

~ Protecting NZs wildlife and wildplaces ~

Regional Programme Launched for '05/'06

You will have found in this newsletter mail-out a copy of the Forest and Bird programme, prepared with a major effort from Viv McGlynn and Alan Hawkins on the Manawatu committee. We trust you'll find a number of events on the calendar that you'll be interested in and able to join in on!

Most importantly, we want to thank those in the Manawatu Branch who've volunteered ideas for the 05/06 calendar, they are much appreciated and have made Viv and Alan's programming job heaps easier! In addition to the ideas, its hats off to those brave souls who've offered to lead excursions and work parties. Thank you each in advance.

Though similar to previous programmes, there are two notable changes:

Firstly, in a move that will increase your access to conservation activities and programming in the region, Manawatu Branch has gone to co-listing events among Forest and Bird branches in the region encompassing Horowhenua, Manawatu, Rangitikei, and Wanganui Branches.

With the support of each branch in the region, we are trialing this co-listing programme. We're keen to hear what you think about this, feel free to contact a committee member if you have an opinion to share!

Secondly, we are trialing a 6 month programme rather than the previous 12 month version, to accommodate the co-listing effort with other branches and to optimize the planning cycle.

Aotearoa Environmental Film Festival

Saturday 30 July
The Globe Theatre
Palmerston North
See pg 5 for details...

A Rata Planting in the Gorge to Celebrate Arbour Day

7 June 05. The senior class of Ballance School along with their Principal Sue Fuller, and a keen parent, met five members of Manawatu F&B (including 2 Tararua reps) and a team from DOC at the Ballance end of the Manawatu Gorge Scenic Reserve to celebrate Arbour Day/Week. Chris Thomasen has grown rata seed collected 5 years ago from a tree in the Manawatu Gorge with the support of Forest and Bird and Project Crimson. "Yes it's a long term project, but you have to start somewhere!" she says with a wry smile.

After a talk from Chris about the topdown way rata that grows and giving ideas how the school can grow their own, Vic intrigued them with his snail collection and the likely things they'll find if they look hard enough under logs. We then planted 2 trees in likely places (rata are quite particular about where they grow - if too dark they won't grow) and will hopefully thrive with the continued attention of Ballance school and some open space. It was a combined project with the school, F&B, DoC and Project Crimson all having a hand in somewhere - mainly in the soil! As Chris pointed out rata is our Christmas tree down this way - not the pohutukawa, and we should be planting it everywhere!

Conservationist's Calendar

- **14 June:** Branch night at Te Manawa, 7:30 pm.
- **25 June:** Trip to explore Kahuterawa native bush and streams
- **12 July:** Branch Night: at Te Manawa, 7:30 pm
- **16 July:** Trip to explore Round Bush
- **30 July:** Aotearoa Environmental Film Festival. @ The Globe Theatre, Palmerston North
- **August 1-7:** EnviroFest at Massey University celebrates NZ Conservation Week

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Manawatu Forest & Bird

Contacts '05/'06

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Annual Programme: Viv McGlynn	353 2305
Tertiary Coordinator: Emily Weeks	354 0922
Environmental Advocacy: TBC	
Membership Promotion: TBC	

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 great local branch website within www.environmentnetwork.org.nz are also good sources of information. You may ring our national office on 04 385 7374.

AGM ushers in new committee

The April AGM saw a revitalized branch committee elected and ready for conservation action this year in the Manawatu (and now Tararua as well!).

Leonora Pearson, our new Treasurer, is keen to get into the books and brings a fair bit of experience to the job. Emily Weeks is perfectly suited to the job of Tertiary Coordinator, being that she is an instructor at International Pacific College, and a PhD candidate at Massey University. Emily will bring a student focus to the committee, as we work to encourage more student participation in conservation action.

People for the positions of Environmental Advocacy Coordinator and Membership Promotion have yet to be confirmed. If you are a team-player suited to either opportunity, please ring Donald Kerr as he is keen to see these positions filled.

Val Cleghorn has offered to be the Tararua district representative, given the branch there has gone into recess recently. Val won't always come across for committee meetings, but will be in regular touch with the committee members and you (if you are lucky enough to be East of the ranges!).

As Donald indicated in his report to the AGM, the year ahead is full of opportunities and challenges, and with this team we look forward to meeting them on your behalf. Your ideas and input are highly valued as we focus on conservation projects in the region, please contact us with your ideas & questions.

~~~Quiz Night at the AGM~~~

Thanks to Jane and Pete for lending their quiz master expertise to the evening festivities, and to Chris for supplying all those tricky native plants to identify! Despite George freely giving answers to any team willing to listen, only one team emerged victorious after wading through the 40 questions including plants, bird sounds, and conservation knowledge areas.



winners of the Quiz Night at the AGM were the cheery team comprised of Rae, Alan, Leonora, Helen, and Michael. The medallion awarded is pictured below. Congratulations!



Chairman's Report to the branch AGM

At the last National Council meeting of Forest and Bird, a head office conservation staff member introduced me to the Minister of Conservation as Chair of one of the most active branches of Forest and Bird. I can't say if it is true - but if it is, then it is due to a highly motivated and active committee. I can't do them justice for all their efforts, but let me pick out some highlights.

Committee Focus

Jane Carver has thousands of native trees growing in a joint venture with UCOL, as well as leading numerous working parties. Secretary **Brent Barrett** has continued the high quality of our bimonthly newsletter and, with treasurer **Sally Pearce**, has overseen a \$4838 grant from the Square Trust for branch promotion, including our newsletter, publicity, and the very successful move to Te Manawa. **Vivienne McGlynn** (nee Nicholls) and **Alan Hawkins** have arranged a series of exciting and entertaining guest speakers in our new venue, and our regular trips. Not formally on committee, but **George Paton** (trips and publicity), **Lesley Paton** (sales table), and **Rae Nicholls** (supper, as well as fascinating newsletter stories, and less exciting folding) have all contributed to keep our branch nights and programme running smoothly, as has **Dave Hamilton** running Kapiti trips for us. **Peter Herbert** continued possum pest control in Oxenham Bush. **Dianne Haist** has worked hard in submissions and advocacy work. Several committee members met our local members of Parliament to put our case against changes to the Resource Management Act. **Vic Vercoe** has special thanks, who after many years overseeing branch nights by organizing seating, lighting, and equipment for speakers and guests, retired from committee. **Chris Thomassen** continues to grow and find homes for our Project Crimson Northern Rata. Her artwork features in the newsletter and will soon be seen on our new website, which **Caroline Percy** is working on. As well, **Caroline** and helpers have kept our junior

wing, the Kiwi Conservation Club, running smoothly, and **Caroline** joined **Massey Environmental Group** members handing out chocolate fish with the **Best Fish Guide** outside supermarkets.

These efforts are of course aided by many non-committee members who have put their time and effort in as well.

Several committee members are retiring but they won't be lost from environmental work. **Dianne** has joined the **PN City Environmental Trust**, **Jane** and **Peter** will continue planting and pest control work, **Sally** and her family are working towards a QEII covenant for Te One. I'll be sorry to see them go but I'm sure there will be some enthusiastic new faces after the AGM.

Highlights

- ∞ Membership growth
- ∞ Bimonthly newsletter
- ∞ Branch nights at Te Manawa, and all of our programme
- ∞ Blue Zealand and promotion of the Best Fish Guide
- ∞ RMA workshop
- ∞ Promotional days in the Esplanade and Square including native bird costumes
- ∞ Thousands of native trees ready for planting, and weed and pest control work
- ∞ Esplanade Nature Trail leaflet formal launch, with our own **Margaret Neilsen** and also Mayoral candidate (now Mayor) **Heather Tanguay**
- ∞ Don Ravine: Proposed Turitea Mainland Island - Scoping Study. The Palmerston North City Council funded Forest and Bird to carry out an ecological scoping report.

Challenges for the Year Ahead

- ∞ Membership drive
- ∞ Linkages with Tertiary students
- ∞ Vote for the Environment
- ∞ Progress on a Kiwi Sanctuary in the Turitea Water Reserve
- ∞ Maintaining the activity and profile of the Branch

Donald Kerr
Manawatu Branch Chair

~ The June and July Events Calendar ~

Tuesday 14 June~ 7:30 p.m.

Branch Night at Te Manawa
“Arghhh! there’s a Possum in my Bush!”

Is a possum polishing off your favourite bit of native bush? Has a stealthy stoat stolen a rare hatchling from a nest near you? Malcolm Todd of Horizons Regional Council has kindly agreed to give us the low-down when it comes to controlling those evil Animal Pests of our native birds and forests. Come along and hear what he has to say about putting animal pests where they belong!

Saturday 25 June~ 9:00 a.m.

Excursion in Kahuterawa Bush & Stream
Trip Leader: Vic Vercoe

If you’ve had the privilege of joining Vic’s trips before, you’ll know you’re in for a super treat this time as well! This walk will focus on the Back Track in the Kahuterawa Valley, but may ramble in a few other directions in that area. Vic’s keen eye and in-depth knowledge of everything from our tiny native orchids to our massive native snails makes this trip a sure bet for those with a love for the curious natural history of New Zealand.

Vic plans to leave at 9 a.m. from the PNCC car-park in Church Street across from NZ Post at 9:00 a.m. Carpooling will be available. Ensure you bring sturdy footwear, a hearty lunch, drinking water, a rain coat and all. Vic plans to be out until mid-afternoon so be prepared to spend a bit of time among the wonders of nature hidden in our own Kahuterawa Valley!

And the winner is...

Congratulations to **Olga Zeinert** of Palmerston North, winner of the Bird Word Search contest in the April newsletter. For her efforts, Olga won a CD-ROM telling the story of the Manawatu Estuary. Olga is a long-time member of our Branch and a life long conservation advocate.

This month’s contest features our beloved native trees, and the prize this time around is a Forest and Bird t-shirt of the winner’s choice. Good luck!

For those of you who don’t win, you can still get a genuine and high quality Forest and Bird t-shirt~ you’ll just have to pay, that’s all! Ring a committee member for details of the sizes and colours available for purchase. Price is just \$35.

Tuesday 12 July~ 7:30 p.m.

Branch Night at Te Manawa
Jill Rapson~ “Why Weed Karaka?”



Are some NZ native plants “weeds”? Perhaps- according to our July speaker. Jill Rapson is a NZ plant ecologist at Massey University who claims that Karaka, a NZ native plant, is raising increasing concern by its apparently invasive behaviour in the lower North Island. Come along to branch night and hear Jill and three of her research team describe a project which studies a range of vegetation types, with and without Karaka, to uncover the truth about this suspect plant. Their work also examines the spread of karaka plants in particular reserves, and attempts to evaluate its long-term impacts on forest regeneration. The aim is to decide if and when karaka should be “weeded”.

Come along to have a ‘new look’ at this familiar plant, and be prepared for a bit of debate!

Saturday 16 July~ 9:00 a.m.

Excursion to Round Bush
Trip Leader: Vic Vercoe

One can only be amazed when entering Round Bush, to see what the Foxton Coastal Plains held prior to land clearings. Visiting this unique bush remnant between Himatangi and Foxton promises to be a real treat, even in mid-winter! One of the fascinations will be a first hand look at all the Karaka that Jill and her students will have told us about at the branch night. Come prepared for the weather (Vic predicts bright sunny and calm- but do check the forecast & conditions on the day!), bring a lunch and thermos of tea, plus some sturdy shoes. Rumor is a couple of weeds may be lurking there as well, so a pair of gloves might also be useful!

A BIG thanks to the team at the Environment Network Manawatu for listing all Forest & Bird events on www.environmentnetwork.org.nz and for hosting the electronic copy of this newsletter there as well.

Southern Solutions Presents

Te Mauri o Papatuānuku

The Aotearoa Environmental Film Festival

Saturday 30 July

The Globe Theatre

Palmerston North

Doors Open @ 6 pm / Films @ 7 pm

*** full details at www.environmentnetwork.org.nz ***

tickets on sale now!

\$8 students and unwaged / \$12 waged

@ TICKETEK on 358-1186 or ticketek.co.nz

Our Principal Sponsors

- ∞ Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird
- ∞ Palmerston North City Environmental Trust
- ∞ KnowWaste~ the PN City Council's Zero Waste project

Festival Highlights

Kotahi Ao (NZ, 2005, 30 min)~ LIVE~ The Wellington-based, solution focused, global grassroots environmental film project!

Mardi Gras: Made in China (USA, 2004, 58 min)~ Exploring disconnects between producers and consumers in a global economy.

Good Riddance (AUS, 2004, 5 min)~ Animation highlights eco-friendly transport!

Tasmania's Forests (AUS, 2004, 10 min)~ Watch in horror as they chip their way through the heart of Tassies natural heritage.

Opo the Dolphin (NZ, 1956, 12 min)~ A lighthearted retro look at the friendly dolphin who captured New Zealand hearts in the 1950s. and so much more.... 3 hours of films all up!

Bushy Park sanctuary “closes” new predator fencing

04 May 2005

As Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird members, we can each take pride in this landmark achievement by our northern neighbors. Many of you would have heard the excellent talk by Allan Anderson at our branch night series last winter. Earlier this year, the Manawatu Branch also made a \$500 donation to the fence project. The following is excerpted from the excellent story in the 05 May edition of the Wanganui Chronicle:

Governor-General Dame Silvia Cartwright said she'll don her gumboots as a private citizen and be back to witness the successes made possible by the new \$807,000 Xcluder pest proof fence at Bushy Park, the completion of which was celebrated 4 May 2005.

A tui sung and kereru swooped overhead as the celebration unfolded at the sanctuary where Dame Silvia told the assembled crowd her diary note for the day had read she was to open a fence but when she thought about it she was there to close it.

“This is a fantastic accomplishment the project began in February 2003 and has involved hundreds of supporters. I congratulate you on the hard work,” she said.

“It will be a pest free Bushy Park and home to native flora and fauna including the kiwi, saddle-back, kereru and kokako. Now it is my very great pleasure to declare the pest free fence closed,” Dame Silvia said.

Bushy Park Trust chair Ian Brown said the occasion was an important one in the history of the

park and he paid tribute to project convener Allan Anderson whose determination and talking had secured sponsorship and funding for the fence. “He’s like a terrier once he gets hold of something,” Mr Brown said.

He said Mr Anderson’s passion for conservation went back a long way. “Allan joined the Forest and Bird when he was seven years old in 1947. Someone obviously twisted his arm then and that’s where he picked up the habit.”

Royal New Zealand Forest and Bird Society representative Keith Beautrais was one of the final speakers before Dame Silvia unveiled a plaque commemorating the completion of the fence. “This is a small place but it is truly a treasure,” he said.

~derived from the Wanganui Chronicle article originally published 5 May

Society’s Top Boss Talks Conservation

As you will have seen in the latest ‘Forest and Bird’ magazine, we have a new top boss for the Society, having recently hired Mike Britton as our General Manager.

On 20 April Mike spoke to the Wanganui Branch of Forest and Bird, and a couple of us from the Manawatu team tagged along to get the inside scoop (and put in our two cents worth!).

Mike has a strong track record of revitalizing conservation organizations in NZ, and it was clear he’s come to the job with a packet of great ideas to get Forest and Bird membership booming and active again! <<<Just to note, locally we are booming and active~ we had a 10% upward trend in membership last year!!!>>>.

On the night, Mike spoke clearly about the increasing complexity of the environmental issues we face

in the new millennium, and outlined strategies to tackle these. It’s not just about the kiwi anymore, but about the whole range of factors from loss of natural capital and ecosystem resilience, right through to climate change, that must be addressed. He reaffirmed commitment to the campaigns that Forest and Bird has underway. He also has a strong commitment to increased communication with branches and members, and building a membership with new vitality for the challenges ahead.

Mike also spent a great deal of time getting one-on-one feedback from those of us attending the meeting, and made it clear he wanted input from as many of us as possible.

If you’ve got an idea or opportunity to discuss~ give him a ring on 04 385 7374 (normal business hours).

Regional Spotlight Hits WEEDS

That’s right~ Horizons Regional Council is revamping their strategy on weeds! A few committee members have had a sneak peak and discussion of the proposed changes in direction, and find favourable changes in both strategy and tactics.

These include greater surveillance, site specific management emphasis, and an emphasis on environmental weeds (i.e. the ones that creep into our native bush!).

Two things YOU can do:

One: nominate a weed for inclusion in the Official Rogues Gallery of plant pests. This list is very important, as it determines what weeds get focused on first. Ring Horizons on 952 2800 to get a plant pest nomination form.

Two: keep an eye out for the draft policy document (probably July) and have a look through it with an eye toward making a submission.

5 Local Volunteers recognized at our AGM

This year's AGM included the launch of our branch volunteer service awards. Manawatu Branch Volunteer Service Awards are formal recognition of individuals noted for their hard work, enthusiasm and behind the scenes endeavours that keeps us ticking over - efforts that have a tendency to be overlooked, until now.

In our first granting of these awards, we salute the labours of five longstanding branch members. The award itself was created by Chris Thomasen, and is pictured here at right so you can see just how beautiful an award it is. It won't be possible to list everything they've done (or even remember it all)~ but here is a brief synopsis of their valuable contributions to conservation:



The Volunteer Service Award

Michael Greenwood Michael is deservedly recognised as a botanical expert. But his value to us is so much more because of his patience. He doesn't hesitate to answer, without reproach, when you ask him the name of a tree for the third time in five minutes! Michael's unstinting hard work at Keebles continues, and he has served many years on our branch committee.

Rae Nicholls Rae is enthusiastic in everything she does - organising trips and supper duties, folding newsletters. I was surprised when Rae took on the role of fundraising for Brent Stephen-son's albatross watching voyage - but the ample fruit of that was seen when Brent returned to report. Rae was also a much valued member of the local committee.

George Paton George through the years has worked behind the scenes keeping our newsletter delivery watertight, and for many years also took on the task of organising our entire branch programme, and the committee meetings never had to worry again. George is also active in advertising and leading trips.

Leslie Paton Leslie has supported George, but as well, she has single-handedly run our sales table on branch nights for many years. The regular income that she generates from this table keeps us in the black. The sales table is a great way to recycle conservationist treasures, and to pick up some fresh produce.

Vic Vercoe Vic has supported the branch in many ways, shepherding us through the branch nights at the Salvation Army for many years, running fantastic trips and spouting off about the natural history of orchids and snails, plus regularly turning out with enthusiasm for work parties!

Warm Welcome to our Tararua members!

Greetings and salutations all ye dwellers of the eastern side!

Over the last year, many Forest and Bird members in the Tararua district (Dannevirke to Pahiatua and surrounds) have migrated membership to the adjacent branches of our fine conservation society!

A number of you have chosen to fly this way, and you are each warmly welcomed to the Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird. We are most keen

to see your migration choice pay off in terms of an emphasis on conservation activities and conservation outcomes in your Tararua district, and in the not-too-distant future the launch of a revitalized and thriving Tararua Branch of Forest and Bird.

To aid this process, we have sought a volunteer from your area to represent your interests to the committee, and to be a first point of contact for all activities, interests, questions etc. that fall into the realm of the Tararua.

Val Cleghorn, who many of you east siderers and some of us west siderers will know, has kindly volunteered for this job! Val can be contacted on 06 376 5500 or at valandes@orcon.net.nz

We also note that Val has offered to retire from this position should someone else be anxious and willing to provide these important services. If that is of interest to you~ please get in touch with Val herself, or a branch committee member.

Oops!! WE GOT IT WRONG

and now we'll put it right! In our April newsletter on page 3, we recommended planting the Taiwan Cherry, *Prunus campanulata*, also known as the Formosan Cherry, to attract birds. **Oops!!!!**

Fleur Maseyk, Forest and Bird member and also a weeds expert at Horizons Regional Council caught us out on this one~ and was kind enough to put us right!

While this Cherry is good at attracting birds, it is also a BAD in that it can be a weed in some settings (like native bush remnants), and as such we are updating our recommendation to suggest that you do NOT plant this Cherry. Now we know!

Thank You to Unison Trust

Just as we are tuning the committee for the 05/06 year ahead, Unison Trust (representing Murphy's Law pub in Palmerston North) has again shown their generosity toward nature conservation outcomes by funding a profile raising campaign to the sum of \$3,000.00.

These funds are used by Manawatu Branch of Forest and Bird to underwrite the production and distribution of this newsletter (circ. ~500), meet the costs of branch night, and place display advertising in the Tribune newspaper. This grant follows on from a similar grant issued in 2004 to the branch, which was used to underwrite these necessities.

Royal Spoonbill Census a Success

With duck shooting season under way, it was expected that there would be plenty of birds sheltering in the Manawatu Estuary, and that was just what our group of about 15 bird-watchers found on Sunday 15th May.

It was a lovely calm sunny afternoon, with the tide coming in, and members of the Manawatu Estuary Trust (MET) spread out to cover as much of the estuary as they could. One group went by boat up the river to the Cut to count birds there as well. It was gratifying to find 45 Royal Spoonbills feeding in the shallows, but only 24 Wrybill were on the sand

flats. Sometimes up to 40 or 50 are running about on the sand. However, they did count 58 Banded Dotterel and 26 Caspian Terns.

Sheltering on the southern side of the estuary 200 Canada geese were counted along with 120 black swan.

At one stage these all flew off together and this was quite a sight. The numbers of these large birds seems to be increasing. Also there was a very large flock of Shoveller Ducks, and Grey Teal keeping well away from the shooters.

Three bar-tailed godwits were seen wintering over, and a variety of

oystercatchers, terns, pied stilts, and gulls, but the rarest bird spotted was one New Zealand Dotterel, an uncommon visitor to the Manawatu Estuary. These dotterel commonly stay further north.

All in all it was a very successful count, with 30 different species spotted. The MET plans to hold regular Bird Counts, and it will be interesting to compare the results over time.

~Joan Leckie
Manawatu Estuary Trust

Society's Top Dolphin Conservationist speaks in Palmerston North

On 17 May, Dr. Liz Slooten of Otago University addressed the Manawatu Branch of the Royal Society of New Zealand and guests at Te Manawa. Her subject was the 'Science and Conservation of Hector's Dolphins'.

Dr. Slooten has been a central figure in developing Forest and Bird's modern marine conservation focus, and is a long-standing member of the National Executive committee of Forest and Bird. This year she is honoured with a nomination to run for the vice-presidency of the national executive.

Hector's dolphins are found only in NZ, and all South and North Island populations are endangered. The North Island population, which centres at the mouth of the Manakau harbour, is in particularly desperate times, with only 111 individuals seen in a recent comprehensive aerial survey.

Dr. Slooten described her team's current studies which show that unfortunately the current marine protected areas at Banks Peninsula and Manukau harbour are not adequate to protect Hector's dolphins from facing local and possibly global extinction in the near future. This is a big wakeup call to stakeholders in this area!

Current protected areas end 4 nautical miles from shore~ over 50% of Hector's dolphin sightings in winter are outside that boundary.

One surprise was that clean green NZ is far behind international standards in terms of marine mammal protection legislation and practice.



Dr. Liz Slooten, one of New Zealand's top marine mammal science expert, and a long-standing and respected member of the National Executive Leadership of Forest and Bird.

Fortunately, there may be signs of this changing, with the recent sin-binning of the squid fleet to put observers on 100% of its boats, and announcement of more robust seabird protection measures.

Dr. Slooten's talk ended on a very positive note~ outlining a visionary marine mammal conser-

vation portfolio that would see Hector's dolphins population returned to their 1970 levels by the year 2050.

This plan calls for controls on trawling (in addition to the existing gillnet bans), increased compliance, new protected areas, and extension of current protection boundaries further out to sea.

Forest and Bird has a real opportunity to advocate for marine mammal protection in New Zealand. We are fortunate to have a world-class conservation scientist in our midst.

Editor's Note:

[[[Now if you are scratching your head and thinking 'why didn't I know about this BEFORE it happened?'~ it is because we need your email address! This excellent talk was one that unfortunately fell through the deadlines of this paper newsletter (we didn't find out about it until about 4 weeks after the April newsletter came out). So we were only able to get the word out to those of you that have given us your email address. If in future you don't want to miss out~ please send you address to us at forestbirdmanawatu@hotmail.com and we'll get you on the list. Email notices from the Branch are very infrequent and unobtrusive~ no junk mail here! And privacy is assured, as your email address is safeguarded and not disclosed to others.]]]

Feilding in Focus

Autumn has seen a real focus on Feilding by your local branch! Work parties, meetings, excursions, and advocacy have each played their part!

Work: On 16 April, a strong crew turned out to our annual clean-up day at Kitchener Park, putting a lot of things right, and seeing a lot more to be done!

The obvious ravages of the February floods have perhaps been repaired in many places, but the ecological shifts are only beginning to germinate! In the bush of Kitchener Park it is only now become apparent the huge influx of invasive plants (aka WEEDS!) that have come in on those floodwaters. In places, Old Man's Beard was seen at 20 seedling per square metre! Without proper control (see advocacy below) these will be a major weakening of this lowland bush remnant. Chris and Alan organized the work party, hats off to them for making the day a success!

Meetings: Our May meeting was held in Friendly Feilding, as is our tradition. This year local farmer Mark Carter spoke about his farm between Feilding and Halcombe, which is coming alive with native plant and birdlife. A quiet but direct sort, Mark described in some detail the work undertaken to put the property into shape over the past decade. A major block has been in regeneration since the '70s, and it is startling how speedy the native bush is at coming back! In 2000 that section was fenced to ensure stock exclusion and accelerate recovery of the natives. Mark and his partner Coby approach life in a holistic manner, farming in ways that are both profitable and friendly to the environment. A notable achievement is their home design which uses solar and wind to supply all the power requirements of the household. On farm,

they use trees and ponds to minimize losses from erosion. Our thanks to Mark for making the feature presentation for one of the annual highlights of the Manawatu Branch programme.

Excursions: Like so many days in late May, the forecast was worse than the weather!

Mark Carter had invited us to his farm for a look around and the speedy bush revegetation underway in a massive 50 acre slope near Feilding.



Over twenty Forest and Bird members visited the Feilding area farm owned and operated by Mark Carter (pictured above). The gem on the farm property is the 50 acre native bush reveg project on a retired slope.

Personally, I couldn't think of a better way to control erosion, with stock exclusion fencing on the slopes springing to life with a surprising array of native trees, and silt ponds in the waterways to hold that bit that still gets away.

The bush coming back so well is certainly proof that gorse is a fantastic nurse crop. The stock have only been fenced out since 2001, and since that time the understory has really strung to life. Already spectacular in places, the bush will be magic within a very few years.

After the look around, we came up to Mark and Coby's home. Not too many people choose to go off-grid when it is just over the road, but then these aren't just your average folks either. We saw the

works, from deep cycle batteries to the solar panels and the windmill that make it happen.

Just down the road from the Carter farm, we had a chance to pop into Chris Thomasen's streamside bush reveg project. Amazing, as it is only 8 years on from bare paddock, and already a dazzling variety of native trees are over two or three times our height as we step into the bush. Stepping back out into the new native planting done just this year, we can see Chris is going strong with plans to keep herself busy for a good while!

Advocacy: Kitchener Park is one of the few quality accessible remnants of lowland forest in the Manawatu, and with your help we'll continue to see that it gets the attention required to ensure it improves! With all this activity, committee members Chris, Alan, and Donald (with the aid of Alan Dodge) have put submissions to Manawatu District Council to protect native bush remnants in and near Feilding. MDC has looked positively on requests to increase resources for Kitchener Park. This includes both weed control in the bush, and fencing to keep stock out, and stopbanking to guard against floodwaters bringing more weeks into the area.

A request to protect a 5 acre native bush patch on Ranfurly Road is also before the MDC. At May branch night, Manawatu Forest and Bird passed a unanimous motion to "strongly urge MDC to reconsider the Ranfurly Road Gully proposal." Questions on the advance of this effort should go to Alan Dodge or Alan Hawkins, as they have full story.

Submissions were also made to the Manawatu District Council draft annual plan, and their longer term planning processes as well.

“NZ Tree Time” ~ Your June WordSearch Contest

- **Goal:** Find all 38 hidden trees
- **Then:** Enter the prizewinners!
- **Prize:** a Forest and Bird t-shirt!



→
Tree
Word
Bank
→

- AKEAKE•••••
- HINAU
- HOROEKA
- HOROPITO
- HOUHERE
- KAIKOMAKO
- KAMAHI
- KANUKA
- KARAMU
- KARO
- KAURI
- KAWAKAWA
- KOHUHU
- KOWHAI
- MAHOE
- MAIRE
- MANATU
- MANUKA
- MAPOU
- MATAI
- MIRO
- NGAIO
- NIKAU
- PATE
- POHUTUKAWA
- POKAKA
- PUKA
- PUKATEA
- PUTAPUTAWETA
- RAMARAMA
- RATA
- REWAREWA
- RIMU
- ROHUTU
- TARATA
- TAWA
- TORO
- TOTARA

Puzzle Design Courtesy of Chris Thomasen

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

Your Name: _____
 Your Address: _____
 Your Phone Number or eMail: _____

And The Fine Print:
 Entry deadline **10 July 2005**
 Correct entries will go into a prize draw for a Forest and Bird t-shirt (value \$35) of the winner's choice
 Winners name to be drawn at the July branch night, 12 July 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 August / September edition of the Twig and Tweet Gazette