



Forest & Bird
TE REO O TE TAIAO | Giving Nature a Voice

Waitakere
BRANCH



Wai-o-te-Kauri Stream where the Kauri grows

Forest and Bird Waitakere - Newsletter February 2019

The success of bufferzones.

Ark in the Park, our flagship project of 2270 hectares of predator-controlled property in the Waitakere Ranges, has had a 'bufferzone' around it for a long time.

Anecdotally neighbours report seeing and hearing more birds, which points to fewer predators. Research done at the Ark has shown the positive benefits for birds, but also for invertebrates, which benefits up to 100 metres outside the predator controlled area. But it also works the other way around: if the neighbours help keeping rats, possums and mustelids under control, it relieves the pressure off the main project.

The focus at Ark in the Park has been around the north of the Ark (Bethells/Te Henga) and around the Dam on Scenic Drive. Since two kokako jumped over Scenic Drive to nest on a private property last year, a lot of locals have become involved in the effort to protect these amazing birds. Named Francis and Zelah, they are the best ambassadors for predator control we could hope for, letting us film and photograph them up close while they entertain us with their antics! Especially helpful is Kay Wright, a local resident and Ark in the Park volunteer, who has been supporting people around that part of Scenic Drive with predator control information, traps and baits. Only with local support like hers we can extend our reach to others. Seeing special and rare birds (they are on our \$50 note!) like this really sparks an interest, which we use in turn to have other conversations, for instance about pets (cats and dogs) and their influence on our ecosystem. They successfully fledged another chick last spring, and we do hope they will produce another this breeding season!

On the northern end is the Bethells/Te Henga 'bufferzone', with several projects run by locals. A petrel protection group, a group of dotterel minders, the professional trapping by Matt Mannington at the wetland of Habitat te Henga, the Forest Ridge group, walkway group..... and many private individuals all are working towards a better ecosystem.

If we want to get a really holistic approach (since the Ark in the Park aim is "from the ridges to the sea") we need to support



Credit: Jacqui Geux.

and coordinate these efforts. For instance, when trap catches are decreasing in one area, is that because the animals are getting trap shy? Or are not sufficiently attracted by the lure? Or is it because others are trapping them? If the latter is the case, everyone should know about the catches in their overarching area, not the least to avoid demotivated volunteers who might stop checking their traps if they have very low catch rates.

In other areas bufferzones, or 'haloes' have started up as well: around large sanctuaries as well as around smaller reserves. Auckland Council has identified the need for those, and for an overarching approach to support larger groups. Therefore their targeted rate for conservation includes a contestable fund for "Community Coordination and Facilitation", for larger scale projects. We will be applying to that fund for someone to work on extending our bufferzone, and making sure we capture the data of all the groups without burdening those groups of volunteers with extra work. Sharing their successes, their learnings, their results would go a long way towards a sustainable bufferzone around the Ark.

Annalily van den Broeke –Chairperson Forest & Bird Waitakere

Waitakere Ranges Track Closures

Auckland Council are asking for our views on their proposed track plan to reopen the tracks in the Waitakere Ranges. Forest & Bird have formulated a response which is supported by Te Kawerau a Maki, The Tree Council, Waitakere Ranges Protection Society and Friends of Regional Parks. That response, which you can copy or edit as you wish, with a link to the survey, is here:
<http://blog.forestandbird.org.nz/the-waitakere-ranges-track-plan/>

www.forestandbird.org.nz/branches/waitakere or www.facebook.com/forestbirdwaitakere and
www.facebook.com/habitattehenga and www.facebook.com/arkintheParkNewZealand
Twitter: #Arkinthepark

Tai Haruru Upgrades and Garden Tour!



Photo by Jacqui Geux

We're heavily investing in our Tai Haruru Lodge in Piha to give you an even nicer experience. After a new fireplace to keep you romantically warm and a new heat pump to get you warm and dry in minutes, we've now also installed the long awaited mosquito screens. And we're applying for funding for a new roof. Our current roof, made from Onduline which is basically painted cardboard, will be replaced with much more durable colour steel.

So why not book Tai Haruru for your next weekend away? It sleeps five to six (with three singles, one double bed and a 'daybed' in the lounge) in the main house and has another four beds in the self-contained annex. House and annex can be booked together or separately. Only metres from the beach and surrounded by a native garden.

Priced from \$50 per night for the annex, proceeds fund our West Auckland conservation projects and only the person booking the lodge needs to be a member. Interested?

More info on www.forestandbird.org.nz/our-community/lodges/tai-haruru-lodge or with volunteers Jean and Peter King (09) 812 8064, hop0018@slingshot.co.nz

Or come join us for a tour of the house and native garden led by Chris Bindon, on Saturday 13th of April, for which see the last page.

Huia Water Treatment Replacement Plant.

The Watercare Liaison Group is still waiting for answers from Watercare in regards to their final consent application, which will be notified. As soon as we have received the application, individual groups as well as the combined Liaison Group will make their submissions.

For more information, go to:

<https://www.watercare.co.nz/About-us/Projects-around-Auckland/Hula-water-treatment-plant-replacement-Manuka-Ro>

Election of the Board of Forest & Bird

– by Monica Peters

As a part of my Board responsibilities, I am leading the review of Forest and Bird's process for electing the Board. At present, a very few members (i.e. councillors only) can make key Board election decisions. This places the organisation behind many other membership-based organisations e.g., the Sierra Club (USA), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK), Wilderness Society (Australia) and the NZ Youth Hostel Assn., and NZ Caravan and Motorhomes Assn. Each have versions of direct elections by members, overall increasing the democracy of the organisation.

Several models for increasing wider Forest and Bird member engagement in Board elections were presented at the South Is Gathering in late October. There was a very clear preference for one of these options, but it's important for the Board to have a broad range of feedback and engagement in this process (it's about democracy after all!). We (the Board) would like to know what your preferred model is, but also what other questions about this process you might have that need to be addressed.

We will discuss feedback at the next Board meeting (mid-March), so will need any feedback by END FEB please. We aim to move on recommendations at the AGM. Please email me, m.peters@forestandbird.org.nz with your feedback and questions. In tandem with the electoral review process, the Board is also looking at membership (i.e. what constitutes a member for voting purposes).

Summary of voting models:

1. Status quo - Branches elect/put forward one or two Councillors (dependant on Branch size). Councillors elect all Board positions. General members are not included in the voting process.
2. Councillors elect key Board roles i.e. President, Deputy President & Treasurer. F&B members directly elect NON-KEY Board positions
3. Staged process - Councillors elect most Board positions, with 2-3 Board members elected by membership
4. F&B members elect ALL board positions including Chair, Deputy Chair and treasurer - Board themselves decide on who has which position, or members decide on all positions. Council key role then focusses on remits.
5. Council system disbanded – will require a change to the constitution, direct election of Board by members

By Monica Peters- Forest & Bird board member

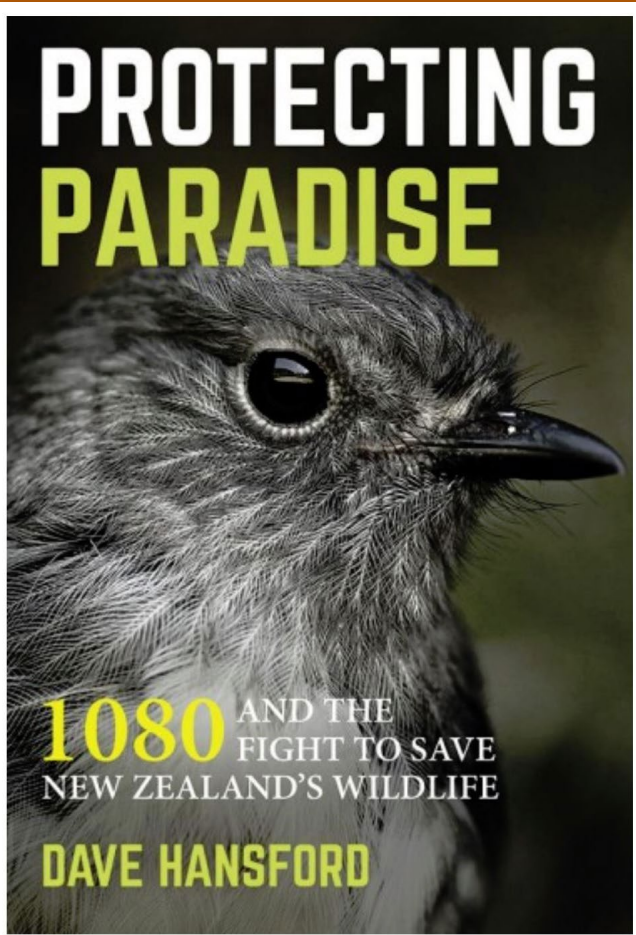
Support us with your purchase.

The very well-written book "Protecting Paradise" by Dave Hansford is available for members with a significant discount: \$25 in stead of \$35 because of the importance of its topic. If you are confused by the many conflicting claims around 1080 – if you just want to get to the truth around one of the most critical environmental policy decisions we face – this book was written for you.

We are still selling our beautiful Ark in the Park cards to fundraise for our flagship project, available through us or via www.arkinthepark.org.nz/about_ark_in_the_park/support_ark_in_the_park.html

Volunteer Frank has been busy building Weta Houses, a perfect home for our amazing native invertebrates: it keeps them safe from rats and out of your house at the same time!

Everything for sale at our Forest & Bird stall (often at the Oratia Market and at Community Days around West Auckland) and through waitakere.branch@forestandbird.org.nz or 021-2207136



Open Day at Matuku Link



Image by Stefan Marks.

Did you know New Zealand only has 10% wetlands left? It's time to pay more attention to these amazing ecosystems, storing CO2 to limit climate change and a valuable habitat for native birds. To celebrate World Wetlands Day our local wetland restoration project Matuku Link, on 111 Bethells Road towards Te Henga/Bethells, opened its doors to the public. From 10 am to 3 pm a steady flow of volunteers bringing friends, locals bringing neighbours and interested public with their families came through the gate. All appreciated the guided walks by John Sumich and John Staniland, and the latter even posed at the sign for the track named after him! The highlight of the guided walk was spotting the elusive bittern, or Matuku, the namesake of this property. The route of the 'accessible walkway', for anyone using a push chair, walker or wheelchair to experience a wetland and bush edge, was open to view and decorated with poems by John Sumich on the benefits of the tall sedges 'Carex'.

The nursery is run by the volunteers from Waitakere Rivercare who were given lots of compliments for the newly built nursery and the healthy looking plants, which are waiting for the rain and the upcoming planting season. They are still recruiting for volunteers: nursery work is mainly indoors, no bending required with our new potting table and lovely company guaranteed.

VIP Kayak Day Saturday 30th of March

There are still a couple of tickets left for this unique experience. A huge success last year, we're repeating this once-a-year opportunity of a one-off paddle to raise funds for Matuku Link. The navigable part of Waitākere River is accessible only from private land and on this one day access will be allowed. Limited tickets available for only \$60 each, all gear (kayaks, paddles, life vests etc) and training provided. Bookings required with Annalily: matukulink@gmail.com or 021 2207136

All funds raised will be used to benefit this project: rebuilding the barn into a wetland education centre, revegetation, pest control and everything else we need to do to protect and enhance our native wetland and bush ecosystems.
www.matukulink.org.nz

Matuku Link is a charitable trust called Matuku Reserve Trust. It is not strictly a Forest & Bird project but has received support from Forest & Bird Waitakere and many volunteers are active Forest & Bird members.

Magazines wanted!

Have you finished with your Forest & Bird Magazines? We'd love to give them to our visitors at stalls and schools. Just connect with Margaret at 09-837 5274 or drop them off at reception at Waitakere Gardens Retirement Village. Thank you!

Pest free Piha in action



PfP's cadet division unloads wild ginger from Te Ahuahu Rd into the Council weed bin.

Pest free Piha (PfP) is a project of Project Piha Heritage which has for the last decade focussed on Piha's natural, cultural and historic values and ensuring that these are not undermined by urbanisation and gentrification.

While by no means a peninsula, Piha has the advantage for pest control of being bounded by the mighty Tasman to the west and surrounded entirely by the Waitakere Ranges. Actually the village is within the Ranges, as defined in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage legislation – and we decided that pest control might be managed differently in such a contained area. So we developed a strategic plan with clearly defined goals and objectives, and precise, and time-bound, targets, including the outcome that Piha would be pest free by 2025.

The key strategy in the plan was to establish volunteer groups in all roads in Piha – 12 to 15 depending on the length of the road - overseen by a paid operations manager with clear key performance indicators based on the plan. Money has been raised from several quarters and we began operations in May 2018 with a goal of getting 6 groups established in the first twelve months. This figure has already been exceeded as Piharians take the project to heart.

We started with invasive weeds, rather than predators, since organising weed working bees (10 in the second half of 2018) bring people together, introduce them to their neighbours,

etc, a more collegial process than trapping and baiting for predators. We need the groups to work collaboratively towards a sustainable project end, since they'll be needed to maintain the pest free status we intend to achieve by 2025. In 2019 group activities will extend to establishing predator plans for each road with baselines and predator targets. We focus on both weeds and predators because they are closely interlinked (a predator free Piha will just produce more efficient seed distribution through the growth in the bird population. Equally, weeds eg lupins in the dunes, and gorse and pampas on restoration sites, provide ideal habitats for predators.)

Success to date is evident not just in the reduction in invasive weeds, but also increased bird numbers – for example, the return of grey-faced petrels to the southern cliffs following intensive predator control there. The “build it and they will come” approach is also demonstrated by our well- publicised dotterel population which last year fledged two chicks and have again hatched three eggs, despite selecting nesting sites in our off-leash dog area – and illustrating that the project will ultimately succeed in the 2025 target only if we can gain the cooperation of a large proportion of Piha's 900 properties, including dog and cat owners. Getting the whole population behind us is our greatest challenge.

By Peter Hosking – coordinating Pest free Piha

One weed at a time

Early in 2014, I contacted Auckland Transport asking them to tackle the weeds that had taken over a large area in the road corridor near to my home. There followed phone calls, emails, a meeting with an official from AT and a meeting with members of the Local Board. Occasionally there was action. The edges would be tidied – with a weed-eater, spreading the tradescantia! The over-hanging vegetation would be trimmed – scattering the agapanthus seeds. There would be spraying – which killed everything, except the agapanthus. One day, I saw someone spot spraying small woolly nightshade, which was effective. I asked AT to tackle some larger ones that were seeding – and they did!

Four years after I first rang AT, I asked them to tackle the ginger – just the ginger. After several phone calls, I was told the job was done. It wasn't. Eventually, Fulton Hogan rang me to tell me that AT "did not have the appetite" to deal with the

ginger. Expressing my anger and frustration to a friend, I said that I felt like doing it myself – and she said she would help me. We entered the area through a curtain of climbing weeds, and there was ginger as far as the eye could see.

We spend an hour or so once a week, cutting and pasting. There are sizable native trees and young natives under the ginger so there's no need to do any planting! It is a steep slope that has slipped in the past, but leaving the ginger roots to break down should, along with the larger trees, prevent a slip. We're also removing old rubbish.

We've had a break over Christmas and New Year, but we'll be back into it soon. The trees provide plenty of shade – but insect repellent will be essential!

By Doreen Sunman – Laingholm.



ginger before



ginger after

AGM Forest & Bird 2018 – part 2

As promised in our November newsletter, this is the second part of Robert's report on the AGM.

Sanderson Memorial Address - Sarah Thomson

Sarah is a lawyer and former Kiwi Conservation Club kid. She spoke eloquently about her lifetime environmental journey and participating in court action against the Government over climate change. I was very interested to find that her father, Philip, was the creator of Philproof bait stations, extensively used throughout New Zealand. It turns out he named them 'Philproof' because he was able to jump on them without breaking them!

Sunday - AGM & Council meetings

All nominations for officer and Board member positions were elected unopposed except for the Treasurer's position. Alan Chow was elected new Treasurer (over Michael Humphries). He replaces a retiring Graham Bellamy. Graham has given great service to the Society and was awarded a Distinguished Life membership for his outstanding work over the previous 12 years.

Our new board consists of: President - Mark Hanger (president), Kate Graeme, (deputy president), Alan Chow (treasurer) and members Chris Barker, James Muir, Monica Peters, John Oates, Te Atarangi Sayers and Ines Stäger. Note that Te Atarangi and Monica were newly elected to fill vacancies.

Remits

Most of the remits proposed by the Board were deferred for further consultation. This included one on dispensing with the Treasurer position altogether. However, one remit giving the Board a more clearly defined ability to intervene in the affairs of a Branch (under exceptional circumstances) was passed. This includes the power to remove Branch Committee officers or members. Another Board remit setting more precise limitations on branches making external donations was also agreed.

A branch remit to distribute the magazine in a paper wrapper rather than a plastic one was agreed. While this was undoubtedly environmentally desirable it would not surprise me if members who find their magazine arrives soaking wet become disgruntled!

Another branch remit advocating that the Russell Lupin be added to the National Pest Plant Accord List was also accepted. This plant is a major pest in parts of the South Island.

North Shore branch proposed a remit to advocate very strongly for better tree protection. The Board suggested an amended version which would give it effect but take account of the limited range of the Society's resources to effect major change.

Altogether the Conference was a roaring success - the food was top-notch with those of us with 'special requirements' having our needs fully met!

Robert Woolf - Waitakere Branch Councillor

Activities by Forest & Bird Waitakere

Third Thursday Talks:

All are held at the Kelston Community Centre, cnr Awaroa/ Great North Rd, starting at 7.30 pm. Non-members are very welcome, join us for supper afterwards. Koha appreciated to cover hall hire. For further information contact Liz Anstey at 0274762732, lizanstey@hotmail.com

Thursday February 21st, 7.30 pm

Ruby Moore

freshwater ecologist and collections Manager Natural Sciences at the Auckland Museum - The importance of fresh water streams in Auckland

Ruby Moore is a freshwater ecologist who has a particular interest in the streams and waterways around the Auckland region. During her career, she has worked with many school and community groups to raise awareness of the natural environment through education and citizen science. In her current role as Natural Sciences Collection Manager she is working to build a fuller picture of New Zealand's unique critters and land vertebrates. In this talk she'll highlight some of her finds in West Auckland streams as well as give us an overview of what is happening in wider Auckland in regard to fresh water streams and their inhabitants.

Thursday March 21st, 7.30 pm

Karen Baird

Forest & Bird Seabird Advocate – A SeaWeek Event!

Before Karen started her role with Forest & Bird she worked at, among other places, the Ministry of Fisheries. She will share her knowledge of (the absence of) fish management practices that influence our seabirds: from albatrosses to penguins. At a recent North Island gathering, Karen showed the audience what fish quota are based on and why they mostly don't work. Karen's talk will not only be engaging, it will definitely open your eyes about our current practices and what needs to change to keep our seas in shape.

Thursday April 18th, 7.30 pm

AGM – note: due to the change of the end of the financial year, our AGM has moved forward by one month.

Speaker: Christine Rose – campaign advisor at World Animal Protection but also known as our local activist for our environment, especially for Maui and Hector's dolphins. She will be talking about her new employer and how their global vision is applicable to our local situation.

Thursday May 16th, 7.30 pm

Quentin Paynter

Research Scientist at Landcare Research: Introducing bioagents to control weeds

Quentin Paynter is an entomologist with over 20-years of experience in weed biocontrol. Originally from the UK,

Quentin has worked on biocontrol projects in France, Australia, and New Zealand, where he has worked for Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research since 2003. Quentin divides his time between scientific studies designed to improve the success rate and ensure the environmental safety of weed biocontrol and hands-on weed biocontrol work, developing biocontrol agents for key invasive weed species in New Zealand and Pacific Island countries, such as the Cook Islands and Vanuatu.

Biological control is often the most cost-effective management tool for invasive weeds. This presentation will cover the history of weed biocontrol in New Zealand and ongoing work undertaken by Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research to ensure that biocontrol agents are safe and effective. The talk will also reveal what biocontrol agents are in the pipeline for release in the Auckland region over the next few years.

Other Activities:

Saturday 2 March 2019, 10am-12 Noon

In Celebration of SeaWeek, Guided Harborview Wetland Walk on Te Atatu Peninsula. Email motumanawa@gmail.com to find out meeting details, limited to 25 people max.

Tuesday 5th March 7pm at the Arataki Visitor Centre: Grey-faced Petrels on the West Coast

Hear all about 30 years of research on the grey-faced petrels surviving on the islands and headlands of the West Coast near Bethells. Graeme Taylor, DOC's petrel expert, who also identified petrel colonies on Puponga Point in 1998, will explain the findings of his research at a special talk organized by Seaweek and the Cornwallis Petrelheads. James Russell of Auckland University will talk about recently established burrows on the northern Manukau Harbour Foreshore and his plans for volunteer coordination in our community. Cuppa to follow to allow you to talk with researchers and ask questions.

Sponsored by The Waitakere Ranges Local Board and Manukau Harbour Forum



Other Activities Continued:

Saturday 13th April, 6 – 8 pm - A Night in the Bufferzone

Discover night life in the area around Ark in the Park, our largest conservation project, this time in the bufferzone at Matuku Link: possibly pakeke, glow worms and giant moths and maybe even bats! A treasure hunt highlighting the positive results of predator control for our native species.

Ark in the Park in the Waitakere Ranges has been doing predator control with volunteers for the past 16 years, enabling the reintroduction of endangered species like kokako, whitehead and robins. The Bufferzone is the area around the Ark with predator control on private properties connecting to the Ark.

Booking necessary: arkbufferzone@gmail.com <http://matukulink.org.nz/2019/01/30/a-night-in-the-bufferzone>



Photo by Jacqui Geux



Photo by Jacqui Geux

Saturday 13th April 2019, 11 am to 12.30 pm - Tour Tai Haruru Lodge and Garden.

Enjoy the wonderful secret native garden at Garden Road, on a tour led by our expert Chris Bindon. It is the backyard of Tai Haruru, the lodge owned Forest & Bird for members to book. Open today only to the general public, with tea and scones available for sale afterwards. The lodge is only a couple of minutes from the beach of North Piha, so you can make an easy visit to one of West Auckland's most iconic beaches afterwards. Bookings necessary: waitakere.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

Contact details Waitakere Branch Committee Members as at May 2018:

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Michael Coote, Motu Manawa and Harbourview	021 622 122	marquisnz@clear.net.nz
John Staniland, Matuku Reserve	810 9516	bushridge@slingshot.co.nz
John Sumich, Ark in the Park and Habitat Te Henga	818 5267	cjnk@xtra.co.nz
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Dave Allen, Kaipara connection		dave.allen@outlook.co.nz

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