



North Taranaki Forest & Bird + Kiwi Conservation Club news

P.O. Box 1029 New Plymouth 4340

October to February 2023

COMING EVENTS

Saturday 25 November 11:00 • End-of-year history–mystery walk + nosh at SPB

We planned this event last year but the weather was against us so we're going to try again. Park in Gill Street behind Top Ten Cinemas and assemble outside Shining Peak Brewery (SPB) at 11:00 for a history–mystery tour that includes a view from the top, an historic cemetery, barbed wire and very high walls, a quarry and a pretty streamside walk. It concludes with lunch at SPB if you fancy it (own cost).

The walk will take up to an hour and a half, depending on how much we dawdle.

Please register your interest by 14 November at janethuntnz@outlook.com (so we can book a table at SPB).

Continues 



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



We tend to use phones and watches to remind us of appointments these days but you can't beat these beautiful calendars and diaries for month-by-month stunningness on your desk or wall. And there's plenty of space to record those important dates. Great gifts for friends, family or just for yourself!

Contact Dawn with your order — rjmills58@gmail.com

Saturday 20 January • Tongaporutu ramble + Rapanui Ōi colony visit

Tongapōrutu is the ever-changing face of coastal erosion in Taranaki, with rock stacks constantly cut from the cliffs and subsequently eroded. Terns nest on the stacks and if you are lucky you may see herons around the rock pools.

The 2.4ha Rapanui Ōi or grey-faced petrel colony is a short drive away, high on the cliffs south of Rapanui Stream. It's a spectacular predator-fenced coastal shrub and flaxland cliff landscape and although we are unlikely to see the birds when we visit, it is Taranaki's only mainland ōi breeding site.



Meet at Tongapōrutu carpark at 11:00 (approximately one hour's drive from New Plymouth). Low tide is 12:09 so this should be ideal for a wander around the river mouth. We'll eat lunch (byo) at the carpark on return then go up to Pilot Road to visit the colony. We drive across farm tracks and walk a short distance over paddocks to the sanctuary.

It's a few years since we've done this trip, so it will be interesting to see how it's evolving.

The walk along the river is muddy and slippery so please wear appropriate footwear and maybe bring a walking pole.

Sound good? Please register if you plan to come: janethuntnz@outlook.com.

Saturday 24 February • Picnic at Tom & Don's 11:00 at the gate, 65 Albion Rd, Okato

It's been some time since we've visited Tom & Don's, our second and largest reserve, mainly because the reserve is land-locked and access is a wee bit tricky. It will probably be hot and dry in February but it's always interesting to see how things are going out there and if we take kai, we can sit on the hill and look out to sea while we tuck in. We'll maybe take a stroll around some of the fenceline and take a peek in the bush.

Peter Winter is going to take his 4-WD vehicle and will ferry us from the farm entrance. Please let us know if you plan to come.



Right: 2020 — looking down onto our riparian planting.

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

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RECENT EVENTS

It's always pleasantly surprising to look back and see what we have been doing in recent months. One way or another, there's plenty to report since the last newsletter, mostly centred on Te Wairoa, our reserve on SH3A/Mountain Road.

6 July • Tramping Club visit

The New Plymouth Tramping Club started their July hike in Lepperton and walked to Te Wairoa, completing the loop track in time for lunch in the clearing.

It's great to see groups such as the tramping club experiencing the reserve. If you haven't been there yet, feel free to stop by when passing (drive up Clearview Rd: you can't miss the entrance).

Alternatively, join us on one of our working bees (the next one is scheduled for 5 November, 10:00).



5 August • waiwaka planting

We planted two waiwaka in Pukekura Park in June as part of Forest & Bird's 100th celebrations — but had three lovely young trees left over. There is just the place for them in Te Wairoa, not far from the bottom stile on Clearview Road. The soil is soft and boggy and there's a light well to grow into.

There are also already a number of waiwaka planted maybe ten years ago by Andrew Woodger.

There was a certain amount of *Tradescantia* clearing to be done and then, *ta-da*, the plants were in the ground. We're happy to report that, like the ones in the park, these waiwaka are flourishing.

Right: Dawn and Peter set one of the young trees into its forever home.



21 September • Reading the rocks at Tapuae

Robert Crookbain was our guide to the dramatic rock strata along the coast west of Paritutu. He didn't just tell us about the formations — nothing so simple. We were challenged to make our own observations and propose tentative hypotheses. It was a great turnout and despite a chill onshore wind, an excellent outing. Thanks Robert.



4 October • Committee visit to Te Wairoa

The path through the lower reserve has long been a source of concern when it's wet. This year has been particularly bad, with seriously boggy patches right through.

On 4 October, the committee considered the possibility of a new track around the face of the hill. We had a great time exploring but ultimately concluded that it wasn't a goer (too steep and gnarly with supplejack).

We have therefore decided that, other than for trapping purposes, we will close the lower track when it's wet and use the line through the middle of the reserve instead. That line requires a little clearing but otherwise is well marked and a pleasant walk.

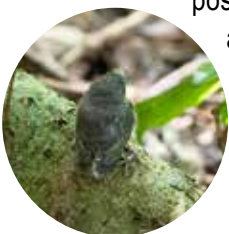


Right: Karen, David and Peter consider the options.

27 October • those power lines again

Every five years or so, we must have trees trimmed three metres away from the power lines along the Mountain Road boundary.

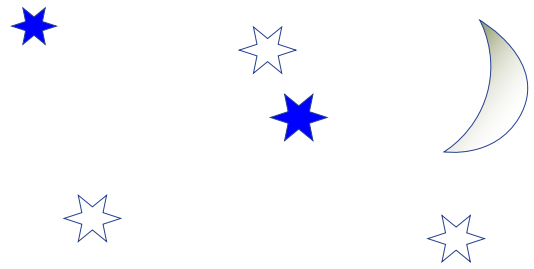
On Friday 27 committee members Janet and David had a brief on-site meeting with Kato Dentith from Asplundh and Carol Burgess from QEII Trust to review this year's trimming. Kato assures us that they will be as careful as possible, slanting the foliage away from the lines.



We're happy with that.

It won't happen until early 2024 to allow this little feller and others like it to get their wings.





What we've been up to

14 July 2023 • Visiting the Taranaki Rock Hounds

(Taranaki Lapidary & Mineral Club)

18 enthusiastic KCC'ers visited the club where five club volunteers talked to the group about 'all things rocks'.

We learnt the different types of rocks and where they are found, watched some rocks being polished, saw the big saws that cut the rocks, panned for sapphires and garnets, looked at fluorescent rocks in a dark room, explored fossils, worked on quizzes and spent pocket money in the shop.

The club gave all the KCCers a lucky dip to finish and I saw some real treasures inside those little parcels.



14 September 2023 Frog night

Jess, a biodiversity officer from TRC took us on a frog hunt at Pukekura Park.

While we heard lots of frogs we successfully found and studied only one.

But we also found koura, weta, leaf veined slugs, glow worms, eels and lots of spiders.

Spotlighting at night is always a favourite things for kids to do!



23 October 2023

The forest is alive with predators and prey and so an enthusiastic group of 'mini beast hunters' visited the Araheke Bush Walk and searched under leaf litter, logs, stones, inside tree hollows and everywhere we possibly could to see what we could find.

An interesting assortment of insects was soon detected. Thanks to our ID chart we identified millipedes, giant centipede, slaters, weta, caddisfly, darkling beetle, leaf veined slugs, worms, beautiful spider webs, discarded shells of small native land snails and other assorted 'mini beasts'.



Coming up

Cardiff Walkway - Saturday 11 November 2023

We are joining with the New Plymouth Take a Kid Tramping group for this event. This little walkway includes some historical weirs and a ram pump system built by the Cardiff Cooperative Dairy Factory in 1891.

KCC Christmas Packs



Are you looking for a conservation themed Christmas present for a friend or family member? This is a great gift for grandchildren! There are two price options.

Check out <https://kcc.org.nz/xmas-packs/> to see what is in them. It's sure to be loved.