



Forest & Bird

GIVING NATURE A VOICE

Southland Branch Newsletter

October 2018

An Opening word from our Chair:

The future hasn't been written yet, but I saw previews of it at the Spring Eco Festival in Invercargill. The annual festival brings together the leading lights in our transition from the Age of Oil to the Age of....we're not sure yet, but we do know that it needs to be in tune with the natural world in ways the fossil fuel age wasn't.

While some of our global "leaders" drag their feet and stubbornly – wilfully – ignore the evidence of climate change, down here at ground level where it counts, plenty is happening to create a sustainable future.

Three examples from the festival –

1. The people I met who have either gone off grid or are about to. They've slowly built up the PVs and other infrastructure and they're taking the plunge to being in command of their own domestic energy. As costs come down it is becoming more achievable and more mainstream. On behalf of our big wild rivers, I am grateful to these pioneers.
2. The South Alive community development initiative is doing great things towards creating a neighbourhood-level sharing economy. They are putting in mechanisms for people to share what they have excess of, and what they need. It's one of several such schemes that bring people together outside of the competitive individualism of the profit-driven market to ensure that essential resources are distributed fairly.
3. Electric vehicles. There were cars, a hot-rod, and an assortment of differently-wheeled bikes. I was there with my Leaf, and the interest in electric forms of transport was hectic. There was a constant stream of people wanting to know the ins and outs = because they knew that sooner or later they would ditch their reliance on fossil fuels.

Everyone who contributes to or attends events like the Eco Festival is helping to build the gentler, more sustainable future we need. And on the subject of contributing – please take time to attend some of the events we have planned for the summer programme – from saving penguins, to planting native plants, to supporting landowners who are doing good things and having fun helping out on some great projects. Thanks for your contribution in whatever form it takes!

Lori Johnston
Chair- Southland Branch

Southland Branch Committee:

Lori, Johnstone Christine Henderson, Neill Robertson, (Manapouri), Chris and Brian Rance, Gay Munro, Marie Lockie, Edith Jones, Jenny Campbell (Mossburn), Peggy Snoep, Margaret Hopkins (Stewart Island), Ruth Dalley (Te Anau, Maryann Darmody, Amy and Beth Duffill-Brookes

If you haven't received this newsletter via email then it means Head Office Membership team do not have your email address. Please contact the Branch or Membership Team directly membership@forestandbird.org.nz and give them your email if you want to receive emails from the Branch about changes to the programme of events.

Forest and Bird Addresses:

Southland Branch PO Box 1155, Invercargill

Southern Region Office – Sue Maturin PO Box 364, Dunedin

Central Office – PO Box 631, Wellington

www.forest-bird.org.nz

Our committee is keen to hear from any member who can help out with a variety of tasks. If you are good with technology we could do with help setting up the monthly talk equipment, if you like design maybe you could help with Newsletters or facebook page, or help with trips, submissions, stalls, events, Te Rere, Tautuku or something new for the Branch email Chris-rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz



Southland Branch of Forest and Bird

When you join Forest and Bird and you live in Southland, you automatically become a member of Southland Branch – one of the 46 branches throughout NZ. Nationally, Forest and Bird employs staff in Wellington and a Regional Coordinator (ours is Sue Maturin, Based in Dunedin). At Branch level we are all volunteers who spend time organising Branch projects like Southland's Te Rere Penguin Colony and Tautuku Reserve, support other conservation projects, make submissions, support campaigns and generally "Give nature a voice".

Your financial contribution through membership is crucial to the running of the organisation, but at branch level you can also make a difference by helping or supporting locally focussed projects or issues. The Branch also runs a Kiwi Conservation Club for children with events each month Bronwyn KCC 2130017 or email southland@kcc.org.nz

To be able to communicate about events, or changes to the programme of trips we need your email address, so if head office don't have your email details the branch cant communicate with you. Also a plea to any members who have changed their email in the last year please let us know so the membership team can add your new email to their membership details.

If you don't want to receive branch emails that is fine – just let us know by reply email to the branch southland.branch@forestandbird.org.nz or email directly to membership@forestandbird.org.nz

Why I Support 1080



I support the use of 1080.

The reason why I am writing this - possibly rather lengthy article- is that friends I love and respect have questioned why I support 1080. So let me tell you my story.

As a human being on this planet, I'm strongly aware the impact we have had on our country, Aotearoa. And one of the worst effects we had was to bring all sorts of mammalian predators and browsers to systematically destroy our native forests, tussock lands, birdlife, bats, insects, frogs, and fish. Our native species are in crisis. Over 2000 species are facing extinction ... that's "no going back" territory. So I started working for Forest & Bird 15 years ago ... I'm that passionate about nature. My partner and I also came from a background in organics and are passionate about protecting our world from the rampant use of toxic substances. So I will admit to having had a fair amount of scepticism about 1080.

However, we decided we needed to research the issue, question the science, and really understand the complex dynamics occurring in nature. He has a Bachelor's degree in Ecology and I have a Master's degree in Geography. We weren't prepared to have any wool

pulled over our eyes (sheep talk!). The long and the short of it was - the science stacks up, and continues to do so every year. It doesn't mean to say there haven't been challenges with 1080, and - as with anything - each year we learn about how we can better use it to target rats and stoats - building on the longer-held knowledge with its use for possums. So from my point of view, 1080 is an essential tool needed in this fundamentally important issue we have with introduced predators and browsers.

People have suggested we could better trap our way out of our dilemma, but having run a trapping line now for over 5 years, I can see the sheer impossibility of the task. We cover 200 hectares, have 30 volunteers checking traps on a once weekly basis. We aim for rats, mustelids and possums. And even with our huge effort, we barely struggle to keep a lid on the critters. We mix it up with different traps, different lures and bait, and even pulse bait stations ... but still we can't get on top of them. One of the big reasons is because they keep reinvading from areas outside our zone that aren't trapped - and that country is steep, gnarly, and harder to get to.

People argue it's a poison in our environment, but it is actually more biodegradable than other toxins. And so often I think - if you are genuinely concerned about toxins - that you would be better to address the PM10 emissions from the cars in your area, worry about overuse of herbicides and pesticides in your council parks and streets, worry about the rat bait put out in your neighbour's garage or back yard, or the smog created from bad wood fires. Those things are much more immediate and will kill a lot more people than 1080.

People argue that the death is not humane - and I hear that pain. But the reality is, we will lose our native species ... and every time they are murdered on their nests - that too is painful. Show me an ideal world!

I actually find that most of the anti-1080 people have some other agenda - and it seems to be driven by those who are hunters in the main. They actually want our forests to be full of deer, goats, and pigs. Yet those beasts are responsible for the collapse of our forest understorey. Go into an open beech forest - that's not natural. Its understorey has been eaten out by browsing mammals. It's not a healthy forest. 1080 will kill mammals, there is no doubt about it. But at least they have another place to call home, and extinction isn't on their agenda. But it's either them, or the kiwi, kaka, bats, tomtits, riflemen, robin, etc etc.

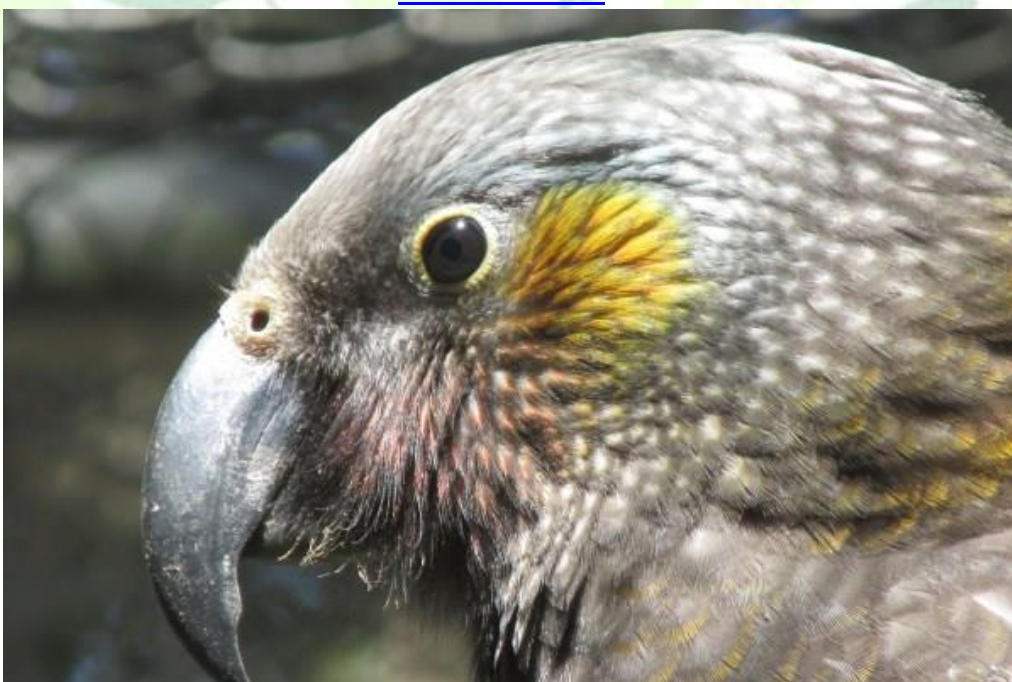
Some people opposed to 1080 are opposed to it because of a fundamental concern for the well-being of animals, or because they are opposed to toxins. I suggest if you are strongly opposed to toxins, then please put your effort into the unnecessary use of neonicotinoids that are affecting our bees; and if you care for the well-being of other animals - please consider that extinction is forever. There is no "nice middle road". That is what our native species are facing. Supposed arguments that our native animals are being wiped out by 1080 is patently false, and any rigorous scientific investigation post 1080 operation will show you that.

Finally, it's like our forests have a cancer - that without substantial help - will die. One of those tools in the toolkit that we know how to help is 1080. Do you really want to be part of denying our forests and the wildlife within them that help?

I decided I couldn't rest at night without giving them all the help they needed.

Debs Martin

<https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/resources/frequently-asked-questions-about-1080>



Kiwi Conservation Club Southland



Matariki at the Nursery



We had a great Matariki celebration in the Education Centre on Saturday night following laid out silver ferns through the tracks to the nursery. Around 50 people came and joined with Kiwi Conservation Club kids in making lanterns, learning the moves to the Matariki macarena song, toasting marshmallows and enjoying shared food. Lanterns were made from glass jars with Matariki designs and stones were also painted. A quiet moment of reflection in the dark encouraged everyone to think about things that had happened in the previous year and what was to look forward to in the new season. Even the stars and the planets were out and we all enjoyed seeing them through the telescopes. Thanks to Chris & Brian, Linda & Ray, Lloyd and to everyone for joining in the fun and providing some very yummy food to share.



Kiwi Conservation Club Southland

KCC Exploring at the Nursery 18 August 2018r



A beautiful sunny day meant that for this event we were able to wander outdoors, exploring all the way. We first noticed the monkey puzzle tree, feeling how prickly it was and learning that it is a native of Chile in South America. The 10 children and 6 adults then headed out towards the pond, stopping to feed the resident ducks and hearing all about how Chris and Brian have created the pond and planted NZ natives. Learning about the adjacent Bushy Point reserve and how the Otatara Landcare Group is restoring this area, and seeing the plantings over the years filled in the afternoon. We had a kai stop at the Bushy Point pond and it was great to just sit and be in nature. We look forward to the Bushy Point planting day on 8 September.

Bronwyn Graham





Southland Community Nursery and Education Centre

– it's a happening place!

A native plant nursery, with volunteer mornings every Friday, School groups and other groups by arrangement, a series of workshops throughout the year, a venue for meetings and corporate get-togethers – To find out more check out www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz Or Email ChrisRances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz

In the last year the Education Centre has been visited by over **1000** school children! See what they got up to at:
<http://www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz/news-and-events/>



For further information on workshops and booking details see the following link. We will be adding new workshops so keep checking
<http://www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz/education-centre/activities/workshops/>



Like us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/Southland-Community-Nursery-1824134004516199/?ref=nf>

The Southland Community Nursery is open again for spring!



Volunteers are welcome to come anytime from 9am – noon every Friday. Seeds sowed in autumn are coming up and there are lots of clean-up jobs in the nursery as well as the usual potting, pricking out, weeding, moving plants, track work etc. With the good spring weather plants are coming into flower early – kowhai, fuchsia and pittosporum are in full flower giving bellbirds and tui plenty of food. Birds are carrying

nesting material and preparing for the nesting period. It is at this time of year crucial to control pests while birds are nesting to avoid chicks being killed in the nest by predators.

We have had diverse groups of visitors to the Nursery this year from the usual school groups learning about native plants to weaving and printmaking workshops. One of the most recent groups has been a SIT Health and Wellbeing course wanting to do "Forest Bathing" – no, it's not what you think! An article in Stuff describes it as follows "While it may sound like getting clean in the woods, forest bathing is a healing practise inspired by the Japanese immersion therapy "shinrin yoku". Translating to "taking in the atmosphere of the forest", the discipline was first introduced in 1982 by the Forest Agency of Japan as a method of stress relief for civilians in urban areas. The idea of the experience is to slow down and connect with the present moment or to simply be in the forest". So... we went into our forest understory and soaked up the atmosphere created by our 400 year old trees. There is no doubt that taking time out in nature is good for our physical and mental wellbeing and it is not a new idea (it's just that it's now called mindfulness rather than a walk in the woods!). When we were contemplating building the Education Centre there was a whole raft of research about the benefits for children of play in nature. It inspired us to build the Education Centre and welcome schools to our property. Southland Kindergarten Association is leading the way with their "Bush Kindy" even purchasing a native forest area in which to do it.

The Nursery is also a great networking place and sharing information about diverse subjects and learning from each-other over a coffee and food is also good for us in many ways. So it's not all about growing plants!

However, we do sell plants to fund the Charitable Trust and are happy to give advice freely about your restoration requirements and of course if you come and help out at the nursery you can take some plants away for free. Check it out at

www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz and come for a visit. If fridays don't suit then email to arrange another time that works for you.



Tautuku Lenz Reserve

Its School holidays and the kids are driving you up the wall declaring they are bored. Yes actually bored with computer games. Or perhaps they're fighting over whose turn it is to be on the computer. You obviously need something different for them to do.

Or maybe you are tired of being on call every spare moment you have and want to lose that incessantly ringing cell phone.

Well here's a great place to go as a family, or singly either overnight or longer, taking time out away from computers & cell phones. Perhaps when going as a family you could take along a few friends or cousins as well and spread them out amongst the three cabins which will accommodate sixteen people.

Relax in the quiet bush clad Tautuku Reserve in one of the cabins available. You will be woken each morning with bird song like you never hear in the towns & cities. Take time to savour the stillness of the morning when there is little to disturb nature's magic.

Gazing out the windows over a coffee or a wine you will be amazed by the birdlife peering back at you through that same window. Kereru, Tui, bellbirds, tomtits, fantails and silvereyes. You might even spot a fernbird on the estuary boardwalk or hear parakeets in the bush.

A walk on one of the three tracks within the Reserve will be either a great soul restorer or a clever way of getting away from the cherubs for a while. Better still take them along and let them run off some energy before heading back for some board games or load them into the car and head for one of the many walks/sights available in the area.

Maclean, Matai & Purakaunui Falls, Tautuku Beach, Shanks Bush which is great for the kids as they have to find what doesn't belong in the bush, a fun walk for all. These are all within a short drive as are Lake Wilkie, Pounawea & Papatowai if you run out of groceries.

Then when the stars snap & twinkle in the sky above you take the cherubs out to see the glow worms on the Nature Track. That will probably overexcite them so maybe follow it with some board games or quiet reading.

Staying at Tautuku Cabins in Lenz Reserve will give you time for learning about the natural world either indoors with games & books or outside in the fresh air, a breath of fresh air after the rush and pace of today's lifestyle.

The Main cabin sleeps ten, Coutts cabin sleeps four, and the cute A Frame sleeps two. You will need to bring your own linen and bedding.

Tautuku Cabins can be booked online at Bookit just follow the link below

<https://bookings.bookitsecure.com/pub/supplier.aspx?b=LENZRE>

Dawn Patterson



Another way of experiencing Tautuku is to join one of our working weekends. On the weekend of 22 September 2018 a keen group from Southland Branch stayed at Tautuku Forest Cabins for the branch six-monthly working weekend. The jobs included trackwork - clearing the water-tables and raking the nature track and the wetland boardwalk track, removing combi-guards from red tussock, cleaning the id signs on the track, cleaning all the inside walls of the ablutions blocks (Lodge and Coutts Cabins) and sweeping the outside of the Lodge building in preparation for painting, repairing chair in the Lodge building and cleaning inside the building. There are always lots of different jobs, it's a lot of fun and the accommodation is free in exchange for a little work.

Chris Rance



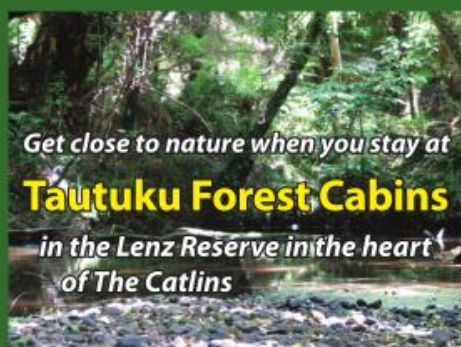
The Lodge (sleeps 10)



The Coutts Cabin (4)



The A Frame (2)



Tautuku Forest Cabins



Coutts Cabin

Location: Lenz Reserve, Southern Scenic Route, 72 km south of Balclutha

Accommodation:

Cottage (sleeps 8-10) ♦ **Coutts Cabin** (4) ♦ **A-Frame** (2)
(Guests need to provide own bedding and towels.)

Rates per person per night (Discounts for F&B members):
Adults \$20-30 ♦ School-age \$5 ♦ Under 5 No charge

Bookings: Keith Olsen Ph: 03 415 8244
diana-keith@yrless.co.nz Mirren St, Papatowai (You will need to collect a key from this address.)



Is this familiar?



On penguins and elephants

Jane Young reflects on the recent Yellow-eyed Penguin Symposium in Dunedin

Almost ten years ago, I attended my first Yellow-eyed Penguin Symposium. Some things have changed since then: audiences are larger, presentations slicker – and the statistics even less encouraging. There is no longer an air of defensiveness on the part of those who support intensive intervention and rehabilitation. Penguins are being treated for the scourge of diphtheria and, increasingly in a warming world, mosquito-borne avian malaria. Underweight chicks and adults are being taken in for rehabilitation, while injured birds receive skilled, effective treatment at the Dunedin Wildlife Hospital. There is general agreement that the ambulance – metaphorical and otherwise – now has to be parked fair and square at the bottom of the cliff.

Although there is still an army of volunteers carrying out trapping, weeding and revegetation in penguin habitat, penguin populations, with very few exceptions,



Yellow-eyed penguin chick. Jane Young

recreational fishers have been instrumental in blocking

No?

Then maybe you're not on the mailing list...

If you haven't received a Kārearea it means F&B doesn't have your email address – so if you want to receive this newsletter and regular updates on Southland's F&B events please send National Office your email address - membership@forestandbird.org.nz. By doing this you also save the Branch the cost of printing and posting your newsletters. Of course if you prefer to receive hard copy of the branch newsletters that is fine too, but the monthly Kārearea is only available on email and the best way to notify you about changes to the programme is by email.

What is it?

Kārearea is a newsletter full of southern conservation stories and events. It is edited by Jane Young of South Otago F&B Branch and every month we send it around our Southland members promoting Southlands upcoming events.

Te Rere

The last 6 months has been a busy time at Te Rere. We had our main planting for the year on 14 July 2018 and it was a great day, well attended and all the plants were planted and covered with protectors by lunchtime. Thanks must go to SIT Environment Students for helping as well as Otago volunteers, our own members, Southland Tramping Club and James and Marie from Pukerau Nursery who brought the plants onto site. Fergus,



Brian and Bruce led planting teams and then guided walks around the reserve. The new bridge built by Tramping Club and F&B members was inspected and was looking good. It makes navigating the reserve much safer, especially for Fergus and helper John who use it a lot. Thanks also to John for donating an electric fence unit to Te Rere recently.

The pest control monitoring by Environment Southland staff was eagerly anticipated after



the installation of the high tech Squalk Squad equipment last year. However the results were disappointing as the rat numbers were higher than prior to the operation.

The "Penguins in Crisis" – talk by Mel Young was well received by a good crowd at the SIT talk venue in September. The radio tracking

devices a group of us were privileged to see attached had produced some

interesting results – particularly showing fledged penguins generally headed north and as far as Christchurch. Our own penguin didn't get that far – the signal disappointingly failing around Otago. Mel has submitted a proposal for work at Te Rere this coming season, so we will see what develops from that research.



The annual penguin count will be on Saturday **8 December 2018 – Te Rere Penguin Count – To book contact Brian Rance–**

rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz

Yellow-eyed penguin Symposium August 2018

There was a report from DoC on the new 'Hoiho Threat Management and Recovery Plan' - first public airing of presentation on this.

Hoiho Governance Group (HGG) provides strategic direction, Hoiho Technical Group (HTG) develops recovery strategy. Initially involves DoC, Ngai Tahu, Fisheries Inshore NZ and YEPT - will talk later to other potential stakeholders, e.g. regional councils. Ngai Tahu reps are Yvette Couch-Lewis (HGG) and Estelle Leask (HTG). 5 year objective to halt decline of YEPs, 20 year objective to reduce threat status, 100 year objective YEPs are flourishing. Work programmes include Fisheries (engagement with Aquatic Environment Working Group process), Data Management, Habitat Management and Bird Management. All of this work will be documented on the DoC website:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/birds/birds-a-z/penguins/yellow-eyed-penguin-hoiho/hoiho-threat-management-and-recovery-plan> . Feedback is invited.

- There was a report from YEPT. Overall decline in population very concerning, low nest numbers and fledging rates but good chick weights. Whenua Hou population "dropping like a stone" - at this rate there'll be no YEPs there by 2030 - must be marine factors, as habitat is perfect.
- There was a report from DoC. Productivity in Catlins much better than Otago Peninsula, which also had more fatalities. Fewer juveniles seen than last year. South (sub-antarctic) and mainland are genetically distinct populations - on average only 2 individuals per year move from South population to mainland population.
- There was a report from Penguin Rescue (Katiki area). Had only 10% decline since 2015, compared with >60% at major sites in South Otago. Intensive monitoring and management. A lot of effort has gone into rehabilitation of underweight YEPs. Removed a lot of predators - no predation of chicks. Lots of nesting boxes in paddocks - the YEPs tend to prefer them to the available bush area! Treated a lot of chicks for diphtheria. Lost a fair number of adults and chicks to malaria. For 20% of South Island population, cost is \$52,500 p.a. . 6,500 volunteer hours.
- There was a report from Penguin Place (Otago Peninsula). >100 YEPs per season go through rehab there. \$50,000 p.a. . Good juvenile sightings early in season, but didn't continue through to moult.
- There was a report from Dunedin Wildlife Hospital Trust. Treated 75 YEPS in past year. \$110 - 150K p.a. High survival rate. Came from variety of sources, largest source was Penguin Place.
- There was a report from Fisheries Inshore NZ. This was a presentation on bycatch, *not* competition for fish (which they are discussing separately with YEPT). Their members have 400 vessels around NZ, including 20 setnet vessels. Setnetting does take place around Whenua Hou. They must work with a lot of species protection initiatives (dolphins, sharks etc). The amount of commercial fishing has been stable over the last 10 years or so.

There are many small things fishermen can do to minimise risk of YEPT bycatch. There is now a YEP Information Group - fishermen and scientists sit together to work out what best to change in their operational practices, e.g. coloured mesh panels on nets. Every inshore finfish vessel will have a risk mitigation plan by 2020. FNZ monitor by observation and digital recording. MPI observers have seen no YEP captures in recent years by the setnet fleet.

- There was a report from a Zoology student, Meg Houseman. The 23 mainland YEP sites are independent populations, but all but 2 (Katiki Point and Barracouta Point) have similar population dynamics. For those 21 sites, >80 chance predicted of extinction by 2060. Suspicion is that this is largely driven by warm sea surface temperatures.
- There was a report from a Zoology student, Bryony Alden. There are four population groups of YEP: chicks, breeding adults, non-breeding adults and juveniles. 40% of YEP population is non-breeding adults, which provides some safety net for deaths of breeding adults. Project tracked population trends in non-breeding birds by marking and resighting. Used microchipping, but that has several limitations (e.g. chip life, readability). There is pronounced bias toward males in non-breeding adult population. There has been higher female mortality rate over the years - we don't yet know why.
- There was a report from Mel Young. YEPs sometimes stay at sea for extended periods pre-moult, stocking up their reserves. A transponder tracking survey on resident breeders showed feeding on gravel and sandy sea floors - off the Catlins up to 150m depth, up to 30km from shore, for single or multiple day trips, whereas further north shallower and nearer to shore. Different types of sea floor offer different types of desirable prey fish. Sedimentation and damage to sea floor are threats. YEPs have 7 preferred prey species, but will eat other, less nutritious prey (e.g. jellyfish) if shortfall of preferred prey species - that does have implications in pre-moult period for penguin short-term and long-term health, though, risking acute (starvation in moult) and/or chronic (poor quality moult/refeathering) nutritional stress.
- There was a report from a Zoology student, Richard Seed. They strapped miniature video camera & GPs package to birds. Benthic (sea floor) foraging was typical (though they can forage pelagically). Prey fish varies with substrate. YEPs do take blue cod, but it is suboptimal prey due to its sheer size - catching takes similar time to smaller species, but 'capture time' (time to achieve swallowing) is long - also, rather big for chick to eat. Small prey, e.g. juvenile tarakihi, are swallowed far more quickly, so YEP can catch multiple fish in a single dive.

Geoff Dembo

Southland Ecological Restoration Network(SERN) Trip

Spring Field Trip – Saturday 3rd November

9.00am: Leave Feldwick Gates, Queens Park

10.15am – noon: Rural Women's Castledown Wetland

This wetland at the foot of Rural Women Southland's pine plantation, has been recognised as an important remnant flaxland. With assistance from the Dipton Landcare Group, the Rural Women began this restoration project in 2015. Come along and hear more about it, as well as giving a helping hand with planting/planting maintenance.

12.30pm: Mossburn – lunch stop

2.00pm: Five Rivers Café – Mid Dome Wilding Pines

Millions of dollars are being spent on the problem of wilding pines. Hear about progress on our local site and what the long term vision is.

5.00pm: Return Feldwick Gates, Queens Park

Along the way we will hear about protection of our natural heritage by landowners through the QEII National Trust. There are many areas of native bush, tussock grasslands and wetlands being protected in perpetuity, under Open Space Covenants, retaining biodiversity and landscape values in Southland.

The trip is Free but bookings are essential - to BOOK a place on the bus for this tour please email SERN member, Sheryll Ashton, at petesheryll@yahoo.com.

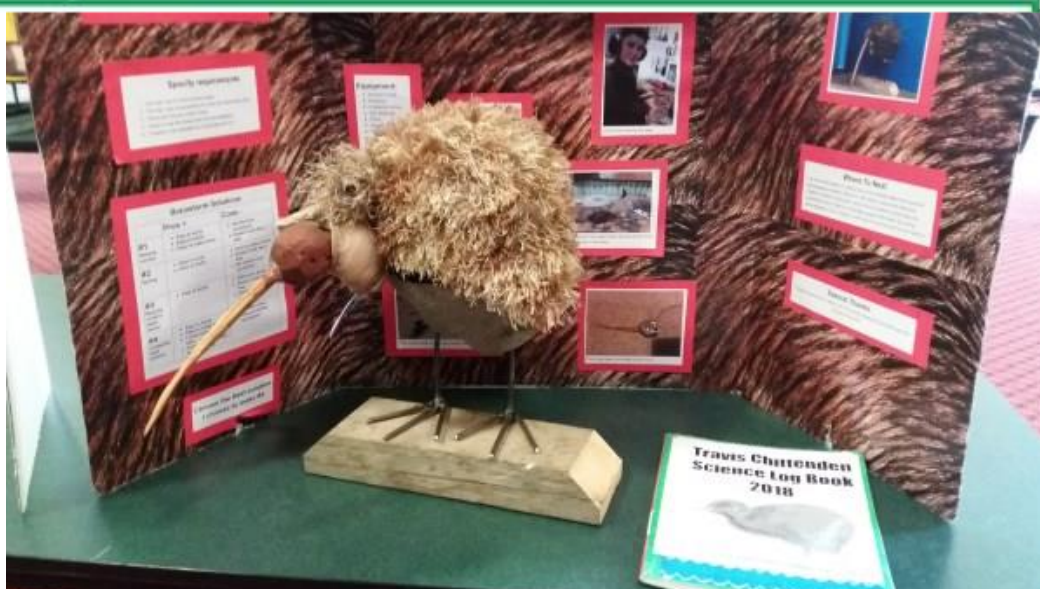
Bring your own lunch and refreshments, and be prepared for wet conditions under foot.

Thanks to Environment Southland for sponsoring the bus costs.

Science Fair



Year 7/8 student Travis Chittenden from Halfmoon Bay School for his project "Kiwi on the move". He is interested in kiwi conservation, so he designed a robotic kiwi for use in kiwi avoidance training for dogs on Stewart Island. The robot looks like a kiwi, can move and can also deliver a mild electrical shock to a dog that bites it.



Mossburn School Garden Harvest



It was a cool winter's day but it did not stop the enthusiasm for digging potatoes and cutting rhubarb and broccoli which the children at Mossburn School had a hand in growing over the year. Malakai Stapleforth has been a keen gardening participant and especially enjoys sharing the produce with other students and taking fresh vegetables home to his family.

"I really love rhubarb for puddings and potatoes are my favourite and I love them" he said. The children enjoyed meeting and interacting with the two people from France, Annaelle Soullard and Alcide Guerin who helped with the digging of the potato crop and cutting the rhubarb. They have been in New Zealand for 6 months touring around in a van and helping out on farms and orchards.

"When we visited Mossburn school we enjoyed talking to the children as we have not been able to do that before" Annaelle Soullard said. "They had fun helping us harvest and obviously enjoy eating the vegetables they grow". "We do not usually have school gardens in France but children do have gardens at home where they learn to plant seeds and grow their own vegetables and fruit," Alcide Guerin said. "We have enjoyed working in other gardens around the country learning about the different veggies and fruit you can grow as well as Maori potatoes the children had grown at Mossburn."

"We had never eaten fejoas before or kumara but we enjoy eating them now," he said. "We have done some work through the WWOOFers scheme, which means Willing Workers on Organic Farms, which gives us a bed and food in exchange for part time work."

"We have enjoyed meeting lots of interesting and generous people in New Zealand and of course seeing your beautiful scenery and native birds such as the kaka, kiwi, yellow eyed penguins and bellbirds," Soullard said.

The couple completed their work at the garden by covering the ground with fallen autumn leaves, leaving them to rot down and improve the soil over the winter ready for the children to begin the growing process again next year.

Jenny Campbell

29,000 plants in the ground- so far!

On Saturday 8 September 2018 eighty-five people came along to Bushy Point in Otatara to help with the annual Otatara Landcare Group (OLG) planting project. In the Year 2000 (you remember, that year everything electronic was going to stop!) Barry Smith came up with the "2000 in 2000" project. The idea was that every resident of Otatara would plant a native tree at Bushy Point. Now, 18 years later we are onto our 29000th tree. It's a big OLG effort supported by the community and it seems to go from strength to strength. The aim of joining up two areas of bush (the totara forest and the regenerating kahikatea forest) has



largely happened and large areas of former paddock are now a flourishing regeneration area. For those not so familiar with the project it also got an injection of enthusiasm and funding in 2011 from the Rugby World Cup (well the Tindall Foundation under the banner of the world cup) supporting a project in every region of the country by funding the purchase of native plants and their maintenance for the following three years. On the ground that meant an extra 10,000 plants



in three years. The large turn-out of people in September meant that the 1000 locally grown plants were in the ground by lunchtime – snug under their combi-guards (to prevent rabbit browse) and we were all tucking into a well-earned BBQ sausage.

Planting days are great for their camaraderie and fun – it's a family day and it is gratifying to see so many children who will remember planting here and visiting in years to come. Bushy Point is Department of Conservation land where the OLG has a 30 year lease to convert the paddocks back to nature. It is open space, available to everyone and

has walkways, a pond, native planting, tracks and interpretation – check it out, access from the end of Bryson Road, Otatara.

Chris Rance

Eco Fest 2018

Invercargill Eco Fest brought in people who have a commitment to the theme 'Climate Change: You Make the Difference' as well as those who were inquisitive and want to find out more.

The number of stalls rose to over 40 with new participants bringing innovative ideas such as how to make bees' wax sandwich wrappers, using eco/ keep cups instead of single use coffee cups, to reduce waste to landfill and mental health services on the theme of engaging with nature for health and well-being.

The regulars included Forest & Bird, KCC, worm breeders, bees, insulation, water use and quality issues, and various forms of transport to try such as a donkey, reclining bikes, adult trike and electric car rides. Political parties explained their policies while Department of Conservation staff explained various aspects of predator control with the support of local groups which monitor traps in their areas, all making a difference. A variety of workshops gave opportunities for more in-depth discussion.

People had time to talk about their aspirations and actions in committing to a more sustainable lifestyle such as moving off the electricity grid, thinking about buying an electric car and investing in a beehive to ensure our plants can continue to be pollinated. Using some of the skills our grandparents practised were another feature such as crochet, knitting, rag rugs, growing herbs for teas, growing our own vegetables and working in community as is being practised by South Alive in South City, all ways of reducing our impact on the earth.

People were appreciative of the chance to talk about their passions, exchange views, enthuse and empower others to make a difference.

The event was marked by a positive, friendly atmosphere and lots of conversation between stall holders as well as the public.

Thank you to the stall holders, volunteers and Southland Forest and Bird and the supportive group from previous Invercargill Environment Centre Trustees for continuing to make it happen.

Jenny Campbell, co- organiser



Our Calendar



Summer Events:

Saturday 3 November 2018 – SERN Trip Saturday 3 November 2018 (see info)

Sunday 4 November 2018 – Eco-Fun Day at Bushy Point and Southland Community Nursery 1pm-3pm (park at 183 Grant Road car park) and pick up your eco-pack from the Education Centre. Leaders Chris Rance 2131161, Bronwyn KCC 2130017 southland@kcc.org.nz

Tuesday 4 December 2018 – Early Christmas get-together for members – new and old – nibbles and drinks at Zookeepers, Tay Street, Invercargill, 5pm-6pm.

Saturday 8 December 2018 – Te Rere Penguin Count – To book contact Brian Rance – rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz

Monday 21 January 2019 – Join OLG Chilean Flame creeper pulling at Bowman Bush, Otatara – 7-9pm (Contact Randall Milne randall.milne@es.govt.nz)

Saturday 9 February 2019 - Fantail Rise World Wetland Day planting trip and walk down the lower Mataura River with Environment Southland's Nathan Cruickshank (Leader Gay Munro rgmunro@netspeed.net.nz). Combined KCC trip (Contact Bronwyn - Southland@kcc.org.nz)

9 March 2019 – Trip to Gobles Gully – 10am-midday. Help out with planting, weed control in the hidden gem in Riverton (Leaders Malcolm Mackenzie and Brian Rance – rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz Combined KCC trip (Contact Bronwyn - Southland@kcc.org.nz) – picnic lunch at the Riverton Rocks and explore Riverton Back Beach

13 April 2019 – Manapouri trip - Planting at Home Creek, with an afternoon walk around the Wilderness Reserve. Please bring lunch. Leader - Edith Jones - 03-249-6991 or EdithBJ8@gmail.com



Forest & Bird
GIVING NATURE A VOICE

www.forestandbird.org.nz

SOUTHLAND BRANCH NEWSLETTER

Southland Branch
PO Box 1155
Invercargill

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