



FOREST AND BIRD SOCIETY MANAWATU BRANCH



NEWSLETTER

OCT-NOV 2003

Upcoming Local Events

October

14~ 7:45 pm Branch Meeting 

Get the latest updates on stitchbird conservation and research at one of New Zealand's premier nature reserves, TiriTiri Matangi. **Matt Lowe** of Massey University will be telling us all about it at the branch meeting on the Tuesday.



The **hihi** (stitchbird) will be the focus of our 14 October meeting.

18~ Trip to Mount Bruce 

Spend a pleasant spring Saturday in the Wairarapa and have a firsthand opportunity to spot the stitchbird plus heaps of other native birds and bush! Phone **Henk** today on 357-4877 for more details.

24-28~ Weekend at Te One 

Spend the Labour Weekend in the beautiful surrounds of the Kawhatau Valley helping rid this conservation area of invasive weeds while enjoying the natural heritage of New Zealand. Phone **Sally** on 359 4326 for more details.

~~ VISIT WITH AN EXPERT ~~

Discover what you and Forest and Bird Manawatu can do locally to protect our natural heritage! **Geoff Keey**, Forest and Bird's biosecurity officer will visit with us to share strategies and ideas on **21 October from 7:45 p.m.** at the Salvation Army complex corner of Church and Princess Streets, Palmerston North. Interested? Phone Donald on 952-7178 or email forestbirdmanawatu@hotmail.com to learn more.

November

11~ 7:45 pm Branch Meeting 

Sarah Gibbs, visiting from the Tongariro Natural History Society, promises you a fascinating presentation on the native fauna and flora of our Central Plateau.

15~ Paengaroa Reserve, Taihape 

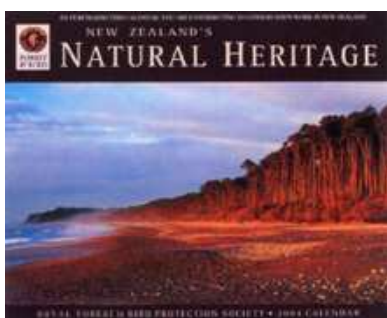
Local Forest and Bird member Viv Nicholls will be leading an informative trip to see what this lovely Scenic Reserve holds in store for the nature-lover in each of us. Phone **Viv** on 353-2305 for details today!

23~ Work Party at Keeble's Bush 

One of our most treasured local native bush fragments will be getting another round of tender loving care, come along and join the fun! Phone **Peter van Essen** on 355-9076 for additional information.

With twelve full-coloured, beautiful scenic images of New Zealand, the 2004 Forest and Bird calendar is here, *to get one today for just \$13, ring Sally on 359 4326.*

on sale now!



Take a look inside for

- ü Local **Conservation** News
- ü A letter from our **new chairman**
- ü **Spotlight Feature:**

John Ridgway Save the Royal
Albatross Voyage 2003-2004

BARBERS BUSH RESERVE

Text and photos contributed by **Chay Cotter**.

The Barbers Bush Reserve is a small forest fragment found within Palmerston North. Reclamation and restoration of this native bush area is my case study's global objective. To date, we've focused on weed removal and transplanting of native species during a series of 5 working bees, the first of which appeared on the Forest and Bird Manawatu Branch activity calendar on Saturday, 26 July. With ~20 volunteers on-site that day, we removed much of the wandering jew (*Tradescantia fluminensis*) and initiated other objectives.

In subsequent working bees, ~10 volunteers have shown commitment by their continued involvement. This core group is mostly nearby property owners, but participation by a couple of non-residents (Adie and Kev) and occasional help from Forest & Bird members has been a huge boost to the project. Thanks to this continued volunteer support, much has been done to improve the Reserve. Horizons' plant pest officer, Neil Mickleson, has visited the Reserve to talk about weed control and to demonstrate the poisoning of woolly nightshade (I challenge you to find any remaining!). We've even been able to transfer natives from neighbouring land (which is to be developed). In one area, about 60 m², sprayed blackberry has been taken out and we've planted natives, especially rangiora. To celebrate, we finished the last work party with tea and cake, care of Beryl and Chris.

~~Do Your Bit~~

save a tree and postage too!

if in the future you would prefer to receive a FULL COLOUR edition of this newsletter by email rather than the black and white paper copy, send a request to the newsletter editor at forestbirdmanawatu@hotmail.com



Beryl Raggett and Doug Armstrong are happy putting weeds in their place!

What does the future hold for Barbers Bush Reserve? Firstly, I'd like to get back into weeding, using hand and possibly spray weed-control. To ensure future planting, excursions will be made to eco-source local native seed. The involvement of nearby property owners has been appreciated, this local interest will hopefully lead to on-going reclamation and restoration after my study finishes.

Volunteers (you!) are always welcome at the Barbers Bush Reserve working bees, anybody who wants to be involved can contact a Forest and Bird committee member, or send an email Chay at s2014013@ipc.ac.nz for the latest details.

Ø Chay's next Barber's Bush working bee is **Saturday 4 Oct from 9 a.m.**



Chris Barber and Murray Sneddon digging up for transplanting.

Greetings

from the
Incoming Chair

Welcome! I trust you're enjoying the return of the kowhai blossom this spring as much as I am. With the encouragement of the local committee, I have accepted the role of Branch Chair. I thank them for their ongoing work, especially Brent and Rae who do both the secretarial tasks and the newsletter.

We are starting a new bird conservation project this year in the Manawatu. This project is a twice yearly regional bird survey, modelled on a successful UK conservation initiative, the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch (see <http://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch> for their details). Implementing a bird survey in the Manawatu will help us and local government map and monitor the success, or failure, of regional greening projects, and will create community interest in conservation and bird life. **Please do join in the first Manawatu bird survey on 18-19 Oct, you will find the survey form and all the details on page 4 of this newsletter.**

Our branch hosts a special workshop with Geoff Keey, Society biosecurity expert, on 21 Oct in Palmerston North at the Salvation Army Complex corner of Church and Princess Streets from 7:45 p.m.. At that time Geoff will update us on predator and pest problems, and train us in effective lobbying. Anyone can write a letter to a politician, and they all make a difference. See you there.

Nationally, kiwi are dying at 11 a day. They will be virtually extinct in our lifetimes outside of safe zones (mainland islands). We seek improved protection for kiwi nationwide. Locally, we continue to push for a mainland island to re-introduce kiwi in the Turitea Water Reserve. If you wish to make your opinion count locally, the draft management plan is open for submissions until 24 Oct (see details below). My vision is that from a well-protected core such as the Turitea catchment, the kiwi could re-establish in the Tararuas and once again be a natural feature of the lower North Island.

Donald Kerr

Chairman, Manawatu Branch RFBPS

p.s. feel free to contact me via email (d.kerr@ucol.ac.nz) or by phone on 952-7178



Local Opportunity! Submissions on Turitea Reserve Draft Management Plan

The current draft document and submission forms are available from <http://www.pncc.govt.nz/Council/> or by ringing the Palmerston North City Council. All submissions are due 24 October 2003.

National Opportunity! Queen's chain under threat: what will you do???

New Zealand's culture and recreation is based on access to the outdoors, whether it be in the mountains, countryside, on rivers and lakes or the coastline. The Minister for Rural Affairs, Hon Jim Sutton, has released the report, "**Walking Access in the New Zealand Outdoors**". The Minister is now seeking comment and feedback from the public on the report through a consultation process. To encourage comment and guide responses, the Minister has suggested some questions in a letter which he would like feedback. The report and letter are available online at <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/>, or alternatively by contacting MAF. Please direct all submissions or and any queries relating to this topic to: land.access@maf.govt.nz or send mail to Land Access Report, c/o Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, PO Box 2526, WELLINGTON. ***Please provide all submissions no later than 30 November 2003.***

Donald Kerr, Manawatu Forest and Bird Chairman, states that "while the report promotes the ethos of the Queen's chain, and has many positive ideas, it also includes a concept of "deeming access" which may in effect lead to the abolition of the Queen's chain. One effect might be to lose the right to take strips of conservation land along our waterways." Note that there will be series of official meetings on this important issue, including one **in Palmerston North on 22 October** to be hosted at the Sherwood (251-256 Featherston Street) from 7 to 9 p.m. ***Please make attendance at this forum a priority!*** For more information on this subject visit www.PublicAccessNewZealand.org today.

MANAWATU BIRDWATCH

18 – 19 October 2003



It's fun and it's easy

How to take part

All you need to do is spend **half an hour** watching the birds in your garden, local park or reserve or school. Then tell us the largest number of each species you see at any one time. (Not the total number you see, because some birds may visit the area you're watching several times in half an hour.) You only need to record the birds actually in your garden, park or school, not the ones flying over.

Thanks for taking part in the pilot Manawatu Birdwatch. We plan to run these biannually so we can see how our birds are doing.

Pictures of New Zealand birds can be found on the internet at:

<http://www.nzbirds.com/Gallery.html>

Conservation fact sheets can be found on the Kiwi Conservation Club website at:

<http://www.kcc.org.nz/factsheets.htm>

	Name of bird	Most present at any one time
Title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, etc)	Tui	.....
First name.....	Bell-bird/Korimako	.....
Surname	Fantail/Piwakawaka	.....
Address	Silver-eye/Tauhou	.....
.....	Kereru/Wood pigeon	.....
.....	Harrier Hawk/Kahu	.....
Date and time	Kaka	.....
Weather	Falcon/Karearea	.....
Are you a member of:	Kingfisher/Kotare	.....
Forest and Bird <input type="checkbox"/>	Grey Warbler/Riroriro	.....
Kiwi Conservation Club <input type="checkbox"/>	Whitehead/Popokatea	.....
How many people took part?	Morepork/Ruru	.....
Adults Children	Magpie	.....
Where did you do your birdwatch?	Blackbird	.....
Home garden <input type="checkbox"/> School grounds <input type="checkbox"/>	Starling	.....
Park <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Thrush	.....
If the survey was not at the address above	House Sparrow	.....
Address or location	Other bird species	.....
.....
Which area was your birdwatch within?	As well as seeing birds, are these present:	
Palmerston North City Council <input type="checkbox"/>	Weta <input type="checkbox"/>	
Manawatu District Council <input type="checkbox"/>	Gecko or skink <input type="checkbox"/>	
Any comments or improvements?	Morepork/Ruru (night calls) <input type="checkbox"/>	
We welcome your feedback.	Other birds you regularly see, but not today	.....

Please return your completed forms to:
 Manawatu Forest and Bird
 PO Box 961, Palmerston North.

You can also email results and comments to:
forestbirdmanawatu@hotmail.com

Or phone in your results to:
 Adie Leng, Environment Network
 Manawatu Co-ordinator at PNCC,
 3568199.

Our thanks goes to the UK Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for the idea, and assistance.

NOTE: Your name and address will only be used to mark the location of your survey, to query unusual results, and for those not receiving the Manawatu Forest and Bird newsletter, to let you know the results.



Spotlight Feature



John Ridgway Royal Albatross Voyage

Albatrosses are dying in their tens of thousands. Almost forever, these magnificent birds have flown up to 2,600 kilometres a day around the Southern Ocean. But soon they will no more. Illegal longline fishing will kill them all.

John Ridgway has decided not to just stand by and watch this happen. He's put together and funded an entirely **independent voyage round the world** to raise public awareness and prevent their needless slaughter. His volunteer crew, experts in their fields, are giving up to a year of their lives to help. Having departed Scotland on 25 July 2003, on-board the yacht English Rose V1, they are now nearing Capetown South Africa, where they will re-supply in mid-October prior to sailing to Melbourne and on to Wellington for arrival on 17 December.

New Zealand Forest and Bird member Brent Stephenson, currently based in Palmerston North at Massey University, will be joining the crew for the journey to the Falklands from Wellington Harbour, commencing 26 December 2003. If you were at our September meeting you had a first hand chance to meet Brent and to catch his enthusiasm for this project.

You can follow the voyage's daily progress and track their many bird-sightings from your own armchair at www.savethealbatross.org or by following the links at www.forest-bird.org.nz. The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand is the lead partner for the Wellington-Falklands leg of the voyage, which is meant to return to Scotland in July 2004 having sailed the Southern Ocean raising funds and awareness to save this magnificent species from extinction. In the words of John Ridgway, "This is the very most we can do. It may be the last chance for the albatross."



The yacht **English Rose V1**, flagship of the Save the Albatross Voyage 2003-2004 is pictured here near Scotland. She will be berthed in **Wellington** harbour from **17-26 December 2003** before setting sail toward the Falklands. Find more details, including the daily ship's log, many seabird sightings, and other unique adventures online at www.savethealbatross.org.



King of seabirds, the majestic albatross



On Sale Now!!! Show your colours today by ordering the eco-friendly, all cotton, 100% re-usable shopping bag with the **Forest and Bird logo!** For just **\$5**, these bags are a highly fashionable accessory for yourself or for the eco-minded family member or friend who may require that very unique gift item. Place your order today with Sally on 359-4326.