



Waikato Biodiversity Forum Newsletter November 2011 Number 33

Kia Ora/Greetings to all Forum Members

Forum work over the past three months has included:

- Organising two Conservation Week activities
- Holding a Forum event on the Coromandel
- Negotiating with editor of Hamilton Press to provide monthly biodiversity article
- Meeting with Katherine Hay and NZ Landcare Trust staff re Events and Community Group Workshop plan for 2012
- Updating the Forum publication Restoring Waikato's Indigenous Biodiversity: Ecological Priorities and Opportunities
- Presenting an oral submission at Hauraki District Council's District Plan review hearing
- Working with WWF personnel re setting up Regional Biodiversity Forums
- Providing feedback to SWDC on options for protecting SNAs for their District Plan review
- Responding to 0800BIODIV calls
- Submitting for on-going Forum funding through the LTP process

Funding Advice

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

Te Whangai Trust



Te Whangai Trust has beautiful ecosourced plants for sale for environmental restoration. Karo and lemonwood will make great shelter and nurse plants, beautiful five finger one metre tall, awesome root structure, akekake and ribbon wood plus more. Repeat buyers coming back for more. Sale price to biodiversity supporters \$1.50 each. We need nursery space for new seedlings. Ring John 021-952-659 email g.adalton@xtra.co.nz

Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society.

Rat monitoring results are just out for the society's 850ha of pest control on Mt Pirongia using bait stations: down from 75% to a mere 2%. These excellent results continue the trend of the past five years of control and the two 'telling' rats will wish they had moved out long ago!! The bait station areas are serviced by our team of over 50 volunteers, and only requires a commitment of about 3 Saturday mornings over the spring and summer.

The Society is now approaching the Department of Conservation to extend the bait station grid to take the total area under control to 990 hectares and hopefully make the society eligible to reintroduce Kokako to the maunga in the near future. Plans are currently underway to translocate North Island Robins (Pitoitoi) in 2012 thanks to funding from Waikato Regional Council. . The robins are likely to be sourced from Mapara in the King Country area and will involve some exciting but lengthy days pre-feeding, catching and relocating birds. Since the very formation of the society, this goal has always been at the top of our vision and we are rapt that such an important milestone is about to be achieved.

Native bats are also the focus of our attention, with several Automatic Bat Monitors to be set up in our working area around January/ February next year, with a core group of volunteers looking forward to exploring varying options, ultimately seeking to identify elusive maternal roosting sites.

Volunteers for our projects are always welcome and our website (www.mtpirongia.org.nz) and Facebook page set out our current activities. Please contact our Chairperson, Clare St Pierre on clare.stpierre@gmail.com or (07) 8719133 for further information.
Tonia Eckhoff – Publicity Officer

Kauri 2000 Trust



The major planting activity for Kauri 2000 this season has again been in the DOC reserve at Matarangi Reserve. In June a further 1060 trees were added to this regenerating forest bringing the total planted in the area to over 9,000. This was a great achievement by the combined efforts of a team from the Bank of New Zealand, volunteers, trustees, and students from Coromandel Language School and Mercury Bay Area School. Tairua School continues to expand "their" forest above Sailor's Grave where students under the careful guidance of trustee Cherry Ladd are gradually transforming the area into a kauri forest for the future.

Another section of land on Kauri Hill behind Coromandel Town was included in our planting plan for this year. Our Coromandel co-ordinator Keith Stephenson took the helm with contractor Glenn Lees and planted 600 trees assisted by a team of community workers. With the destructive earthquakes in Christchurch fresh in our minds the trustees decided to dedicate these trees as a symbol of hope and permanence for the future to those who have suffered loss of loved ones and property. A dedication ceremony was held on 22nd September. All of us at Kauri 2000 extend season's greetings to the many, many people who are helping to protect our environment. If you are looking for a unique gift idea and want to help restore the kauri forests to the Coromandel give a kauri seedling, a gift that will last thousands of years. Contact us at: info@kauri2000.co.nz www.kauri2000.co.nz Visit us on Facebook. www.facebook.com/Kauri2000

Flora of Aotearoa/New Zealand Course

University of Waikato will be running its course February 11-25, 2011. Those who have attended report it is very worthwhile. This paper is for anyone keen to learn how to identify plants and about the origins of New Zealand's flora. It provides an introduction to field identification, philosophy and techniques of plant systematics focusing on endemic New Zealand plants. Skills taught include field identification of plants and knowledge of plant families, genera and species representative of the New Zealand flora. The course starts with a field trip to Pureora Forest Park followed by lectures, labs, and two more day trips. Students then complete an independent project. This course is suitable for people from a broad range of backgrounds, including university students, professionals wanting to upskill, amateur botanists wanting to learn more, ecologists, ethnobotanists, landscape architects, etc. No prerequisites required. Contact Chrissen Gemmill gemmill@waikato.ac.nz for further information.

The Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust (WCEET)

The Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust (WCEET) is now seeking applications for its 2012 funding round. Over the past eight years the Trust has provided nearly two million dollars in funding to environmental enhancement projects throughout the Waikato Catchment. For further

information about WCEET email: enquires@wceet.org.nz If you have any questions please call Trust Secretary Michelle Archer on 07 858 8403. Applications close on the 31st January 2012.

New Zealand Association of Environmental Educators Conference

The 6th NZAEE biennial Conference is being held from 17-20 January 2012 in Hamilton. The programme is on website (www.nzaeeconference.co.nz). The conference theme is Changing course for a Sustainable World and we hope the event will attract educators who are passionate about contributing to change towards sustainability. They have over 60 presentations on the programme, including some recent research, hot topics and great workshops to engage your minds and hands.

A number of young people will attend the conference from all over the Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Auckland and beyond. Chris Eames, Conference Chair

Weed Standard Operating Procedures

All three Weed Standard Operating Procedures that make up the Department of Conservation's Weed Quality Management system are now available on the internet. These Standard Operating Procedures cover weed surveillance, planning weed work and reporting and reviewing weed programmes. They can access them through:

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/publications/science-and-technical/doc-procedures-and-sops/weeds/>

This best practice technical information can be used by communities, iwi, non-governmental agencies, and partner organisations to help project manage weed work. Please note that Animal Pest SOPs are also available through:

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/publications/science-and-technical/doc-procedures-and-sops/managing-animal-pests/>

This work is part of DOC's commitment to sharing its knowledge and information with others, and to enable more people to participate in conservation.

Mangaiti Gully Restoration Group, Hamilton

With the winter planting of 2768 trees/plants behind us weed control becomes a priority with the onset of



the spring flush. We have focused on mulching the grass area with a regular supply of donated mulch.

This is to retain the ground moisture during the summer dry period and to suppress the weeds. In October Mangaiti Gully was part of a city wide survey to establish the location of Pekapeka, long-tailed bat colonies. Seven electronic detectors were put in our gully for four nights but unfortunately nothing was recorded. Although we were forever hopeful the result was not that surprising. The known colonies tend to be located in the southern part of the city.

Building walkways to give us access to the wet gully floor has been given some priority. A DOC spec. set of steps have been built, a track across the grass area cut with a small digger and a "floating" board walk

constructed to float on the mud. The design of the floating board walk was established after a trial in the muddiest part of our gully. This trial proved very successful which gave us confidence that the board walk we have built will be successful. (See photo). We have an excellent working relationship with Hamilton City Council. In this project they supplied all the materials and our group did all the labour. Rex Bushell

NZ Landcare Trust Conference

With New Zealand landscapes under increasing pressure from commercial and recreational interests, the need to protect the environment and our native biodiversity has never been more important. Open your diaries and block out 29th February to 1st March 2012 - these are the dates for 'Landcare in Action: National Landcare and Catchment Management Conference'. NZ Landcare Trust will host the conference at The Gallagher Academy of Performing Arts, University of Waikato Campus, Hamilton. The event will celebrate the work of rural communities from all around New Zealand and provide an opportunity to explore the role that community leadership plays in sustainable land and water management. It will also consider the practical challenges associated with combining biodiversity enhancement projects with the commercial needs of primary producers. In addition the conference will examine sustainability in a broader commercial context, investigating how sustainable land management can make good business sense.

The conference has been designed to attract a range of Landcare practitioners and resource management professionals. So, if you are a community volunteer directly involved 'on the ground' with pest control or restoration work, this event is for you. Also if you are a scientist or a professional working with communities on sustainability or Landcare projects, this event is for you. Further information is available from the Landcare Trust website, including a draft program for the event and registration details. www.landcare.org.nz/conference

Project Kahikatea

Project Kahikatea is delighted to announce we've made the leap and joined the virtual world; creating a website, which you can view here: <http://www.projectkahikatea.net.nz/>

It's an evolving site at the moment and very much in the early stages, so any feedback would be gratefully accepted. We would like the site to become a "hub" of information for people with Kahikatea remnants and others interested in the survival of this unique lowland ecosystem also.

Nardene Berry, Project Kahikatea Team Member.

The David Johnstone Pukemokemoke Bush Trust BBQ



End of year BBQ and thanks to all the friends of Pukemokemoke. You are invited to a BBQ and a fun afternoon on Saturday 17th December from 4 pm onwards. We hope that your whole family can come. Please bring a salad and liquid refreshments. The Trust will provide meat and juice/tea/coffee. There will be games and tractor rides for the children.

We will be dedicating a lookout panorama and picnic shelter to the memory of the late Brooke Des Forges, first Chairman of the David Johnstone Pukemokemoke Bush Trust. For those who are really keen workers, we are having our last working bee for the year on the same day,

that is Saturday 17th December, 1-4pm.

Waikato Regional Council Catchment Liaison Subcommittees

The Regional Pest Management Advisory Subcommittees have been discontinued and their functions transferred to the appropriate Catchment Liaison Subcommittees. Some existing members of the Advisory Subcommittees were given membership on the Catchment Liaison Subcommittees so there would be continuity in knowledge of pest management issues. You can see the structure of the Catchment Services Committee here

<http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/About-us/Council-profile/Committees-and-councillors/>

The individual Catchment Liaison Subcommittees do not have web pages, but that is something the Council is working on. The role of the Pest Management Advisory Subcommittees was to provide advice and guidance to council's Regional Pest Management Committee on policy, annual operational plans and general pest management issues. Individual subcommittee members had an important role as a conduit for information between communities and the regional council. The eight Catchment Liaison Subcommittees also have that role and are excellent sounding boards for local community expectations.

This change in structure reflects Waikato Regional Council's continuing move toward a more integrated catchment management approach; the more the Council can conduct debate and address issues on a catchment basis the better. The council believes that the ability to draw biosecurity, biodiversity, river and catchment services, carbon farming, water quality initiatives, DOC operations, iwi co-management and other issues into one forum has tremendous value. Overall, they believe the change will allow them to do a better job of connecting with communities more efficiently. The following Pest Management Advisory Subcommittee members have been appointed to Catchment Liaison Zone Subcommittees:

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|------------------|----------------------|
| Barry Hickling | Taupo Zone |
| Malcolm McKenzie | Waipa Zone |
| Tina Morgan | Coromandel Zone |
| Doug Wright | Central Waikato Zone |
| Ian McDougall | Lower Waikato Zone |
| Andrea Hanna | West Coast Zone |
| Roger Buchanan | Waihou Piako Zone |
| Steven Rowe | Upper Waikato Zone |

Opito Bay Environment Group

Winter storms eroded large sections of the dunes (refer photo attached) and took out a lot of the grasses we planted at Easter last year (2010). We discussed this with Jim Dahm from the Waikato



Regional Council. His comments were encouraging saying that, "The erosion is natural and there is still some spinifex landward of the erosion scarp. Once erosion ceases, the spinifex will grow down the dune face and naturally repair the dune face over time". We were grateful to receive a grant for pest control from Waikato Regional Councils 'Small Scale Community Initiatives fund' and will be purchasing additional rat baits and traps. Brian Thompson continues his great work in trapping possums, rats, stoats and wild cats. We have noticed a reduction in possum numbers (our two Timms traps set around two of the houses have not caught anything in the last 2 months!). Definitely

seen an increase in pheasant numbers which shows these ground nesting birds are getting some respite from predators. Manuka 'slash' has been placed in a 40m long slip in our planting area. We will monitor the seedling growth over the next 6 months. A thanks goes to Hirini Rolleston from Waikato Regional Council for supplying our group with weed control products to combat pampas, blackberry, cottonaster, wild ginger, arum lily and tobacco weed. Well over 500 trees were planted over winter with releasing carried out in early November. Trees especially taraire are looking great (just have to wait another 20 years to look even better!!). We have noticed a lot of self seeding of manuka, karo, flax, ferns and mapau starting to come through. Chris Severne chris@obsidiancommunications.co.nz

Rings Beach Restoration Group

We are two retired Granddads and one lady, Bruce Ian and Sarah. We are working with Coromandel Coastal Walkways, DOC, WRC and the Waikato Biodiversity Forum. Our restoration project is located at Rings Beach which is situated on the north east coast of the Coromandel Peninsula between the two townships of Matarangi and Kuaotunu. The project involves an area of 4- 5 hectares of wetland and 30 hectares in fill planting. We aim to restore and preserve the wetland, to plant locally sourced native trees – 1,000 per yr for next 5 years, to encourage native bird life and to monitor, protect and increase fern bird, to eradicate noxious weed especially wilding pines and to control pests by first monitoring then eradicating. We have been extremely busy since the Pest Management/Biodiversity workshop in Coromandel in February 2011. We have raised \$20,000 via grants and donations, planted 350 native

food bearing trees, eradicated 785 wilding pines, commenced the 1st step of pest control and set up a networking programme to inform and record what we have done. A whole new lifestyle has opened up for us. We are being guided, advised and assisted by experts in the field including Moira Cursey, Waikato Biodiversity Forum, DOC Programme Manager, Michael Walker, Eddie Murphy and Nick Hammond, Coromandel Coastal Walkways, Waikawau Restoration- Wayne Todd and Kathi Parr, Maungatautari project, Selwyn McKinder and Craig Lomax, Waikato Regional Council Matt Highway and Hirine Rolleston, local iwi, Kauri 2000 and Warwick Buckman, Waihi Trees. Our volunteers at this stage number around 20 with more coming to plantings. We have received donations from our local communities and we keep them informed about the project.

If you believe in it and dream it – you can do it – with a little bit of help. Bruce Smith

Te Kauae O Maui (TKOM) Nature Reserve

TKOM Nature Reserve comprises a mixture of mature and regenerating forest. Beside manuka and kanuka, it contains mature kauri, pururi, rata, rewarewa, tanekaha and tawa, to name just a few. It has a large number of nikau palm groves, mature fern trees, lancewood and five finger. In this Nature Reserve, *Pittosporum virgatum* which is at risk and naturally uncommon, is present. The area comprising 97 hectares just south of Colville has never been burned off, as was the case with most of the neighbouring properties and therefore the regeneration of the forest is well established. TKOM has not been milled since it was purchased by the current owners in 1980 and some of the kauri are starting to crown now.

The “Umangawha Kiwi Site” of which TKOM Nature Reserve is the centre, was classed ‘a kiwi hot spot’ by Sid Marsh in 1995. Two other surveys, conducted in 2005 and 2010, confirm his findings.

A male kiwi and its offspring were monitored for four years as part of the Moehau Kiwi Sanctuaries efforts to understand and protect the species in a more effective way. Kaka are heard and seen daily and at night roost on one of the centre ridges. Kereru, morepork, bellbirds and tui are present, as are a lot of other small forest birds. The streams are pristine and undisturbed, creating the ideal habitat for native frogs, fish and eels. Several species of skinks and geckos are present and sometimes seen basking in the sun and the rare and vulnerable striped gecko (*Hoplodactylus stephensi*) is known to occur in the Colville area. A wide variety of interesting native insects and other invertebrates are also present, e.g. native bees are commonly seen. For more information go to our web site

www.tekauaeomauinaturereserve.org.nz Nathan McCauley

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 to me. I'll put you in touch with them. Cheers Moira