



Waikato Biodiversity Forum Newsletter May 2009 Number 23

Kia Ora/Greetings to all Forum Members

Submissions on draft Longterm Council Community Plans (LTCCPs)

I have made submissions on all LTCCPs and have been presenting oral submissions. Nine down and 4 to go! It has been a pro-active exercise in raising awareness of biodiversity and also a way of thanking Councils for their contribution to the operating of the Forum.

Biodiversity Advice Waikato (BAW)



Jan Hoverd has resigned from the service. We wish her well with the other projects and conservation activities she is involved in and I'm sure we will see her at Forum events in the future. Thank you Jan for all your work across the region. It is valued and appreciated.

Biodiversity Advice Waikato is provided and supported by the Waikato Biodiversity Forum. Service operates Monday to Friday 9am-6pm, and has an after hours phone. The service will be maintained until 30 June at this stage at 0800 BIODIV (246 348).

Website: www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz

It is unclear at the moment whether BAW will continue in its present form after 1 July 2009. We await the outcome of Environment Waikato's LTCCP.

Calendar of Events and Working Bees pages on Website



The Waikato Biodiversity Forum provides a regional notice board type calendar on the website. The Waikato

Biodiversity Forum is a regional service so we'd like to include events from the range of areas across the Forum's boundaries. The Forum's event page <http://www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz/events/> is one of the highest hit pages on the website so people must be interested in finding out about biodiversity related events/working bees. So if you have events, **working bees** or trips planned over the next few months and would like them advertised outside your group they can be forwarded to the Biodiversity Forum coordinator for inclusion on the website.

Biodiversity Contestable Advice and Condition Funds

Next Funding round opens on 20 May 2009 and will close 3pm Wednesday 1 July 2009. Notification of outcome is anticipated in October 2009. www.biodiversity.govt.nz/biofunds

Anyone proposing to submit an application, prior discussion with Fund staff can be useful for applicants. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of your project or proposed application please feel free to call Stephanie Weller on 0800 86 2020.

How to apply

You need to familiarise yourself with the Biodiversity Fund Guides and Exclusions for funding.

<http://www.biodiversity.govt.nz/land/nzbs/pvtland/conditionapps.html>

- **ONLINE APPLICATIONS:** As with previous funding rounds you are encouraged to submit applications online using the appropriate form for the Advice Fund or Condition Fund. www.biodiversity.govt.nz/apply
- Refer to the online application guide for helpful notes and hints (WEBSITE LINK)
- **MANUAL APPLICATIONS:** If you are submitting an application manually applicants must use the appropriate and revised application forms for this round.

<http://www.biodiversity.govt.nz/land/nzbs/pvtland/conditionapps.html>

Further information or assistance

If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of your project or proposed application please contact **Stephanie Weller** or Alan White (Fund Manager) on 0800 86 2020.

National Community Biodiversity Fund

This fund of \$4million over 2 years, has been established for community initiated restoration projects on publicly owned land, particularly in under represented and threatened ecosystem, such as wetlands, dune land, urban waterways, river / stream banks and forest remnants and projects aligned with the Statement of National Priorities for protecting rare and threatened native biodiversity.

Eligibility: Public land (including DOC, Council, Transit, Rail and LINZ lands)

Who can apply: Community groups, NGOs, Trusts etc who are working on restoration projects on public land.

Further information: www.doc.govt.nz/communityfund

Planting Days

Ruapuke Beachcare Group has a planting day at Ruapuke Beach, North end of beach on Sunday 14 June 10-11am. All welcome. Please bring a spade or digging tool. Contact Pete or Atmavidya 825 8993 email parito@clear.net.nz

Plants for sale

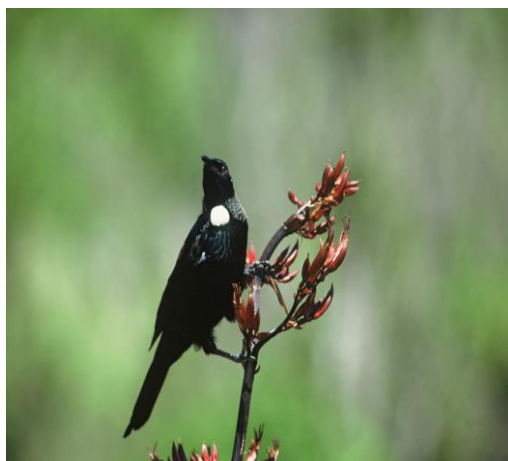
Te Whangai Charitable Trust has beautiful metre high natives for plantings at extraordinary rates. It's an opportunity for individuals and groups to assist at risk people in the community and utilise welfare and correction dollars to create an environmental resource. Website running www.tewhangai.com Phone: 09-232-7725 Email: g.adalton@xtra.co.nz Adrienne Dalton

Franklin District Council Covenant Newsletter

The Franklin District Council has begun to send covenants holders a newsletter of interesting information to help them manage their conservation covenant areas. If you want a copy of the newsletter please contact Kelly Deihl Kelly_deihl@franklin.govt.nz

Hamilton Halo Project at Maungakawa Scenic Reserve and Sanatorium Hill Cambridge

Maungakawa Scenic Reserve is situated 22kms from Hamilton city. This reserve forms a unique and supportive corridor for native birds between Te Miro to the North and Maungatautari to the South. Over the 14 years I have lived next to the Reserve I have witnessed an increase in the number of rats, possums and wild cats within the reserve and surrounds. I have watched the number of native birds and fledglings, visiting my garden decreased significantly. In 2004 John Innes from Landcare, visited the reserve to monitor Tui nesting sites. As a result of their research; Maungakawa Scenic Reserve now forms part of the Halo project. The Halo project involves intense possum and rat control at key bird breeding times, to increase the population of native birds such as the Tui, in addition to providing wider biodiversity benefits.



In 2007 landowners living near the reserve (including ourselves) along with residents from Cambridge and Hamilton, banded together to form a voluntary group known as 'Friends of Sanatorium Hill'. One of the main objectives of the group is to reduce the number of possums and rats within Maungakawa Reserve; to increase the survival chances of tui fledglings, and to help boost the tui numbers for the Hamilton Halo project.

With the help of funding from Environment Waikato and the Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Fund, an intense pest eradication programme commenced in October 2008 on Maungakawa Scenic Reserve. From a pre-control survey of 30% rat presence, monitoring in January 2009 showed there was no presence of rats -100% success rate.

The large mature Rewarewa trees, flowered brilliantly for the first time in 14 years, as a response, I'm sure, to the reduced numbers of possum's nibbling new spring growth. Tui came to feast on their nectar. The flaxes have flowered more profusely with harakeke flowers; a tui's favourite food.

By mid January I spotted the first of the two tui fledglings to arrive in the garden. I had not seen tui fledglings visiting since 2002. Then in March, I heard a cacophony of bird song coming from the garden and spotted four bellbirds. This would be the most bellbirds I have ever seen during our time here. Shining cuckoo were also heard. Vanessa Moore (Friends of Sanatorium Hill)

Thames Forest and Bird

Thames Forest and Bird in conjunction with Environment Waikato, DOC, and the District Council will begin a project to restore part of the Wetlands of the floodplain of the Lower Kauaeranga River in mid-June. A recreational walking track will be added later, as resources permit. The area, just above the traffic bridge on SH25, has been seriously degraded by concentrations of stock over the past 100 years

Friends of Pukemokemoke

Friends of Pukemokemoke was launched on a rather damp and overcast day on Sunday afternoon 17th May. The Chair of the David Johnstone Pukemokemoke Bush Trust, Dr Warwick Silvester, welcomed about 25 people to the Reserve. Among those present were fellow trustees Trudy and David Lloyd (also Chair of the parent David Johnstone Trust), and Eileen Slater, Secretary to the Trust. Warwick mentioned the desire the Trust has to extend the number and involvement of local and nearby town/city folk in the ongoing work of protecting and developing the Reserve.

The Halo project overseen by Environment Waikato is currently preparing a major effort to poison and remove the rats and possums from the bush. We want to improve the visitor facilities such as tracks and signs. Another priority is the removal of the privet, followed by native tree replanting along the Mangatea Stream. The Trust is very grateful to Wayne Bennett for the donation of some 20 trees eco-sourced from seeds gathered at Pukemokemoke or nearby. These trees have been planted around the log hauler site, with a handsome white maire in the middle of the site as a reminder of the open day on the 17th May.

Don't forget that we'd love you to join the Friends of Pukemokemoke. If you or your friends are not yet members please send your \$10 annual sub to Eileen Slater at GuardianTrust, P O Box 1375, Hamilton 3240, or set up an automatic payment to Guardian Trust, Westpac Bank no 03 0104 0984913 01 and quote the reference '19956802 Pukemokemoke.'

A working bee is being held on Saturday 20th June to erect a bold new entrance way at the roadside and if we have enough helpers, to form the lower loop track and tackle some of the privet on the river side of the log hauler site. Any one is welcome to come and help....bring loppers, spades and lunch!

**For further information about joining, phone or email Alan Leadley, 07 8552919
muallleadley@hnpl.net**

Project Crimson Kawhia Initiative

Schnachenberg (1935) records the existence of an extensive pohutukawa forest clothing the back dunes between Kawhia and Aotea Harbour entrances, on New Zealand's west coast. He quotes local knowledge of thousands of fence posts being extracted from the stands in earlier years. This pohutukawa forest was likely typical of vegetation clothing stable dunes along much of the upper North Island's west coast before the land was cleared for farming. Because it is a sand-dune coast line, as opposed to often rocky coastlines associated with pohutukawa forest in the east, clearing and burning essentially eliminated the coastal forest. Four remnants of the Kawhia forest survive, the largest, comprising perhaps 20 trees, on the highest point on the back dune between Kawhia and Aotea Harbours at a site known as Pukeatua. The focus of the current project is the protection and enhancement of what is arguably one of the most important residual stands of pohutukawa on New Zealand's west coast, and particularly within the Waikato region. The project will include pohutukawa establishment strategies involving companion planting, enhancing natural regeneration and undertaking the associated

monitoring, along with detailed characterisation of the existing vegetation. The project will be championed by Project Crimson Trustee Dr Gordon Hosking and the Trust's science advisor Dr David Bergin.
Dr Gordon Hosking

Bees and Biodiversity

One of the first indicators of an environment in trouble, along with the absence of frogs, is the sign of few honey bees, *Apis mellifera* and bumble bees working in our gardens and orchards. Often you will hear people complain about the lack of pollination amongst their fruit trees and vegetable garden. Bees are also needed to pollinate native trees and shrubs and there is simply not enough bees to go around !

Like all beneficial insects, bees do not take kindly to insecticides, sprays, pesticides or any other nasty chemical used by horticulturists/agriculturists/gardeners to encourage bigger fruit or longer lasting veges or whatever they claim these chemicals can do. The bee takes back to the hive the chemical laden pollen and nectar which is stored and fed to the larvae and other bees in the colony, which over time weakens the bees leading to disease and death. Powerful new insecticides known as neonicotinoids have been banned in France, Italy and Germany after the loss of millions of bees over the past 5 years - New Zealand needs to follow suit very quickly or we will lose forever this tireless small insect.

The varroa mite has devastated wild bees in NZ, so there is not the number to build up hives in the spring, which means that beekeepers have to look after their bees with varroa treatment twice a year to help protect the bees from dying out. Without the intervention of man, bees would disappear over a short period of time. A sad indication of human nature when it takes only 50+ years to destroy what this tiny insect has taken millions of years to build up and live successfully with. My own answer is to keep a hive or two, you will be pleasantly surprised at how easy it is, plus the increase in pollination help with pollinating not only food crops and garden flowers but the wider indigenous biodiversity of our native forest.

Marcia Meehan, oraflorealhoney@slingshot.co.nz

Guardians of Paku Bay Association

Guardians of Paku Bay Association are delighted to announce that they have been granted resource consents by Environment Waikato to build two bird roosts in a small embayment in Tairua estuary. The roosts have been designed by wellknown coastal scientist Jim Dahm and are intended to mimic naturally occurring sand bars. They will provide roosting sites for a variety of birds, where they will have 360° views and safety from disturbance by people and predators. The roosts will be carefully monitored with records kept on the effects of tides and storms and the number and variety of birds which use them. The high level of development in coastal settlements in the Coromandel Peninsula is putting pressure on roosting sites for wading birds, and the Guardians hope that this work will become a prototype for similar projects in the Coromandel and other New Zealand estuaries.

Unfortunately, the Guardians also continue their eight year battle to prevent a marina being constructed in Paku Bay. This is a small sheltered bay in Tairua estuary, which is surrounded by housing on three sides and which drains completely at low tide. A small stream runs through the bay and, apart from its amenity value for local and holiday visitors, it is also a valuable site for bird feeding and loafing.

Three applications have been made to build a marina by the same applicants, one of whom is a subsidiary company of Watts and Hughes Construction. The first application was withdrawn by the applicants prior to a hearing, the second was rejected by both the Environment and High Courts and a hearing on the third was held in November last year and adjourned. The Commissioners subsequently invited the applicants to apply for further resource consents to redirect Grahams Stream and to build a bird roost very close to the site of the Guardians roosts. This hearing was held last week and has also been adjourned.

If the marina is consented, the Guardians are worried that the impact on bird life will be severe. However they intend to complete their bird roosts as soon as material from navigation channel dredging is available, hopefully later in the year.

If you want to contact people whose details are not in the newsletter you can go through the Contact Us page on the Forum website and send an email Moira

The newsletters are all placed on www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz for easy access.

Acknowledgement Tui Photo Paul Schilov