

Habitat



NORTH SHORE BRANCH

DECEMBER 2010 – APRIL 2011



IT'S RAINING COWS



FROM
THE EDITOR

In this, my penultimate issue as current editor, the focus is on disadvantageous intensive agriculture. A year ago (Habitat Dec-Apr 2010), I reported on the high water footprint of the dairy industry being 1,000L of water to produce 1L of milk. Moreover, it takes 16,000L of the precious liquid to produce 1kg of juicy beef (www.waterfootprint.org). Sadly, the situation is not much different for producing crops and other commodities.

'Oh,' some might say, 'isn't that what the water cycle is all about?' Well sure, but much less than 3% of the world's water is actually useable (www.bluegold-worldwaterwars.com). New Zealand's dairy giant does much for the economy. People need sustenance in this physical life; we don't need to subsist off the land in order to tread lightly upon the earth. Trading of commodities within and between nations is nothing new.

Aotearoa is fortunate to receive a considerable rate of precipitation, so much so that we are rather slack in managing our water wisely. Just about everywhere else people are far worse off in terms of water resources, and the picture is not getting any rosier. Water might become the highest sought-after commodity in the immediate future... Let's use our commonsense to live more sustainably before our predicament becomes irreversible.

FOOD (OR IS IT DRINK) FOR THOUGHT: "MAN CANNOT CREATE, HE CANNOT EVEN RECREATE, THAT WHICH HE HAS DESTROYED IN NATURE. HE CAN ONLY CONSERVE." – ROCCO KNOBEL.

TUFF CRATER – Ploughing ahead

We have had contractors eradicating pampas, climbing asparagus, privet and wattle at tank sites 1-3, and visitors will notice that a large area of pampas, privet and phoenix has been ground into mulch.

The 2010 Community Planting Day attracted 160 volunteers who planted more than 2,000 plants in a couple of hours. Altogether, volunteers have planted more than 3,000 plants at Tuff Crater in the past year. We have also paid for contractors to control phoenix palms and outlying pampas. Another contractor has started work on

weed control of the headland area below McBreen Ave.

We have sufficient funding to proceed with contractor control of tank sites 4-6 as well this summer. The Kaipatiki group is busy growing eco-sourced plants for the planting season. Also, Don Turner of Takana Plants has donated 10 large grade trees. Volunteers are continuing over summer with the control of elaeagnus, privet and kikuyu. Northbridge members are babysitting 400 flax plants through the summer ready for planting out next season. A volunteer, Christine Major,

has been working with Nick Beveridge of the Northern office developing a pest control plan. We now have a small team implementing this plan with bait stations on the properties surrounding the reserve. In addition, we have most of the funding required to upgrade the track between The Warehouse and St Peters Street. Work should commence on this over summer.

We can always use help with this project so if you're keen to come along to a work day just sing out!

– Richard Hursthouse



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WATER, ANYONE?

The battle to save Schedule 4 land from mining was short and bitter, but resulted in a win for Forest & Bird and the environment in general. However, it was only a battle – the war rages on. Possibly the biggest fight will be about New Zealand’s water resources and who has the rights to exploit them. Intensive irrigated agriculture poses the greatest threat, somewhat ironically, in Canterbury and the Mackenzie basin.

Canterbury is (or was) blessed with huge braided rivers, lowland streams, lakes and mighty aquifers. Yet this low rainfall, traditionally sheep-farming area has become the host to the second largest dairy herd in the country. Nationally, dairy cow numbers rose from about 400,000 animals to 640,000 from 2002-2008: half of this increase (120,000 animals) was in Canterbury. This growth has been matched by an 11% year-on-year rise in the number of water



consent applications in the province. In any 3-month period Canterbury is expected to permit an amount of water to irrigators equal to the total amount granted in Taranaki over the last 20 years. With successive governments failing to provide a national policy statement on water that would have provided a framework for the management of water, Environment Canterbury (ECan) was being slowly overwhelmed by burgeoning consent applications as well as the alarmed calls of environmentalists for restraint. Enter the government:

A report from former National Cabinet Minister (and farmer) Wyatt Creech, which condemned the performance of ECCan, quickly led to the sacking of the elected councillors and their replacement by a panel of hand-picked commissioners charged with ‘fixing’ the problem. Environmentalists fear that the bill,

passed under urgency, is no more than a device to enable and speed up water infrastructure projects in Canterbury. Or, as Fish & Game’s chief executive Bryce Johnson has asserted, ‘It is an irrigation bill.’

Meanwhile, in the Mackenzie Basin, farmers are professing that irrigation is the only answer to their economic woes. Their plans to install enormous pivot irrigators to create 2km-diameter luxuriant green circles on the brown tussock landscape bring threats to fragile ecosystems found nowhere else in New Zealand. While the government at this stage seems disinclined to allow this to happen, we must not become complacent! Biodiversity, water quality and our way of life remain under threat as long as the government sees export dollars generated by intensive irrigated dairy farming as the best way of raising the living standards of New Zealanders.

– Alan Emmerson

Tea-trees on Tiri – Kanuka is kind and Manuka mean



Photo: Helen Bucksey

Mānuka

Mānuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) and kānuka (*Kunzea ericoides*) belong to the myrtle family (Myrtaceae). They are widespread and often both called tea-tree, but to the botanist there are significant differences between them.

Captain Cook and his entourage called manuka ‘tea tree’ because they used the green leaves to make a substitute for tea. The Maori made weapons out of kanuka because the timber is very hard and durable. Pakeha (Europeans) used the timber for wharf piles, tool handles, wheel spokes and fences. Early settlers battled hard to clear their land and regarded manuka and kanuka as invasive shrubs that negated all their hard work.

Today, these plants act as an important tool for revegetating bare, eroded slopes. By creating shade and shelter from the wind, they provide an excellent nursery for slower-growing native plants. Then, as these other plants get taller and overtop them, the manuka and kanuka die away as a result of being shaded. Unlike many other native plants, manuka and kanuka are not usually eaten by browsing animals like sheep, cattle and goats. This is another reason why these plants are useful in restoration projects.

REMEMBER: Kanuka – kind (to touch); Manuka – mean (prickly)
– Margi Keys



Photo: Philip Moll

Kānuka

Editor’s Note: I asked Margi to share this information because it can sometimes be quite hard to tell kanuka and manuka apart, especially when they’re young or not in bloom. Reaching maturity, kanuka becomes more tree-like while manuka usually remains shrub-like. However, when in doubt, walk up close, stroke some well-representing leaves, and apply this mnemonic – it’s the best ever!



Photo: Philip Moll



Welcome New Members!

A hearty welcome to Justin Williamson, Chris Goodwin, Liz Goodwin, Eleonore Le Clerc, Bob Stirk and Suzi Phillips who recently joined North Shore Forest & Bird. May you enjoy partnering with us in conservation initiatives on the Shore!

North Shore KCC honoured at Civic Awards 2010

Muriel Fanselow (2008 Old Blue recipient) was nominated as our longest-serving coordinator for an individual Civic Award, while North Shore KCC was nominated in the organisation category, having both been seconded by F&B and KCC families. It goes without saying that both nominations succeeded in winning Civic Awards!

KCC on the Shore started up in 1988 with three coordinators, all recently-retired primary teachers at the time. Muriel, now aged 83, is the only one of the original coordinators who is still active in KCC today. Although she no longer attends physically challenging trips, she hosts the planning meetings at her home, is happy to make phone calls for us, and gives us the benefit of her 'corporate memory' as a long-time Forest and Birder.

As the second longest-serving coordinator (since 1990), I collected the club's award on behalf of the team. We are seven coordinators currently, and take it in turns to attend the annual training. Recently, Margi, Ute and I attended. Brian is our treasurer and has arranged the printing, and now emailing, of our newsletter for many years. Margi puts together the newsletter and she's our camp expert. Rhonda liaises with National Office and keeps our membership records up to date. Six of us arrange and lead trips once or twice a year, so the load is spread and it doesn't become burdensome.

We hope the awards will raise the profile of KCC on the North Shore, and attract more families that will be active in attending our events. All members love the KCC 'Wild Things' magazine they get in the mail from Wellington, but there's nothing like actually getting out there and experiencing nature for oneself!

PS: North Shore City ceased to exist on October 31st, so these were the last North Shore City Civic Awards, presented by the Mayor of North Shore City, before the Supercity has taken effect.



– Christine Ball



KCC co-ordinators (left to right): Muriel Fanselow, Jocelyn Sanders, Margi Keys, Christine Ball. (Absent: Brian Gannon, Ute Friedrich, Rhonda Woodriff.)

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The Forest and Bird Library Collection is now at Awataha Marae, 58 Akoranga Drive. Open Mon - Fri 10am to 3pm. Phone 486 5467

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NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY *TIAKI TAIAO*, NORTH SHORE BRANCH

Cool fun at Mt Ruapehu for KCC group

The KCC trip to Ruapehu at the end of September was attended by eight young people aged 8 to 14, and five parents. We stayed three nights at Taylor Memorial Lodge at Pokaka (between National Park and Horopito). Bellbirds abounded, and the many trains at night were fun to wake up to! Some of our group relived the Christchurch earthquakes the first time a train went by in the night...

Outdoor activities included playing in the snow at Turoa; walks off Mountain Rd on the Ohakune side to the Mangawhero Falls and also Waitonga Falls where the children learned about stinkwood and mistletoe; a walk on the old Coach Road to the fabulous historically restored Hapuawhenua Viaduct where we saw a tomtit plus tall maire, rimu, miro and matai. Ali Beath from DOC gave us an excellent presentation on the nationally endangered whio (blue duck) one night. She brought a stuffed whio and



The new F&B Ruapehu Lodge near Whakapapa Village.

a DOC 200 trap plus a frozen stoat, weasel and ferret. We had a treasure hunt and quiz on another night. The highlight for the children was using the telemetric tracking equipment – an excellent addition to hide and seek!

All families experienced the thrill of skiing on the day we left the lodge, but the best weather was on the day we arrived and the day after we had left. We'll be back next September/October hols!

– Margi Keys



Greg the takahe was one of the highlights of our visit.

Tiritiri Matangi Island – where nature thrives

The last weekend in September saw a group of Forest & Bird and KCC members heading over to Tiritiri Matangi for pure bliss. We left Gulf Harbour under a grey sky, but not long after we arrived on the island, the wind blew the clouds away to allow us to enjoy a fantastic time in the sun.

The replanted bush is now very well established and it was lovely to walk along the tracks exploring the beautiful scenery and spend time at the various feeding stations and water baths watching hihi (stitchbird), saddleback/tieke, tui and bellbird come and go. Some of the highlights included sightings of the recently-released rifleman, the amazing-sounding kokako, and

of course, a visit into our bunkhouse by Greg the takahe!

Saturday evening we all headed off on a night walk. We hadn't been out for long when, as we rounded a corner, came the best treat of all... little spotted kiwi! It remained just off the path, but in clear view, allowing us to admire it before it disappeared into the bush. As we continued on down towards the sea, we had to step off the path and wait patiently whilst two comical-looking little blue penguins waddled past us up to their burrows! We could hear the kiwis and moreporks calling as we headed back for a nightcap and an excited exchange of stories about how lucky we had been.

– Sarah Noble

Wanted: New Treasurer

A volunteer is required to take over as branch Treasurer. Our treasurer for the past two years is stepping down and a replacement is required. This is an excellent opportunity for someone with basic bookkeeping skills to make a real contribution to North Shore Forest and Bird. There is time for a full handover to be facilitated, as the outgoing treasurer will oversee the end-of-year accounts which are submitted to Head Office in February. Interested? Please contact Alan Emmerson on 473 2216; emmo66@xtra.co.nz.

URGENT: ELECTRONIC FACILITATOR NEEDED

Person with reasonable computer skills to take over the branch email distribution job. This involves keeping and maintaining the branch membership email contact list. Three times a year the list is updated by Head Office in Wellington. The responsible person will email the branch newsletter, Habitat, to those members preferring it digitally. Other notices to members are sent out from time to time and Habitat Extra is also sent out three times a year. Someone is needed by the end of November to replace the incumbent, Nick Keenleyside. Nick will coach the new person into the job. This is an important position and an opportunity to do your bit for conservation! Contact Alan Emmerson on 473 2216; emmo66@xtra.co.nz.

Send newsletter contributions to Victor Meyer, PO Box 33873, Takapuna or email victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz

Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society *Tiaki Taiao*, North Shore Branch

PO Box 33-873, Takapuna, New Zealand | www.forestandbird.org.nz | northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

The Committee 2010/11

ALAN EMMERSON	–	Chairman	473 2216
RICHARD HURSTHOUSE	–	Deputy Chairman	410 5339
JOCELYN SANDERS	–	Secretary	479 2107
LAUREN POWER	–	Treasurer	478 6103
LIZ ANSTEY	–	Committee	480 1545
ANNE DENNY	–	Committee	480 5570
CEDRIC HAY	–	Committee	410 5977
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SARAH NOBLE	–	Committee	475 6338
CLAIRE STEVENS	–	Committee	419 1233
HELENE WILLIS	–	Committee	480 8851
BRIAN GANNON	–	KCC	443 2479
KAREN WEALLEANS	–	Guest speakers	410 1995
LINDA JOHNSON	–	Habitat deliveries	413 9851
NICK KEENLEYSIDE	–	Electronic distribution	info@fragileworld.org.nz

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

VICTOR MEYER, email: victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz

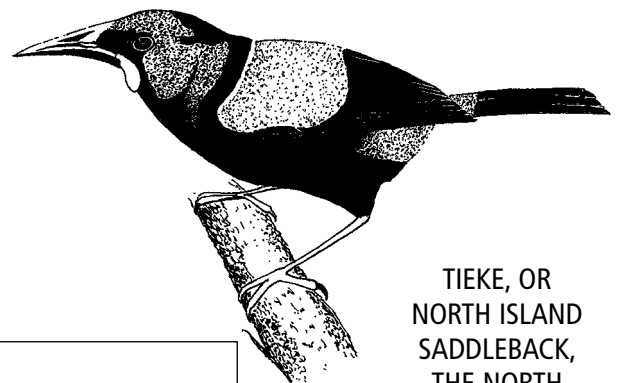
BIRD RESCUE

SYLVIA 478 8819

Remember if you are concerned about any conservation problems in your area, get in touch with Alan or Richard.

Habitat

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH SHORE BRANCH
ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY



TIEKE, OR
NORTH ISLAND
SADDLEBACK,
THE NORTH
SHORE BRANCH
EMBLEM



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NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY *TIAKI TAIAO*, NORTH SHORE BRANCH

WHAT'S ON

ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS

Public meetings take place on the first Monday of every month (excl January).

VENUE: Takapuna Senior Citizens' Hall, The Strand (behind Takapuna Library).

TIME: 7.45pm.

ADMISSION: Donation / koha (please give generously).

We'd like to see you there!

DECEMBER Monday 6th

'Living and working on the Antarctic Peninsula – tales of a Marine Research Assistant.' Andrew Miller (NIWA Marine Ecology Technician) will give a talk about some of the science projects he was involved in whilst on a 2-year tour of duty at the UK's Rothera Research Station on the Antarctic Peninsula. These include recording the behaviour of Antarctic cod, studying the impact of iceberg scouring on natural communities, and routine oceanographic work. This evening is also our Christmas meeting so please bring a festive delight to share for supper!

FEBRUARY Monday 7th

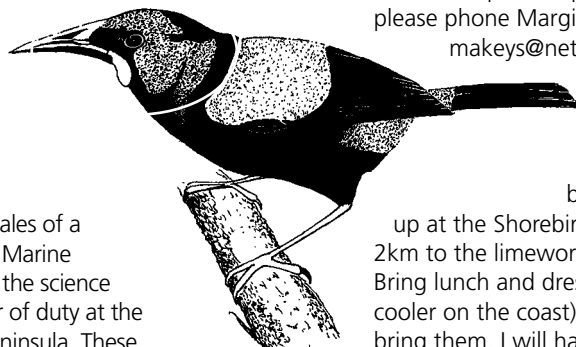
'How to use native plants in the garden to create habitat' by Karen Wealleans (B.Hort.Sc.). Karen will present case studies of urban gardens to show how planting, even on small sites, can attract birds and wildlife. She will also give examples of the way native plants can be used and discuss species which grow successfully, but are not commonly found in gardens. Karen has been working in the landscape industry for many years and has a special interest in urban native planting and revegetation.

MARCH Monday 7th

'The missing F-word – Flora, Fauna, and FUNGI' by Peter Buchanan of Landcare Res. Peter holds a PhD in Botany from the University of Auckland and leads the Fungal and Bacterial Systematics Intermediate Outcome (OI). He is mutually responsible for the NZ Fungal Network, NZ Plant Conservation Network, and collaborations on forest biosecurity with MAF. Peter is a key organiser of BioBlitz and the NZ Fungal Foray. Don't miss this presentation!

APRIL Monday 4th

'Wetapunga recovery – the giants of the weta world are on the move' by Chris Green of DOC. Wetapunga is the largest species of giant weta found in New Zealand and, until recently, was only found on Hauturu (Little Barrier Island). Chris, an entomologist, has been monitoring the wetapunga populations since kiore were eradicated in 2004. He will share how the numbers have changed on the island and also describe the captive breeding programme through which populations on Motuora and Tiritiri Matangi islands are going to be established.



February, Sunday 27th.

GILLS RESERVE (ALBANY) WALKABOUT, 9.30am. Meet by the bridge at the bottom of Gills Rd, off SH 17. There is off-street parking at one of the businesses nearby. The track follows the true right bank of Lucas Creek, then rises steeply through mature bush which includes taraire and mixed podocarps. Bookings are essential so please phone Marge Keys on 443 6919 or email makeys@nettel.net.nz.

March, Saturday 26th.

MIRANDA – FAREWELL THE BIRDS, 10.30am (to be confirmed). We will meet

up at the Shorebird Centre and walk approx. 2km to the limeworks/shellbanks for high tide. Bring lunch and dress for the weather (it is usually cooler on the coast). If you have binoculars, do bring them. I will have a couple of telescopes for close viewing of the birds and everyone will have

a turn looking through these. Stout shoes are recommended (boots not normally required). For more information go to www.miranda-shorebird.org.nz. Register with Alan Emmerson on 473 2216 or emmo66@xtra.co.nz.

April, Fri/Sat/Sun 15-17th. RUAPEHU LODGE WEEKEND TRIP.

A trip is planned to the new F&B lodge near Whakapapa Village, Mt Ruapehu. Details have yet to be finalised but the plan is to travel down on the Friday, probably by car-pooling. There will be a variety of activities to choose from, e.g. hill walking, botanising, birding. Numbers are limited and costs (to be confirmed) are likely to be approx. \$90-100 per person (own bedding & self-catering). Please register your interest with Alan Emmerson on 473 2216 or emmo66@xtra.co.nz.

TUFF CRATER WORK DAYS (Sat 9am)

Tuff Crater is our key restoration project and we need your help! Work varies from light weeding to more energetic tasks. Volunteer work days are pencilled in for:

Dec 11 | Feb 12 | Mar 12 | Apr 9

To be on the notification list for Tuff work days please email northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz or phone Richard (410 5339) or Anne (480 5570).



Remember to buy a F&B Gift Membership for a special person this Christmas!