

Kārearea

Protecting a southern land

October 2019

Image: Craig McKenzie



In your face – Extinction Rebellion!



Wellington Action *Simon Oosterman*

During recent weeks we've seen two different kinds of climate action in New Zealand. There have been Strike 4 Climate marches, which have attracted massive participation, especially by students – and the pop-up protests organised by Extinction Rebellion groups. Both actions have drawn mixed responses.

Deputy PM Winston Peters believed that students should stay in school because they would be able to learn all they needed to know about climate change by "seeing what the Government is doing".

Education Minister Chris Hipkins, on the other hand, felt that there was a lot that students could learn through civic activity such as the climate strikes. "I want kids in school learning and if they're not in school learning, then I want to make sure what they're doing is contributing to their learning."

Responding in March to the first strike, National MP

Judith Collins said the protests were "not going to help the world one bit." In October she voiced opposition to a sign that read "help farmers phase out animal farming", claiming that young people were being brainwashed to hate farmers.

Strike organisers estimated that, nationwide, up to 170,000 people took part in the New Zealand demonstrations on 27 September. A week later, a smaller number of protesters joined in Extinction Rebellion events that aimed to cause disruption such as by blocking access to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), and to a Wellington branch of the ANZ bank. (The ANZ is the official banker of Bathurst Resources, New Zealand's largest coal mining company.) Extinction Rebellion was only launched a year ago, but about 500 people turned up to the Wellington action.

The movement demands that governments:

- **"Tell the truth" and declare a climate and ecological emergency.**
- **Act now to halt biodiversity loss and reduce greenhouse emissions to net-zero by 2025.**
- **"Go beyond politics" and set up a "Citizen's Assembly" on climate and ecological justice.**

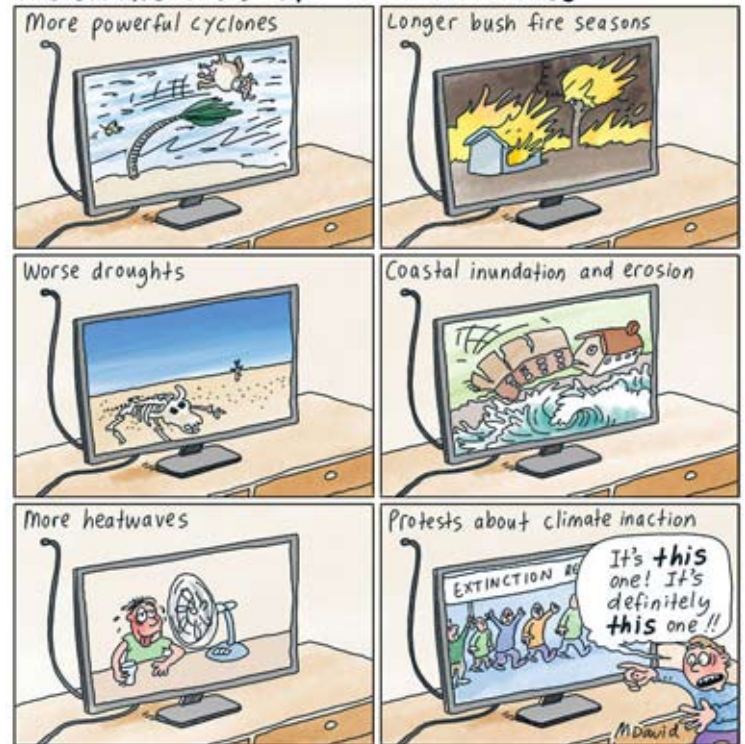
From the public's point of view, these sorts of actions don't provide the feel-good factor that comes from being able to take part in huge rallies where (generally) patient motorists are controlled by (generally) patient police. PM Jacinda Ardern made it clear that, whereas she might support the climate strike and the right to protest, she felt that, "Blocking people from being able to go and do their day-to-day job doesn't necessarily take us any closer to the climate action they are calling for." Extinction Rebellion media manager Simon Oosterman, on the other hand, made the point that, "Business as usual is pushing us towards mass extinction."

The movement has gone global in a remarkably short space of time, despite establishment resistance. Boris Johnson, for example, referred to its UK founders and supporters as "uncooperative crusties" who should stop blocking the streets of the capital with their "heaving hemp-smelling bivouacs". In New York City, nearly 90 activists were arrested after staging a die-in on Wall Street, pouring fake blood on the iconic bull statue outside the New York Stock Exchange.

During an Australian climate emergency action, former Greens senator Scott Ludlam was charged with obstructing traffic. Ironically, he couldn't appear in court because the police gave him bail conditions which banned him from coming within 2.5 km of the Sydney Town Hall. Other protestors had been given conditions which forbade them to even speak to members of Extinction Rebellion.

Gail Bradbrook, co-founder of Extinction Rebellion, was asked what her response was to those critics who

The climate crisis: spot the inconvenience



Mark David

agree with their goals but oppose their tactics. She pointed out that, "people don't have to like us in order to start talking about the crisis. What happens if you stand passively by the side of the road with a placard saying, you know, "Stop climate change" is you just get ignored. When you get on the street and block it, people start to have a conversation about this existential situation that we're in ... we've tried all the other stuff — writing to our MPs and our politicians and doing petitions and going on marches. I don't see what else there is, other than getting on the streets." ■



Dunedin Strike4Climate Jim Young

Bird of the Year spreads its wings

New Zealanders will be able to vote for a whole flock of their favourite native birds in Forest & Bird's *Bird of the Year* contest this year.

A change in the voting system means people will be able to vote for up to five of the New Zealand birds they love in order of preference. Previously, they have been able to only vote for one bird.

"This is our 14th Bird of the Year and we didn't want to duck our responsibility to keep making it better," says Forest & Bird spokeswoman Megan Hubscher.

"We believe its popularity will soar to new heights this year now New Zealanders can put up to five of their favourite birds in the running. We're sure people will embrace it and the birds will too."

Under the voting system, up to five preferences of voters can be taken into account to find the winner. This voting system might change the tactics of our campaign managers to "vote #1 for my bird".

It also means the result will not be known until all the preferences are tallied at the end of voting, adding to the suspense and hopefully reducing the likelihood of overenthusiastic fans of a particular bird attempting "fowl" play in the voting, Ms Hubscher says.

Voting for Bird of the Year 2019 will open on Monday 28 October and close on Sunday 10 November. During this time enthusiastic campaign managers and teams will use creativity, humour, and sneaky tactics to pull in votes for their bird.

The lighthearted competition has a serious purpose in spreading awareness about the threats to our native birds, most of which are threatened or at risk of extinction. Introduced predators, habitat loss and fishing bycatch are among the menaces they face.

<https://www.birdoftheyear.org.nz/>

On the Hoiho scale, how are YOU feeling today?




Yellow-eyed penguins (hoiho) are disappearing before our eyes. They are one of the rarest penguins in the world with just 1,700 pairs remaining. If nothing is done, scientists predict they could be extinct on mainland New Zealand within 10 - 20 years.

Raising public awareness of hoiho is crucial for their conservation. You can help by voting for them to win Forest & Bird's annual Bird of the Year competition.

Follow our campaign on social media at @votehoiho and be ready to #VoteHoiho between 28 October and 10 November 2019 at www.birdoftheyear.org.nz



www.birdoftheyear.org.nz @votehoiho

Support Hoiho!

Come along to South Otago Forest & Bird's stalls where you can order Hoiho merchandise. Proceeds will support the Branch's work for Yellow-eyed Penguin conservation – predator control, revegetation and advocacy.

**Sat 26 Oct 9am–1pm
Owaka Museum Market Day**

**Sat 30 Nov 9am–4pm
South Otago A&P Show**



For more information about merchandise see: www.bit.ly/votehoihoswag

Focusing on Fresh Water

Action for Healthy Waterways

Despite the bewildering abundance of regulations, policy statements and environmental standards designed to improve the state of New Zealand's fresh water, we still need urgent action to stop things getting worse and set us on a path towards improvement.

The government's *Action for Healthy Waterways* plan, currently out for consultation, has some flaws, but has been generally applauded by environmental organisations. You can download either a summary or the full discussion document from <https://submissions.mfe.govt.nz/>.

Proposed regulations would require different actions in different regions and catchments, but in general would mean:

- **better management of stormwater and wastewater**
- **no further loss of wetlands and streams**
- **tighter controls to prevent sediment loss from earthworks and urban development**
- **farmers and growers understanding and managing environmental risks and following good practice**
- **new standards and limits on some farming activities in some regions or catchments.**

To have your say on the proposed changes go to <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/consultation/action-for-healthy-waterways>. Submissions will be accepted until 31 Oct.

Te Mana o te Wai

Te Mana o te Wai or 'the mana of the water', refers to the integrated and holistic health and wellbeing of waters as a continuum from the mountains to the sea. It is the fundamental value and concept that protects New Zealanders' special connection with freshwater, while simultaneously sustaining its ability to provide for the future wellbeing of people and our unique ecosystems. In the context of freshwater management, it provides a national framework to understand water, that can be applied to inform how decision-making connected to the care and use of water should occur.

Te Mana o te Wai establishes a three-tiered hierarchy of obligations, requiring that certain uses for water must be prioritised over others.

Priority 1

The health of the water

Priority 2

Providing for essential human health needs, such as drinking water

Priority 3

Other consumption and use.



Pied stilt – Just one of the stunning bird photographs by Craig McKenzie to be found in *Catlins Birds – a pocket guide*, available from South Otago Forest & Bird.

STAND Awarua Holiday Programme Oct 2019

It was great to have Stand return to visit the Southland Community Nursery – to give the opportunities to get out and about in nature.

Today it was pond fun, firstly looking up close at some of the creatures that inhabit the wetland at the nursery. Water boatmen, damselfly larvae and a koura (fresh-water crayfish) were the highlights in the nets this time around. The koura's hairy front nippers, its tail, antennae and eyes were all looked at closely, and we talked about what a koura might eat!

A walk around the pond picking up nature was followed by some very creative boat building – and the challenge of seeing if they would float for 30 seconds! A look for skinks, birds and insects, kai for lunch, puppet and song fun finished off the visit.

Bronwyn Southland KCC

Stand Tu Maia is part of a national service that provides programmes for children and young people



From around the country



Mohua DOC, James Reardon

Saving mohua motivates Makarora Valley trappers

Predator Free NZ gives an insight into the need for both trapping and toxins to control predators in the Makarora Valley near Wanaka

Mohua (yellowheads) are vulnerable to climbing ship rats and stoats as the birds nest in holes in old or rotten trees. Since the arrival of introduced predators, mohua numbers have plummeted, from being the second most abundant bird in forests across the whole South Island, to just a few thousand in isolated populations.

"The beech mast has just finished and we've got a rat plague at the moment," volunteer trappers report. "Each team is going out every fortnight – but we're still losing. In the last month we've caught 177 rats. In the previous month we caught 130 rats compared to the normal number of about 20 rats per month.

"Every year since about 2009, the Mohua Trust and DOC have put money towards an annual mohua survey. Mohua numbers were steadily declining until 2017, when 1080 was dropped at Makarora. Since then, mohua numbers have been increasing – but they're still only back to the level they were in 2011. DOC does a huge amount of rodent monitoring with tracking tunnels. Once numbers exceed a certain threshold, they can only handle them with 1080: our traps cannot cope and the mohua could well vanish from Makarora."

See: <https://predatorfreenz.org/makarora-valley-mohua/>



They breed them tough in the south

South Otago KCC members brave wintery spring conditions to go kite flying at Kaka Point.

Land sale to OceanaGold

ECO (The Environment and Conservation Organisations of New Zealand) reports on the approval of the sale

Labour's Finance and Associate Finance Ministers, Grant Robertson and David Parker respectively, have scored simultaneous blows against the climate, biodiversity and Waihi residents by approving "new" applications to the Overseas Investment Office (OIO) by OceanaGold to buy 180 ha of farm land. The land is intended to be used to dump toxic tailings, allowing OceanaGold to expand the Waihi Gold mine.

This land is the same land that Lands Minister Eugenie Sage refused to agree to being used by OceanaGold for tailings dumps earlier this year.

The Hauraki District Council would have to give consent under the RMA, but this is a Council renowned for its poor environmental record: including refusing to sign the Local Government Climate Declaration, and its efforts to press for a local bill to promote mangrove destruction. The RMA also does not permit a proposal's contribution to climate change to be considered by decision-makers.



Waihi gold mine

Jenny Campbell – Old Blue

Southland Branch Chair Chris Henderson explains why Jenny Campbell has received Forest & Bird's highest award.

"Jenny's strength lies in making connections with other people. Her communication skills are excellent and her warmth and humanity are great assets, alongside an incisive intellect. Her positive outlook inspires others, and she is always eager to find the good in anything she is part of.

"Jenny's passionate advocacy of cultural, social and environmental issues involve not only Forest and Bird, but also establishing the Invercargill Environment Centre, connecting with local iwi, Waste-busters, Kidzone, schools, her church, sustainability activities such as EcoFest, and climate change organisations (including Coal Action Network Aoteroa)."

A very busy woman. And a very well-deserved award.



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Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust

www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz

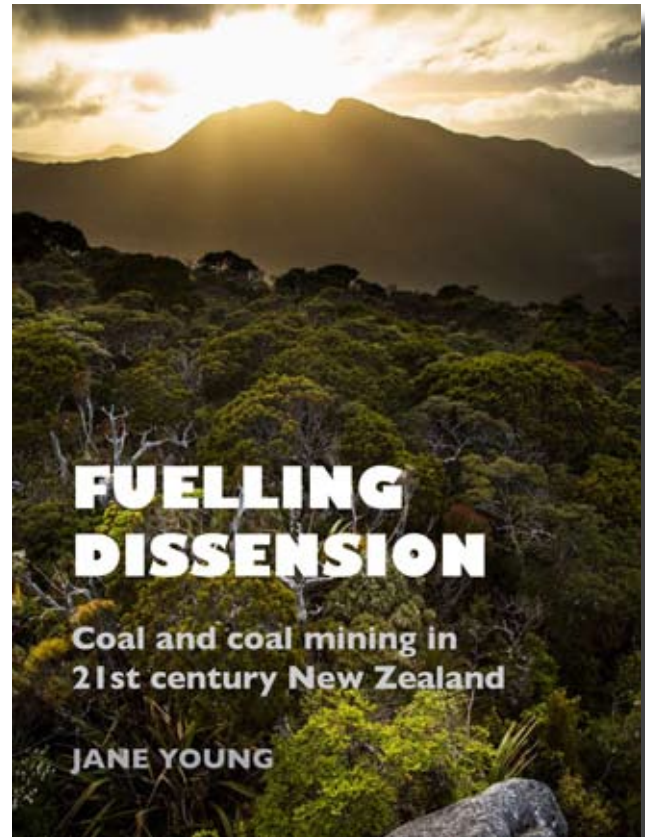
New Zealand Sea Lion Trust www.sealiontrust.org.nz

Kārearea: protecting a southern land

Contributions welcome. Copy for Dec is due on 30 Nov.
Editor Jane Young: janejimmyoung@slingshot.co.nz

Kārearea contains southern-focused environmental news and views from both groups and individuals.

It is edited by Jane Young but is not the official newsletter of any specific group.



Publication date: November 2019

Jane will be introducing her new book at

7:30pm on Mon 18 November

St Andrews Church Hall Balclutha

For more info: triplehelix@slingshot.co.nz

South Otago Forest & Bird at the Dunedin Climate March *Jim Young*

