch, conservation issues and our activities, handing out brochures etc.

### WALK - Sunday 8th JULY

#### WALTER SCOTT BUGS TRIP

Join us for a session with KCC at Walter Scott reserve looking for beasties in the bush with an expert bugs person.

Contact Briar Taylor Smith  
Phone: 0212 934 832

### TALK - Thursday 12th JULY

#### Valder Grant reports

7.30pm at Hamilton Gardens. Hear about more projects which have received grants from our branch.

\* Meal - see box

Coming up but more details in next newsletter - put them in your diary:

### WALK - Sunday 12th August

#### Mapara and Oamaru Falls

Leader Keith Wilkinson

### WALK - Sunday 9th September

#### Waihi area

Leader Sue Lean

### TALK - Tuesday 11th September

#### DoC update

### Walk - Sunday 14th October

#### Otanewainuku

### Labour Weekend Camp

#### 19 - 22 October

#### Shakespear Lodge,

Whangaparaoa Peninsula



## What we have been up to -

KCC went to Blue Spring to check out the amazing clear water. The spring is fed from the Mamaku Plateau where the water takes up to 100 years to filter through. One of the kids took his fishing rod and caught a trout.

We helped to plant and release trees at Ed Hillary Hope Reserve with the Native Forest Restoration Trust.

Our second trip to Ed Hillary Hope and our Pukemokemoke trip were cancelled due to bad weather but we'll be back at both places later in the year.

Briar represented KCC at the Enviroschools kids day out at Lake Karapiro and took the kids on a bug hunt.

### Register your interest in our third trip:

#### March 10th: A free tour of Maungatautari!

What: A free nature tour for all ages

When: March 10th

Where: At this amazing place

How: At this stage, please let me know that you are keen by registering your interest. Spaces are limited.

Looking forward to adventures with you all soon :)

Briar



Admiring the clear water at Blue Spring

## February 16th: Rotopiko Bioblitz

Last Friday

afternoon

KCC and the

Kirikiroa

Explorers went

along to the

Lake Rotopiko

BioBlitz. We

explored the site

with scientists

and volunteers

to look for as

many different

species as we

could possibly find.

We explored the Jurassic

Forest where we aged the amazing kahikatea

and we circled the lake learning about wetlands.

The scientists answered all our questions

about fungi, bacteria, plants, invertebrates

and pests. Amazing drone footage was taken

and we got to be part of it and have a close up

look at the Landcare Research drone. By the

end of the BioBlitz, scientists and volunteers

had identified 193 plant species, 52 different

kinds of fungi, 28 spider species, plus loads

more other creatures. Fortunately pest

mammals were only found on the outside of

the predator-proof fence.

If your family hasn't been to Lake Rotopiko yet,

KCC highly recommends it; there's an activity

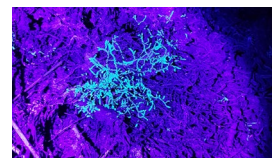
trail for kids and great tracks that you can take

a pushchair on. The lake is also a Kiwi Guardian

site, so take the kids, find the secret code and

enter the code online to claim a free medal.

Dr Briar Taylor Smith



Fluorescent lichen in Walter Scott Reserve - Photo Briar Taylor-smith

# Car Pooling

Help protect our planet from the effects of climate change and pollution (and reduce costs) by carpooling when going on Forest and Bird trips and camps.

Please phone the leader of the trip a couple of days in advance to organise if you need, or can offer, a ride. Please do offer the driver a reasonable contribution towards their petrol costs.

# Cancellation of Walks

Walks will go ahead unless there is a really adverse forecast, but check with the leader if unsure.



Return Address  
Waikato Branch Forest and Bird  
PO Box 11 092  
Hillcrest  
Hamilton

