



Welcome to the November newsletter

Nice to meet you!

Thank you to everyone who could make it to our first get-together meeting earlier this month. As a new South-East Wildlink Manager, I was delighted to meet many enthusiastic folks. Your passion for nature and the environment is genuinely contagious.

I am introducing myself briefly to those who could not make it this time. I moved to New Zealand five years ago, and before I started working in conservation and biosecurity, I studied at the University of Auckland. My Ph.D. project investigated the effects of sugar water feeding on native birds. As a practical outcome of this study, I produced a safe guideline for feeding households. It might be of interest to some of you. So, below is what I recommend:



Sugar Water Feeding Guidelines

1. Choose commercially available feeders designed for native birds (photo on the right) to exclude sugar water access for the introduced species, such as house sparrows, which can transmit diseases.
2. Provide sugar water only in winter during the coldest months. Stopping supplementary feeding in spring and summer lets birds use natural food sources, pollinate native plants, and minimise the risk of bacterial growth at high ambient temperatures.
3. For winter feeding, I advise using high sugar concentration (≥ 1 cup of sugar per 1L of water), as it positively impacts birds' health.
4. Thoroughly clean all structures used in feeding (at least twice a week), and do not add extras to the sugar solution, as it encourages bacterial growth.
5. Place your feeder on a tall pole away from fences and trees to protect attracted birds from predation by domestic cats or pathogens of the invasive pests.

More info:
<https://sugarfeederproject.wixsite.com/sugarfeeder>



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Papakura Stream Restoration Project

An impressive habitat restoration mahi at Papakura Stream started in 2021, the initiative of Conservation Volunteer Plantings and Trees for Survival Planting. The project is a partnership with CVNZ, the Franklin, Papakura, and Manurewa Local Boards, Healthy Waters, the landowners, and many corporate partners. I talked to the project coordinator, Siobhan O'Grady, and she told me this.

Last year, the project involved four landowners who assisted in planting 12,500 native trees, shrubs, and grasses along the stream and adjacent areas. In 2021, the group partnered with The Sustainable Business Network, which part-fund one of the project's sites, and provided funding for a team of five full-time field staff for nine months. That immensely helped with site preparation, organisation of volunteer planting events, and weed and pest control.

In 2022, the Team mainly worked on the upper reaches of the Brookby stream and public land along Esplanade Reserve in Randwick Park. This time, there were already nine engaged landowners who planted 41,000 natives. On top of that, Papakura Stream Restoration collaborated with Trees for Survival. That allowed the project to involve school students who planted additional 7,482 trees. Another 45,000 natives came from our SEWL community committee member, Nicky Auld. Overall, there were 1,470 volunteers from schools, corporate groups, and the community involved in this project, and almost 93,500 extra trees in the Papakura Stream catchment this year alone!

In addition, the project funded over a kilometer of new fencing in the area, while volunteers removed over a tonne of rubbish and cleared many hectares from aggressive weeds. It is genuinely delightful to see that new green belt in the making, and it shows what we can achieve when groups and landowners work together!

For more info contact Siobhan O'Grady: SOGrady@cvnz.org.nz



FOREST & BIRD COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Forest & Bird Operating Framework

Forest & Bird is no longer operating under the 4 Tier pandemic response plan. Instead, our work approvals and controls will largely mirror public health advice guidance. The most common personal control for COVID-19 is mask use. This link describes the recommendations around mask use <https://covid19.govt.nz/prepare-and-stay-safe/keep-up-healthy-habits/face-masks/wearing-a-face-mask/>

Vaccination Requirements

There are no longer any mandatory requirements for Forest & Bird staff or volunteers to be vaccinated to carry out any work activities. Forest & Bird still strongly encourages that everyone is fully vaccinated and boosted, in line with public health advice.

What work can be undertaken?

All activity types are now approved for all Forest & Bird staff and volunteers to undertake. Note, this permission only relates to COVID-19 risk, other risk management controls may be required for your work. Additional controls for specific roles and activities are covered below. In all other cases the controls required by the current public health advice or regulations are the only control requirements relating to COVID-19 risk.

At-Risk Forest & Bird workers

For any 'at-risk' volunteers additional controls may be appropriate. These controls will depend on the nature of the 'at-risk' status for individuals. Determining whether an individual is 'at-risk' and what that risk means is up to the individual. For clarity on how an 'at-risk' individual is defined and some guidance on what that might mean for you please check out who has greater risk of severe illness. If you decide that you are 'at-risk' and that you would like more controls in place to protect you, please discuss this immediately with your manager Branch committee member. These conversations are a private medical matter and should only be discussed with the individual.

General controls to reduce transmission

Staying home when sick is a very effective control measure to prevent spreading of any illness.

Masks continue to be an effective infection protection mechanism. Forest & Bird encourages and supports all staff, volunteers or contractors to wear them as a personal choice. Some activities or roles (as noted below) require the use of masks.

Roles and activities requiring additional controls

- Where any activity requires staff or volunteers or contractors to travel on public transport as part of their work then they must wear a mask for the duration of that travel.
- Any Forest & Bird staff or volunteer traveling internationally on Forest & Bird business must adhere to any government mandates existing at the time including those of governments in countries they are traveling to or transiting through. These requirements must be discussed and agreed on a case by case basis with the CE before any travel booking is made.

Exceptions

The Chief Executive can approve any legal exceptions to this management plan if they believe they have reasonable justification, and the risks can be adequately managed. Reasonable justification will be at their sole discretion.



HAND-OUT DAY

The last for this year hand-out day will be held next Saturday, **the 3rd of December, from 9.30 until 11 a.m.**

Address: **Pointways Pony Club,**
1424 Alfriston Road.

Come along and spread the word!
Great opportunity to swap your broken traps and socialise.

If you placed an order but can't make it on the day, please get in touch with Daria (d.erastova@forestandbird.org.nz) to arrange delivery.

Pest animal control tally - Trap NZ

A new email to report your catches is d.erastova@forestandbird.org.nz.
Photos are welcome!

Please remember to keep emailing your tallies or log in to trap.nz and enter them yourself.

The Trap.nz project link is
<https://www.trap.nz/group/node/1151107/subscribe>



TrapNZ workshop

We plan to conduct a series of TrapNZ workshops early next year, online and in person, for new trappers or those wishing to refresh.

Email Daria d.erastova@forestandbird.org.nz if you are interested.

More information will follow!

UPCOMING EVENTS

November-December

It's bird breeding season, so set your traps and put toxins in your bait stations!

Summer

This summer, we will resume SEW wildlife monitoring activities.

14-18 December: bird counts.

Join Daria at local reserves if you wish to upgrade your bird ID skills, or count birds at your property if you are a confident birder.

January - April: long tail bat monitoring,
Were you doing that before and want to continue?
Or is it something entirely new for you? Either way, let us know if you are interested in detecting bat presence at your property.

For more details and to RSVP, please email
d.erastova@forestandbird.org.nz

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