

~~~ The 'Lucky 13' Issue ~~~

Forest and Bird Sparks Regional EcoPark Concept

The regional EcoPark concept recently reported in the media has solid roots in the Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird, with the idea originally put to council by current and past Branch chairs, Donald Kerr and Viv McGlynn.

This idea took an important step forward in autumn 2004 with the delivery of a scoping report commissioned by Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird and by PNCC. Don Ravine, a longtime area resident, DoC employee, and ecology expert in the lower North Island conducted the research and wrote the scoping report in March 2004.

The report developed feasibility estimates for mainland island options for the Turitea Water Reserve, including open and fenced bird sanctuary options.

The EcoPark Concept is currently in negotiations between Mighty River Power, PNCC staff, and city councillors. Manawatu Branch committee is maintaining an active interest in the concept going forward, working to ensure that the park will come to fruition and be managed in a way that maximizes nature conservation and environmental education values for the region.

This goal is firmly in line with the mandate provided by Forest and Bird since 1923~ to preserve, protect, and promote New Zealand wildlife and wild places.

A copy of the scoping report is available for viewing, contact Donald Kerr on 952 7001 ext. 70836 for more information about Forest and Bird's involvement with the EcoPark, or come along to a branch night to hear a bit more about it!

Nice One!

Congratulation to Hannah Peek of Palmerston North, winner of the Word Match contest in the August newsletter. For her efforts & luck, Hannah wins a South Island High Country Poster ~ the "Six Pack of Parks".

This months contest features rivers and streams of the Western Ranges. Winner receives a 2006 Conservation calendar from Forest and Bird.

Sort Christmas Early this Year!

FaB 2006 Conservation Calendar and Diary on Sale NOW!

This sale is the annual fundraiser for Manawatu Forest and Bird~ a great chance to actively support nature conservation.

see page 5 for your price and purchase details.

Conservationist's Calendar

- 11 Oct: *Glorious Geckos!!!*, 7:30 at Te Manawa
- 15 Oct: *Excursion to the Ohingaiti Concretions*, near Hunterville.
- 8 Nov: *Manawatu Estuary Goes International*. 7:30 p.m. at Te Manawa.
- 12 Nov: *Keebles Bush Work Party*, P North
- 13 Nov: *Breakfast with the Birds @ Manawatu Estuary*
- *More events pgs 9 & 10*

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Trustpower 2005 Community Award goes to Manawatu FaB

TrustPower sponsors the annual Community Awards in the Manawatu, recognizing local volunteer groups that make a substantial positive contribution to community spirit and well being.

This year, Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird was honoured to be recognized in the Heritage and Environment Category of the awards as the runner-up, behind the Urban Care group.

Whilst Trustpower is locally investing in environmentally friendly energy from windfarms, elsewhere (see story below) Trustpower's hydro plans clearly fail Forest and Bird standards, so the Branch had reservations on accepting the award.

As a compromise, the \$250 prize that came with the TrustPower award will be used to further

conservation advocacy in the Upper South Island, where TrustPower is currently undertaking to establish a major hydro project that, if consent is gained, will quench the Wairau River.

The Wairau is one of the last intact braided rivers in the world, home to many rare plants and animals endemic to New Zealand.

The Manawatu Branch committee has taken the decision to donate the \$250 to the Marlborough Branch to oppose this hydro scheme, which is actively supported by the Save the Wairau Campaign Marlborough Branch of Forest and Bird, and by Forest and Bird Field Officers and staff in Head Office. More information on the Save the Wairau campaign is online at www.livingrivers.org.nz

Trustpower Seeks Consent to Ruin Braided River

In a marked contrast to local efforts by TrustPower to present itself as a friend of the environment, they have recently applied for consent to quench one of the last braided river systems in the world- the Wairau River in Marlborough. This scheme, which has support from the horticultural industry but which would devastate the natural value of the river, harks back to the ill-conceived Project Aqua which recently was stopped at the last hurdle.

The TrustPower proposal will destroy a unique natural feature of NZ, in exchange for a low efficiency power scheme. As such, Forest and Bird is opposed to the scheme.

The Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird, having received \$250 from TrustPower Community Awards, will donate that fund directly to the Save The Wairau Campaign.

The text of a media release from head office follows, you can find out more by contacting Debs Martin, our excellent Forest and Bird South Island Field Officer based in Nelson, on 03 545 822 or

027 684 0599. You can also look online for more info at website www.livingrivers.org.nz or ring Brent on 357 6962.

MEDIA RELEASE

8 Sept 2005

"TrustPower's plans for the Wairau would see the ruin of one of the world's last and finest intact braided river systems," said Forest and Bird's Regional Field Officer, Debs Martin, as the largest resource consent application ever seen in the District is publicly notified today. "The Wairau River is internationally important. New Zealand is one of only three places in the world to have extensive braided river systems," said Ms Martin.

Our NZ braided rivers have the highest rate of endemism. The Wairau River is no exception, with over 20 native fish species and specialised river birds. "Supported by scientific evidence, Forest and Bird is seeking Ramsar status over the Wairau River, giving it the international recognition that it deserves," said Ms Martin.

"Braided river systems rely on highly variable flow regimes, not constant minimum flows, to maintain their natural character and productivity. TrustPower's proposals would destroy that natural character. Fur-

thermore their statements that all effects are 'minor' or 'less than minor' mislead the public and contradict their own reports," said Ms Martin.

"TrustPower's application dismisses the impacts on the largest breeding population of the endangered black-fronted terns in New Zealand. Scientific research shows these birds are already under threat from predation and early studies indicate that lowered flows in the river both increase predation and remove valuable food production. New Zealand has a responsibility to ensure the ongoing survival of our endangered species. Further loss of braided river habitat is unacceptable."

"Unfortunately the Council are yet to receive advice from their experts on whether or not the application is complete. Our own preliminary analysis of the application during consultation shows important information may be missing," said Ms Martin. "The public should be aware that the scheme may affect them, especially if they use the lower Wairau or nearby groundwater."

"The answer to our electricity generation issues is not more hydro power on braided rivers. The natural variable flows of braided rivers combined with low winter flows make generation inefficient when peak power is in demand."

Manawatu Forest & Bird

Contacts '05/'06

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Secretary & News:	Brent Barrett	357 6962
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Branch Programme:	Viv McGlynn	353 2305
Tertiary Coordinator:	Emily Weeks	354 0922
Environmental Advocacy:	Joanna McVeagh	356 6054
Calendar and Diary Sales:	Kris Grabow	027

All members and the public are invited to all branch activities and meetings. Branch nights are the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 7:30 p.m. at Te Manawa, Main Street West, Palmerston North~ everyone is welcome, and a gold coin donation is very much appreciated!

You can always reach us with an email to forestbirdmanawatu@hotmail.com, or write to us at PO Box 961, Palmerston North.

The national Forest and Bird website www.forestandbird.org.nz and the website www.environmentnetwork.org.nz are also good sources of information.

You may ring our head office: 0800 200 064.

My favourite NZ plant is....

Passionate about plants? You are now able to cast votes for your favourite plant via the website of the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (www.nzpcn.org.nz). Unlike MMP, this voting system allows people to vote up to 5 times. Please register your votes and encourage your friends, family, and colleagues to vote also.

This system will enable us to determine New Zealand's favourite plant but also to establish any regional variation in what is the top species. Spot prizes will be awarded in December to people drawn out of the pool of voters.

Voting is open till 30th November 2005. Spread the word. Vote online or send your vote to ~

New Zealand Plant Conservation Network

P.O. Box 16-102, Wellington, NZ

www.nzpcn.org.nz

STOP PRESS!

GreenPeace

DeepSea Roadshow

firsthand narrative and footage from the Rainbow Warrior 2005 Tour of NZ

Space Is Limited: RSVP required to
0800 22 33 44

7:30pm

Thursday 13 October

UCOL Room 8202
(block 8, level 2, room 2)
Cnr King and Princess St
Palmerston North

Welcome!

A warm welcome to the summer's new Manawatu Forest and Bird members! We look forward to your joining us as we continue celebrating and protecting New Zealand's wildlife & wild places.

- ∞ *Nicole Mistal*
- ∞ *Allie Tahuaroa*
- ∞ *Todd Simmiss*



Get Wasted!

Urgently Wanted: Your submission on PNCC Solid Waste Strategy.

Adoption of a Zero Waste philosophy will seriously reduce Palmerston North's wasted rubbish - and it will help neighbouring communities to reduce their waste.

Please put in a submission to PN City Council before 14 October. For more information contact Donald Kerr 952 7001 ext 70836.

Armchair Wildlife Tours!

Ye gads! Free travel?! Come along to one of our next three branch nights and experience the wonders of the natural world from the comfort of Te Manawa's luxurious lecture hall.

Yes indeed, for scarcely the effort require to stir your soul to start the car, you can now travel by picture and story throughout New Zealand, and even into the heart of Africa~ experiencing sights and wonders of the natural world as close as you would ever dare, so

See You There!

Manawatu Forest & Bird presents



© Jason Elsworth
www.jasonelsworth.co.nz

Manawatu Estuary The Ramsar Connection

~ Joan Leckie ~

Manawatu Estuary Trust &
Forest and Bird Distinguished Life Member

7:30 pm Tuesday, 8 November



Meeting at Te Manawa
Main Street West
Palmerston North

"Everyone's Invited"

A gold coin donation is appreciated

Manawatu Forest & Bird presents



'Glorious Geckos!'

~ Michael Kean ~

Our Local NZ Native Lizard Expert

7:30 pm Tuesday, 11 October



Meeting at Te Manawa
Main Street West
Palmerston North

"Everyone's Invited"

A gold coin donation is appreciated

forestandbird.org.nz

Manawatu Forest & Bird presents



'Tanzania National Parks'

~ Nigel Perks ~

Wildlife Travel Guide

7:30 pm Tuesday, 13 December

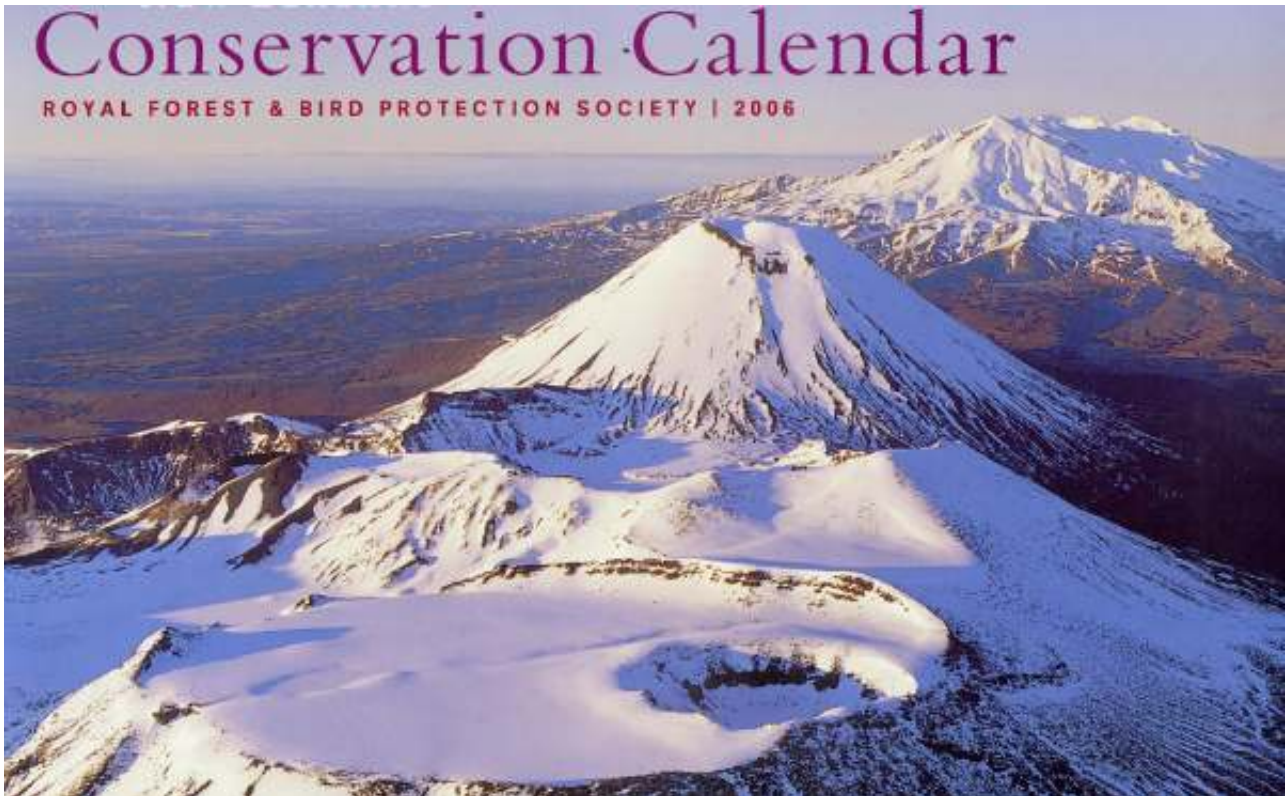


Meeting at Te Manawa
Main Street West
Palmerston North

"Everyone's Invited"

A gold coin donation is appreciated

2006 Craig Potton Conservation Calendars and Diaries for Sale



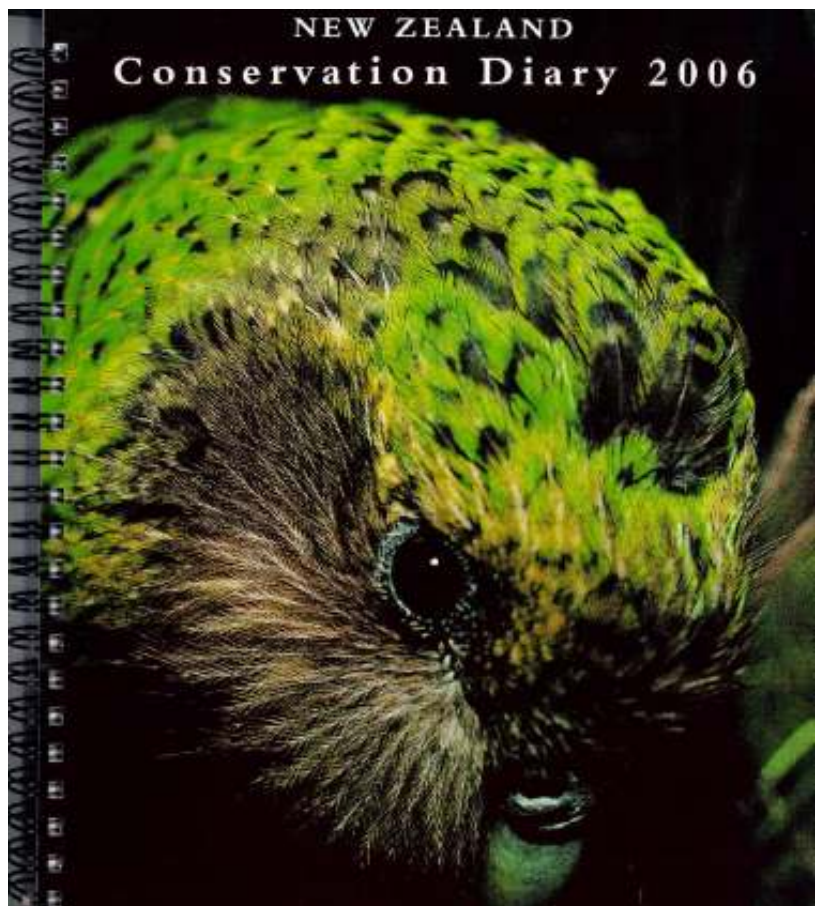
This is the **annual fund-raiser for the Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird**, providing resources for local conservation work, the Branch outings programme, and local advocacy.

Diaries are **full-colour** week-at-glance format, spiral bound. Calendars are 12 month. Both are **high quality**.

A **preferred Christmas gift** in NZ and overseas, you'll also want to keep one for yourself!

Calendars are **\$13**, diaries are **\$22** each.

Contact **Jo (356 6054)** or **Kris (027 460 1047)** to reserve your order today~ the supply is limited!



Local Wetland Gains International Recognition

21 September 2005

The Horowhenua Branch of Forest and Bird and the Manawatu Estuary Trust are delighted that the Manawatu River Estuary has been accorded international status as a Wetland of Significance, the sixth such site in New Zealand.



Chairwoman Joan Leckie says she's confident everyone in the region will be very pleased with the news that the Estuary has been listed under the RAMSAR Convention, a global treaty on wetland protection.

"Internationally people are more familiar with RAMSAR sites than we are here in New Zealand, and tourists will now know that the Manawatu Estuary is a significant area to visit. There are currently 1459 RAMSAR Sites throughout the world, in 129 countries. Foxton is already a successful tourist town, and the new Manawatu Estuary designation will add to its attractions and benefit the local economy."

"Wetlands perform very valuable ecological functions. They are the kidneys of our waterways, cleansing and purify-

ing the waters. They provide food in the form of a vast array of insects and invertebrates for a wide range of birds, many of which are endangered in New Zealand. Wetlands provide space for the rivers to spread out in times of flood, helping to prevent erosion. Over 90% of our wetlands have been

drained to create farmland in this country which makes the remaining ones more precious. Wetlands are also among the most beautiful places on earth."

Mrs Leckie said the RAMSAR status allows this wetland to be valued and protected but still used wisely for

recreation by all the different groups which enjoy the estuary: the bird watchers, the boaties, the fishermen, and those taking their daily exer-

it. A big event is planned in Horowhenua for March 2006 to celebrate this wonderful wetland.

"Special thanks go to the Department of Conservation, Horowhenua District Council, Horizons Regional Council, Darren Hughes MP for Otaki, iwi, farmers and local people, for their help and support of the project over the past three years."

"The challenge now is to manage the estuary sustainably and maintain its natural state. There are few other remaining wetlands of this size and quality in this part of the North Island. We need to ensure it remains intact for future generations."

Contact: Joan Leckie, Secretary Horowhenua Branch of Forest & Bird; Chairwoman, Manawatu Estuary Trust, 06 368 1277, or 021 683 277



cise. The Estuary's special international status must now be reflected in the local bylaws. It is envisioned that all local people would recognise that it is a treasure and help to look after

For those of you who are keen, Forest and Bird is running a spring trip to the Estuary for Breakfast with the Birds, Saturday 13 November. Details on the events page.

Spring Activities Report

Work Party At Sixtus Lodge

13 August

Sixtus Lodge Trust Board says a very big thank you to the 12 people who came to the Lodge and worked to plant 150 native trees, to release small native plants from long grass, and to pot up 75 seedlings for future plantings.

Sixtus Lodge is a nature retreat and environmental education facility at the foot of the Western Ruahine Ranges, located North and East of Kimbolton.

A Robin posing in Bushy Park.
Photo: Will Pearson



Excursion to Bushy Park

Saturday 3 September

What a beau day~ right in the midst of the fine weather we had a winter's end. Forest and Bird members from Feilding and Palmerston North teamed up with a few carloads from the Horowhenua Branch of Forest and Bird, and with a sprinkling of Forest and Bird members from Taranaki as well!

Bushy Park Homestead was transformed into Forest and Bird Central for the morning, with over 40 keen conservationists crowding in to hear Allan Anderson of Bushy Park Trust explain the features of the newly installed fence, and vision for the Park as a 'kiwi crèche'.

The afternoon had a good walk around the property for first hand inspection of the new Xcluder pest-proof fence, with a bit of botanizing sprinkled in for good measure. The bird life was a bit quieter than we had hoped, perhaps due to the recent poison drops, but kereru and robins (photo left) were still around in good numbers. With the mammalian predators gone for good, Bushy Park will be a real birder's bonanza in future.

The trip home was a quick one, with just a brief stop for the very best ice cream in Wanganui!

Waituna West Walk

Saturday 10 September

Colin Ogle, NZ native plant expert from Wanganui, lent his botanical expertise on the day, spent exploring some of the little know bush between Feilding and Hunterville.

On first acquaintance, the Manawatu looks quite bare of forest cover. But if you have a window seat while flying to Auckland suddenly you realise theres an accumulation of forest in the gullies that you don't see from the car. These are the gullies that dissect the pastoral terraces. Many farmers left the bush recognizing those slopes weren't as profitable as the flats, or that they provided shelter for their stock.

The piece we explored is part of an extensive gully system, mostly fenced, and some of it covenanted – ie legal protection for the future. Such gullies provide many habitats for plants and welcome food and roosting/breeding sites for birds.

This particular area had a plateau so it was easy walking.....tawa, titoki and maire were common with rimu and matai interspersed. The lack of rain was certainly evident with many of the smaller trees showing signs of stress – mahoe and some larger leaved coprosmas were wilting – in September!

Colin Ogle peering into a botanical treasure during the Waituna west walk. Photo Chris Thomasen.



We appreciate being given access by the farmer to this area.

Work Party at Oxenham's Bush

Saturday 17 September

Local Forest and Bird members joined Hugh Oxenham in the Kahuterawa Valley to plant native trees.

The sizable area of old-growth native forest, together with neighbouring grass paddock of another was recently signed off as a Queen Elizabeth II National Trust covenant earlier this year. By covenanting the whole of the title, Hugh has preserved the existing forest remnant and effectively promised to reforest the remainder of the property - a large task that he has almost single-handedly undertaken, with great success.

Five year old trees are now well established in the previously grazed paddock, and thousands are being added every year. Just to illustrate Hugh's enthusiasm: The 500 ecosourced plants that Peter van Esen (local QE2 representative) had pre-delivered for planting were already in the ground, so another couple of hundred plants were required on the day!

A highlight of the day included the planting of three Northern Rata seedlings grown by local conservationist Chris Thomasen using seed ecosourced from the Manawatu Gorge population, and funded by Project Crimson.

Oxenham Bush has seen more than planting as well~ branch members Pete Herbert and Kevin Wells have been poisoning possums to pro-

protect the forest - dominated by mature Northern Rata and Nikau palms. Invasive weed problems, including Ivy and Sycamore.

If you'd like see the forest close up, I'm sure we can arrange another visit with Hugh, in exchange for a little time caring for the trees, or perhaps

This work party we had a change of pace, with a chance to get some new stock-proof wire fence in place between the covenant areas for better

grazing management of weed seedlings over the next couple seasons. This has become a priority now that the adult sycamore seed source has been removed from the covenant area. Spare time was spent chasing down the odd Catoneaster bush around the margins, and spotting the rare ivy infestation.

On the Saturday night in the home-stead, Phil tuned up the old radio for us to listen to the cliffhanger election result after a delicious dinner.

Sunday saw the fence finished, and a tired happy lot of workers heading back home. We were Sally (trip organizer), Phil, Kevin, Phil, Hugh, Phil, Alan, Brent, and Julie~ representing both Manawatu and Rangitikei Branches of Forest and Bird. If you aren't named Phil~ you are more than welcome to come along in future~ just not sure we can have four people of the same name on one work party! Contact Sally on 359 4326 for more details. The next Te One workparty is on the last weekend of October.

Excursion to Totara Reserve and Te Apiti Windfarm

Sunday, 25 September

A blustery day ensured there was plenty of action at the windfarms above Ashhurst, with all turbines in action for a real display of nature's power captured for our convenience!

After a look around, we wandered up the valley to see a few of the walks in the Totara Reserve, and marvel at the massive trees still standing in the Valley floor. We enjoyed a pleasant lunch near Camp Rangī, did another short walk, and sauntered on back to Palmy.

We were hosted in our adventure by the Rangitikei Branch for the day~ providing us with a leisurely organizers job!

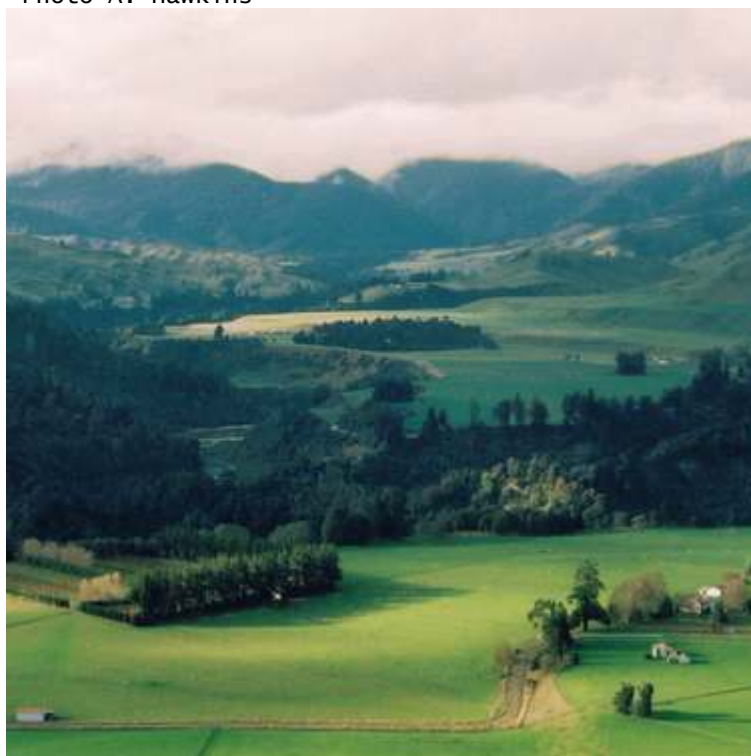
We were Hugh (trip leader), Diana, Heather, Phil, Brent, Joanna, Ian, Herbert, Sam, Sandy, Lucy, Ann, and Kheng and family.



Kris and Peter carefully planting a hand-reared and eco-sourced Northern Rata in the revegetation area at Oxenham's Bush. Photo Caroline Percy.

some possum culling if that's your thing! Contact Donald Kerr if you'd like more details about Oxenham's Bush.

Looking up the Kawhatau Valley, near Te One bush. Photo A. Hawkins



Te One Work Party

17/18 September

Up in the Kawhatau Valley (between Kimbolton and Taihape) sits the Te One native bush remnant, never logged and now well on the way to full protection by a QE2 covenant to ensure it is managed for conservation values into the future.

The bush remnant has been the subject of regular visits from Forest and Bird work parties, with the primary goal of sorting out

~ The Spring Events Calendar ~

Tuesday 11 October~ 7:30 p.m.

Branch Night at Te Manawa
Michael Kean~ “Geckos Galore!”

Mike Kean, a lizard enthusiast from Levin, will be presenting a talk on the adaptive radiation of the NZ geckos. It's believed that they all evolved from one species in existence 40 000 years ago. His interests have led him to develop a cd rom for schools and other institutions. Mike is a dynamic speaker, sure to give a most interesting presentation on the mysteries of these often overlooked part of New Zealand's natural heritage.

Saturday 15 October~ 9:00 a.m.

Excursion to the Ohingaiti Boulders
Trip Leader: Alan Hawkins 323 0583

Most of us will have heard of the famous Maoraki Boulders, those huge balls of rock which are such a tourist attraction on the South Island beach, but few people know about our local examples on the bank of the Rangitikei River near Ohingaiti. On Saturday, 15 October Alan will lead a trip to visit these geological curiosities~ set in a fascinating bush and swamp setting near the banks of the river.

Carpool will leave PNCC carpark at 9:00 a.m., via Feilding for 9:30, and away approximately one hours drive north to the walking track. From there a manageable 30 minute walk down to the river to view the boulders, and then back up to the cars for the ride home. The walk is suitable for families and children. Bring your camera, a lunch to eat at the Boulders, sturdy shoes, rain gear, and a smile. This is a trip to an amazing place in on our own back step~ an opportunity not to be missed.

Saturday / Sunday 29/30 October

Work Party at Te One, Kawhatau Valley
Trip Leader: Sally Pearce 359 4326

Springboarding on the great progress made last summer and over the winter's work parties, this trip will serve to finish off the last bits of fencing, and get stuck back into the sycamore and Catoneaster weeds about the place. Come along for the day or stay overnight in the homestead~ a bit of work and a bit of fun.

Te One is approximately one hours drive north of Palmerston North, set in a lovely part of the Kawhatau Valley between Kimbolton and Taihape, at the foot of the Ruahine Ranges. Call Sally for more details and to organize transport, tools etc.

Tuesday 8 November~ 7:30 p.m.

Branch Night at Te Manawa
Joan Leckie, Manawatu Estuary Trust
“Our Estuary and the Ramsar Connection”

Joan Leckie is a long standing member of the Levin Forest and Bird branch. She has over the years seen the potential of the Manawatu Estuary as a significant wetland for our region and has worked persistently with Forest and Bird Horowhenua Branch, and more recently the Manawatu Estuary Trust, to see it recognized as a wetland of international importance as well.

The mechanism for this is a Ramsar declaration of the wetland as being one of international importance, after the wetlands convention signed in Ramsar, Iran in the 1970s.

In July 2005, and after several years of hard labour, the Manawatu Estuary was accepted by the international committee.

Joan will talk about the special features of the estuary, and explain how the Manawatu Estuary became New Zealand's 6th Ramsar site.

Saturday 12 November~ 9:00 a.m.

Work Party at Keebles Bush, P North
Trip Leader: Peter van Essen 355 9076

Time for the spring clean out at Keeble's, just close to town between Massey and Linton. This bush remnant is a beautiful and tidy reserve, with some amazing specimen trees of the lowland bush. Unlike most places around Palmy, this reserve was never logged and never burnt over, and has been long set aside for study and conservation purposes. It still needs a bit of attention though, especially some invasive weeds needing cleaned away. Bring along sturdy shoes, gloves, plastic bags, and a lunch. Plan for a half days work and fun out amongst it; a carpool will leave the PNCC carpark in Church Street at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday 13 November

“Breakfast with the Birds”
at the Manawatu Estuary
Trip Leader: Joan Leckie 06 368 1277

Fancy a feast for your eyes, with breakfast thrown in? Then come along for a morning visit to the Manawatu Estuary, have a look through the spotting scope at the migratory birds, and enjoy a breakfast and tour while you're there!

This visit promises to be a fun chance to get to know your waders and seabirds, and to see the latest Ramsar wetland in New Zealand. Bring your binoculars, a camera, suitable footwear, and your big breakfast appetite! Ring Joan for details.

~continued next page

~ The Spring Events Calendar ~

Saturday / Sunday 10/11 December

Overnight at Pukepuke Lagoon
Trip Leader: Adie Leng 359 4734

Wetlands wonderful wetlands! The lagoon is one of the unique 'dune slack' lakes of the Manawatu coast, located just inland between Himitangi and Tangimoana beaches.

Come along for a great chance to see the lagoon wetlands in the morning and evening, the best time for bird and animal life. Accessible by permit from DoC, this is a great chance to visit this very special part of the Manawatu. Adie, our trip leader, has a real love for wetlands and will provide a great overview of the lagoon and it's marvellous 'sponge like' properties! Ring Adie for more details if you're keen to join this adventure.

Tuesday 13 December~ 7:30 p.m.

Branch Night at Te Manawa
Nigel Perks, Travel Guide
"Tanzanian National Parks"

Nigel is a real globe trotter, comfortable in Palmy and Africa alike. Here about travel and wildlife of the amazing African country of Tanzania, get some international wildlife safari tips, and see the most amazing animal life from the comfort of your very own chair at Te Manawa! Who could ask for more?

Top Dollar Paid for Branch Programme Ideas

Okay, actually we aren't paying anything to anyone, but it is your chance to freely put forward ideas for excursions and branch night topics or speakers for the Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird.

That's right~ planning for the Summer and Autumn Forest and Bird regional programme is currently underway. If you've been somewhere fascinating, or heard an excellent presentation on NZ conservation, we want to hear from you!

If you have an idea for an excursion, work party, or Branch night speaker, please contact Viv McGlynn on 353-2305. We are always keen to hear about local speakers with a flair for communicating a passion for New Zealand wildlife and wild places!



Six Pack Roadshow Visits the Manawatu

On 23 August, the Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird had the pleasure of hearing a presentation by Ms Eugenie Sage, our Society's South Island Field Officer, based in Christchurch.

Ms Sage is one of the foremost of conservation advocates in NZ, and is currently focused on protection of the South Island High Country.

Her presentation focused on a current proposal put forward by Federated Mountain Clubs and Forest and Bird, calling for the establishment of Six Parks (a.k.a. the Six Pack) in the eastern highlands of the South Island. The meeting was well attended, with over 80 in attendance, including a number of (hopefully!) future members of Forest and Bird.

The presentation featured spectacular slides, showing the range of native plants and birds of the high country. Even on the dry east side, it is clearly a place that is amazingly diverse and exhibiting high conservation value.

Ms. Sage also provided a summary of high country farming, pointing out the amazingly low rents charged to the lease holders (in some cases lease holders pay less rent for an entire high-country station than one would pay to rent an average in Wellington!).

There is also the concern the many of the stations are really more suited to recreation and/or retirement than to agriculture, meaning that some lease holders have exclusive lease rights to sub-

stantial areas whose primary value is to conservation or ecotourism, not pastoral agriculture.

Tenure review, a government process whereby high country lease holders can freehold the parts of their property deemed suitable for farming; and sell the remaining portion to the Crown, was also described by Ms. Sage.

Unfortunately, the scheme has tended to price the land purchased by the Crown (a.k.a. you) at 5X the price of the land that is purchased for freehold.

Given this inequity, it may in fact be better value to pursue conservation outcomes through alternative means, such as the Nature Heritage Fund.

Vote for the Environment

Yes the mighty Elections - by the time you read this we may actually have a result- and possibly even a government!

The question here is- on the day and the campaign and media frenzy preceding it- did the environment register?

Yes, and no....

Once again, Forest and Bird, working collectively with Greenpeace NZ and ECO, ran a 'Vote for the Environment' campaign. In a flurry of policy analysis, the main parties were ranked on 59 environmental criteria, with the Greens leading the pack, and ACT trailing severely.

But as we know, the election came down (and we do mean down) to just a few issues- and conservation and the environ-

ment wasn't often mentioned among them.

So the election was perhaps a non-event, at least for conservation and the environment.

The one notable mention of environment in the media was the untimely and large hiccup from the National Party on whether they were or were not planning to re-instate logging of public native forests on the West Coast.

Aside from that, conservation and environment didn't rate with the media, and party policy often ran quite thin when conservation was the topic.

On the plus side, over sixty people did attend the local Vote for the Environment Candidates Forum, organized by Environment Network Manawatu.

An unnamed member of Forest and Bird heckled with posters like "Bribe us too - More High Country Parks" and "Orange Roughy - Gone by lunchtime?".

Although we still don't know who will form the government, one thing is sure - we need to work smarter and harder as a society to get key environmental issues such as marine and freshwater conservation, mining, and the dawn chorus much higher up the media and political agenda.

There is clear indication that in 2006 and beyond, Forest and Bird branches will actively work with all members of Parliament, not just those in government, to increase their understanding of the basic requirements for protection of New Zealand wildlife and wild places into future generations.

Regional Meeting Sets Society Scene

A recent phenomena, the Forest and Bird regional meeting is a chance for those lucky souls saddled with Branch leadership responsibility to meet with their regional counterparts, and with Forest and Bird Society staff, to hear the latest Society perspectives and to nut out regional conservation priorities and strategies.

Saturday 24 September saw Donald (Manawatu chairperson and Society Executive member) and Brent (Secretary, Manawatu), off to Wanganui for the regional chinwag. Once there we were greeted by representatives from Southern Taranaki, Wanganui, Horowhenua, and the Hastings/Havelock North Branches.

Shortly thereafter Mike Britton (General Manager, Forest and Bird) and Kevin Hackwell (Conservation Manager, Forest and Bird) showed up from Wel-

lington, and the chins really started wagging!

The day started with an update on conservation and environmental education activities at Bushy Park. With the closing of the new fence, they are celebrating their first recruit to **Kiwi Kin-die**, where young kiwi collected by BNZ's Operation Nest Egg are to be raised in Bushy Park to the 'safe' weight of 1 kg, where they are considered likely to fend off a stoat attack.

Donald presented Joan Leckie with a floral bouquet in recognition of her stellar success in achieving international Ramsar wetland status for the Manawatu Estuary. That success represents hundreds of volunteer hours from Joan over the past several years, and is a real tribute to her vision as a conservationist.

Kevin Hackwell outlined progress on Living Rivers Campaign

and on South Island High Country and mining issues (all three areas have extensive overlap and are strong society priorities).

Mike Britton provided an overview of the strategic direction of the Society, a plan that is to be formally considered by Society Branch representatives in November.

A highlight of the meeting was the presentation by the enthusiastic lot from Hastings/Havelock North Branch, including **Dave Gore and Ian Noble**. The presentation focused on 'Forest and Bird Public Relations', and gave some great grassroots ideas for growing Forest and Bird's reputation as New Zealand's leading conservation organization.

One of Dave's quotes that sticks in the mind is '*you can buy your advertising, but you must earn your reputation*'.

The Freshwater WordSearch Contest

- **Theme:** Rivers and Streams West of the Ranges
- **Goal:** Find all the Waterways and enter the prizewinners!
- **Prize:** 'Craig Potton 2006 Conservation Calendar'



M J D S L Z T N I E N I H O K A M K K U
 N A J T X T E B D E W I N R I B A P R K
 M L U O U T A H E B K I U U Q H J A Z N
 Y A S N O F W V J E K I H N U C M Z F Q
 R O N Y G Z A X K A H A T T A O H R U J
 U T I G U A O P M H G I E I K T G W A K
 O T H E A Y T L A N U R V O G X A G E I
 Y L A M B P E U A U A D T E N N N P N W
 T J W W Z M A M K W L O N D O N A L O I
 J L H M A V T P A U M D S G D I G R A T
 G D X O N N U V A K R Q A Y T U K T G E
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 W Z K W K J K M S Q H R N U M A L W A O
 I U N A G N A T A M O U U G K K Q U M T
 L O I O I F D I N Q R J D I I O G W O F
 W H O V R C O U F V O Z E L D T Z K D A
 E R W Z L O R I A C P K V F X I E C Z K
 K O Y N K C U C D L I H N W L A W I E P
 W H A R E R O A O E T G R N W W R L S W
 R Q A W B G V L O J O C L A N U T I A W

Word Bank

- XBEEHIVE
- ___DUNDAS
- ___HOROPITO
- ___KAHUTERAWA
- ___KIWITEA
- ___LONDON
- ___MAKIEKIE
- ___MAKINO
- ___MAKOHINE
- ___MANAWATU
- ___MANGAHUIA
- ___MANGAONE
- ___MANGAPAPA
- ___MATANGANUI
- ___MAUNGATUKURANGI
- ___OROUA
- ___PATANUI
- ___POHANGINA
- ___RANGITIKEI
- ___STONY
- ___TEAWAOTEATUA
- ___TOKEAWA
- ___TOKOMARU
- ___WAITOKANUI
- ___WAITUNA
- ___WHAREROA

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Your Phone Number or eMail: _____

And The Fine Print:

Entry deadline **Saturday 5 November 2005**

Correct entries will go into a prize draw for a 2006 Conservation Calendar (value \$15).

Winners name to be drawn at the November branch night, 8 November 7:30 at Te Manawa.

Post entries to **Manawatu Forest and Bird, Attn: Prize Draw, PO Box 961, Palmerston North**

Winner's name to be published in the December / January edition of the Twig and Tweet Gazette