



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR
Catherine Walsh



What a strange start to the summer; it's the beginning of Dec and yet the weather is still unsettled, with hail one day and hot sunshine the next! I recently bought my first home and have been enjoying getting a couple of vege beds planted up, so fingers crossed the sunshine is here to stay.

Dec 5th marked International Volunteers Day, a great chance to thank everyone involved with Forest & Bird locally and nationally for your involvement and support. It just wouldn't be possible without you!

On that note, our very own Teresa Hurst was presented with the Ti-Kouka award at our October branch meeting by Atarangi Sayers (member of the board), in recognition of her countless contributions over the years to both the branch and the organization as a whole. Congratulations Teresa, you have been and still are, one of the most active and involved members of the branch, and your wealth of knowledge on plants in particular has been invaluable. (A photo of the occasion is at the back of the newsletter along with the 2019 Trip Sheet)

Just enough space to squeeze in a Merry Christmas to all!! Have a fantastic summer and New Year



too!

Photo: (Liz Carter) View of Lake Tutira while on the Guthrie Smith & Hanger trip.

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 Ian Baker - forestandbirdhastingshn@gmail.com

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 of the newsletter.

BRANCH ACTIVITIES



GUEST SPEAKERS

August: Anna Madarasz-Smith, HBRC Senior Coastal Scientist, came and spoke about the Ahuriri Estuary and its unique ecosystem.

September: Our very own Debbie Walton and Terry O'Brien gave a talk titled "The Walker's Haute Route, Switzerland - sometimes perilous, often exhausting but always exhilarating."

October: Kahori Nakagawa came and spoke about the ECOED kiwi program and its progress.

November: Rod Dickson, Biosecurity Advisor-Animal Pests for HBRC, spoke about the biosecurity and biodiversity of animal and plant pests.

PUKAHU PROJECT REPORT

Report: Bob Lester/ Photo: Linda Johnson

We are now Six months on from Planting Day, who would believe time can fly so quickly! The weather has given us good, bad and WORSE.

Happy to report that although we were seriously flooded, the quick work of neighbor Peter with follow up by Linda and Christine, meant that most of the water-edge plants have survived and our working bees have given them a chance.

Nearly all of the "Poo Pit" plants have good mulch with more to be applied this weekend.

We have had great support once more from the William Pike Challenge Award pupils and their parents. Also, an increased turn out by our own members, which is wonderful to see.

As I write, the dry Spring has given way to steady drizzle and this will be a great benefit pre-Summer. We still have rabbits but our new tree guards have given the chewed ones a second chance.

Linda and I would like to thank all who have assisted and extend a welcome to anyone new. Even if you just want to check out last year's forest..... which gives us cheer every time we look at it.

Remember, the first Saturday morning every month (our ongoing maintenance day).



BLOWHARD BUSH REPORT

Report & photo: Christine Lawrence

A beautiful day early in September saw the team planting a variety of plants (120) from our own nursery, just inside the boundary near Taihape Rd. Unfortunately, we have lost a few to frosts. We then spent time pulling or cutting down between 300-400 wilding pines of varying sizes, from a few centimetres to 2-3 metres. Wilding pines will always be an issue for us being surrounded by PanPac Forest. From time to time we have trees fall across the tracks, and usually this means a small crew will need to make a special trip to deal with them.

The infrared camera on loan from the HBRC has been positioned in several locations over the months, but has recorded little activity. The most recent being a possum.

We recently received a donation of a self-resetting possum trap and a self-resetting stoat/rat trap. To try and find the best location to place the possum trap, we put chew cards along some of the lines in October to help us ascertain whether we have possums and where they are. The cards were collected in November, and most of those on Line 5 were showing indications of possums. It has now been a year since the 1080 drop. Now to choose the best location on this line for the trap!

During November's workday, we heard and saw a shining cuckoo, and a long-tailed cuckoo was possibly heard as well. The grass orchids were in flower, and the spider orchids are just about to bloom.



This year has seen a number of new members join our team, mostly hearing about us via Volunteering Hawke's Bay. We have been very lucky this year to have teams of approximately 12 people each month, and I'm grateful to each one of them who come whenever they're available. Some team members rarely miss a day in the bush. One new member travels from Waipukurau each time; a very early start to the day for her.

For those team members who are sharing their knowledge of pest control and Blowhard Bush with new members; thank you very much, it is very much appreciated. I look forward to working with you next year as we try and reduce the number of pests in our little piece of paradise.

KIWI CONSERVATION CLUB REPORT

Report & photos: Linda Johnson

Here's what we've been up to lately:

August: 27 children and 22 adults were able to hold a real live gecko at our winter indoor event. Thanks to Bruce Tregonning for sharing his knowledge, books and geckos with us. Yohanna (7y) wrote... "It was lots of fun and I even got to put one gecko in the cage."

September: We ran the Great Kereru Count for DOC's Conservation Week: 15 children and 17 adults counted 12 kereru. We learned some facts before walking through Mohi Bush to the prime kereru watching site.

I spoke about KCC to Pecha Kucha (a community event where approx. 250 people listen to 6 or 7 speakers, each talking for 6min 40sec on a topic of their choice).

October: 17 children and 19 adults spent an evening in CHB. Oliver (10y) wrote...

We met two people from the Lake Whatuma Care Group called John & Bernie (who) talked about the Bitterns which are critically endangered. I learnt that even though they don't have webbed feet they can still swim, their favourite foods are eels and frogs,...hide in the Raupo so they are hard to see...Bernie told us that they have trackers on about 9 of the male birds, the battery lasts about 4years after this time it will fall off so it doesn't harm the bird. Later we ate our picnic tea on the grass, after we had finished Linda suggested we all sit really quietly and listen for the Bitterns. I really enjoyed listening to them as I hadn't heard one before. It was an awesome trip!

Sarah and I attended the Coordinators annual gathering in Wellington. Education activities occurred on Matiu/Somes Island and at Otari Wilton's Bush. We also discussed ways to increase membership and increase attendance.

November: 9 children joined branch members at the Blowhard Bush Bugs & Beetles Bioblitz. See separate report.

Chris Hurst, Sarah Nicoll and Kristy Owens are our volunteer Assistant Coordinators. Sadly, Chris will be leaving us at the end of the year after 15 years of service. Tu meke! You're awesome Chris, and we'll miss you.

Stuck for a gift idea for children you know? Give them a gift

membership to KCC www.kcc.org.nz



BLOWHARD BUSH BUGS & BEETLES BIOBLITZ

Report & photos: Linda Johnson

On November 24, branch and KCC volunteers ran a mini-bioblitz, focused on terrestrial invertebrates at Blowhard Bush. The purpose was to add to our knowledge of the Blowhard Bush ecosystem. A list of plants and birds exists but there are no lists of invertebrates, fish and other classes of living organisms.

We were privileged to have Dr Amelia McQueen assist in the planning and facilitation of the event. She also made it possible to borrow microscopes from EIT. Mike Lusk and John Berry also assisted with finding creatures (and flowering orchids) and shared their knowledge with us. Unfortunately, the entomologists from Te Papa were unable to attend but they provided malaise traps to catch flying insects. They will identify the samples Amelia will send to them, and will provide us with the resulting list in due course.

A total of nine children and 20 adults from KCC and the branch attended. There was an afternoon session involving treasure hunting on bush tracks, in caves, and in leaf litter. The participants were divided into three groups in order to cover more ground and have unpressured time using the microscopes. The evening session searched and collected along the north Tui Track before heading to the caves just for fun. Some people attended both sessions, others only one. A night session was not held.



A small selection of our interesting finds includes cave wetas, giraffe weevils, flies, spiders, millipedes, leaf hoppers, peripatus, a leaf-veined slug, a large black ground beetle and a tiny pseudoscorpion. Critters that could not be preserved well enough to send to Te Papa were photographed and released. The photos were uploaded to the iNaturalist website for identification as well as creating a record of what is at Blowhard at this time in history. A short story and some photos were put up on our branch Facebook page. It has attracted a lot of attention and been shared twice by other nature-based organisations.

Thank you to Nick, Miriam, Christine, Brian, Debbie, Terry, Erin, Teresa, Chris and Kristy for your help in making

this a successful event.

NURSERY REPORT

Report & photos: Debbie Walton

Nursery activities are in full swing as we try to get all the plants in good order before the weather heats up. We purchased another cubic metre of potting mix recently and we've had to buy more PB2's. We do our best to recycle all our containers and PB's whenever possible.

At the last nursery day, two of us spent the entire morning moving the outdoor plants around so that more plants could be moved out from the greenhouse. Meanwhile, Catalina, Chris and Peter were potting on carex and manuka with Erin busy supplying them with potting mix, watering the plants and placing them into the gaps we had made in the greenhouse. There are always interesting things to do, as well as more mundane tasks like



clearing weeds and scrubbing the wooden benches - thanks Erin!



Each week we enjoy visits from the dear little black cat which belongs to Joan - he really enjoys the company and the attention - and the 'biscats'.

At our next session, we will be pricking out plants into root trainers and potting on more plants. We've been trying to determine what plants did well when raised from seed and which ones did not. Surprising to us is that the pittosporum seeds didn't take, so if anyone has seedlings in their garden, please let us know.

We finally had a success with the DOC200 trap, snaring a rat after a long wait of 6 months or more with no catches. The pukekos are a big nuisance currently, pulling out seedlings and generally creating havoc.

We are at the nursery on Tuesday mornings from 9.00am-12.00/12.30pm. Come and visit us sometime! As always, a very big

thank you to the volunteers who make such a wonderful contribution.

TRIP REPORTS



WAITANGI REGIONAL PARK TO HAUMOANA DOMAIN, AUGUST

Trip Leader: Diane Brown/Report & photos: Liz Carter

We were blessed with a beautiful day to do this walk. There were 34 people on the trip and we started the day at the Celestial Compass in the Waitangi Regional Park, with a talk from Phil Belcher. Phil is one of the local carvers of the Pou (Whenua), Maori land posts. He was an excellent speaker and explained the meaning of all the carvings very well. I heard several people comment afterwards that they would like to bring a sleeping bag down on a clear night and observe the stars for themselves. What fun that would be!

Everyone wandered along at their own pace, enjoying the picturesque estuary areas at both East Clive and at Haumoana. There were some new information boards to read that had been recently installed. A lot of white baiters were observed trying their luck along the way.

Our lunch spot was on the grassy slopes of the stop-bank on the Haumoana side of Black bridge. Once we reached the Haumoana Domain most of the group found their way to the local dairy and enjoyed an ice cream to finish off a very pleasant day.



GUTHRIE SMITH ARBORETUM & HANGER, TUTIRA, SEPTEMBER

Trip Leader: John Stairmand /Report & photos: Liz Carter

As usual daylight saving started on this weekend, but nobody from the group of 47 slept in.

It was another beautiful day, as it had been on the recce, a jackpot for us. Since the recce a couple of weeks prior to the trip, there was a lot more blossom out and most of the trees had some colour on them. Everything was about to look stunning within the next few days as most trees would be at their spring best.

On our arrival, Kirsty Christion met us and gave a talk on all the happenings of the Arboretum, the school camp and Hanger. She and husband George are doing a great job in being the curators for the Guthrie Smith Trust.

In the morning, the main group walked through the majority of the Arboretum, enjoying looking at all the trees, shrubs etc from the different countries around the world, such a big collection! This also took in a walk going around the beautiful little Lake Okakai. The Treasures followed behind at a leisurely pace, but didn't get around the Lake.



After a leisurely lunch for everyone in the lovely warm sunshine, the main group were eager to get going and walk around the Hanger. This area of natural bush was closed up in 1896 to regenerate and left largely untouched by human intervention for over 120 years.

Many thanks to David Belcher who had spent 10 years being involved with the Arboretum, and gave the group valuable insight into the history and development of the Arboretum as they made their way along the walk.

A donation of \$5.00 per member was donated to the Guthrie Smith Trust.

The Arboretum is open on Sundays only, no charge, but there is a donation box which you can pop a

donation into. It is a lovely place to visit and have a picnic on a Sunday.

MIDDLE STREAM/SWAMP TRACK, RUAHINES, OCTOBER

Trip Leader: Tony & Jenny Des Landes/ Report & photos: Liz Carter

A threatening forecast of rain and thunder for the area was predicted for lunch time, but it never arrived, so it turned out to be a beautiful day.

Forty members headed off by bus down to Central HB and up to the Sunrise Hut car park. Hikers got on their way about 10.15am.

Once across the Waipawa rivers concrete bridge, it was a slog uphill beside the park boundary fence for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour. Finally, at the crest of a ridge, the track levelled out and headed through native bush, dominated by beech trees.

There was a pretty stream to negotiate before heading upwards and onwards to reach the clearing near Middle stream, where a rest was enjoyed at last with lunch. The group returned via the same track.

The treasures spent their day enjoying the beautiful Swamp Loop Track. It really is the best walk in the area. Lots of bird life was seen and heard.

A good work out for all 40 members. Great day!



BLUE LAKE, OPOUHI STATION, NOVEMBER

Trip Leader: John & Pam Wuts/Report & photos: Liz Carter

With widespread rain about to hit Hawkes Bay, it was tricky to make a decision; do we go or not. Being the last trip of the year and the Christmas break up, it was decided to take a punt and go, and hope the rain would arrive later. Good call from John.

Thirty-nine members boarded the bus, which now has a sign with our logo 'Napier Forest and Bird' flashing across the windscreen. How good is that! Everyone came prepared to get wet, which they did by the end of the day.

On our arrival at Lake Opouahi carpark it was fine, so a quick cuppa was had. Our lovely views soon disappeared though when heavy fog appeared, which then turned into drizzle for the rest of the day.



We headed down to Blue Lake crossing private farmland, trying not to disturb the cows and new calves, the mothers are very protective of their new-born's. We made it down to Blue Lake a little earlier than planned, so decided to have an early lunch by the lake.



We didn't linger too long, as the drizzle was turning into rain, so started to make our way back up on a different track. A bit of huffing and puffing going up again. We arrived back at the carpark about 1.30pm, all drenched.

The treasures had a little wander down on the farm, then returned back up and puddled around the Lake Opouahi track, finding lots of orchards and hearing a lot of bird song. The lovely big shelter at Lake Opouahi kept us dry and warm, enough for us to enjoy some early Christmas festivities. The raffle was drawn and 1st prize was won by Lynne Anderson, 2nd won by John Warren, and 3rd prize won by Tony des Landes.

A good ending to a wet day and a successful year.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

December: No trip planned. Everyone relaxing for end of year.

January, Sunday 27th: Boundary Stream/Shines Falls. *Leader:* Tony & Jenny des Landes

March Sunday 3rd: Yeoman's Track, Ruahines. *Leader:* Liz Willis

March Sunday 31st: 'Rough Block', Cape Sanctuary. *Leaders:* Liz Carter

April Sunday 28th: Gallen's Bush, Te Pohue. *Leaders:* Steve & Christine Tutbury.

If you would like to attend any of the above field trips, please get in touch with our Trip Co-ordinator Liz Carter on 844 9358.



Photo: Teresa Hurst receiving the Ti-Kouka award!

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.

COMBINED NAPIER & HASTINGS/HAVELOCK NORTH FOREST & BIRD FIELD TRIPS 2019 (tear sheet out to keep)

January, Sunday 27th Boundary Stream/Shines Falls.
Leaders; Tony & Jenny des Landes.

March, Sunday 3rd Yeoman's Track, Ruahine's.
Leader; Liz Willis.

March, Sunday 31st "Rough Block", Cape Sanctuary.
Leader; Liz Carter.

April, Sunday 28th Gallen's Bush, Te Pohue.
Leaders; Steve & Christine Tutbury.

May, Sunday 12th Autumn@the Arboretum, Guthrie Smith Arboretum.
(Combined KCC event, details to be determined). Contact; Linda Johnson- Ph 878 9705.

May, Sunday 26th Mount Erin.
Leader; Karen Israelsen.

June, Sunday 16th Hastings/Havelock Nth branch Tree Planting, Pukahu Project.
(Combined KCC event, details to be determined). Contact; Linda Johnson- Ph 878 9705.

June, Saturday 29th Napier branch Tree Planting, Waitangi Regional Park, Awatoto.
Leader; Mike Hockey.

July, Sunday 21st Beach Clean-up, 1.30-3.30pm, site to be determined.
(Combined KCC event) Contact; Linda Johnson- Ph 878 9705.

July, Sunday 28th Admiralty Gum Trees.
Leaders; John & Pam Wuts.

August, Sunday 25th Estuary Stop Bank from Westshore to Bay View.
Leader; Dianne Brown.

September, Sunday 29th Tangoio Falls and White Pine Bush.
Leader; Gay Owen.

October, Sunday 27th Apiti Track, Ruahine's, Norsewood.
Leader; John Stairmand.

December, Sunday 1st Anawhenui Station & Balls Clearing, Puketitiri.
Leaders; Liz Carter & John Stairmand.

For any inquires or to book, please contact the Trip Co-ordinator unless otherwise specified;

Liz Carter: Ph 844 9358.



Thank you to The Print House, Havelock North, for sponsoring our newsletter.

BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

Committee members

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Debbie Walton	Nursery Co-ordinator	Ph 877 5907
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Non-Committee members worth a mention

Bernie Bowden	Te Taiao rep
Bob Lester	Pukahu Project

Liz Carter
Catherine Walsh
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Photo: (Liz Carter) Heading back after having had lunch next to Blue Lake, Opouahi Station.

**Forest & Bird
Hastings-Havelock North Newsletter
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