

Kāpiti-Mana Forest and Bird

Newsletter October 2023

Are we failing?

I recently watched the documentary *I am Greta*, about Greta Thunberg. She said the same thing repeatedly but used different words. *You are failing. Why aren't you acting? Is my microphone actually on? because I feel it is not. I want you to panic.* The audience, people in some of the most important jobs in the world, responded every time in the same way. They clapped and cheered. She said she found this hard to understand. Why were they clapping? because they understood? and would things now change? No. Nothing significant enough has changed.

The world has accepted that we have a climate emergency. It has also accepted that we have a biodiversity crisis. The power of the climate crisis has been seen all over the world. Yet New Zealand voted for the economy over the environment last Saturday.

That is not to say that too much is different. The most significant climate indication is *Climate Tracker* which shows NZ's performance so far is *highly insufficient* and would result in a 3-4^o warmer world. We are kicking the can down the road. We are pretending that it is not happening.

We have said many of the right things. We have; signed up to the 30 by 30 (30% of the land and ocean protected for nature and improving by 2030), agreed to doing all we can to limit global warming to 1.5°C, agreed to be carbon zero by 2050, but to use Greta's words, *"We are failing. Why aren't we acting? Is anybody listening? You should be panicking"*.

Individuals, groups, and organisations are doing some climate positive things and NZ's carbon footprint is coming down but a trajectory to 3-4°C is not enough. Greater Wellington seems to be doing a great deal. The number of trees planted in Queen Elizabeth Park over the past few years far exceeds what volunteers have planted over decades. It's a late start for GW but when an organisation like that decides to deal with a problem, they have the capacity to really make a difference.

Imagine if the government got behind climate change and biodiversity loss. Just enabling natural solutions such as saving wetlands, taking unsuitable land out of production, replanting damaged areas, reclassifying all stewardship land and treating that land according to its classification, dealing with pests and weeds on all DOC land, reducing synthetic nitrogen fertilizer use to the extent that our waterways returned to healthy streams and rivers. That would do so much to help us meet our climate goals.

Imagine if climate unfriendly products were given a date when they could not be sold - domestic gas fires, petrol mowers, non-electric cars, coal. What a difference that would make. Most people would look for alternatives when replacements were needed.

Imagine if the government stopped supporting damaging industries; producers of aluminum, burnt lime, caustic soda, cut roses, ethanol, iron and steel, lactose, market pulp, whey powder. These are more difficult

problems to fix but so is climate disruption.

Imagine if public transport was free.

If the NZ government decided to really act on climate disruption, we would see massive change and yes, taxes would probably go up.

Is any of this realistic?

The UK was one of the first countries to really act on climate change. It set its emission targets in legislation, then worked on policies to achieve them.

- Improve business' use of energy, stimulate investment and cut costs;
- Stimulate new, more efficient sources of power generation;
- Cut emissions from the transport sector;
- Promote better energy efficiency in the domestic sector, saving householders' money;
- Improve the energy efficiency requirements of the building regulations;
- Continue cutting emissions from agriculture;
- Ensure the public sector took a leading role.

Bitterns in New Zealand

The loud deep booming of matuku-hūrepo in the early hours of the morning is quite emotive. In Māori folklore it is said that *the matuku boom for loneliness and sorrow, and this helps us to grieve our own losses*, and the te reo for a lament is a matuku. If you've ever had the privilege of seeing a bittern you will know their distinctive cryptic stance to disguise their presence – sort of 'caught in the headlights with a twist'. You're most likely to see one on the edge of a wetland, preferably raupo-lined, or in other damp areas like rank grass in paddocks or beside springs or drains. They also have very distinctive flying style. They are precious.

However, there are thought to be only about 1000 Matuku-Hūrepo -

And it worked. From 1990 until recently, their emissions were tracking to being *almost sufficient* (Moderate improvements would result in a 1.5° world).

But recently, unfortunately, they have backed off... The 2030 phase-out of new petrol and diesel cars, the 2035 phase-out of gas boilers, and the requirement for landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. These are no longer required. The UK is now headed to *insufficient*, (Substantial improvement needed to achieve a 1.5° world).

If we become worse, we, who used to be world leaders, will join the world's laggards, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and Thailand as *critically insufficient* leading to an above 4° world. In that world, our economy won't matter.

Russell

Australasian Bittern - *Botaurus poiciloptilus* left in New Zealand and perhaps 1300 in Australia. By comparison, there are about 70,000 kiwi. Unsurprisingly, DOC considers them endangered "Threatened – Nationally Critical".



Pic credit: © Alex Flavell-Johnson

This caused Forest & Birder, John Sumich (coordinator of the OK Boomer Survey) to ask the question 'Do we need to do more to conserve this species?' and the answer from 94% of those surveyed was YES!

As a result, the Love Bittern Project and associated Trust is in the process of being set up. You can follow its development and find opportunities to contribute here: www.lovebittern.com or start following their Facebook page: Bittern Conservation New Zealand <https://www.facebook.com/people/Bittern-Conservation-New-Zealand/100056994204383/>.

Other places to find out more about these birds include:

Matuku Link <https://matukulink.org.nz/>
NZ Birds Online: <https://www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz/species/australasian-bittern>

Here's a couple of videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Egja>

[apXFGS8](#) and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vpqO1_visY

Bird of the Year? Or the Century??

You can vote for the Australasian Bittern in the upcoming Bird of the Year competition.

- voting starts on 30 October 2023

The bittern information for the competition has a good recording of a booming bittern.

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

Get involved in the competition and have some fun.

The Bird of the Year raises public awareness of our amazing native birds and their plight, and even helps to gain funding to ensure they can thrive for the next hundred years and for many generations to come.

To celebrate F&B's centenary we're choosing a Bird of the Century this time around.

Kohekohe Walk: Hemi Matenga Memorial Park Scenic Reserve

Time 30 minutes return from/to the Waikanae Station

Attire Comfortable walking shoes with a good grip for big steps, roots, and slippery surfaces when wet. Jacket, because it is always cooler in the bush.

Transport Train to Waikanae Station

Food/Drink Waikanae has plenty of places. Café and dairy on Elizabeth Street.

Toilets At the station

Dogs must be on a lead.

Why it is special This is the largest (330Ha) remaining tract of kohekohe forest that formerly covered vast areas of the West Coast from Wellington to

Waikanae. This memorial reserve was established in memory of Hemi Matenga Waipunahau.

Directions From Waikanae railway station, walk south to the railway crossing. Cross the railway heading left up Elizabeth St. past St Luke's church, the War Memorial Park and the Kāpiti Coast Museum. Turn left onto Seddon St. Then first right onto Utauta St.

Note: Waikanae school is on your left. The trees on its Seddon St frontage were planted to commemorate soldiers lost in the World War II making them over 70 years old. There is also a magnificent Southern Rata in the grounds visible from Winara Ave.

At the intersection of Utauta St and Winara Ave turn left. Then take the first street on the right - Kakariki Grove. Walk to the T intersection and turn Right. Look for the Walkway sign on your left just past No 63. Step over the chain gate and walk up the wide rough gravel access road to the water tank. Take the steps to the right of this and follow them to the path zigzagging up the hill behind the water tank until you get into the forest. Take time to read the sign, signifying the start. Its history and safety instruction are important.

From here, enjoy a 30-minute Kohekohe walk to Tui Crescent. Bring your eye's ears and nose for a short sharp emersion in some lovely old kohekohe forest. The gradient is gently undulating, and the terrain is rugged but you are on a well-used path.

Twenty minutes in, unless you dawdle to enjoy the scenery and plants, you reach the junction of the Kohekohe and Parata track, described below, but you aren't going that way. Instead, continue ahead on the Kohekohe track. The last 10 minutes is punctuated by the lovely sound of the stream, and you will be back at another water tank and a similar gravel access road that takes you onto Tui Crescent.

Turn left. At the corner you have two options.

1. Turn right onto Kereru St., first left onto Winara Ave., then any of the next three streets Hira, Utauta and Elizabeth will all get you back to the railway station. Hira St joins Pehi Kupa St with a path over the line at the northern end of the railway station, and Utauta and Elizabeth join where you started.

2. At the corner before you turn you will see a path right of 1B Kereru St. This will take you through more delightful Nikau, Kohekohe and Tawa forest, across a

stream and back to Kakariki Grove. Once back on the road, walk to the intersection, turn right and continue down Kakariki to Winara Avenue. From here you can retrace your steps or walk to Elizabeth Street, turn right and walk to the rail crossing and station.

If you return via the south end of the railway station and you need a coffee fix, Relish Cafe has good food and an outdoor garden. For snacks there is a dairy next door. There are two supermarkets close to the station.

Other things to enjoy.

The museum on Elizabeth Street is open Friday, Saturday, Sunday from 1-4pm so worth a look on your return. The War memorial park provides picnic space.

The Parata Walk. 1-2 hours return. A steep climb through Kohekohe to Tawa forest.

The Te Au Route. A tough 3-4 hour tramp for the fit and experienced, from Tui Cres to Huia St. The route is marked but unformed between The Parata track and Huia St.

Waikanae township and outdoor mall with a children's playground, cafes, Mahara Art Gallery, Shoreline Cinema, supermarkets, and Salt and Wood pub.

From the old state highway bridge - Walks, bike paths on either side of Waikanae River to the Estuary and the coast or connecting to the bike paths developed alongside the Expressway. These take you to Ōtaki to the North and Paraparaumu, Paekakariki to the South.

Eraena Catsburg

*Could your favourite walk be next?
We'd love to hear from you about it.*

Climbing Asparagus Fern

This weed (*asparagus scandens*) is neither edible, nor a fern, but it sure likes to climb.

It even looks rather attractive with feathery leaves (until you realise it plans to rule the world!) It can grow even in deep shade and twists its thin wiry stems around plants climbing to the top of the forest canopy and smothering trees or blanketing the ground preventing other seedlings from coming up.



It has tasty round orange fruits favoured by blackbirds especially and produces multiple tubers which are very hard to kill, and you usually miss a few, and the stems often break if you try to pull them up. (you can tell I have experience!). If I notice one when walking through the bush and can pull it easily, I usually wedge the base hanging into a branch

Footloose in Kāpiti

I attended this celebration recently. It was a great opportunity for a whole lot of conservation volunteers and others to get together, but it was really to celebrate 21 years of the Kāpiti Cycleways, Walkways and Bridleways Advisory group, and to launch a new set of brochures on walks (and cycling) opportunities around Kāpiti. One thing it made me even more aware of, is how

where it will lose vigour, but there's a risk it will fall and start to grow again. The most effective time of year to deal with asparagus fern is now (early spring - with glyphosate 20 mL/L then follow up in autumn with



10ml/L glyphosate – yes, follow-up will be required). Also be careful if the vine is already around the stem of a tree, not to spray and kill the tree!

For example, in the photo above it's the bright green vine climbing on a kahikatea seedling (which has very similar but duller brownish green).

Photos and article by Pene Burton Bell

advanced Kāpiti is in 'trail connectivity' and the opportunities available. People travel to Kāpiti to enjoy our trails. There's only 25km of trails that still need to be built to complete access from one end of our rohe to the other, and for this a fundraising trust is planned.

This was a good opportunity to thank the CWB Advisory Group for all their planning and

lobbying over the years **Ngā mihi nui! And keep up the great work.**

I'll be bringing some brochures to our next public meeting on October 25th. If you can't make that, you can check out these and other opportunities at:

Next Public Meeting

GW Councillor Quentin Duthie responds to our question: *Has Greater Wellington really gone green? Or is it just 'smoke and mirrors'?* Join us on **Wednesday 25th October 2023** at 7:10pm at Waikanae Presbyterian Church

Make Your Voice Heard

Forest and Bird submitted on the Kāinga Ora Northern Porirua Growth Area consultation. Read more on the FOTSC website: <https://www.tauposwamp.org/> (soon)

Kāpiti Coast District Council is consulting to form *a vision that will enable a future that is sustainable and will guide Council planning now and over the next couple of decades.* They want to *uncover what matters most to our community, what change people want to see, and understanding people's aspirations for the future.*

These cover each district, as well as business, tourism, education, health and housing so are

Forest and Bird Calendars and Dairies

F&B 2024 Conservation Calendars and Diaries: stock will be returned 26/10/23 **Last chance** to order from our treasurer Peter Kentish on 04 298 1255, or 02102770520, or email pk2003_595@hotmail.com
Order by Wednesday 25 October.

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<https://www.wellingtonnz.com/visit/trails/top-trails-on-the-kapiti-coast>.

*When using the brochures, be sure to note the scale and difficulty of each trip you're considering. **Pene**

Hall, 43 Ngaio Road. Please bring some coins for the koha and some for the raffle.

FINAL chance to buy F&B calendars and diaries too (or contact Peter beforehand)

wide-ranging. Find all the details here:

<https://haveyoursay.kapiticoast.govt.nz/hub-page/vision-kapiti>, closes end October 2023.

Last chance to submit on MfE's Biodiversity Credit System consultation (closes 3/11/23)

<https://consult.environment.govt.nz/biodiversity/nz-biodiversity-credit-system/>

Last chance to submit on MfE/MPI's Potential amendments to the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (closes 31/10/23)

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/potential-amendments-to-national-policy-statement-for-highly-productive-land/>

Buy now and sort out your Christmas pressies - even for overseas friends and relatives. Diaries are \$25 and Calendars \$18, and raise funds for our branch.

Russell and Pene

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

Kapiti Coast Conservation Volunteering Opportunities

Fieldway Dunes Group (Waikanae), call Susie - 021 549 221

Friends of Waikanae River Monday 9-11.30, call Jo 022 083 1550

Friends of Wharemauku Stream 3rd Sunday 1:30pm, call Sue 027 846 5488

Greendale Reserve (Otaihanga) Meetup Tuesday 9-12, call Chris 04 904 6174

Kaitawa Reserve (Paraparaumu) Meetup Thursdays 9-12, call Tony - 027 5514443

Kāpiti Biodiversity Project, including Queen Elizabeth Park Stream Planting Group: Tuesday 9 – 12, email biodiversity.kapiti@gmail.com

Kāpiti Weekend Wetland Restoration Group (Mackays Crossing, Paekakariki), 2nd Saturdays 9:30-12:30, email jillvissercox@gmail.com

Kotukutuku Ecological Restoration Project (Paraparaumu), call Peter - 021 215 9262

Ngā Uruora Kapiti Project (Paekakariki/Pukerua Bay) Tuesday mornings & 2nd Sundays from 9, email kapitibush@gmail.com

Ngā Manu Nature Reserve (Waikanae) Monday afternoons and plenty of other opportunities. Check out <https://ngamanu.org.nz/get-involved/>

Nikau Valley Restoration Society, call Wayne 022 395 5867

Paraparaumu Beach Restoration. Check out their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100093383598502>

Predator Free Paekakariki. Email: predatorfreepaekakariki@gmail.com

Queen Elizabeth Park Restoration Group (Mackays Crossing, Paekakariki) Wednesday 9-12. Email pburtonbell@gmail.com

Tikotu Stream (Paraparaumu). Sunday, monthly. Call Rose 027 756 2713

Waikanae Estuary Care Group (Paraparaumu Beach/Waikanae Beach) Saturday and Thursday mornings. Check out <https://sites.google.com/view/waikanaeestuary/home>

Waikanae River Trappers. Contact Alison 027 452 7425

Weggery Restoration Group. Call Julian 022 090 3868

Whareroa Guardians (Mackays Crossing, Paekakariki) 1st Sundays 9-12, more during planting season, email whareroa.guardians@gmail.com

Porirua Conservation Volunteering Opportunities

Friends of Battle Hill, email battlehillranger@gw.govt.nz

Friends of Mana Island, email fomi@manaisland.org.nz

Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet, checkout <https://gopi.org.nz/>

Kahotea Stream Group (Titahi Bay) Quarterly releasing, litter clean up events and winter plantings. Email kahoteastream@gmail.com

Maara Roa (Cannons Creek) Meetup Saturday fortnightly 9:30. Call Sef 04 234 7747

Mexted Stream (Ranui). Call Bill 0276770180

Pauatahanui Reserve (Porirua Harbour). Email pauatahanuireservecommittee@outlook.com

Pest Free Porirua – email pestfreeporirua@gmail.com

Taupō Swamp and Catchment (Plimmerton) email tauposwamp@gmail.com

Whitirea Park Restoration Group (Titahi Bay) Check them out on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1055760224479856>



Forest & Bird

TE REO O TE TAIAO

Giving Nature a Voice

CELEBRATING
100
YEARS 1923-2023

If you think your conservation volunteering group should be included, please email kapitimana.branch@forestandbird.org.nz, we'd be pleased to hear from you.