

# Habitat



**Forest  
& Bird**

GIVING NATURE  
A VOICE

NORTH SHORE BRANCH

APRIL – AUGUST 2011

## MARCHING ON TO MORE CRITICAL HABITATS



FROM  
THE EDITOR

**T**his is it – my final *Habitat* during my six year stint as conservation volunteer. I give it up with real reluctance, as previous editors also have, to make way for freshness... I still remember that day in 2005 when Neil Sutherland and Claire Stevens came to our flat in Browns Bay to interview me for the position. Neil said something along the lines of, 'Victor, this is an unpaid position – will you still be interested?' I must admit, it was on the tip of my tongue to say, 'No!' But I'm glad I didn't, even though *Habitat* has been quite demanding and stressful at times, it was a rewarding experience nonetheless. I have, no doubt, many people to thank

so please bear with me. Apart from Neil and Claire, I'd like to acknowledge the regular contributions of Alan Emmerson, Jim Lewis, Richard Hursthouse, Anne Denny, Jocelyn Sanders, Liz Anstey, Margi Keys, Helene Willis (new members), Karen Wealleans (guest speakers) and Christine Ball (KCC). I also thank Dorothy Wernham and her successor, Linda Johnson, for coordinating deliveries, as well as Nick Keenleyside and now his successor, Mona-Lynn Courteau, for electronic distribution. Other contributions to *Habitat* over the years were made by Sheryl Corbett, Fleur Schultz, Cedric Hay, Nick Beveridge, Kirstie Knowles, Muriel Fisher, Caren Shrubshall,

John Basset, Nola Ovens, Phil Bishop, Ivan Sanders and recently Sarah Noble. Grateful thanks are due to the professional designer and his team – who prefer to remain anonymous – for the giving of their time and resources to ensure that *Habitat* has a high, visual impact. Superprint is thanked for past printing at a discounted rate and now Actionmail for sponsored printing (due to the brokering of Garry Browne). If I've omitted or ill-represented anyone, please accept my sincerest apologies.

Although our paths may well cross again, I leave you in the capable hands of Margi as next editor and bid you farewell!

**"What has been shaped by man can, if necessary, be shaped again. An animal that has become extinct is lost forever."**

– Guggisberg

## When the going gets Tuff, the Rugby Academy volunteers get going!

**Y**ou'll be amazed at the progress when you next visit Tuff Crater. Contractors have continued to remove privet and monkey apple plus spray climbing asparagus, honeysuckle and pampas. Some volunteers are now qualified in the use of herbicides and have been spraying kikuyu, arum lilies and gorse. The track is well underway with metal being laid. However, a bank of shells (possibly Maori kai site) was uncovered on the ridge of tanks 3-4 which meant informing Historic Places and the consultant archaeologist, so work has temporarily halted.

On 12 February, rugby players from the Auckland Rugby Academy arrived at 7am to assist at the working bee. Organised through NZ Trust for Conservation Volunteers,

• continued overleaf



# CHANGING THE GUARD

In May it will be three years since I took over from Jim Lewis as Chairman of the North Shore Branch. At the next AGM I will step down to make way for a new candidate. My term has been busy and eventful with a number of new initiatives and a greater involvement in national campaigns.

Here on the Shore the restoration of Tuff Crater has become the branch flagship and progress is there for all to see. Admirably led by Richard Hursthouse and Anne Denny, there were over 1200 hours of volunteer effort put in during 2010 with several thousand trees planted. Fundraising for this work has been handled by Sarah Noble and many tens of thousands of dollars have been secured for the project. The Branch has also restarted monthly outings and these have been popular and well attended. A variety of activities have been available from half-day walks to full-day excursions and even weekends away. The traverse of Maungatautari Mountain was a memorable challenge.

Victor Meyer has edited *Habitat* for the past six years, despite having moved away from the Shore a couple of years ago. This issue

will be his last and we record our thanks for a job well done over a long spell. Margi Keys, in her first year on the committee, will take over this important job from the next issue. The sale of calendars and diaries has been the mainstay of branch finances for many years now. Margaret Breakspear will continue to run this effort after a very successful first year on the job in 2010. The committee as a whole has been supportive and hard working and made my job a lot easier. I thank them all for that.

On the national front, we have played our part in a number of campaigns. In my first year we had the election and our branch held a debate for candidates from the main parties. This was lively and well attended by members and the general public alike. National, who won the subsequent election, put fire in the bellies of conservationists by announcing

plans to open Schedule 4 conservation land to mining. The Government was forced to back down after more than 20,000 people, many from our own branch, marched down Queen St before attending a rally in Myers Park at which Nicola Vallance of F&B spoke forcefully, along with others.

It was the first time I had marched since the Vietnam War! Currently, at national level, the Society is fighting to stop Meridian's plan to dam(n) the Mokihinui River (West Coast) and to ensure a drylands conservation park is created in the Mackenzie Country (Canterbury). At branch level we have lobbied local MPs on these issues.

We have at least one candidate who will stand for the position of Chair in May, so I will have a successor. I wish him or her well and look forward to seeing the Branch continue to prosper.

– Alan Emmerson



## WHEN THE GOING GETS TUFF

### • continued from front page

the players were accompanied by their development manager who said volunteering for community groups is a valuable part of their overall training. Being extremely fit and strong, the boys (18-20yrs) cut out rampant privet and elaeagnus and after 3 hours on the job were fed, watered and thanked profusely for their hard work!

Also attending were 25 of our regular Forest & Bird volunteers, including some from North Harbour Rotary Club. Moth

plant, climbing asparagus and wattle were targeted.

Without all the keen conservationists who have voluntarily given their time and energy to this project over the years, it wouldn't have got off the ground.

As well as the valuable work being done at Tuff Crater with planting and weeding, a huge amount of volunteer time is also spent behind the scenes attending meetings, project planning, information for the public and the enormous effort involved in applying for and obtaining

funding from a variety of sources.

During the past year our two funding experts on the committee have obtained grants of \$60,000 for exotic tree removal and weed control alone. They have also succeeded in getting funding to start Stage 1 of the walking track. An information brochure is being prepared as is signage for the Tuff Crater walkway.

A big "thank you" to all our volunteers, you are fantastic!

– Liz Anstey



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## Welcome New Members!

A hearty welcome to Christopher Westcott, Julia Crosfield-Brant, Karen Goa, Ken Goa, Belinda Grise, Lou Farrand, Anne Fenney and Ngee Ohya who recently joined/rejoined North Shore Forest & Bird. May you enjoy partnering with us in conservation initiatives on the Shore!

# Outing to bird-watch the Manukau

**T**hirteen of us met up last year on a fine, warm October morning. We first visited the ponds accessible from Puketutu Island, which are a haunt for ducks.

Our previous visit to the Manukau had been in March 2009 – the ducks had been radiant in new plumage, having come through the post-breeding moult. This time, unfortunately, there were fewer duck species and they were all moulting after breeding, which takes place very early. The disappointment was short-lived, however, as spring means the passerine (perching) birds are all singing. We were able to locate several species by their song and fix them in the viewing telescopes. Many were surprised by the beauty of the singing male greenfinch. We also had wonderful views of kingfisher, eastern rosella and goldfinch. We heard the elusive shining cuckoo's unmistakable call but were unable to spot it, and this was also true for chaffinch and yellowhammer.

Leaving Puketutu, we returned to the meeting place, which was the car park next to Mangere Lagoon. From here we walked the track that skirts the coast and leads eventually to Ambury Regional Park. This walk was deliberately timed to coincide with the rising tide which gradually pushed the wading birds closer and closer to our telescopes and binoculars. We paused at the fenced-off area that provides protection for breeding NZ dotterel and were lucky to locate a bird in full breeding plumage. Two species of oystercatcher, spur-winged plovers, pied stilts, wrybills and bar-tailed godwits completed the array of waders in view.

We relaxed on a knoll and ate our lunch as welcome swallows swooped and skylarks soared. The heat was intense as we walked on, adding more species as we went: white-faced heron, three species of shag, Caspian tern. The latter is a majestic bird with its blood-red bill – the largest tern in the world. Its name suggests origins on the other side of the world, but it is quite common in New Zealand and breeds here.

To cap the afternoon, we came upon roosting royal spoonbills which were spectacular through the 'scopes at close range. We compiled a list of 36 bird species – exactly the same number as we recorded in the autumn of 2009. However, there were only 27 species common to each list, which meant those who had attended both outings could now boast of seeing a total of 45 species on the Manukau; not bad for city bird-watching...

– Alan Emmerson



**Above: oystercatchers, (left) pied stilt and (right) spur-winged plover.**



# Habitat



The Forest and Bird Library Collection is now at Awataha Marae, 58 Akoranga Drive. Open Mon - Fri 10am to 3pm. Phone 486 5467

APRIL – AUGUST 2011

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY *TIAKI TAIAO*, NORTH SHORE BRANCH

## North Shore KCC goes to Pa Harakeke

The North Shore KCC went to Pa Harakeke (flax gardens), with Judy, to learn how to make flax flowers, and to learn more about flax.

We learnt about harakeke (common or swamp flax) and wharariki (mountain flax), which are both native to New Zealand. We also learnt about lots of other flaxes, and we were all surprised at how many species there were.

When we went on the bushwalk, the cat Jo-Jo came with us. Of course, she didn't walk but got carried! We walked across

a stream, into the bush, and looked at more flax plants and cabbage trees. We had a look at the swamp, where you get black dye, and we looked at a plant where you can get yellow dye from. When you cook the plant, it smells really nice. We learnt how to cut flax correctly, and what medicinal purposes the flax had. We also learnt how to strip the flax to get fibre from it, which looks like string, and we made flax flowers.

We had an awesome time and we all hope to do it again!

– Jenny Hill (student)



### Print Advisor

We would also like to acknowledge the sponsorship and assistance of Garry Browne or Print Advisor™ (garry@printadvisor.co.nz) and International Print, Browns Bay, who have printed 5000 brochures for the Tuff Crater project. In addition, the artwork for this brochure and three new signs, created by Kate Hursthouse, designer, are hereby acknowledged.

### Omni Gloves

North Shore Forest and Bird acknowledges Omni Gloves, Glenfield, for donating gloves for volunteer use.

### Habitat Extra

We'd like to remind members/readers that *Habitat Extra* is our e-newsletter compiled by Richard Hursthouse and sent out during January, May and September in between the main newsletter editions. Both can be downloaded from the website ([www.forestandbird.org.nz/what-we-do/branches/north-shore](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/what-we-do/branches/north-shore)) so you can get all the latest bits and bobs!

Send newsletter contributions to Margi Keys, PO Box 33873, Takapuna or email [makeys@nettel.net.nz](mailto:makeys@nettel.net.nz)



## COMPUTER RECYCLERS

The Branch is the grateful recipient of a donated laptop from Computer Recycling Ltd. We were put onto them through our Tuff Crater links to Canon. Graeme Torckler, manager, runs a business recycling IT equipment or 'e-waste' such as printer parts, IT parts and equipment, telephone systems, electrical cables and cords. They separate the various wastes by type (plastic, metal, copper, etc) and sell these to manufacturers to recover cost, as their services are FREE. We are pleased to acknowledge their sponsorship and advertise their services. You can contact CR Ltd on 525 5518 or email [info@computerrecycling.co.nz](mailto:info@computerrecycling.co.nz).

We now need an IT savvy person to maintain and update the software on this laptop. Contact us on [northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz) if you can help.

## Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society *Tiaki Taiao*, North Shore Branch

PO Box 33-873, Takapuna, New Zealand | [www.forestandbird.org.nz](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz) | [northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz)

The Committee 2011

<b>ALAN EMMERSON</b>	–	Chairman	473 2216
<b>RICHARD HURSTHOUSE</b>	–	Deputy Chairman	410 5339
<b>JOCELYN SANDERS</b>	–	Secretary	479 2107
<b>RAY SIMPSON</b>	–	Treasurer	TBC
<b>LIZ ANSTEY</b>	–	Committee	480 1545
<b>ANNE DENNY</b>	–	Committee	480 5570
<b>CEDRIC HAY</b>	–	Committee	410 5977
<b>MARGI KEYS</b>	–	Committee	443 6919
<b>SARAH NOBLE</b>	–	Committee	475 6338
<b>CLAIRE STEVENS</b>	–	Committee	419 1233
<b>HELENE WILLIS</b>	–	Committee	480 8851
<b>BRIAN GANNON</b>	–	KCC	443 2479
<b>KAREN WEALLEANS</b>	–	Guest speakers	410 1995
<b>LINDA JOHNSON</b>	–	Habitat deliveries	413 9851
<b>MONA-LYNN COURTEAU</b>	–	Electronic distribution	<a href="mailto:kotuku33@gmail.com">kotuku33@gmail.com</a>

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

VICTOR MEYER, email: [victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz](mailto:victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz)

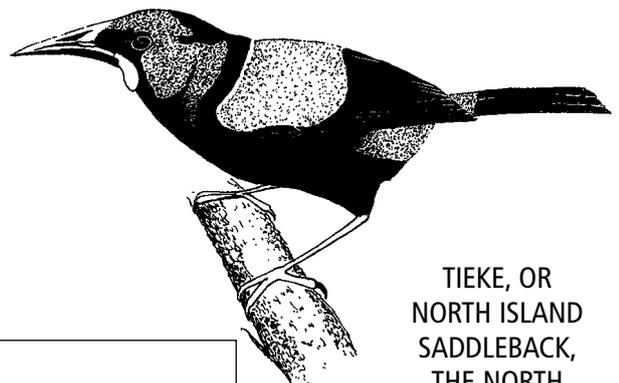
### BIRD RESCUE

SYLVIA 478 8819

Remember if you are concerned about any conservation problems in your area, get in touch with Alan or Richard.

# Habitat

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH SHORE BRANCH  
ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY



TIEKE, OR  
NORTH ISLAND  
SADDLEBACK,  
THE NORTH  
SHORE BRANCH  
EMBLEM



# Habitat

APRIL – AUGUST 2011

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY *TIAKI TAIAO*, NORTH SHORE BRANCH

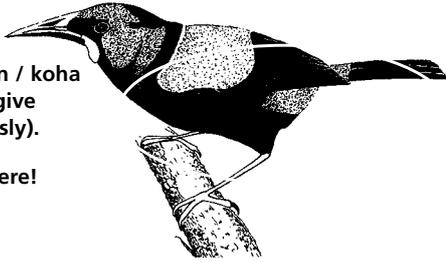
## WHAT'S ON

Public meetings take place on the first Monday of every month (excl. January).

**VENUE:** Takapuna Senior Citizens' Hall,  
The Strand (behind Takapuna Library).

**TIME:** 7.45pm.

**ADMISSION:** Donation / koha  
(please give generously).



We'd like to see you there!

### APRIL Monday 4th

*'Wetapunga recovery – the giants of the weta world are on the move'* by Chris Green of DOC. Wetapunga is the largest species of giant weta found in New Zealand and, until recently, was only found on Hauturu (Little Barrier Island). Chris, an entomologist, has been monitoring the wetapunga populations since kiore were eradicated in 2004. He will share how the numbers have changed on the island and also describe the captive breeding programme through which populations on Motuora and Tiritiri Matangi islands are going to be established.

### MAY Monday 2nd

This evening is our all important AGM which will take place prior to a talk yet to be confirmed at the time of going to press. The speaker has to run the topic past her professor first so it's bound to be of high quality. Don't miss this very promising occasion!

### JUNE Monday 6th

A film for tonight may well be on the cards! However, permission from the producer – a Christchurch resident – could not be sought appropriately in the wake of the Quake Aftermath at the time of publishing.

### JULY Monday 4th

*'Proposal (not) to develop dairy farms in the Mackenzie Basin'* by Nicola Vallance, Forest & Bird Conservation Advocate, is too intriguing to be missed!

### AUGUST Monday 1st

This presentation was still being arranged at the time of publication. Please refer to your very next newsletter for actual details, or contact Karen Wealleans on 410 1995.

## ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS

**APRIL, Fri/Sat/Sun 15-17th.** RUAPEHU LODGE WEEKEND TRIP. Make own way to the lodge on Friday and provide own dinner. Discussion about walk options for Saturday, i.e. morning self-guided walks, afternoon self-guided walk or all-day self-guided walk:

1. Silica Rapids – 3hrs
2. Whakapapanui – 2hrs or cars to one end and walk 1hr
3. Taranaki Falls Loop – 2hrs
4. Ridge Track – 30-40min return
5. Tama Lakes – 5-6hrs

Saturday evening – Potluck shared dinner and guest speaker Ali Beath on the whio (blue duck).

Sunday morning – Cleanup, and then:

1. Trip to Okupapta Caves with private guide on the way back to Auckland – this is a morning event and costs \$125p/p with a ratio of 1 guide to 10 people.
2. Lake Rotopounama – through Turangi.

Costs to cover lodge hire and common tea, coffee and milo – \$55 per adult and \$45 per child for the two nights. If you wish to do the Caves walk the \$125 is extra. Provide own breakfasts and lunches, but shared group dinner and supper on Saturday night (potluck). Bring own snacks. Supply own bedding, sheet, pillow, sleeping bag, warm clothes, hat, rain gear, towel and own first aid and medicine. To make a booking please ring Anne on 480 5570 or 021 121 4610.

**MAY, Sunday 29th.** ARK IN THE PARK, WAITAKERE RANGES, 9.30am sharp. Meet at Ark in the Park, where we will join Ark volunteers to help maintain the bait lines. We will be working 1 or 2 people per experienced volunteer mainly off trail. There is also the option of walking the easy Auckland City Walk (1-2hrs) hopefully with a guide. There will be the chance of seeing robin, kereru, stitchbird/hihi and possibly kokako. To get to Ark in the Park head west on Swanson Rd, left onto Scenic Drive, right onto Te Henga Rd towards Bethells Beach, and left into Falls Rd. Proceed past the golf club and park at the next building (tool shed). Then walk further along the road, across the bridge and the putting green to the Ranger Station. Bring food and drink and good bush-walking gear. Baiting takes all morning, returning to the ranger station for a sausage. Please register with Richard by May 23 and confirm if you are up for baiting or the walk (car-pooling possible): ph 410 5339 or 021 216 1296; richard.hursthouse@xtra.co.nz. More information at [www.arkinthepark.org.nz](http://www.arkinthepark.org.nz).

**JUNE, Sunday 19th.** TUFF CRATER COMMUNITY PLANTING, 10am-noonish. This is our major annual planting event open to all! The council planting will be along the top of tank sites below Canon – a continuation of last year's planting. We will also be planting the mulched area tanks 4-6. Bring a sharp, preferably narrow-pointed spade. Parking is past and below The Warehouse head office off Warehouse Way. No need to register. For queries please contact Richard Hursthouse (410 5339) or Anne Denny (480 5570).

**JULY, Saturday 23rd.** SMITHS BUSH RESERVE, NORTHCOTE, 10am. Meet at Onewa Domain entrance (off Northcote Rd). This lovely 40min nature trail leads through a cathedral grove of giant puriri trees. Large kahikatea and totara are an added feature of this reserve. We'll look at the effects of traffic pollution from the northern motorway, weed invasion, pests and discuss some of the unusual vegetation. If time allows, we may continue on past Awataha Marae round to Tuff Crater. Any queries please contact Liz (480 1545) or Anne (480 5570).

**AUGUST, Sunday 28th.** MOTUORA ISLAND PLANTING, 8am sharp. Join us for an exciting boat trip to the picturesque, predator-free Motuora Island. We will be infill-planting native trees. You will have time to take a walk around the island, or beachcomb. A sausage sizzle and drinks are provided for lunch, but you will need to bring morning tea. Remember to wear sturdy shoes and clothing. Pack a variety of clothing for the weather. Gloves and spades are provided. Catamaran departs from Sandspit at 8am and returns at 4pm. Although the cost is \$20 an adult and \$10 a child, there is often a gold coin donation it being the last planting trip of the season. Book with Jocelyn on 479 2107, [jocsanders@vodafone.co.nz](mailto:jocsanders@vodafone.co.nz).

## TUFF WORK DAYS

Tuff Crater is our key restoration project and we need your help! Work varies from weeding to planting\*:

Apr 9 (Sat 9am) | May 7 (Sat 9am) | \*June 19 (Sun 10am) | \*July 17 (Sun 9am) | Aug 13 (Sat 9am)

To be on the notification list for Tuff work days please email [northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz) or phone Richard (410 5339) / Anne (480 5570).