



Waikato Biodiversity Forum Newsletter August 2013 Number 40

Kia Ora/Greetings to all Forum Members

Forum work over the past three months has included:

- Worked at Fieldays
- Prepared feedback for the NZLCT on the Bi-lingual Waikato River restoration guide
- Completed the Communication Plan
- Provided feedback to the SWDC on Hearing 5 papers Impacts of Farming Practices
- Prepared resource people registration form and management procedures for the resource peoples register
- Updating Community Group database- the large biennial update
- Liaised with Nature Space on sharing information on community group project on our websites
- Responded to 15 biodiversity related enquiries from Forum members and public
- Updating the Forum's website
- Trialing resource people registration form with 12 Forum members
- Assisted with the National Wetland Trust the open day at Rotopiko/Lake Serpentine Reserve
- Met with Waikato Regional Councils Sustainable Business Manager to explore ways for the Forum could link with sustainable businesses in the Waikato
- Prepared presentation on funding for the HCC Gully Restoration Series
- Prepared pataka article for the Thames Coromandel District Council
- Attended the Waikato Regional Council Land and Water Stakeholders Forum

Funding Advice

The Forum's website has a comprehensive list of funders. Moira is available for funding advice.

Forum's Facebook page

The Forum has a facebook page. I encourage you to use it to communicate with each other and post biodiversity related comments and events on the page and also LIKE us so our profile is spread.

Kararehe Kino Vertebrate Pest Research The Ripple Effect

This publication is produced by Landcare Research and is available online

<http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/publications/newsletters/kararehe-kino>

The July publication includes topics such as new developments in vertebrate pest control technologies, repellent to protect native birds from 1080, single or multiple capture traps-what should you buy? And developing species-selective novel control tools for pest control.



Waikato River Authority / Waikato River Clean Up Trust

Please note that WRA have moved to new offices the address and contact details are
21 Rostrevor Street
PO Box 9338
Hamilton 3204
Phone: 07 839 7966

DOC Trapping Youtube videos

This is collection of short videos where trap users can review the key points for setting the most common pest traps available in New Zealand. <http://www.youtube.com/user/DOCskillable>.

The videos include one for urban trap users. And finally DOC has been exploring new and innovative ways to reach new audiences and help people learn more about urban trapping through www.chalkle.com. In essence, chalkle connects people who want to learn with people who want to teach, taking the administrative hassle out of organising workshops. Recently DOC used the chalkle platform and hosted a successful pilot workshop focused on urban trapping. Both the platform and event proved very successful with more workshops planned for the future. The workshops support the Enhancing the Halo project, which aims to make Wellington New Zealand's natural capital by ensuring backyards are safe havens for native wildlife. The Halo website, <http://www.halo.org.nz/>, is a great resource for communities to use to make this happen in their backyards. An [info graphic](#) has been designed that helps people work out which trap is best for their backyard and directs them to training opportunities (via chalkle) and a DOCskillable video.

Lower Mangapiko Streamcare Group Inc

Last summer saw more clearing works on the stream, followed up with fencing and 4500 natives



planted in two major areas of the stream. The dry summer was ideal for the work and approximately 3.9k was cleared. Thanks to sponsorship from Waikato River Authority this has allowed the work to be done with support of Waikato Regional Council, Fonterra, RD1, farmers and the Streamcare Committee.

It is hoped that more work will continue this coming summer with under 10k [eitherside] left to be done between Te Awamutu and Pirongia.

Research TITLE: Measuring restoration success

How do groups measure the success of their restoration projects? That's a question I pondered a lot while working as Waikato Regional Coordinator for the NZ Landcare Trust. Now a PhD student at Waikato University, this question forms the basis of my study. In recent years there has been huge growth in the number of community groups and restoration projects – both here and overseas. At the same time, a number of toolkits have been developed specifically for community groups including FORMAK (forests), SHMAK (streams), the Cultural Health Index (streams/rivers) and WETMAK (wetlands). A lack of evaluation means we know very little about how they're being used (or not!!) Later this month, I will email a questionnaire to around 400 community groups throughout NZ. The aim is to gain a better understanding of community/NGO-led restoration projects and the role (actual or potential) environmental monitoring plays.

My blog: www.monicalogues.com is set up both to support the study and as a forum for discussion. As the study evolves, I will share preliminary findings from the questionnaires and related interviews – your feedback on posts is welcome. If your group is interested in being part of the study, please email me at monica.a.peters@gmail.com for further information.

National Wetland Trust

A predator fence around a peat lake, grand old kahikatea forest, and a rare restiad peat bog has just



been completed at Rotopiko/ Lake Serpentine, site of the planned National Wetland Centre. Keys have been handed over to the National Wetland Trust and the contractors will soon be finalising the security alert system and taking down the construction signs. The Trust is grateful for the public's patience while the fence has been built, and pedestrian access will soon be restored. Pest removal will begin in the next few months. The fence was paid for with generous grants from the Waikato River Clean-up Fund, Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust, Lottery Environment and Heritage Fund, WEL Energy, Waikato Regional Council and Trust Waikato. The Trust has received substantial support from Waipa

District Council and the Department of Conservation.

As restoration works ramp up, the Trust is calling for volunteers to help with planting, weed management, monitoring, and planning for the return of native animals. Contact Karen on karen.denyer@wetlandtrust.org.nz or 021 031 2716 if you would like to be part of the team that makes it happen. Photo of the fence provided by Xcluder.

Conservation Inc Conference

This conference is being held in Dunedin on 17-18 October 2013. The website describes the Conference as offering "a formative opportunity to explore the nature of the changes in train and the challenges facing citizen-initiated conservation. Conservation Inc proposes to examine questions relating to four themes:

1. Connecting

How can like-minded groups and NGOs connect to make the most of opportunities to collaborate?

2. Staying viable

What factors will influence the success and vitality of community-based conservation? What will it take to ensure that groups thrive and remain effective as custodians? What works and what doesn't in the way we organise ourselves and our work?

3. Responding to need

How well will community initiatives meet biodiversity needs? How do we ensure that they do?

4. What's feasible?

What has worked so far for community-based conservation in New Zealand? What can we learn from that?

See this website for details <http://www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz/conservationinc>

Waikato Regional Council

The Wahitapu wetland is located in the Wharekawa Catchment near the Opoutere settlement on the Coromandel Peninsula. The wetland forms part of a large contiguous area of indigenous saltmarsh habitat that extends south towards the Opoutere estuary. This is a significant ecological area which Waikato Regional Council in conjunction with the local community are keen to see restored. The wetland hosts a number of threatened bird species including fern bird, banded rail and spotless crane. Predator control in the form of bait stations and DOC 200 traps is being carried out at the site in an effort to protect these birds.



May 2011 - View between the bridges on the west bank looking south.



May 2013 - Note the emerging new *Juncus* rushland.

There are a number of weed issues at this site which are threatening the wetland. In May/ June this year Waikato Regional Council carried out extensive weed control of pampas, wattle, ginger, blackberry and wilding pines. Salt water paspalum has also been carried out over a number of years at this site and this year was the 4th year of control at the site. The control of salt water paspalum at this site was a regional first. Despite the paspalum dying back after spraying within a year the grass is able to re-colonise in the same area, although it comes back less dense. The weed control has opened up a number of areas and this year 950 native wetland plants were planted. Further restoration work is planned for this site.

Mangaiti Gully Restoration Trust



Will they or want they? We have had three sighting of morepork roosting in tree ferns all in the same area. There is no suitable nesting places so we have built a nesting box based on the spec's from the Hamilton Zoo (300mm x 270mm x 500mm deep with a 120mm hole). The Zoo has successfully bred them on several occasions. The nest box has been erected on its own pole and set up with a webcam (\$18) that can be plugged into a laptop and a red filled battery light so that we can view inside without disturbing the occupants. It is set among the tree ferns. Now we just have to wait and see if this deluxe accommodation is appreciated. The thing is morepork don't appear to be very fussy where they nest. Rex Bushell

Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society

Bait station filling in the Society's 1,000ha grid on Mt Pirongia is scheduled to commence on 31 August and will continue over a number of Saturday mornings into October.



This is also a chance for us to monitor how the recently introduced North Island Robins (Pītoitoi) are faring in our control area, and whether the number of unbanded Robins sighted (currently at two) can be boosted. The Society is grateful for Meridian Energy's funding support which is meeting the cost of the baits.

Following our AGM in July we are continuing our planning to

translocate Kokako to Mt Pirongia, although this may still be some years into the future. Funding requirements are substantial, so the Society is interested in any sponsorship or fundraising proposals for this. One fundraising event has already been completed successfully, involving riparian planting around the Te Rore Water Supply stream. New volunteers are always welcome and we look to match your interests and fitness to what we have available. More information is on the Society's website: www.mtpirongia.org.nz and lots of photos are on our Facebook page. Please contact Clare St Pierre (07 8719133 or clare.stpierre@gmail.com) if you would like to volunteer for planting, bait station filling or monitoring opportunities, or to discuss options.

Whatawhata Field Day

This Field Day will interest dry stock farmers, dairy grazers, farm foresters, farm consultants and rural professionals and provide practices that can affect farm profits and the farm environment

24 October 2013

9.30 am to 3.30 pm (lunch provided)

Whatawhata Research Farm

1872 Whatawhata Rd (on SH 23, Hamilton to Raglan)

A hint of what you'll learn

Catchment management has become a widely accepted approach for improving water quality. In 2001, a farm scale experiment was established at the Whatawhata Hill-Country Research Centre. This was to

evaluate the effects of an integrated package of land management actions on economic performance, biodiversity and aquatic ecosystem health.

A decade after implementation, listen to the scientists and land managers on the results to date.

Contact Bala.Tikkisetty@waikatoregion.govt.nz for more details and to register for this event.

Moehau Environment Group

Point View School's year 3 and 4 students have been busy building 250 rat trap boxes for us. During August a group of parents and students came to visit us in Port Charles to deliver the boxes. The group stayed at Tangiaro Kiwi Retreat and despite the wet weather got to go kiwi listening and see a kiwi in the wild. We also ran our annual planting day at Waikawau Bay this winter. Colville School students



planted 65 cabbage trees and flaxes donated by Waikato Regional Council. Since 2007, local children have participated in tree planting most years at the site, gradually transforming a paddock of kikuyu into a lush rainforest.

Our cyanide operation has knocked-back possum numbers in 1200ha around Port Charles. To maintain a healthy forest we aim to keep possum numbers under five possums per 100 traps set.

During post operation monitoring we caught an average of 2.4 possums for every 100 traps. We couldn't have hoped for a better result.

We are on a mission to raise funds for our Kiwi Sanctuary. Our Kiwi Sanctuary has been in operation for 8 years and protects nearly 8000ha of kiwi habitat. Due to a shortfall in funding we need to source more funds to ensure trapping can continue. If you would like to help us protect kiwi, please visit www.meg.org.nz Natalie Collicott

Waikato RiverCare

Waikato RiverCare staff and contractors have successfully completed programmed autumn infill planting at 5 Waikato River restoration projects. A total of 6,230 plants were planted at the following Waikato RiverCare projects, Ngaruawahia esplanade reserve (town boat ramp), Taupiri A project



(carpark opposite urupa), Taupiri B project (just north of the Taupiri urupa), Taupiri D (Huntly south) and the Huntly Golf Club. Waikato RiverCare used last summer's excellent weather to complete a comprehensive spray programme involving contractors Treescape (Waikato and central North Island). With the weeds suppressed at projects the next step was arranging native plants to completed infill planting. Native plants were sourced from three Waikato nurseries. Waikato RiverCare prefers to use native plants that are eco sourced (seed sourced from the Meremere ecological district) on restoration projects. By early May soil moisture levels were starting to rise and drought conditions eased. Waterside planters Ltd were contracted by Waikato RiverCare to complete the task within restricted time frames.

Infill planting starting at the low lying Taupiri B project due to the risk of surface flooding and finished with plantings on the banks of the Ngaruawahia esplanade last week. Infill planting is done by Waikato RiverCare with the long term aim of shading and preventing or slowing the reinvasion of weeds into restoration projects. A big thanks to all those individuals, neighbours, agencies and companies that helped make the last two months so successful. For more information on Waikato RiverCare and restoration projects please visit our web site. www.waikatorivercare.co.nz

Attached photo: Ed and Barney from Waterside Planters Ltd finish planting the last totara tree at the Taupiri A project.

Opito Bay Environment Group

Another good winter for planting. We have put in around 300 natives (kauri, pururi, five finger, totora, mahoe, taraire and tarata) into the slip prone hillsides. The existing plantings have shot away and we are starting to get some good secondary growth especially from manuka, kanuka and karo. In addition



we have been very active with plant and pest control on the block we have been restoring attacking ginger, woolly nightshade and pampas. Along with traps supplied by DOC, we have supplied 12 Timms traps, baits and peanut butter lures to a local trapper in the Bay and the figures below show how successful he has been. The following kills have been made in our area operation from 16.1.2013 to 30.7.2013: rats 225, stoats 52, hedgehogs 118 and possums 480. Total to date 875. From June 012 to July 30. 2013 we have trapped 775 possums

We have applied for further funding from Waikato Regional Council for next year to purchase more traps as well as rope and warratahs for fencing off part of our dunes.

We have restored a retired steep hillside valley into a regenerating forest and with this we have noticed an increase in native bird life which is very rewarding. Chris Severne

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