

# Kapiti-Mana Forest and Bird

## Newsletter May 2023

### Land use classification LUC7

We had a lovely time in the Wairarapa the weekend before last. We visited Boggy Pond – a large wetland on the side of Lake Wairarapa, Wairio Wetland - nearby where we saw a bittern and heard one booming, The Pinnacles, Cape Pallister, Fensham Reserve, Carters Scenic Reserve and White Rock - on the eastern coast. The native areas were great to walk around and explore.

The trip to White Rock was particularly interesting to me. Many people would see beauty in the landscapes along this road. On a good day, sheep and cattle can be seen grazing on the grass, a small aircraft lifts off the spectacular steep ridge runway into the air and delivers a load of fertilizer, the streams run clear because it has not rained for a while and the sea continues to pound around White Rock and onto the shore. But that is not all that is happening.

On the road, there were washouts to navigate, areas where the road had slumped, large pines with their roots and soil attached, leaning over the road like sentinels– their tops removed. In some parts, all the surrounding hillside, including the road, was on the move. Above the slipping areas, long circular cracks were visible showing where the land had separated from the strata underneath and started on its journey to the stream below which was yellowish brown being loaded with molten clay and gravel.

The tragedy of the commons said that the commons (land held by the people) would be trashed by those seeking

private gain (rather than use their own land). But I think the tragedy of the commons today is that the land that is used inappropriately by private landowners creates problems that destroy public infrastructure and amenities and the losses of, or costs of, restoring those services and amenities falls on the public. We lose amenities because we cannot use or recreate in unclean water. We don't enjoy natural areas that are damaged. Native birds and fish cannot use degraded habitats. Repairs to public infrastructure, roads and bridges, caused by inappropriate use of land should not fall to tax and rate payers.

It is not only the road that is falling apart. Clay laden silt is destroying the streams and rivers. The land biosphere (the soil, plants and fauna) is being trashed; used as a commodity for the short-term purpose of the current owner. At the end of their tenure, there will be little of value in the remnant soils, the streams and rivers, and even the local areas of sea. There will be little or no vegetation and very few surviving native wildlife on the land or the seashore.

Whereas once the land would have been forested, roots would have extended down through the soils to reasonable depths, a rich mulch would have coated the ground, branches would have reached into the sky, the land biosphere would have been about 40 metres from top to bottom. It would have been inhabited by many birds, insects,

worms, fungi, fish, and maybe a mammalian bat.

Now the biosphere consists of introduced grass and a few weeds, some patches of manuka, and sheep and cattle. The land is more productive for the farmer but much poorer for biodiversity and the quantity and quality of living matter has significantly declined.

The carbon absorbing properties of the land have also declined. Carbon from forests has long since turned to carbon dioxide from fires, rotted wooden structures and the like. As the soils degraded and washed away, soil carbon has been lost. The only carbon absorption is from the grass, and that could not be sustained without oil-based fertilizer delivered by plane from the purpose-built runway. To make climate matters worse, methane is belched from cows. The whole carbon sequestration system, that is the natural order of earth and has sustained us until now, has been turned on its head.

When the land degrades further, the country roads (about 1hr 10 minutes to drive according to online maps) will need major work. Who will pay? Those that profited from the use of the land and caused the problems, or the public? It is, of course, true that support industries benefit from the farming operation but don't cause the problem.

New Zealand classifies land use into 8 categories. The Tararuas are *Land Use Classification 8 (LUC8) Very severe to extreme limitations to all productive land uses, arable, pastoral, or commercial forestry. Suitable for erosion control, water management and conservation.* The land that we were travelling through, showing the problems described was *Land Use Classification 7 (LUC 7) (Non-arable. Moderate to very severe limitations to pastoral use. High-risk land requiring active management to*

*achieve sustainable production. Can be suited to grazing with intensive soil conservation measures but more suited to forestry).* Pastoral use was happening, but apart from some willow poles along one stretch of river, we saw no *active land management nor intensive soil conservation measures.*

Climate disruption cannot be avoided but the future severity of it can be reduced if we (and others) use every available method to reduce carbon emissions and to increase carbon sequestration. One method would be to forcibly retire LUC7 land throughout the country. LUC7 land must be the least productive NZ land. I suspect that such a move may be financially beneficial to property owners who have not yet realize that they are pouring money into land that can only deliver a negative return. It would certainly relieve government and councils of maintenance burdens. If/when Cyclone Gabrielle's descendant hits the Wairarapa Eastern Coast, will the public purse be able to build back better.

If all LUC7 land was retired, it could regenerate to native forest and sequester carbon. It would be a significant action for NZ to take to lower the severity of climate disruption. The social and environmental benefits will be enjoyed by the people, and the other species we share NZ with, and the public purse can perhaps focus on more essential transport links while LUC 7 roads erode to future tramping tracks.

Past communities have been abandoned because they became unviable. Climate disruption will similarly cause abandonment. Do we watch and see what happens? or do we plan, and use the worst land for climate disruption mitigation?

*Russell*

## Local F&B Centennial Celebrations: Capt Val Sanderson & Waikākāriki Wetland

Over the last weekend of April, in brilliant autumn weather, Paekākāriki celebrated 100 years of Forest & Bird and the life of its founder, Paekākāriki resident, [Captain Val Sanderson](#).



On Saturday morning Forest and Bird CEO, Nicola Toki, unveiled the Sanderson memorial sign on the newly named Sanderson Way.



Six totara were planted to mark the event, along Sanderson Way which runs through the Waikākāriki wetland, a restoration project run by Ngā Uruora.

The event was made very special by the attendance of eleven members of the Sanderson family (pictured next).



We appreciated the blessing given by Dr. Taku Parai, representing Ngāti Toa and Karl Farrell, from Ngāti Haumia.



The event drew on the fantastic volunteer base of our local branch and volunteers from Ngā Uruora and local Paekākāriki residents. Particular thanks go to Paul Callister (Ngā Uruora), Maree White (Predator Free Paekākāriki) Dave Johnson (Chair, Paekākāriki Station Museum Trust), Amelia Geary (F&B), Prue Tosswill, Julie Warren, Robina La Hood, Lynne Ciochetto and Peter Kentish (Ngā Uruora and F&B).

Volunteers helped set up the displays, looked after the exhibits, and organised the morning tea.

Pene Burton Bell, Chair of Kapiti-Mana Branch F&B, talked of the branch's highlights in restoring sites from Pāuatahanui Inlet to Waikanae Estuary and many places in between, enhancing local beauty and recreational spaces.



The event would not have been possible without the assistance over the whole weekend of Francis Mills, volunteer custodian of St Peters Hall. Local photographer Bob Zuur donated his time in recording the event in his usual

professional manner. Well over 200 people attended over the weekend.

*Paul Callister*

## Coasts and Oceans

### [Wellington Seaweeds video](#)

You might enjoy this informative, very relaxing, 9 minutes of underwater world and learn the names of those seaweeds you keep walking or floating past...

<https://youtu.be/jhzS0lqHIFk>

### [F&B Centennial Webinar: Tāiko - Westland Petrels – TONIGHT!](#)

The third F&B centennial webinar is about how mining is threatening the tāiko Westland Petrels. Join on Zoom on Wednesday 31 May at 7:30pm to learn more about these fascinating birds and threats to their habitat, and the actions we can take to protect them. Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/ysndf9pb>

### [Threat to our coast: Sea Spurge](#)

A serious plant invader, Sea Spurge (Euphorbia Paralias), has been found on the Kapiti Coast, arriving along our shores from Australia at this time of year. It is a baddie! It invades coastal areas, destroying habitats for some

birds, displacing native plants and changing the ways dunes form (which could result in less stable coastlines).

If you see it, don't touch it - it has a milky sap which is very poisonous and can cause blindness. Instead take a couple of photos of the plant and its location, and noting the GPS coordinates, then call the MPI Pest and Disease Hotline on 0800 80 99 66. Here's the summary of MPI's advice: <https://tinyurl.com/yc54z2k5>. You can also see the Newshub story here: <https://tinyurl.com/4c9rsh9t>.



Photo (Credit: [Zcebeci](#), Wikicommons)

## Our AGM coming up on 21 June 2023

Please join us for our next meeting at 7:10pm on Wednesday 21 June 2023 at Waikanae Presbyterian Church Hall, 43 Ngaio Road, Waikanae, will be our AGM, and our current chair, Pene Burton Bell, will be speaking about the history of our branch and its sterling members. We promise to keep business brief. Papers will be sent out in due course.

**We are looking for more committee members** (currently only five), including a new secretary, so we can share the workload and be better eyes and ears for our local environment. Get in touch if you want to know more. Russell: 021 2266047.

## Nga Manu Winter Series: Matauranga Māori & Western Science

One thing on my 'To do list' is to learn Te Reo Māori.

So far, I have read my sisters Māori lessons from the 70's, found books with simple lessons, listened to CD's. Little has stuck in my frail brain. I thought it might be easier. The vowels are similar to Dutch, my parents' language, another language I should learn, especially to help me understand my culture.

I get confused with te reo when there seem to be so many meanings for one English word. How to deal with this?

Enter Ngā Manu and the Winter Lecture Series, and the first Lecture was on Mātauranga Māori (Traditional Knowledge) and Western Science by Priscilla Wehi, Associate Professor, Otago University and Director of Te Pūnaha Matatini Centre of Research Excellence in Complex Systems at Manaaki Whenua/Landcare Research. Priscilla spoke on 'Building from Ecology and Matauranga in conservation and plant-insect relationships.'

She talked about Two-Eyed Seeing. Seeing the environment through science and through mātauranga to provide a broader view. (She noted citizen science also adds to a broader view). More eyes on the job to form a wider data base to gain understanding from.

I learned that Māori language speaks to the natural environment, with imbedded environmental knowledge. Culture, biodiversity and Māori language are intertwined.

She told the story of the Wētā and its relationship to *carpodetus serratus*. Marbleleaf (in English), is named Putaputawētā in the North Island, Kaiwētā in the Te Urewera's, and Piripiriwhata in the South Island.

Putaputawētā: Puta means to emerge. The Puriri moth, (PePETuna) lives in the North Island and creates distinctive holes perfect for wētā. Abundant wētā can be seen emerging from these holes in the Putaputawētā.

Kaiwētā: Wētā have been noticed to feast on the leaf matter (Kai) of these.

Piripiriwhata: refers to the hanging ferns under which the wētā live. No puriri moth in the South Island, so no perfectly formed apartments to live in.

For Tūi, name differences identify the male, larger, as different from the female, smaller. I had never noticed the size difference but will now look closer. Name differences can also reflect the regional and seasonal food sources available providing an insight into regional differences in the native flora and the importance of the association between the tūi and its food source.

This helped me understand why one English word can have so many meanings in Māori. Learning the language will be an in-road into a much deeper understanding of our unique flora and fauna. For me that is exciting and inspiring.

I hadn't expected to summarise this lecture, so my notes were sparse, and pointed to my areas of interest alone. The lecture was much deeper. For more information go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/muuvuxkt>

This was the first of six lectures at Ngā Manu. The best way to get the best understanding is to book yourself a seat to one or more of these informative talks Here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycky8w4b>

*Eraena Catsburg*

## Calling for a local Representative for Kiwi Conservation Club

KCC is looking for a representative from our branch to help with KCC activities.

These events for children are currently run jointly in the Wellington, Hutt and Kapiti regions. Might you be interested in joining the KCO team and taking an active role in planning and delivering events in the Kapiti-Mana area?

To get a good idea of what the role entails, visit

[www.kcc.org.nz/volunteer-for-kcc](http://www.kcc.org.nz/volunteer-for-kcc), then, if interested, contact [r.hatch@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:r.hatch@forestandbird.org.nz) .

## On a Sunday Afternoon?

On the third Sunday of the month from 1:30pm - 3:30pm your help would be very welcome to restore Wharemauku Wetland near Coastlands. Contact Judy for more info on 022 318 6907.

The site is in walking distance of Paraparaumu Station and close to a bus stop on Rimu Road. Gloves, gumboots and old clothes advised. Sounds like fun!



## Make your voice heard...

[ETS Unit price settings for 2023](https://consult.environment.govt.nz/climate/annual-updates-nz-ets-unit-settings-2023/) Closes 16 June 2023

<https://consult.environment.govt.nz/climate/annual-updates-nz-ets-unit-settings-2023/>

It's a survey but you can enter general comments into the 'Provide general feedback'.

The only sense I can get from this is that government action so far has favoured maintaining NZ's financial position and using the ETS to raise carbon prices would negatively affect that. The advice says NZ now has to raise the settings further than it would have because we did not raise them previously. The ETS is our most important tool, but governments have made it ineffective. The climate events we have had so far have not convinced politicians to make it effective. It seems the people cannot rely on Government to act responsibly on this. We need to tell them what we want.

[Consenting improvements for renewable energy \(including where biodiversity is adversely affected\)](https://www.mbie.govt.nz/have-your-say/renewable-electricity/). Closes 1 June 2023

This is a survey, so not too hard: <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/have-your-say/renewable-electricity/>

When considering renewable energy sources – Hydro, Solar and wind, MBIE wants to Create *consent pathways where there are potential adverse effects on significant environmental values...including where there may be impacts on outstanding natural landscapes and features, the natural character of coastal environments, areas or habitats of significant indigenous biodiversity and historic heritage.*

My issue with this is we are continuing an age old pattern. We want more so we take mor from nature. Meanwhile a New Scientist article says pasture and sheep benefit from

a solar panel structure covering the fields. The grass is more nutritious, the sheep sit more, resting in the shade of the panels. We probably have sufficient sheep country without e.g. damming rivers on DOC land, or having impacts on *outstanding natural landscapes and features, the natural character of coastal environments, areas or habitats of significant indigenous biodiversity and historic heritage.*

In my view, solar panels should also be on the roofs of every school and other public buildings, as well as many factory roofs, and over every public parking area.

#### [Draft Fisheries Industry Transformation Plan](#) Closes 11 June 2023

Another survey and bottom trawling is not mentioned but there are windows where you can say what you want: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/draft-fisheries-industry-transformation-plan/>

They say it is *"20 actions and initiatives proposed to strengthen the environmental performance of our commercial fisheries, increase the value created from fishing, and support people in the industry and local communities."*

There are quite a few actions that could *strengthen the environmental performance of our commercial fisheries* but the key one is to ban bottom trawling. This consists of dragging heavily weighted nets across the sea bottom ripping up and catching indiscriminately.

#### Late items

##### [Wet lands](#)

Forest and Bird applied to the High Court, on 30 May 2023, for a judicial review of recent changes made to the policy and regulations guiding the protection and management of wetlands in Aotearoa. The basis of their application is that *The Minister erred in making the changes because he thought they would still ensure no loss of wetlands.*

Read the news release here: <https://tinyurl.com/49uav538>

##### [Horses in Queen Elizabeth Park](#)

Recently I have been asked by several people if I also got rid of horses in QEP. I did not. And the reason I would not is that QEP is a Recreation Reserve and horse riding is recreation. Farming of QEP was not recreation and the public had no access to the farmed area. It is not possible to recreate on land that you are not allowed to access. So yes, I can be blamed for getting rid of farming but not for removing horses. *Russell*

## *Russell and Pene*

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*As always, your feedback on this newsletter would be most welcome, as would contributions (relevant photos and/or stories) to future newsletters.*