



# North Taranaki Forest & Bird + Kiwi Conservation Club news

P.O. Box 1029 New Plymouth 4340

July to December 2023

## HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY DEAR FOREST & BIRD

**"I** thought I was going to a tree planting but it turned into a party!" said Gary, with a huge smile.

What a great occasion our 100th anniversary on Saturday 17 June was, with many old friends delighted to reconnect and more chatter than a tree full of sparrows!

Behind-the-scenes planning began in committee [see the list, p.X] several weeks earlier, when Peter ordered not two, but five well-grown Waiwaka or swamp maire (*Syzygium maire*) from an Auckland nursery. It was a special deal, and the remaining three will go to new homes in the wetland at Forest & Bird's Dorothy Baker Te Wairoa reserve.

Around that time, Anne and Janet met with parks staff Sheryl and Belinda to select a planting site beside the stream

that empties the top lake at Brooklands Bowl. The trees will have wet or damp roots and open space between the surrounding trees, plenty of room to reach for the sky — Waiwaka ultimately become huge.

Dawn booked afternoon tea at the Pukekura Park Tea Rooms, invitations were extended to all members of North Taranaki Forest & Bird and 25 responded, yes! We were under way.



The superb chocolate birthday cake; Rosemary and Bill Messenger plant one of the trees while Marion Adlam watches on.



**O**n the day before, Peter and David loaded the trees onto Peter's red trailer and transported them to the park.

Then, on Saturday they arrived early to dig planting holes while the rest of us assembled at the band



Standing, from left: Carolyn Brough, Anne Coplestone, Bill Lofroth, Marion Adlam, Murray Duke, Gary Adlam, Paul McDaid, Erin McDaid, David Cockeram, Jackie Cockeram, Rosemary Messenger, Bill Messenger, Lyndon deVantier, Janet Hunt, Peter Winter, Peter Haines, Anne Collins, Front row, Karen Hamer, Dawn Mills, Catherine Cheong, Kathryn Mercer..

rotunda beside the main lake. It was wonderful to see old friends greet each other as they arrived.

We walked up the lakeside to the planting site and, once we were all there, had a small ceremony — a karakia and a potted history of Waiwaka in Taranaki from Janet, and from Anne, a brief history of Forest & Bird from 1923 when Captain Ernest 'Val' Sanderson first decided something needed to be done to protect the flora

and fauna of his beloved Kapiti Island.

The rain god Huey was threatening to water the saplings before they were planted, so things hurried along a little and the two trees were soon in the ground, one of them tamped in by life members, Rosemary and Bill.

A group photograph was snapped and off we trooped to the tea rooms for an impressive chocolate carrot cake, a rousing

rendition of Happy Birthday and cups of tea with little cakes and pastries.

We filled two long tables and the room buzzed with conversation.

What a wonderful occasion. Thanks to everyone who came and thanks to all who played a part in making the day such a success.

~ Janet Hunt



Waiwaka, or swamp maire, is endemic to New Zealand and was once common in coastal and lowland wetlands such as the Ngaere and Rawhitiroa swamps in Taranaki. It grows to a height

of about 16m and often has many trunks. Drainage and clearance of large stands from the 1890s onward mean that today it is restricted to isolated populations of ageing trees.

Waiwaka likes to have wet feet and has evolved a specialised root system with powdery, orange-brown peg-like breathing roots or pneumatophores, that enable it to survive in areas of poor drainage. It bears white rata-like brush flowers in summer and has bright red berries in autumn and through winter.

It is a member of the

Myrtaceae family.

In New Plymouth you can see an attractive stand of waiwaka beside the stream in the Huatoki Domain. Under the guidance of Bill Clarkson, these have been planted by school children from seed they have raised themselves. They are worth a look!

We plant these trees as symbols of regeneration of the forest and hope for the future. Perhaps, at Forest & Bird's bicentenary in 2123, those who come after us will see them and celebrate their success.

## Pukerangiora Pā & Everett Park, 25 March 2023



With our backs to the lookout: Marion Adlam, Gary Adlam, Marcella Volino, Murray Duke, Karen Hamer, Robert Hamer, Peter Haines, David Cockeram, .

This F&B event was such a treat!

The first part was an hour's visit to Pukerangiora Pa. The

day was cool, sunny, autumnal — perfect. We walked in to the lookout high above the Waitara River, noting evidence of fallen

trees from the March storms. There were nine of us. We heard from Peter Haines first, about the pa's dark history — it has



been the site of terrible battles in the past, mostly in pre-colonial times. There are signs by way of angled trenches (aka

saps) of the siege by British troops in the 1860s but the land is also criss-crossed by deep ditches from the earlier times, the remains of palisades. At the lookout itself, we were told of women and children jumping to their death to avoid capture by attacking taua/war parties.

It's difficult to reconcile those events with the present. All is quiet now. Tall forest trees, totara, tawa, rewarewa grow in the upper pa. The occasional kereru flies across through the bushtops. It is a place of peace but such a dreadful past.

One of our number, Robert Hamer, added to Peter's story.

He is currently researching the Taranaki landscape and its evolution, with particular interest in forest and forest remnants and will perhaps give us a talk some time.

From there it was short drive to the northern entrance of Everett Park Scenic Reserve. The 85-hectare park has never been logged and is the largest remnant on the Taranaki ring plain of the podocarp forest that once dominated the Taranaki landscape. The land was set aside by the Crown in 1889 and made a reserve in 1919.

We walked the track

alongside the Manganui River to the southern carpark. The track is easy with here and there, forest giants — enormous rimu and totara especially. It's magic in there — so beautiful, in fact, that instead of looping back to the northern carpark by the road, we simply walked the riverside track again.

We ended our visit with a small picnic on a sandy beach on a bend in the river and departed with thoughts of visiting again.

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*Right; this Everett Park kahikatea ranks alongside Northland kauri for being utterly impressive!*

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## Te Wairoa walk and AGM, 15 April 2023



There's not a lot to report, other than that Te Wairoa was beautiful as always (that's us on the left) and we had a very enjoyable and tasty lunch (and AGM) at Tawa Glen afterwards.

### Reserves

Likewise, not a lot has changed or happened in the reserves over winter.

Our first spring working bee is scheduled for Saturday 2 September. We'll let you know more as we approach the day.



## CALENDARS (\$20) AND DIARIES (\$25)



The year is flying by! We've passed the mid-point and the 2024 Conservation Calendars and Conservation Diaries from Potton and Burton are on the horizon. They make awesome gifts for friends, family or just for yourself!

Contact Dawn with your order: [rjmills58@gmail.com](mailto:rjmills58@gmail.com)

# Restoring the peak: a new day for the maunga, 31 March 2023

On 31 March 2023, Janet Hunt and David Cockeram were privileged to represent North Taranaki Forest & Bird at a momentous occasion, the signing of Te Ruruku Pūtakerongo, the collective Crown Redress Deed.

If you live in the shadow of *that* mountain, it's always a presence, whether you are checking out the snow-topped crest on a wintry day, admiring its clean-cut reflection in a lake in summer or dashing for the camera at evening. It's that first sighting on the skyline from the south, or from the north over the sea along the coast, that tells you — you're home. It's built into your mental landscape much as it is embodied in Māori carving from the Taranaki region, that sports a triangular peak-shaped forehead.

It's there, too, on many of the poupou around the walls of the whareniui at Aotearoa Marae, South Taranaki.

On Friday 31 March, 2023 those tūpuna looked down on us as the crown and Taranaki iwi signed Te Ruruku Pūtakerongo/ the collective Crown redress deed.

The event was a milestone in the lives of the people of this region, the children of this mountain. It reverses the wrong inflicted by the New Zealand Settlements Act of 1863 — legislation that permitted confiscation of land if its owners were considered to have been anti-government rebels. Consequently, 1.2 million hectares of tribal land between the Mokau and Whanganui Rivers were wrongly taken, including the mountain.

Various payments and settlements have since gone some way to correct that wrong, but this day was the beginning of the final steps to full redress.

The day started with a short ceremony at 7:30 at the Plymouth International, hosted by the New Plymouth Chamber of Commerce where Andrew Little, Minister for Treaty Negotiations, gave a keynote speech on behalf of the Crown anticipating the main event of the day.

Immediately afterwards, we drove south to Aotearoa Pā, inland from Eltham. It was

a sparkler of a day, with Taranaki Maunga showing off to the west, lightly touched with recent snow, clear, blue and very handsome.

A small crowd was assembled in the marae carpark when we arrived, among



them, Andrew Little and the Minister of Conservation, Willow-Jean Prime, plus Labour MPs Glen Bennett, Angela Roberts and National MP, Barbara Kuriger. As befitted the occasion, we wore sombre colours, the women in knee-length dresses and the men in suits.

There was a formal pōwhiri including a wero by five men brandishing taiaha and, as we moved forward, a karanga from poi-carrying, white-feather-wearing women as well as waiata and chanting from schoolchildren. Throughout, below and behind it all, pulsed the heart-beat of the large Parihaka drum.

The whareniui was full, with all seats taken and some people standing outside. It's a beautiful space, large and airy, with tukutuku panels and whakairo rakau adorning the walls.

The ceremony commenced with speeches from each of eight iwi, Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Ruanui, Taranaki, Te Āti Awa, Nga Rauru, Ngāruahinerangi and Ngāti Tama but the climax of the day was the initialling of the deed itself, on a stage at the back of the whareniui.

There were more speeches and then the big moment, the signing of the deed. There was chanting and singing to raise the rafters. It was noisy, colourful and joyous.

What does it mean? In the day-to-day, not much changes but over time, notably, English names for the mountain and its sibling ranges will be replaced. 'Egmont', the name bestowed by James Cook in honour of an English lord who possibly didn't even know of it, is consigned to history. The mountain now assumes the mana of a legal entity named Te Kāhui Tupua, in the same way that the Whanganui

River is now considered a living being. A new management structure for the park, comprised of Crown and iwi appointees, will be known as Te Tōpuni Kōkōurangi. The park itself has a new name, Te Papakura o Taranaki. Fantham's Peak is Panitahi.

And there's more yet to come, including ratification of the initialling by iwi at a further 14 hui around Taranaki and Aotearoa New Zealand. Watch this space.

I thought of kiwi and toutouwai pottering around up there in the forest: they won't know any different, of course, and access to the park remains as ever for human users, but somehow, everything has changed.

It was an honour to have been there.



## Who's who at North Taranaki F&B & KCC

Secretary: Anne Collins  
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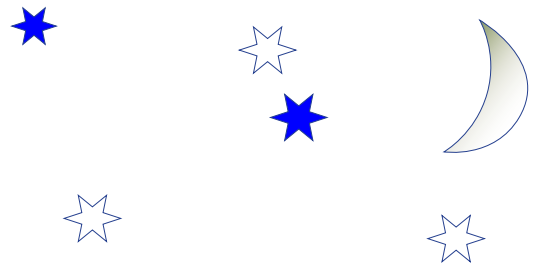
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## What we've been up to

### Living with Wild Weather

On Saturday 25 March, we visited Onaero Bay where Mike, a qualified meteorologist, talked to us about weather with a focus on rainfall — which is very topical given the recent flooding in Hawke's Bay. We made simple weather stations — a rain gauge and a wind vane.

We went for a walk down to the beach and explored for footprints. It was disappointing to see so many stoat tracks when they have little blue penguin boxes in the same area.

Mike gave us a talk about erosion and we looked at where the bank was in 2015 and in 2001. It was quite an eye-opener to see how much land has been eroded in the 8-year and 20-year period.



*This simple experiment showed us how to convert the millilitres of water in a rain gauge into litres of water per square metre.*



*We made weather vanes using recycled materials, an empty ice cream container and a stick from the beach.*



*On the beach after checking out the erosion and looking at the footprints.*

## Birthday Bash, 27 May

We celebrated Forest & Bird's 100 year anniversary with games, making a bug hotel, a pot luck dinner and a quiz evening.

The bug hotels were very popular and it was great having lots of big hands to help out with the activity.

Our cake tasted every bit as amazing as it looked!



Making bug hotels!



Yum!

## Observatory Visit, Thursday 29 June

A very enthusiastic group of 30 turned out on what was unfortunately not a particularly good night for viewing the stars and planets. But, not to be deterred, three volunteers from the Astronomical Society presented an informative slideshow and then we broke into three groups for separate talks.

We all came away with passes to attend a public night free so will be on the watch for a kinder weather window to use the telescopes. Lots of learnings on the night and we now know what a piece of meteorite looks like — and have even held it in our hand.

## COMING UP

14 July — Visit to Taranaki Lapidary & Mineral Club.



Maybe next time!