



# Forest & Bird

## GIVING NATURE A VOICE

### Horowhenua Branch

February / March Newsletter



Lake Waiorongomai

Below is an excerpt from the first newsletter from the Manawatu Estuary put out in November

#### Local History

The history of the [Pāpāngaio Te Wharangi](#) Manawatū Estuary predates all of us. For some of us our connections with this place go back generations, for others we have only recently discovered this gem.

The river mouth and the estuary are places that evolve relatively quickly and continuously. There are many stories of the bird, plant, and animal life that used to be found here in abundance.

We have seen a lot of pressure on our environment from people, animals, and everything that flows down the river.

In July 2005 the Manawatū Estuary was declared a Wetland of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention.

In 2006 the Manawatū Estuary Management Team (MENT), comprising representatives from local Iwi, Department of Conservation, Horizons Regional Council, Horowhenua District Council, the Manawatū Estuary Trust, and others in the community, was established to coordinate efforts to protect and enhance the site and the nature which depends on it.

#### Mahinga Kai / Food Basket

The Manawatū Awa and tributaries are an important ecosystem and are considered as a Pātaka Kai a.k.a. Supermarket for many of our whānau, hapū and community that provides both food and an abundance of other resources from this environment and associated areas.

A rich variety of fish (ngaika) and shellfish (moana kai), natural resources used as food (kai) and medicine (rongoa) as well as for traditional arts like flax/harakeke and Pingao for weaving.

It's important that we continue to maintain and enhance all within the Manawatū Estuary and tributaries for future generations and be good Kaitiaki or Guardians of our Taiao/Environment.

#### Who Are We

We are embarking on the next stage of our journey as we prepare a new Manawatū Estuary Management Plan with strong Iwi and community input alongside the various government agencies.

We include:

- Local hapū and Iwi within the area.
- Manawatū Estuary Trust, Wildlife Foxton Trust, Forest and Bird Horowhenua and Manawatū, NZ Four Wheel Drive Association, Save Our River Trust, and local community residents.
- Department of Conservation, Horizons Regional Council, Horowhenua District Council, and Te Awahou Foxton Community Board.



# Working Bees

## February 2025

**SUNDAY 9 PROUSE BUSH WORKING PARTY 10am** A small bush reserve in central Levin home to rare Powelliphanta snails.

Contact Maggie Peace  
021 215 2688

**THURSDAY 27 PROUSE BUSH WORKING PARTY 10am**  
Contact Maggie Peace  
021 215 2688

**NOTE:** *It is advisable to wear long pants and sleeves and to bring insect repellent to Prouse Bush*

**WED 19 PAPAITONGA NURSERY 9.30am**  
Caring for native plants to be planted out in local areas. Our plants are bought by DOC and Horizons.

Contact Lindsay 021 0816 3394

**All the above are of course subject to weather**

**MONDAY 10 NGAWHAKAHIAMOE BUSH**  
Kaitiaki work mornings. Ngawakahiamoe is a highly viable remnant of critically threatened swamp bush ecosystem (Kahikatea-Pukatea lowland forest) at Poroutawhao between Levin and Foxton. For an introductory discussion, and to receive monthly kaitiaki emails (which include variable start time, what we are doing and what to bring, and weather confirmation early in the morning) please contact

Heather Heron Speirs 022 368 0471  
h.heronspeirs@gmail.com

*Please note that you need to have good balance and strength to work in this environment as the trip hazard is high.*

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## Trips

### **Saturday February 8**

Trip to Waikanae Estuary hopefully to see the White Heron

Meet at Thompson House at 10am

This is of course subject to weather

Contact – Claudia Mason - 06 367 0660

### **Saturday March 1**

Trip to Lake Papaitonga Lookout

Meet at Thompson House at 10am

This is of course subject to weather

Contact – Claudia Mason - 06 367 0660

## Meetings

### **Monday February 17 1.30 pm**

**Speakers** : Saoirse Williamson and Gary Beecroft

Talking about Red Admiral Butterflies

Contact – Claudia Mason - 06 367 0660

### **Monday March 17 1.30 pm**

**Speaker** : To be announced

Specialist in Native Snails

Contact – Claudia Mason - 06 367 0660

## Bird Monitoring

### **Wednesday February 5**

Otaki Ponds and Otaki Estuary

Meet at Thompson House 9.30 am

Contact – Claudia Mason - 06 367 0660

### **Wednesday March 5**

Waikawa Beach

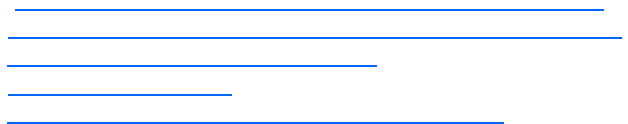
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Contact – Claudia Mason - 06 367 0660

An interesting YouTube Programme

“ Here the Wild Things Are ”

Click to view





# 23 NOV ... SANDERSON'S WAY



After having been postponed from last term we finally got to check out the walk created in recognition of the good work done by Forest & Bird's founder Captain Val Sanderson ... and the plants and animals which call this space home!!

It was great to see some familiar faces returning to yet another KCC Horowhenua adventure, and fantastic to see some new faces join us. We also got to see the most beautiful view of Kāpiti Island!

We were greeted by Andy, from the Kāpiti Coast District Council who explained the significance of the track and how the area we were entering (the Paekākāriki Escarpment) was a very dynamic environment ... with the landscape sometimes changing quite quickly due to rockfall from the treeless escarpment. He then told us that trees actually hold the hillside together, lessening further erosion! I reckon we need to be a Voice For Nature and encourage more tree plantings in environments like this ... especially if they are native tree plantings!



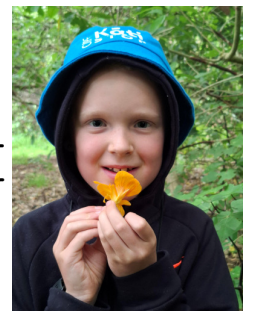
Then we headed off on a 2.5km walk to the Lizard Garden, listening to the sounds of traffic and tui!

Some children were lucky enough to see lizards, but the lizards weren't interested in sticking around to have their photographs taken, so I hope they left a lasting impression in your mind. Others weren't so lucky in their lizard hunting ... but found lots of other interesting things in the garden to explore.

There was a small paper wasp nest which, thankfully, was empty so we could look at its hexagonal cylinders.



There were also lots of ant nests under the rocks, and we got to see the ants scurrying around and shifting their eggs out of the sunlight and away from potential predators. The wild herbs proved interesting ... with Arlo trying a nasturtium flower, and others enjoying smelling the fennel.



The wild flowers were pretty too (one mum even took home a beautiful bouquet!) ... and we got to see how the tendrils of the Sweet Pea plant wrap themselves around other objects for support. Helen also showed us how to find a fairy's toothbrush inside a Periwinkle flower.



Liam found a really interesting plant called 'Quaking Grass' which had quite unusual seed heads.



## The KCC Motto:

I will love and care for my natural world - the native plants, animals, and the places where they live. I CAN make a difference.



# Our birds need you!

Be part of making Aotearoa predator-free by 2050.

Donate a trap to a specific group

Donate funds to the cause



**Forest & Bird**  
TE REO O TE TAIAO | *Giving Nature a Voice*

[www.giveatrap.co.nz](http://www.giveatrap.co.nz)

**BIRD  
FLU**  
**BE READY**

## Bird flu HPAI

Bird flu is a highly contagious virus that can affect any type of manū and is spreading around the world right now. The H5N1 strain of bird flu isn't in New Zealand yet, but we must be on the lookout for signs of the disease. Signs to look for in birds are sudden death, tremors, weakness, paralysis, difficulty breathing and diarrhoea. For more information, including simple ways we can all help wildlife, please go to the

[Department of Conservation](#) and [Ministry for Primary Industries](#) websites.