

Kāpiti-Mana Forest and Bird

Newsletter July 2021

Chair's Opinion

The idea behind Island biogeography is that smaller areas of forest (islands) contain less species. A small area may start off with a number of species but if it remains isolated for some time, more vulnerable species will simply die out. That is why we see piwakawaka and tui but little else in many forest remnants. So one large area of forest is more valuable to native species than several separate areas of equivalent size. Consequently, we need big areas of native forest to keep our native species. Functional ecological connections between two areas of forest (ecological corridors) may allow species to migrate between them through the corridor. When this occurs, the interconnected forest areas can be considered as one.

The draft national statement on biodiversity requires a target for urban indigenous vegetation cover of at least 10%. Once you get below 10%, it's very difficult to maintain indigenous species says Professor Bruce Clarkson of Waikato University. It's an important threshold. New Plymouth and Hamilton have adopted the target. Auckland is aiming for 30%.

But as well as a percentage of indigenous vegetation, corridors need to be included. On the Kapiti coastal plain there are areas of predominantly Kohekohe forest that remain. Green tape is put around them when urban development occurs and generally, they are not diminished. But by having an urban edge rather than a farmed edge, they are more

isolated that they were, the edge is more hostile to native fauna and we know that that will lead to less species and less biodiversity value. Being close to human populations, there will have more cats but probably less mice and mustelids. To really add value, developments should be approved that continue a functional ecological connection to neighbouring areas of bush. Most of the bush areas have a stream of some sort emerging from them. The stream would be a very convenient and natural way of connecting these areas but would need to be planted with natives. To be functional corridor, a minimum width would be necessary.

An article in The Listener August 7-13 Page nicely combines both of these concepts especially with respect to cities. It shows how some buildings have been greened, city walls planted, roads reshaped to allow for planting of sizable trees that give native birds a place to rest, recover and find food. Hamilton wants to restore historical vegetation in its incised gulley system that winds through residential areas to the Waikato River and alone would deliver 8% of Hamilton's indigenous cover.

Combining both corridors and cover of over 10% requires planning. This is especially effective if done when other services, power, roading, sewage and stormwater is planned. Retrofitting into an existing streetscape is not easy.

Not only will the indigenous cover help our biodiversity, it will clean our air, produce oxygen and reduce stormwater. Vegetation affects our mental health, benefits people who are able to walk through bush areas, see birds by day, hear ruru by night.

Sometimes large trees need to be planted in concrete planters to keep them out of our essential services.

What could be achieved in Kapiti?

August 2021 International Panel on Climate Change

The latest IPCC Report says CC effects are widespread rapid and intensifying.

- Climate change intensifying the water cycle - more intense rainfall, flooding, and drought.
- Heat waves causing uncontrollable fires.
- Severe coastal flooding and erosion What were one in 100 years extreme sea level events are more frequent.
- Changes in oceans - warming, more frequent marine heatwaves, ocean acidification, reduced oxygen levels.
- City temperatures amplified due to heat holding and reflective surfaces.
- Permafrost thawing, loss of seasonal snow cover, melting of glaciers and ice sheets, and loss of summer Arctic sea ice.

Climate change action from GW

Greater Wellington released an item through scoop this month. Cr Thomas Nash said *Wetlands, forests and healthy soils are natural infrastructure, which is the best value infrastructure that money can buy. ...Greater Wellington's planting programme which will see 400,000 trees planted across the region this winter. At QEP, \$1,399,101 will go towards restoring 128.5 hectares of peatland and duneland – the largest restoration project of its kind in Aotearoa. (80ha of wetland and 50ha of duneland) And paying for it: It's a unique scheme that does not rely on public funds from rates.*

You can read the full article here

[grazing-land-out-to-pasture-at-qep-and-kaitoke-permanent-carbon-sink-to-take-its-place.htm](https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/0108/01080101.htm)

There has also been extensive planting of 75,000 plants at the top of the catchment in Whareroa Farm Park (not a GW project)

These actions are called mitigation. They slow down climate change. They reduce the need to spend local money on adaption such as sea walls. They benefit the world, not just us. The benefit for us is extremely small – negligible. But that's not the point. If enough mitigation occurs climate change will be halted. Its like Covid. We are not safe until

everyone is safe.



Climate Aotearoa

This book, edited by Helen Clark, is about how climate change is likely to impact NZ – the science, the issues and the solutions. Impacts on those living by the sea, on flora and fauna, on aquatic environments and industries are identified. Solutions from individuals, agriculture and nature are explored.

Helen Clark, regarding the differences between Covid-19 and climate change says Covid - (the) *impact was rapid, dramatic and highly visible with far reaching effects across human health, economies and societies. And the responses ...have emerged quickly – such as physical distancing, mask wearing, testing and tracing systems, quarantine, and now vaccination,*

In contrast Climate change ...its impacts unfold over time as a slower onset disaster; if not addressed decisively, they will be far reaching across the full spectrum of biological and non-biological systems. And solutions, There is no parallel set of measures with immediate and dramatic impact for climate change mitigation – all necessary measures for that take time to implement and to gain traction.

Andrew Jeffs says *Coastal engineering ... is very expensive to build and maintain. ...continuing increases in sea levels will ... outdate these structures. ...they will need to be either abandoned or rebuilt. ...avoiding placing infrastructure in coastal margins will be the most effective response.*

Supporting nature in your will

Sometimes it's difficult to predict daily expenses and therefore to know how much you can afford to give a cause. Forest & Bird has an endowment fund so supporters can leave a bequest to the Society in their will. To make the process easy, there is a page on the website to provide information on how to Leave a Gift in Your Will:

<https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/support-us/leave-gift-your-will>. There is a person you can contact to talk it over, and sample wording to insert. Forest and Bird invests the capital responsibly (through a managed investment fund: <https://www.path.co.nz/>) and only uses the interest yielded to further the cause, meaning there will be money to help the Society keep defending New Zealand in years to come. This is a great way to leave a legacy.

Climate change; What can I do?

This is a question I was asked at the U3A talk. I think I answered it badly. A considered response is, it depends on how much money you are prepared to put into it.

Put in zero money and save.

Consume less meat and animal products including milk and cheese. Animal protein can have emissions 100 times higher than plant protein. Drive as little as you can – instead walk or bike. These two will also improve your health. Fly as seldom as you can.

Small change and save

Led and outside solar lights

Some money (hundreds) and save

Replace your shower head with a low flow shower. Methven's Kiri MKII Low Flow Satinjet Handset is really good and will save you heating additional water especially if you are on a gas water heater.

A thousand or so and still save

Consider carefully what you do every time a replacement appliance is required. A gas water heater locks you into gas and emissions but if you dropped gas altogether how much would you save? Add in the connection or delivery cost. It is probably best to do this when you need to replace a

gas appliance. Water and household heating. Heat pumps are efficient and virtually carbon free. Heat pump water heaters are on the market.

Quite a few thousand

There are options Insulate your home. Double glaze windows. Solar panels and a small battery. Electric car. I have tried all of these. Our costs have dropped remarkably. I would never go back.

Note. Our electric grid may have to burn coal to cope. But that is a national problem to fix.

Our next public meeting

is on 22 September in Waikanae. Come for a cuppa at 7pm, before the talk at 7:30. We're normally finished by 9pm. Our next speaker is internationally acclaimed ichthyologist Andrew Stewart, Fish collections manager at Te Papa, who will be talking about maritime pests and the trouble they cause.

The Great Kereru Count 2021



runs from 17-26 September 2021 and we'd like you to be involved. Flocks of over 100 kereru used to be a common sight a century ago, and these protected endemic birds are a

keystone species - serving an extremely important role in spreading the largest seeds of our native trees such as matai, and tawa. Sightings are much less common today, and it's even more rare to see flocks! By taking part in the count you will help scientists know how many there are (or aren't), where they live (or don't), what they are feeding on, and how best to protect them. This is the last planned count, so if you can spare five minutes, 30 minutes or more, here's your chance to be a citizen science and make those minutes count. Find out more at www.greatkererucount.nz,

or facebook.com/kererudiscovery for more information.

FUN FACTS ABOUT KERERU

- * You can distinguish a kereru from a rock pigeon by it's white singlet and pantaloons. They're also much heavier (think tui vs blackbird as a comparison)
- * Kereru are shy and prefer to eat young tree leaves and fruit (which can make them drunk), rock pigeons prefer takeaways, people and terrafrima.
- * Especially in breeding season (now), love-filled kereru like to show off with display flights - doing magnificent stalls, and swoops in the skies (unfortunately, they don't always realise that some of their flight paths cross road.

Get involved

Ban bottom trawling

The Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, whose members include Forest and Bird, WWF and Greenpeace, presented to the Environment Select Committee, their new report: Save Deep Sea Corals (<http://www.savethehighseas.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Save-Deep-Sea-Corals-NZ-DSCC-Report-July-2021-FINAL.pdf>). The report contains further evidence of the destruction bottom trawling causes on seamounts, and they (and their ecosystems) take decades to recover. The government needs to act before it's too late. To encourage government action, sign the Greenpeace petition:

<https://petition.act.greenpeace.org.nz/oceans-bottomtrawling>.

Stop More Coal Mining

Existing consents mean coal mining in New Zealand will potentially not stop for many decades, but at least we can try and stop any more consents being issued! Sign the Forest and Bird petition: No new coal mines <https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/petitions/no-new-coal-mines>

Calendars and Diaries: our Branch Fundraiser

Have you got yours yet? These beautiful products make great gifts and are early enough to post overseas. They're very inexpensive (\$15 for a calendar, \$23

for a diary), and they help fund our branch activities. Last year we sold out! Contact Peter Kentish with your order, and payment alternatives: 021 027 70520, or 04 298 1255 or via Pk2003_595@hotmail.com, or you can pay online to: Forest and Bird Kapiti-Mana Branch, Kiwibank A/c no. **38-9020-0171967-00** (some banks require an extra 0 on the end).



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Your feedback on this newsletter would be most welcome as would contributions to future newsletters.