



# Waikato Biodiversity Forum Newsletter May 2016

## Number 50

### Kia Ora/Greetings

An update on the Forum's work over the past three months:

- Organised four Health and Safety "In Safe Hands" workshops with Conservation Volunteers New Zealand facilitated the workshop and DOC provided the finances
- Held a Plant and Animal pest management workshop for Central Waikato
- Updating the Forum's "Restoring Waikato's Indigenous Biodiversity: Ecological Priorities and Opportunities" publication
- Responded to 26 enquiries from Forum members and the public through 0800BIODIV
- Attended the Environment sector Healthy River meeting to formulate feedback to the CSG
- Attended the WRC Sustainable Waikato Water issues , climate change workshop
- Attended the Trust Waikato funding workshop
- Attended The Waikato Plan Strategic Partners meeting as a representative of the Forum
- Organising next Forum event in partnership with the Waikato District Council. The focus is for landowners who have SNAs on their property.
- Attended the WRC Sustainable Waikato Water issues , climate change workshop
- Attended The Waikato Plan Strategic Partners meeting as a representative of the Forum
- Attended the Landcare Fieldday at Te Pahu
- Helped community groups set up their displays and worked at the Waikato Expo
- Wrote a submission on Next Steps for Freshwater consultation document
- Attended meeting in Whitianga with Regional Council and DOC the discuss roles and work on the Coromandel
- Attended Local Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy) LIBS briefing meeting for the Waihou Catchment pilot
- Met with DOC staff in Taupo to discuss roles

### Waikato RiverCare Inc - Another first



Waikato RiverCare Incorporated is excited to be starting on a new initiative: pest animal control at two oxbow restoration projects.

The impacts of pest animals on native vegetation are well known, particularly grazing animals like possum, wild goats and hares. Less known are the benefits of controlling rats, mice, hedgehogs and mustelids. These pests are known to consume seeds, invertebrates and birds, which are all vital to the health and long-term sustainability of the plantings. The traps being used are specifically designed to kill the target pests while being safe to use around young children, livestock and pets.

Reductions in animal pest numbers around the project should encourage birds to use the site with nesting cover and berry trees included in the planting plan. One of the leading benefits of increased bird use of the project is seed dispersal and the transfer of local plant genetics within the district.

[www.waikatorivercare.co.nz](http://www.waikatorivercare.co.nz)

## Gully black spots - Beverley Bell

In late summer, the young native plants in my gully suddenly became covered in a black sooty substance. A bit of asking around



revealed that the black spots the faeces of the giant willow aphid *Tuberolachnus salignus*. It was first found in New Zealand in Dec 2013 in Auckland and is widespread in the Waikato. They can grow up to 6mm in body length. These aphids are sap sucking insects like their smaller cousins, and their faeces or honeydew attract large numbers of *Vespula* spp. wasps into the gully. Only females have been found to-date, so the females are producing clones by parthenogenesis. The aphids disappear from the trees in winter. Another good reason to get rid of the willows to help the natives!

For more information and photos:

[SCION Forest Health News, 246, March 2014](http://www.scionresearch.com/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/43594/FH-News-March-2014.pdf)

The hyperlink at the end is

[http://www.scionresearch.com/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/43594/FH-News-March-2014.pdf](http://www.scionresearch.com/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/43594/FH-News-March-2014.pdf)

## Department of Conservation - Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting

The Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting System aims to provide DOC and others with consistent, comprehensive information about biodiversity across public conservation lands, and potentially across New Zealand. While designed for DOC's requirements, the system has the ability to deliver the full New Zealand picture with the participation of New Zealand's other biodiversity managers. Access to new, regularly updated, and more easily shared data will result in better decisions, leading to improved conservation outcomes that support the healthy environment New Zealand needs for its economic and social wellbeing.

The system is part of an ongoing programme to develop a nationally-consistent and cohesive approach to managing biodiversity across all of New Zealand's land and waters

Check out more information at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/monitoring-and-reporting-system/>

## Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society

Monitoring for our Okahukura Kokako Protection project has shown we have successfully reduced rat populations there from 46.6% pre-operation to only 3.3%. A survey of the Kokako in the area is planned for early June and this is a great opportunity for



three of our volunteers involved to build their skills. A *Dactylanthus* monitoring trip to the top of Mt Pirongia is awaiting good weather before proceeding and we are rapt that Heliworx Waikato Ltd are assisting us. For our Mt Pirongia pest control project, we were delighted to secure funding from WWF and The Tindall Foundation's Habitat Protection Fund for track maintenance, monitoring and project management. Bait station filling in both our 1,000 ha grids is scheduled to start in August/September and new helpers are always welcome. We are also on the lookout for a new treasurer. For more info please contact [clare.stpierre@gmail.com](mailto:clare.stpierre@gmail.com).



### Moorhouse Road Wetlands

Hancock Forest Management carried out the aerial spraying of grey willows in the Moorhouse road wetland on 8 March this year. Eight hectares of the wetland was treated with a glyphosate/ organo silicone mixture. This amounts to 4.5kg/ha active ingredient of glyphosate used. HFM and SWDC funded the operation. This will be followed up in Dec 2016 with an inspection to assess regrowth or areas missed and these will be targeted by the ground crew in Feb-March 2017.



Moorhouse Road Wetland

Hancock Forest Management is working on another project **Waitaramoa Road wetland** located in the upper Waipa catchment adjacent to Pureora Forest. Ground based harvesting of a 1st rotation pine crop took place in 2007. This 3 ha unit and a 4ha unit on a lower terrace of the Waipa River were excluded from 2nd rotation planting due to unacceptable soil impacts. Reversion and recovery has been monitored and in April 2016 had some remedial plant pest control was carried out. Wilding pine were felled to waste and grey willow and rare pampas were manually sprayed with glyphosate. . Robin Black



Recovery of Waitaramoa Road Wetland



## Mangaiti Gully Restoration Group

Our latest project that we are working on is to breed up a viable population of native Red and Yellow Admiral Butterflies in our gully system. We already have the occasional Yellow Admiral visitor but have never sighted the more impressive Red Admiral. We have purchased six of the NZ Tree Nettle *Urtica ferox* on which the Admirals lay their eggs and the caterpillars feed on. Two of the nettles will be planted on a farm over on the Coromandel in the hope of getting Red Admiral Caterpillars off some time in the future and the other four will be planted out in an out-of-the-way, had-to-get-to place somewhere in the gully system. We have noted that two of our plants that are still in planter bags have seed clusters on so we will be trying



to get a strike once they have ripened. Rex Bushell

## Wrights Bush Restoration Group

After three years of work by the Wrights bush restoration group we are being rewarded with some great growth, improvement in the biodiversity and texture inside the remnant block of Kahikatea. Our edge protection planting is starting to kick in and over the summer you could feel how much cooler it was inside under the canopy even with some gaps still to fill. What has really been of benefit to this kahikatea remnant is the support we have received from a variety of people organisations. The photo showing the new plantings on one of the old effluent ponds beside the bush. Robert Hos



Visit our facebook page [www.facebook.com/Wrights-Bush](https://www.facebook.com/Wrights-Bush)

## Karioi: Maunga ki te Moana – Mountain to Sea project.

Karioi volunteers – dedicated to surfing - and making a difference too. Whaingaroa/Raglan is one of the top surfing locations in the world and has lots of international visitors. This year two of these visitors have seized the opportunity to be involved as interns in the A Rocha-led Karioi: Maunga ki te Moana – Mountain to Sea project.



Emily Leucht arrived courtesy of the Pacific Exchange Emerging Professionals Program (PEEPP). Emily has been exploring how the use of art can creatively cultivate and foster our relationships with native and threatened ecosystems - even in instances when these species are remote from our daily experience.

Nathaniel Glickman, Canadian, passionate surfer and enthusiastic Karioi KIDS team member – runs the marine educational activities. Nate says - " My inspiration to work with the children of Raglan stems from the urge to help inspire the next generation of locals to be passionate stewards of this incredible ecosystem they are blessed to be a part of."

Emily and Nate have been wonderful additions to our team – bringing with them a load of enthusiasm, creativity and a deep love for the ocean (and of course, surfing!) As Emily describes it "this opportunity and being part of the Karioi program has inspired and enthused my commitment to community involvement in outdoor education and action."

[www.karioimaunga.co.nz](http://www.karioimaunga.co.nz) or facebook karioimaunga



## National Wetland Trust - Volunteer for Wetlands

Rotopiko is one of the region's best peat lake complexes, and the National Wetland Trust has been leading an ambitious restoration project of its margins and surrounds. With the support of councils, DOC, sponsors and the community, we have eradicated all pests from within a 10 ha sanctuary, and are restoring vegetation and planning to re-introduce rare wetland species.



The Trust offers many volunteer opportunities, including regular fence inspections, Weed Free Fridays, corporate and school planting days, surveys of birds, bats and lizards, pest detection and helping develop education activities. Volunteering for wetlands is a great way to learn skills, keep fit, explore nature, make new friends and contribute to helping turn the tide for these valuable but much depleted ecosystems. Our volunteers come from all walks of life and we have activities to suit any level of fitness, skill or availability. Karen Denyer [Karen.denyer@wetlandtrust.org.nz](mailto:Karen.denyer@wetlandtrust.org.nz) for details.

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