



# Waikato Biodiversity Forum Newsletter November 2014 Number 45

## Kia Ora/Greetings and a Safe and Happy Christmas and New Year

Forum work over the past three months has included:

- Transferring community group data to Nature Space
- Working with Kiwis for Kiwi Coromandel Collective
- Ran an invertebrate activity for school children at Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park
- Presented oral submission on TCDC's proposed DogBylaw
- Assisted with planning of the 2015 Landcare Day
- Attended a Conservation Week activity with Friends of Pukemokemoke Bush Reserve and prepared a Health and Safety Plan for the event
- Working with Ecosystem Restoration Project team to initiate sites for restoration work
- Sent letters to Councils who fund the Forum submitting for the rollover of Forum funding
- Ran an invertebrate activity for JUNATS
- Organised the Biodiversity Forum on the 27th November
- Ran an invertebrate activity for Aberdeen School children at Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park with the Hamilton Zoo
- Attended the Healthy Rivers Wai Ora environmental stakeholders meeting
- Met with DOC and South Waikato Forest and Bird to discuss how the Forum can be involved in the Mokaihaha kokoko recovery project
- Sent out Waikato Community Conservation Fund application and liaised with community groups

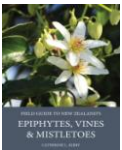
## Calling on Facebook Enthusiasts

Are there any Forum members who would be interested in posting biodiversity information on our Facebook on a regular basis? I'm trying to post every week but sometimes I get caught up in other things and don't get to it as often as I'd like. Let me know if you've got some time for it.

## Moehau Summer Programme

Moehau Environment Group has an awesome Summer Holiday Programme lined up for January. Trips to Cuvier Island are back on the programme so that is an exciting opportunity to factor into your holiday plans. Check the programme out at <http://meg.org.nz/projects/summer-programme/>

## Field Guide to New Zealand's Epiphytes, Vines & Mistletoes



Catherine Kirby has published the first field guide to specifically profile New Zealand's native epiphytes, vines and mistletoes. It contains 261 pages, 103 species and over 300 superb photos. It is easy to use with clear botanical information and identification clues. A copy of the book can be obtained from this website <http://www.nzepiphytenetwork.org/field-guide.html>.

## Te Kauae o Maui –A Small Nature Reserve with a Big Vision

The TKOM Nature Reserve is a 97 ha privately owned significant native bush block on the western side of the upper northern Coromandel, just 2.5 km out of Colville Village. We have had a small animal pest control program in place for over 20 years, but about four years ago we decided to seriously up-scale our environmental work. Grants from the Biodiversity Advisory and Condition Funds enabled us to put a three year intensive pest management program in place. In November we will enter into our last year of this program. We have had a very busy winter with lots of weeding, tree planting, rodent trapping and an extensive kiwi survey going on. A big "THANK YOU" to Project Crimson and the Honda Tree Fund for their kind donation of pohutukawa, kowhai, kakabeak and tree fuchsia. All these are under-represented in the reserve and we are aiming to establish a self-sustaining population.

We check 110 possum traps on a weekly basis and only reduce this to twice a month in July and August. Seventy of those traps are run as a "boundary line" in an attempt to minimize re-infestation from neighboring land. Since 1/11/13 a grand total of 469 possums have been killed, 364 of them on the boundary line, so our plan of stopping re-infestation is working!

During winter we concentrate on rodent control and at present 38 ha are serviced by 7 rat lines with a total of 312 KaMate rat traps. We find these traps very durable, easy to service and are extremely pleased with a very high catch rate of both rats and MICE (For



more information on the traps go to: <http://www.kamatetraps.com> ). In November we will add the next 14 ha of intensive rodent trapping to our regime bringing the total rodent controlled area to 52 ha. Since the beginning of the project (1/11/12) we have caught 675 rats and 536 mice, nothing to sneer at, even if I say so myself! TKOM is a kiwi hot spot. To protect kiwi chicks Moehau Environment Group services 20 stoat traps mainly around the boundary of our land and we look after an additional 20 inside the reserve. Our vision is to create a safe breeding ground for kiwi from which they can then disperse. From May to July we conducted a bio-acoustic kiwi call survey in the wider Colville area with 16 sites being sampled over three audible nights. It was very gratifying to find out that kiwi could be heard at 14 sites. For more details on the survey go to: <http://www.tekauaeomauiaturereserve.org.nz/2014-colville-kiwi-survey.html>

In the next couple of months we have two big projects coming up:

1. Thanks to the Waikato Regional Council we now have the funding to build our own movable pig cage trap. Over the last year pigs have become quite a problem for us. They interfere with our possum traps, bring in poaching hunters with dogs and destroy the regenerating forest floor. They spread the kauri dieback virus which has now reached the Coromandel. So it's high time that we are getting set to drastically reduce their presence!
2. We are also very grateful to the Environmental Initiatives Fund who is providing the funding to carry out a lizard survey on TKOM. We will use a wide variety of methods to learn what type of lizards and geckos call TKOM their home. Who knows, we might even find a Coromandel Striped Gecko. Lots of exciting things happening right now! If you want to find out more about us or would like to get involved please go to our website: <http://www.tekauaeomauiaturereserve.org.nz> Nathan and Nicole McCauley

## Matarangi Reserve - a Hidden Gem of the Coromandel Peninsula

The Rings Beach Wetlands project in Matatrangi Reserve, working under the umbrella of the Coromandel Peninsula Coastal Walkways Society was started in 2006 by Bruce Smith of Kuaotunu, recently retired and looking for a project to fulfil his wish to give something back to the community and as an outlet for an abundance of energy. Bruce discussed his vision with another



local, Ian MacDonald who was in a similar situation, and with the permission of DOC who hold the 137Ha in the Conservation estate they proceeded to blaze a trail and start forming a 4.7km back country walking track, today a comfortable 2 hour round trip. With the help of other volunteers, notably Sarah Cooper, currently a trustee of Kauri 2000, thousands of hours went into completing the track. There is a small stream discharging onto the western end of Rings Beach, and the team discovered the origin of this stream in an unmodified wetland spanning 4.5Ha, which was home to three pairs of the endangered fernbird. With the track nearing completion the focus shifted to the birdlife and the regenerating bush. At that stage Kauri 2000 had already planted several thousand trees on the hill, which had been clear felled of Kauri, mined, then farmed by the "matchbox

method" right up until the 1950s. Bruce and Ian identified an area within a 100 metre perimeter of the wetland, created a network of three parallel tracks and started placing traps for possum, stoats, rats and mice. Carrying on from that, with funding, predominately from Waikato Regional Council and DOC, an annual program of tree planting commenced to kick start the regeneration of a diversity of native species in the area adjacent to the wetland.

Participation by local schools in the planting programme, and a keen network of volunteers to monitor the traplines has seen over



4000 trees planted since 2009 and 3000 predators eliminated. Not only is the birdlife benefitting, but monitoring has established that wetas, lizards and other invertebrates are recovering. The birdlife is recovering and as the new trees grow, more species will make this their home. Several hundred wilding pines have been felled with support from DOC, which has encouraged small native trees to spring up wherever they gained sunlight. Sadly, in December 2012, Bruce Smith passed away, however, the foundations of his vision were solidly established, and Ian MacDonald, ably assisted by Kuaotunu locals has maintained and extended the dream. The walking track is accessible from Matarangi, or both ends of Rings Beach, it is a very pleasant easy walk on the main track, and a loop around the wetland on a trapping track presents a further option to explore the area. If you are planning to visit Matarangi and walk the track please be aware of the threat

of Kauri Dieback Disease as there are many young kauri in the area. The best defence is to make sure you arrive with clean boots with no loose soil attached to the soles. Ian Patrick

## Lake Koromatua

Some two years planning and 14 years putting the plan into action by members of the Hamilton Fish and Game Association is now



showing results at Lake Koromatua. The Shoreline willows have been almost totally removed and have been replaced by naturally occurring Carex. These plants are providing shelter for a variety of wetland birds, including the seldom seen Banded Rail.

The removal of pest plants such as Gorse, Himalayan and Japanese honeysuckle, blackberry and convolvulus is on-going. There have been 34,000 native trees of various species grown by **Hamilton Fish and Game Association** and planted around the lake margins.

Since 2006 a pest animal trapping programme has been implemented with a summary of results below. The removal of the possums had let the wild seedlings grow to trees to supplement

the planted trees.

### Animal trapping 2007-13 at Lake Koromatua

Animal species	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009- 2010	2010-2011	2011- 2012	2012- 2013	2013- 2014	total
Possum	68	21	12	18	14	3	6	142
Cat	6	7	14	1	4	2	6	40
Hedgehogs	22	28	14	26	23	13	8	134
Rats	10	4	9	39	28	24	18	132
Stoats	0	4	3	3	2	0		12
Mice	6	2	0	0	0	0		8
Pukeko	4	2	2	7	1	0	6	22
Blackbird	0	5	2	1	1	0		9
Hares	2	1	1	1	0	0		5
Magpie	3	0	4	Unknown	0	0		7
Thrush			1	0	0	0		1
Rabbit			1	5	3	11	2	22



At a recent field day Paul Champion of NIWA found the endangered willow herb (*Epilobium hirtigerum*) at the eastern end of the lake and plans are in hand to place this plant in a secure habitat.

Similarly, Kevin Hutchinson (formerly of DOC) and Rebecca Eivers (PhD. student) found mudfish in the drains flowing into the lake. Recently, the Mangakotukutuku care group trapped a number of these fish to relocate in their recreated swamp in a tributary of the Mangakotukutuku Stream.

The lake is accessible to the public off the farm race past the house at 537 Collins Road. Please leave gates as you found them and park in the parking area away from the race. There is a roughly formed track you can use to walk around the lake.

Keith Smith

For further information please contact Hamilton Fish and Game members Keith Smith 021 262 8828 or Murray Davies 0274 845 341



## Waikato Rivercare Significant Milestone for Waikato River Restoration

Waikato RiverCare is delighted to announce that recent discussions between the Waikato District Council and Stevenson Properties Limited has resulted in agreement between the parties to fence the last remaining section of riverbank accessed by stock on SH1 between Taupiri and Huntly townships. This project is an excellent example of the way the Waikato River draws landowners, community groups and government agencies together to work out solutions that benefit for all parties and protect the future health and wellbeing of the awa. Waikato RiverCare is particularly pleased that the agreed fence line will protect a locally significant river back water/wetland and allow for its planting and restoration within the 1100m long project.



Waikato RiverCare has been undertaking habitat restoration works on the 5km section of river between Taupiri and Huntly and to date has completed four major projects covering over 3km of riverbank which has seen stock proof fencing and weed control implemented, as well as over 24,000 plants being planted.

Waikato RiverCare's operations manager Kevin Hutchinson plans to get fencing underway as soon as ground conditions allow on the new site, with the aim to have the first pre-planting preparation work completed before Christmas. He's so keen to get started the plant lists are already prepared and expressions to supply the native plants sought from nurseries for the first planting of 10,500 plants in August 2015.

For more information contact Kevin Hutchinson on 027 601 6446, email

[khutchinson@waikatorivercare.co.nz](mailto:khutchinson@waikatorivercare.co.nz) and check out the website at: [www.waikatorivercare.co.nz](http://www.waikatorivercare.co.nz)

## Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society Inc

Our big news is the funding from DOC's Community Conservation Partnership fund for development of a translocation strategy to return Kokako to Mt Pirongia. The proposal is still in the early stages, but we are keen to hear of anyone who would like to be involved with this hugely significant project. A successful hui was held at Purekireki Marae recently as part of our iwi consultation, and we are collaborating with the national Kokako Recovery Group to maximise the benefit of the funding.



Our pest control work in our 1,000ha bait station grid on Mt Pirongia went smoothly during September and October with plenty of community volunteers helping fill the stations over 2 Saturday mornings. We have started post-operational rat monitoring, with one line already returned with a zero presence of rats. Hopefully the rest of the monitoring will reflect the same success. Clare St Pierre. Please contact Clare St Pierre (07 8719133 or [clare.stpierre@gmail.com](mailto:clare.stpierre@gmail.com)) if you would like to help us. More information is on the Society's website: [www.mtpirongia.org.nz](http://www.mtpirongia.org.nz) and our Facebook page.

## Kauri 2000

The Kauri 2000 Trust celebrated the achievement of having planted 40,000 kauri on the Coromandel Peninsula since 1999. The



trust's founder, Cliff Heraud, says that the success of the trust has gone far beyond what he ever imagined. "My dream in 1999 was to plant 2000 trees as a living commemoration to greet the new millennium. To have reached this milestone of getting 40,000 kauri in the ground, forming new kauri forests on the peninsula, is wonderful.

Five commemorative seedling were planted to mark the occasion in August at the start of the Kauri Walking track in Coromandel by Kauri 2000 founder Cliff Heraud and Patron Dame Cath Tizard, representatives from the Bank of New Zealand, Nicky Wagner, Associate Minister for Conservation, MP Scott Simpson, Glenn Leach, Mayor Thames Coromandel District Council, students from Coromandel Area School and the Trustees of Kauri 2000. Reverend Claire Stewart blessed

the planting site and the children from Coromandel Area School responded with Ka Mate haka to give the seedling strength. This milestone has only been achieved thanks to many willing volunteers and a lot of hard work. The trust now has a new milestone of 50,000 kauri in its sights.

## Pest Detective Website

The Pest Detective website was launched earlier this month to provide an interactive field guide to help people in New Zealand identify the presence of pest animals. Many pest animals can be difficult to detect so the website has been developed as an easy-to-use identification tool for:

- practitioners working in the pest control sector;
- landowners and land managers;
- conservation volunteers and community groups;
- students and researchers.

Check it out at <http://www.pestdetective.org.nz/>

The newsletters are all placed on [www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz](http://www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz) for easy access. Cheers Moira