



Annual Report 2019-20

North Canterbury Branch Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of NZ.

Chairperson's Comment

2019 followed the usual course of meetings, workdays and wider communications for the North Canterbury Branch of the Forest and Bird Protection Society, but there were a few challenges. Rick Robinson should be writing this as he was elected chair last year. Sadly a serious illness precluded his continuing and I agreed to be an interim chair for him.

This task has been a pleasant one. I am impressed with the manner in which committee members quietly go about the business of being there for Nature, with reliability and willingness that has made my task very easy.

Michael Godfrey is most visible to our members. His professional quality newsletters you regularly see, and I hope read! He makes it seem so easy.

Our secretary **Frances Wall** is one I can lean against ... relying on her timely responses, beautifully laid out work and sensible decisions about items to present to the committee.

Stefan Fairweather is our modern face as he enters our doings on Facebook - a task many of us could not do.

Ainslie Talbot keeps the committee aware of major conservation decisions throughout the country, provides advice on publicity and writes many submissions. This year these included:

- submissions on ECan and CCC Annual Plans in conjunction with our Regional Manager, Nick Snoyink.
- a submission on the Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park Management Plan
- a submission on the West Coast/Tai Poutini National Park Management Plan
- a meeting with CCC on continuing plant damage by mowing contractors
- a submission on ECan Plan Change 7
- a watching brief on Humphreys Drive reclamation
- and statements regarding the growth of Canada Geese populations.

He regularly mans our displays at events like the Estuary Fest, where our visible presence is important. He keeps us to task in arranging speakers and field trips and this year the Southern Gathering.

Hugh Thorpe has kept our finances in order, and managed our change to a more environmentally sound bank! **Rick Robinson** is always there as a reserve.

Our branch has a number of projects that have been running for some years and kept going because of the faithful leaders whose reports to this AGM indicate their value. I thank them and the regular volunteers who attend those workdays. We gratefully acknowledge their assistance.

- **Boyle Base**, located off the Lewis Pass highway is the longest running of our projects. Some decades ago (2006) Lesley Shand was instrumental in procuring the small hut and the land it stands on for Forest and Bird and began to run a trapping programme in the neighbouring Poplars Conservation Area. Sadly Lesley is no longer able to manage those trap lines so it is

appropriate to acknowledge this project and all her valuable conservation work in North Canterbury. Many a signature or submission she has wrung from us over the years! Helen Hills and Rick Robinson, with a small team, are now running the programme. They would welcome new members. The renovated hut is snug and the setting idyllic.

- **Mahoe-nui** (leader Helen Hills) and **Calder Green** (leader Mick Ingram) are both city based projects originally set-up to provide examples of urban conservation that make a difference, and to provide practical activity for members close to home. These two projects have created more diverse eco-niches in difficult environments. **Mahoe-nui** is transforming a valley above Sumner. **Calder-Green Reserve** consists of estuarine mudflats and their margins (owned by Forest and Bird). This project has embraced CCC land as well and is creating a sheltered walkway and barrier to separate passing dogs from feeding water birds. Mick Ingram is now creating lizard habitats there. Members at these sites work closely with the CCC and we are grateful for support from their staff.
- The **Sanctuary** is a site of rejuvenating riparian forest on the southern bank of the Waimakariri River, north of Christchurch and was developed as a project under Colleen Phillip's energetic chairmanship. Its convenient location, we hoped, would attract our members living north of that river. Rick Robinson had been a most dedicated sower and trapper there, until his illness laid him low for some months. Members work with **Ecan** staff and appreciate their cheerful organisation.

As the Waimakariri River is the closest braided river to Christchurch, it seems it should be the city's *awa*. Its role as a wildlife corridor inland from a rising sea and the fact that it runs free from the Arthur's Pass National Park to the sea enhances its value. Lesley Shand and I had valued its weed-free braids in its upper reaches and had informally mapped weed spread inland along Highway 73 in 2004. I railed against the increase in its weediness when I returned to Christchurch in 2011. This prompted Colleen to launch "Lose the Lupins" as part of a week of educational activities being organised in the Pass in 2017. In 2019, the cool start to the season meant that the lupins were too immature to be topped and so briar bushes at Klondyke corner were dealt with. A recent check revealed a high kill rate but the operation needs to be extended this year to avoid re-infestation.

Our youngest members have been ably catered for by two relatively new volunteers, Jen Parker and Kaye Wilson, who are sharing the running of the **Kiwi Kids Conservation Club**. I understand that Eleanor Bissell, long serving coordinator, lends a helping hand from time to time. They are doing that critical job of bringing a love of nature to the next generation.

Recognising the importance of growing naturalists, the committee is also looking after the West Coast youngsters. Since 2017 the West Coast primary schools have been given class memberships of KCC. The schools survey last year indicated that over 50% are using, and are delighted with, this material. The KCC coordinator there is hoping some of the other schools merely failed to respond!

An exciting development is the emergence of **Forest and Bird Youth**. Self-organising, articulate and highly motivated, the committee has been happy to aid and abet some of their conservation forays to Arthur's Pass (Lose the Lupins) and Kaikoura (Sooty Petrels).

Our branch was represented at green events around the city. Displays were presented at the Styx River Fest (16/2/20) and also at the Estuary Fest (22/2/20). Again thanks to Hugh and Ainslie for organising our presence there. I represented our Calder-Green projects at a workshop and poster display hosted by the CCC on the 30th April for community groups working along the lower

Ōpāwaho/Heathcote River. Then on the 23rd May, the Ōpāwaho/Heathcote River Network hosted an afternoon of brief talks from each of the groups it liaises with from the springs that are the source of the river to its embouchure into the Avon-Heathcote/ Ihutai Estuary. On each of these occasions I replaced Mick Ingram who could not be present.

It saddens us that we do not engage many members beyond the committee to be part of such events in our communities. There are more opportunities and we would like to attend them all. They are an excellent way to advertise “our brand” and the conservation needs in Christchurch and beyond, but we need volunteers to spread the load as well as the news.

We would welcome your input to ways we might become more relevant or engaging.

Alternating monthly talks with excursions.

We provided a series of what we hope have been interesting and varied events.

- **August:** Valerie Campbell gave a power point exposition on Birds of Southern Africa at short notice.
- **October:** Dr Lorna Deppe presented some aspects of her *Marine Conservation Stocktake*.
- **November 1st-3rd :** **The Southern Gathering - *Ki uta Ki ta*** - Mountains to the Sea saw North Canterbury branch hosting members from most South Island branches.
- **November 29th:** Visit to white-flipped penguin colony at Harris Bay.
- **February 2020:** Stocker Scholarship winners presented their 2019 research to members:
 - Alexandra Barclay, Freshwater Ecology MSc, UC :
Macroinvertebrate Communities and Food-web Structure of Canterbury-Westland Alpine Tarns as Early Indicators of Climate Change.
 - Christopher Carr. MSc Computer Science and Software Engineering, UC
The Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Recognise Different Species Automatically in the NZ Bush to Improve Monitoring and Predator Control.

The Stocker Scholarship was established over thirty years ago, funded by a bequest from a member of the Stocker family and supplemented from other funds to keep up with inflation. Details of the 2019 awards are on p7.

Our branch provided a financial grant to assist Dr Lorna Deppe, a seabird ecologist and committee member, in producing a *Marine Conservation Stocktake*. This report was first suggested to the committee by our 2018 chairperson, Colleen Philips, in memory of the late Hendrikje Buss. Hendrikje was a committee member and a passionate advocate for marine conservation. The final copy of Lorna’s investigation was received early this year. It is extensive, detailed and available on our website.

Last year it fell to our branch to mount the **South Island Gathering** of all the South Island branches of the Society. We set the theme of *Ki uta Ki tai* - Mountains to the Sea. Ainslie made sure we got started early and found the excellent venue at the Christchurch Bridge Club rooms. I raked the Internet for caterers and Ann Godfrey and I decided on the most delicious yet cost effective menus. Thanks to Nicky Snoyink (Field Manager), we found a great caterer. Serving and clearing up was provided by a mature lady bowlers. Leading up to and on the actual weekend, we would have floundered but for Ann Godfrey’s valiant shopping and cooking. The laying out of the venue and placing of the tables and chairs in regimented rows afterwards fell to a few, amongst whom Toni Jones deserves a special mention.

Registration was a less glowing experience ...

Located in a city, the Gathering offered fewer opportunities for excursions than the Catlins, for example. But with Nicky Snoyink’s help, we not only got the site sorted but the times and distances down to a tee. Floundering to provide a forest experience to reflect the *Ki uta Ki tai* theme, I

insisted that an after Gathering lunch and walk through Riccarton Bush should be offered, and then disappeared before it took place! Hugh stepped up and I've heard enthusiastic reports.

Well that just about finished us for the year! It was great to finish 2019 on a high note.

Early this year, we were delighted to be able to co-opt Diana Shand to our committee as she brings a great knowledge of Canterbury, its environment, its history and its needs.

Many plans and ideas were formed early in 2020 but because of Covid-19 not a lot has happened for our members. As I write this in June, I can report that we're planning for the rest of the year, but preparing for any eventuality. We hope that you, our members, have been safe and that are now able to join the fight for Nature in whatever way you can. Again, I give many thanks to all committee members, those members of the public that support our activities, attend our events and donate money that supports the national office to make us truly the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

A special thanks is due to Maria Stoker-Farrell who organises the supper at our evening meetings. The opportunity to chat and mingle afterwards is an important part of those meetings.

Remember your local branch committee would welcome your help, just a few hours here and there can make a great difference to us.

*Valerie Campbell, 20th June 2020.
Chairperson.*

Forest and Bird Christchurch Youth

Forest and Bird Youth Christchurch is the local hub of a nationwide network of youth working together to undertake conservation projects. 2019 was a big year for the Christchurch hub. In our first full year of operation, our numbers grew, both in membership and events attended. We did a wide range of volunteer work, including tree plantings, plant care days, rubbish cleanups and protest marches. We've also had the pleasure of working with Forest and Bird North Canterbury at the Mahoe Nui restoration site, and also presenting at the South Island gathering.

2020 started well for us, with a beach cleanup in January, and a successful series of fortnightly city cleanups. We also attended some planting and plant care days. Unfortunately, the current covid-19 pandemic put a hold on our plans for a while, but we're looking forward to getting our projects back on track as the restrictions ease in the coming months.

*Ella Peoples
Youth Leader*

Calder Green Reserve

River and riparian zone care work at and near the FandB Calder Green Reserve near the Ferrymead Regional Park. Recent project work done or in progress has included:

- Quarterly bird surveys along the river / estuarial zone. This provides an excellent database of bird numbers over the years.
- Removal of the invasive Sea lavender *Limonium companyions* from the salt marsh areas. This plant grows to a dense mat and crowds out natives species.
- Riparian planting programme along the river banks of the Lower Heathcote.
- Development of a restoration planting and Lizard Sanctuary Zone in a 3000m2 area of former horse paddocks adjacent to the Opawaho Trail. This is within the Ferrymead Regional Park and opposite the Calder Green Reserve providing further riparian enhancement along 25m of the river.

- Planting (mostly coprosma, muehlenbeckia and sedge grass) is occurring this winter along with ongoing general site maintenance.

This work is ongoing and is being supported by Christchurch City Council Rangers, Coastal Unit, Regional Parks.

Mick Ingram
CGR Reserve Manager

Mahoe-nui Restoration Project

Mahoe-nui is a lovely gully of remnant native bush behind Sumner. It is on CCC land and has been fenced off from surrounding farmland since 2006. It runs from Evans Pass road (near Rapanui Bush) to above the Summit road. Forest and Bird with the Sumner Environment group provide volunteers to help restore the bush under the guidance of dedicated Port Hills rangers Di Carter and Fiona Fenton.

We have two planting days in winter, and two releasing days in spring and in autumn, when the long grass that surrounds the young plants is cut back and used to mulch the plants. We plant about 550 trees each winter. The survival rate for new plants is usually 95% but due to drought conditions this year it was 80 %. At our last autumn releasing day volunteers carted 120 litres of water up the hill to give the most thirsty plants 2litres of water each.

The working bees are only two hours long and in non Covid times volunteers are rewarded afterwards with a tasty morning tea.

Thank you to all the volunteers, for without you the restoration of this bush remnant wouldn't happen. New volunteers are always welcome!

Total volunteer hours for last year were 220.

Helen Hills

The Sanctuary

“The Sanctuary” is an area of about 20 hectares on the south bank of the Waimakariri River about 2 kilometres west of the motorway bridge at the end of Dickey's Road. The area is an Environment Canterbury (ECan) reserve they are developing in partnership with North Canterbury Forest and Bird and other entities. The area is a natural wetland and area subject to flood by the river. No flooding has occurred in the last decade or so though it was close on one occasion this year. ECan is involving other organisations with a view to encouraging biodiversity and the return of native plants and animals. ECan clears areas of grass, blackberry, fallen willow and poplar and other non-native vegetation and Forest and Bird along with other organisations (St Margaret's and Ferndale Schools and Belfast Rotary) supply the manpower to plant the native plants supplied by ECan and to keep the planted area free of weeds so as to allow the new plants to come away.

Forest and Bird's involvement with ECan in the Sanctuary project began in 2016. Planting days and clearing work aimed at Old Man's Beard are attended by enthusiastic volunteers during the year. A high level of survival of plantings has been achieved and the weed control work has been continued by Phil McEntee. My health has prevented me from doing much but Phil and Bruce Craig (who joined the team in November) have continued to check and set about 60 Timms and Doc 200 predator traps within the planting areas this year and have been quite successful. Working a 10 to 14-day cycle, they report the demise of 34 Possums, 17 Rats, 16 Hedgehogs and a number of unlucky mice (13) in the 2019 year. There are some feral cats in the area, and these are preying on the catches and also will be doing damage to the other wildlife in the Sanctuary. Wild cats are a difficult issue likely caused by people dumping kittens in the wild. The area west of the Sanctuary remains uncontrolled and predators will continue to migrate from there. The trapping program has continued in 2020.

The braided river to the north of the area is frequented by ground nesting river birds. Trapping is intended to have a positive effect on their habitat by removing predators. Anecdotal evidence (an increase in Californian Quail, Fantail and Pheasants) suggests that bird-life appears to be increasing in the area. Greg Stanley is a Biodiversity Officer (among many other tasks) for ECan who is responsible for the work being done in the Sanctuary and our relationship with him has been excellent. He is most supportive of our efforts in improving the habitat for the bird-life in the area. Without heavy machinery and the employment of contractors by ECan, the task of extending the native plantings would be near impossible. The work of planting has been focused along the drain (creek) that runs almost the length of the Sanctuary area although extensive enhancement work has been done in the heavily wooded (sub canopy) area between the drain and the stop bank. The project has potential to last for some years yet. We have planted a few large trees (Kahikatea, Rimu and Matai) with shrubs of Kaikomako, Rohutu, Manatu, Turepo, Hoheria and Poataniwha and there have been about 35,000 plants put in the ground over the past few years.

If you wish to participate in planting activities or in any other way do not hesitate to contact me. There is always plenty to do.

Volunteer hours estimate as follows:

Forest and Bird volunteer planting time	- 350 hours
Trapping predators	- 150 hours

Rick Robinson

Boyle Base Trapping Project

The Boyle Base trapping Project is located in the Lewis Pass area near the Boyle village on DOC land. We have about 120 traps in 3 circuits to catch rats and mustelids (stoats and weasels) to protect native wildlife in the valley.

The trapping management team of Helen Hills, Rick Robinson, Geoff Mahan, Phil McEntee and Bruce Craig, with the help of a small group of other volunteers have been very busy over the last year. Due to a mega mast (seeding) of beech and tussock last autumn, the rodent population exploded with a subsequent explosion of mustelids. The rodent population diminishes over winter and the mustelids turn to eating more native birds. We have therefore been attending to the trap lines about every 3 weeks (apart from lock-down), instead of monthly.

Over the last year (June 2019-June 2020), we have removed 490 rats, 53 stoats and 33 weasels from the area.

We had a problem with large numbers of mice eating the lure out of our trap boxes so Geoff and Bruce designed and made 'bait cages' to put in each trap box. This maintains the effectiveness of the trap and saves the cost of replacing the lure all the time. Bruce has also done a great job of altering the DOC 200 trap boxes on the Boyle Gorge circuit for greater ease of access to the traps.

Along the Boyle River (on the St James walkway) we have added 8 more DOC 200s so that along with the Boyle village traps both sides of the Boyle River up to the swing bridge are protected by traps. It is potential whio (blue duck) habitat and whio are nearby in the Nina Valley. We are hoping we will see whio in the Boyle River one day.

We also finished re-routing the upper terrace line so that it now goes through the bush, instead of through boggy terrain. Geoff did most of the route finding and several of us moved the 30 odd boxes into the new line.

Other volunteers, namely Eleanor and Barry Bissell, and Geoff and Marg Henderson, have been doing weeding work in the area, cutting gorse to prevent it spreading into the Lewis River. They also helped keep the lawn around the hut mowed. DOC kindly cut down a dead tree near the hut for

us to use for firewood. Doug, a possum hunter and other volunteers split and stacked a lot of this into the shed which is much appreciated.

Thank you to Di Cowan who does our bird counts in spring and autumn. Bird numbers in spring were consistent with other years which is good to see considering the beech masting problem.

Monitoring of rat and mustelid numbers by Phil McEntee recently show much lower numbers of predators, where our traps are, compared to neighbouring areas that are not trapped.

Volunteer hours for the year are approximately 685.

Before winter Mick Ingram did some much needed maintenance of the hut, painting the roof and the hut exterior. His family volunteered their time to help finish the job before winter set in.

We welcomed some new volunteers but Covid 19 has made it difficult to get new people involved. Hopefully this will be easier now we are at level 1 as new volunteers are very welcome.

For more information about volunteering on the trapping project or to book the hut contact Helen Hills helenhills.mcp@gmail.com ph: 021 023 26155

For more information about volunteering on hut/grounds maintenance contact Ainslie Talbot talbotjones45@clear.net.nz ph: 027 547 1157

Helen Hills

Stocker Scholarships

Every year the North Canterbury branch offers postgraduate students the opportunity to win up to \$5000 in total for environmental or conservation related research in Canterbury.

In 2019 the branch awarded three postgraduate students Stocker Scholarships to the total value of \$5000 for research to be carried out in 2020. The students normally present their research to North Canterbury members in the following year.

MSc student Matthew Turner, (University of Canterbury) is using his grant to investigate new tools/refuges for improving the monitoring of lizards in Canterbury. 80% of native lizards are listed as either threatened or at risk and Matthews research is aimed at improving ways to conserve these endangered species; particularly the highly elusive tree-dwelling geckos. The first part of his research will examine the effectiveness of concrete lizard refuges on Montgomery Spur on the Port Hills. Secondly, he will monitor the design of three different artificial lizard refuges in Riccarton Bush, which have been used for translocations, to see which type is the most effective in terms of protecting tree-dwelling geckos.

University of Canterbury microbial ecology PhD candidate, John Ramana, is breaking new ground, literally and figuratively, examining how microbial and fungal communities affect plant health through their root structures. In this little understood world of microbial interactions between plants and their environment, John will use high powered computerisation, to find out what goes on in these underground communities of microbes and fungi. His research is aimed at developing specialised combinations of bacteria and fungi to inoculate native plants against disease and thus boost growth.

PhD candidate, Sanaz Safavian (UC), is looking at the effects of human disturbance on braided river birds such as wrybill, black-fronted tern, black stilt, banded dotterel, and black-billed gull. She is examining four types of human disturbance; 4WDs, jet boats, invasive weeds and walkers. Sanaz will measure the impact of weed removal in the Ashley river, the extent of 4WD tracks utilising drone surveys in relation to numbers of birds, and measure the responses of birds to jet boats. The aim is more accurate information to help conservation managers to design buffer zones from direct human disturbance.

Ainslie Talbot

KCC

North Canterbury has had another active year connecting local children with nature. We currently have 239 individual members plus 35 schools, and we've had 131 new sign ups over the last 12 months. It's been great to see new members coming out on trips.

Travis Wetland

In May 2019 KCC had an outing to Travis wetland, setting out on a sunny afternoon along the trail to Mairehau Rd to learn more about the birds in the area. (Kids were quick to spot several cats along the way.) Goldfinches enjoying the tiny fruit of the Tororaro flew as the group approached. Tucked in a sheltered corner on shrubby bushes of Tororaro, bag moths, katydids and mantis were making the most of the end of warm summer sun. Bag moths fed on the leaves and several mantis cases were spotted on the branches. Some crane flies that had avoided being bird food rested there.

Kids were able to examine the adaptations of bird legs and feet when they unwrapped parcels of preserved sets of legs complete with feet - hawk legs with feet so different from pukeko and other water birds; a furry rabbit foot to compare!

Tongs, pliers, chop sticks, spoons. They quickly figured out food types for birds from the assemblage of kitchen tools used to demonstrate beak adaptations.

Back at the Education Centre playing a predator prey game (especially as some of the parents were the predators) demonstrated difficulties birds face while nesting, feeding and even when resting; the reason for predator control. Examples of the predators were shown; a weasel, ferret and hedgehog. (Thank you Bottle Lake H.Q. for the loan of the specimens.) KCC leader Fiona raced around pretending to cut trees with a model chainsaw. This reminded all that lots of places like Travis Wetland are needed for the birds and their continued existence.

Children then examined various bird nests, felt how cosy and warm the linings were for the baby birds, some nests with feathers and others with moss and wool. Examining bird feathers including some penguin feathers (after moulting) given by Kristina and Thomas. Deciding what their purpose was proved interesting and informative, and led to many more questions. Flight feathers so different to downy ones that keep the bird warm. Any other creatures with feathers? Why do birds moult? Are feathers alive or dead?

The programme finished with a walk to the Bird Hide to watch swans ruffling their feathers and calling to one another, shoveler ducks and other water birds flying and feeding.

Thank you to the Rangers and CCC for the use of the Travis Education Centre.

Ōtukaikino Reserve

In October we visited Ōtukaikino Reserve (also known as Wilson's Swamp) near Belfast with a group of families, braving some very confusing roadworks to access the site. The children enjoyed a range of earth education activities and a walk looking at the birds and insects of this wetland. A highlight was definitely the rotten logs with lots of bugs!

Ōtukaikino is a hidden treasure - the area was farmed from 1854 until 1961 when the land was sold for the construction of the Northern Motorway. It is now being restored by Lamb and Hayward, and like other wetlands it is an important place for birds, invertebrates and insects. The wetland traps sediments and helps to control flooding and river flows. It would be great to see the triangle of land towards Belfast included in the wetland area so it could be restored, and the wetland extended further.

Penguin Colony

In December we organised a couple of after school trips out to the white-flippered penguin colony in Harris Bay, which were hugely popular. We were guided by Kristina and Thomas from Christchurch Penguin Rehabilitation who kindly shared their knowledge of the colony and their experiences as dedicated penguin rescuers. Luckily the weather was on our side and all the groups

were able to climb down to the rocky shore, view the nest boxes and get up close to a penguin. A memorable experience for all.

Action for Seabirds

North Canterbury KCC started off 2020 with an action to highlight the plight of New Zealand seabirds. We went out to Sumner on January 14th to help build a huge sand albatross to raise awareness of Forest and Bird's important submission to Parliament.

Casting Magic with Worms

In February we had our long-awaited trip to the Bromley Eco drop worm farm to learn all about the wonders of worms. The children heard from CCC educator Chris Duggan about the different types of worms in New Zealand (there are over 200 types!) and then the children got to make their own mini worm farm to take home.

More planned for 2020

Unfortunately our big event - a planned KCC Autumn Picnic with Forest and Bird Youth at Riccarton Bush at the start of April had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, we are now gearing up to run trips again with more adventures planned for later this year.

North Canterbury Marine Conservation Project

In June 2019, Dr Lorna Deppe, a seabird ecologist and committee member, produced a marine conservation stocktake report to provide baseline knowledge on our local North Canterbury marine environment and its conservation needs. It presented information gathered from literature and online research, and from interviewing individuals, groups and organisations involved in marine research and conservation in and around the target area. This was for the purpose of identifying both specific projects as well as general areas of marine conservation need which would be suitable for the Forest and Bird North Canterbury branch to engage with.

The results were communicated to the membership and discussed further by the committee, with the involvement in White-flipped penguin conservation by supporting and carrying forth the excellent work of Dr Chris Challies at the Harris Bay colony being addressed as a first step. Further options include a potential collaboration with Christchurch City Council in re-establishing seabird colonies on Banks Peninsula, and the facilitation of marine conservation science communication to schools and community groups. We are currently working on building relationships with both governmental agencies as well as Sumner community members to support the protection of White-flipped penguins as well as Red-billed gulls breeding in the area.

The branch intends to hold a seminar later in the year (all going well) at which attendees discuss their preferences for future branch marine conservation projects.

Newsletter/website

An electronic newsletter containing upcoming environmental events is emailed to North Canterbury members eleven times a year. If you would like to receive it, contact Michael Godfrey:

mgodfrey@xnet.co.nz . It can also be viewed on the branch website:

<https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/branches/north-canterbury> along with upcoming events and details of our projects.

Michael Godfrey

Facebook Page

Forest and Bird North Canterbury Branch Facebook page continues to be a medium primarily for advertising events organised by the local group. This time last year there were around 400 people who 'liked' the Facebook (FB) page. There are now about 535 people who like it. People who either like or follow the FB page are opted in to notifications when posts are made on the page - for example upcoming events, photos, posts of interest from news sources or head office. People can of course opt out of these notifications, or at least manage them to alter the frequency which they receive them. Given that posts are only made on the page every couple of weeks, people who follow our FB page shouldn't find posts and notifications too bothersome, but that is of course their choice. There is no way to measure how many people follow our page but have 'turned off notifications', nor is it possible to measure if having more likes or followers directly translates as more member engagement or other forms of support (financial, campaigning, etc). It is reasonable to assume that there is increased interest in certain local events when posts are made that lead to an increase in likes or engagements of the said event.

Members are encouraged to post things to our FB page, or email me directly (stefthekiwi@gmail.com) with photos, news and events they would like posted. For events, it is helpful to supply an email or phone number and advise me if you are comfortable with this being posted on a public Facebook forum. I will endeavor to make at least one FB post a week in the coming year, if only with some of the lovely photos that club members have supplied from around Boyle Base or other field trips, club related or personal.

Stefan Fairweather

2019-20 Committee

Valerie Campbell:	Chairperson
Frances Wall:	Secretary
Hugh Thorpe:	Treasurer
Michael Godfrey:	Website, eNews
Rick Robinson	
Helen Hills	
Ainslie Talbot	
Lorna Deppe	
Stefan Fairweather	
Diana Shand	

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