



**Forest & Bird**

TE REO O TE TAIAO | *Giving Nature a Voice*

# Our Year in Review



# Introduction

## *Nicola Toki, Chief Executive*

**At Forest & Bird, we believe in the power of collective action to protect and restore the natural heritage of Aotearoa New Zealand.**

This Year in Review celebrates the remarkable conservation achievements made possible through the dedication of our staff, members, volunteers, and branches throughout 2024.

From the places where native seabirds are reclaiming their ancestral nesting grounds to urban forests where communities are reconnecting with nature, this report showcases the tangible difference we're making for Aotearoa New Zealand's unique ecosystems

Each success story represents countless hours of fieldwork, advocacy, community engagement,

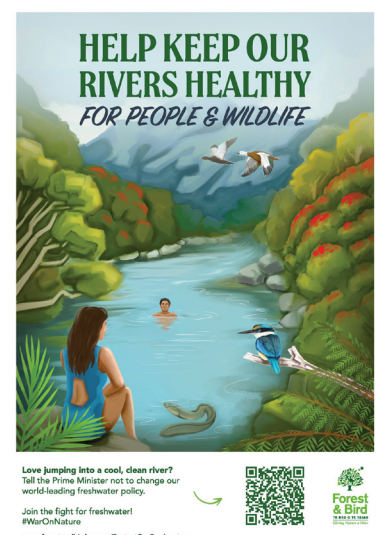
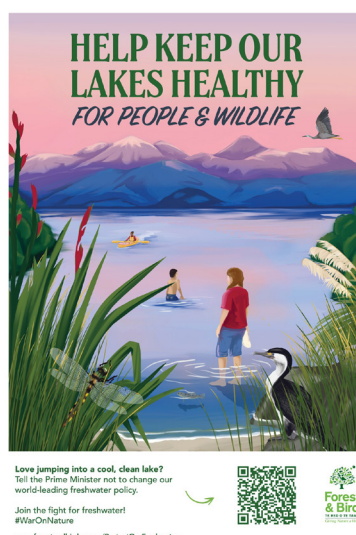
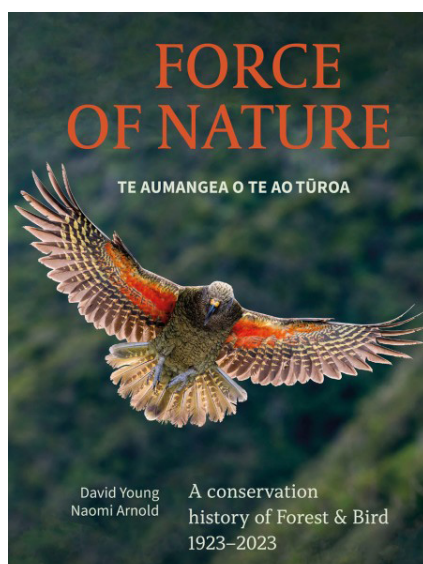
and unwavering commitment to our mission.

The conservation outcomes highlighted here demonstrate not only what we've accomplished together, but also the proven approaches and innovative solutions that are driving lasting change across our network. These inspiring examples serve as both a celebration of our collective impact and a resource for branches and conservation groups seeking effective strategies for their own local initiatives.

Together, we are creating a future where native species thrive, ecosystems flourish, and all New Zealanders can experience the wonder of our natural world.



# Some of our 2024 publications



## SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

# Love the Gulf: Protecting Tikapa Moana / Hauraki Gulf

The Hauraki Gulf is a globally recognised marine ecosystem that supports diverse wildlife, recreation, and livelihoods but faces critical threats from overfishing, bottom trawling, and pollution.

### Situation

Once-thriving waters now face severe overfishing and habitat destruction. Every rainfall brings sewage, metals, and sedimentation from urban centres, farms, and industries. We urgently need better management of impacts on this marine environment that has traditionally sustained generations of New Zealanders.

### Task

Working with mana whenua and conservation partners, we advocated for protecting 30% of the marine area, reducing sedimentation, and ending bottom trawling. After a decade of mahi, the Tikapa Moana Hauraki Gulf Marine Protection Bill represents a significant step forward in safeguarding this treasured ecosystem.

### Action

In 2024, our dedicated Hauraki Gulf Advisor intensified our mahi as we saw the Bill proceed through Parliament. We submitted written and oral evidence to the select committee and worked across political parties to secure support for the Bill. Outside of Parliament, we continued actively participating in the Hauraki Gulf Forum and continued our "Love the Gulf" campaign. We prioritised engagement with mana whenua to ensure Te Ao Māori perspectives were incorporated in the Bill.

### Result

The finalised Bill establishes two marine reserves, five seafloor protection areas, and twelve high protection areas while acknowledging customary rights. When a last-minute amendment allowed commercial fishing in a proposed protected area, we launched a petition and a national publicity campaign alongside other eNGOs to oppose this change. The Bill is a foundation for future marine protections aligned with New Zealand's 30/30 commitment under the Global Biodiversity Framework.

**36,000+**

signatures on bottom  
trawling petition

**19**

protected areas established under  
new legislation

### Key takeaways

- By collaborating with mana whenua and key decision-makers and focusing our campaigning in a positive way, the love for the Gulf, Forest & Bird helped secure significant protections.
- The protections represent a substantial step forward in restoring the Hauraki Gulf's health.
- This approach provides a blueprint for marine protection that can serve as a model elsewhere.
- Through this process, we established extensive connections with local communities, mana whenua, and key organisations.
- These relationships create a robust network for ongoing marine conservation efforts beyond this legislative process.





**136+**  
**submissions**

**made by branches.**

**19 submissions**

**made by staff on district and  
regional plans and resource  
consent applications.**

**30**

**legal proceedings in the  
Environment Court and the  
High Court.**

## SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

# Te Hoiere Bat Recovery Project

Te Hoiere Bat Recovery Project focuses on protecting the vulnerable long-tailed bat population in the Marlborough region.

### Situation

Established in 2010 following the rediscovery of long-tailed bats at Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve, the project expanded significantly between 2022-2025 through Jobs for Nature funding. This rare native species requires dedicated conservation efforts to survive in a landscape transformed by forestry and farming.

### Task

Our key objective was to save and recover Te Hoiere long-tailed bat population from decline. To achieve this, we engaged with the local community in protecting and enhancing the bat population throughout Te Hoiere Pelorus catchment through habitat restoration initiatives while building community involvement and awareness.

### Action

We implemented riparian habitat restoration, comprehensive weed control across four reserves, expanded predator control programmes, and conducted extensive bat monitoring. Our conservation specialists worked alongside local volunteers and mana whenua to implement these initiatives, creating both ecological and community benefits.

### Result

Our restoration established over 20,000 eco-sourced native plants, cleared 24 hectares of invasive species, and reduced the Rat Tracking Index below 5% across controlled areas. Comprehensive bat monitoring expanded our knowledge of population distribution, confirming Pelorus Bridge as the population's stronghold and identifying new habitat areas for protection.

**20,000+**  
eco-sourced native plants established

**Below 5%**  
Rat Tracking Index achieved

### Key takeaways

- The Jobs for Nature funding and partnership with Ngāti Kuia were crucial in transforming conservation efforts.
- The funding enabled the recruitment of dedicated conservation specialists, creating a step change in the project's success.
- This collaborative approach demonstrates how targeted funding can achieve significant conservation outcomes for threatened species.
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships proved effective in engaging local communities in meaningful environmental stewardship.
- The project created a foundation for sustained conservation efforts beyond the initial funding period.
- The successful bat conservation project significantly enhanced Forest & Bird's reputation as a credible conservation leader, strengthening our position when advocating for other threatened species protection initiatives.





**8000+**

**hectares managed for plant and animal pests across New Zealand.**

**30,000+**

**plants planted across our national programmes.**

**500+ km**

**length of trap lines across national programmes.**

**1400+**

**hectares of owned and managed reserves across New Zealand.**

## SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

# Enhancing support for Branches

Forest & Bird operates through 45 volunteer-run branches across Aotearoa, each managing various conservation campaigns and restoration projects. Effective document management and communication are essential for these branches to function efficiently and maximise their conservation impact.

### Situation

In 2023, branches reported significant difficulties with OneDrive document storage and Outlook email systems. Our Annual Satisfaction survey showed challenges with IT Support, with branches finding the system cumbersome and difficult to use for essential administration tasks. We identified that we needed to provide better volunteer support through more intuitive tools.

### Task

Our goal was to create an intuitive “one-stop-shop” for branch administration with “one-click” resource access, improving membership list and inbox accessibility. Success metrics included reduced support requests and increased document usage.

### Action

We implemented a SharePoint Site after testing with diverse branches. Feedback guided usability improvements before launch. We conducted six induction sessions with all 45 branches participating—a first in Forest & Bird’s history. These sessions informed Phase Two development of a dedicated filing area. The project supported two of our improvement projects by centralising Guidance & Standard documents.

### Result

By early 2025, we achieved 100% branch engagement with the admin site and inboxes. IT Support NPS improved to +8, a 16-point increase. Membership list access requests ceased completely. The Branch & Network Support Team will continue to develop initiatives based on branch and network feedback.

# 100%

## Branch engagement with admin site and inboxes

### Key takeaways

- Through this project, the National Office demonstrated its commitment to actively listening to members and volunteers.
- Our user-centred design approach created a solution that truly meets branch needs rather than imposing a top-down solution.
- Providing appropriate tools significantly improved volunteer engagement and satisfaction throughout the organisation.
- By centralising resources and simplifying access, we reduced administrative burden across all branches.
- This allowed volunteers to focus more on conservation work and less on administrative challenges.





**29,146**

**Wild Things magazines sent  
to KCC members over the year**

**83,823 hours**

**Total volunteer hours on projects  
and running branches with around  
3,500 volunteers.**

**31,028 plants**

**planted by branch volunteers  
around New Zealand.**

**15,000+**

**hectares of animal and plant  
pest control carried out**

## SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

# EcoPortal H&S Digital Tool Enhancement

Health and Safety management is critical for Forest & Bird's operations, particularly for field workers engaged in conservation activities throughout New Zealand.

### Situation

In 2023, we introduced ecoPortal for H&S planning and incident management, initially based on existing Word-based processes. The safety planning module proved particularly cumbersome, combining risk assessment, emergency planning, and worker safety briefings into one unwieldy tool that hindered field use.

### Task

Our objective was to streamline safety planning by replacing the original Job Safety & Environmental Analysis module with more user-friendly modules better suited for field use, improving overall safety compliance and documentation.

### Action

We gathered comprehensive user feedback, especially from field workers, and collaborated with ecoPortal on tailored solutions. Our H&S Advisor developed detailed designs incorporating user needs, relevant legislation, and platform capabilities, creating a practical framework for improved field safety management.

### Result

In 2024, we launched three streamlined modules—Risk Assessment, Safety Briefing, and Emergency Plans—enabling workers to reuse plans for repeated tasks. Field staff reported significantly improved usability, with strong uptake across the organisation. The quality of our design was recognised by ecoPortal, who requested permission to use our Risk Assessment module as an example for other clients.

## 3 modules

streamlined to make it easier to plan and manage activities safely

### Key takeaways

- Despite only recently introducing a significant new digital tool, we remained open to feedback on potential improvements.
- We worked promptly to implement changes that enhanced functionality for our field workers.
- This approach demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement in our H&S processes.
- The recognition from ecoPortal validates our user-centred design approach.
- Forest & Bird is now positioned as a leader in implementing effective digital H&S solutions that balance compliance requirements with practical usability.





**54,216**

**Forest & Bird magazines  
printed over the year.**

**541,000+**

**followers on Facebook,  
YouTube and Instagram.**

**\$10,104,637**

**raised through fundraising  
(excluding grants and other  
income).**

**1309**

**digital subscribers to the  
Forest & Bird magazine.**

