

Habitat



NORTH SHORE BRANCH

DECEMBER – APRIL 2009

NORTH SHORE RAKIPAEWENUA'S CONSERVATION CHALLENGES



FROM
THE EDITOR

Conservation on the Shore is a busy occupation, whether it be restoration of remnant ecosystems by planting, weeding, pest control and species relocations or combating disease. The lurking recession is not helping either. Non-profit organisations, such as Forest and Bird, are reliant on members' fees and bequests as well as councils' funding grants and the business sector's involvement to ensure ecological well-being and sustainable living.

The Mokihinui dam proposal by Meridian Energy – if accepted by authorities – could prove catastrophic if the warnings from the scientific community are not heeded. A special public meeting took place at Massey University recently to draw attention to this poignant issue. Despite the ecological ramifications if such a development goes ahead, the expectation of a significant earthquake in the region is hugely overdue, making any large-scale construction risky! Such was the view of a knowledgeable geologist from the audience, adding some sobering insights to a great presentation by Debs Martin (F&B Top of SI Field Officer). If you missed it, refer back to the May issue of

Forest & Bird magazine or the revamped Forest and Bird website.

Last night my wife and I were sitting in the living room, talking about life... In-between, we talked about the idea of living or dying. I said to her: 'Dear, never let me live in a vegetative state, totally dependent on machines and liquids from a bottle. If you see me in that state I want you to disconnect all the contraptions that keep me alive; I'd much rather die.' Then my wife got up from the sofa with this real look of admiration towards me and proceeded to disconnect the TV, the dish, the DVD, the computer, the cell phone, the iPod and the Xbox, and then went to the fridge and threw away all my beverage... I almost died! [Tailpiece from Game Rangers Association of Africa]

PS: Claire Stevens attended the 20th birthday celebration of KCC at Little Shoal Bay one Sunday afternoon. There was a big crowd of children and parents, and a good time was had by all. The three founding women (Old Blue recipients) were there with Gordon Ell who was the F&B branch chair at the time of KCC being established.

PTA THREAT

Acronyms are funny things. Whenever you mention the PTA you immediately think of small community schools and earnest parents bustling about raising funds at the school fair. Or even the memorable song 'Harper Valley PTA' by Jeannie C. Riley! But now there is a more sinister connection...

We first heard about PTA from Jack Crow, the ARC's biodiversity representative, when he spoke to our branch earlier in the year. He told us about this new disease that is killing kauri and has been identified in the big kauri forests up north, the Waitakere Ranges and on Great Barrier Island. While it jiggled my memory about some sick-looking trees in my local reserve, I never did anything about it until I saw

an article in the Herald with a scientist I know standing next to an infected tree. At Landcare, I tracked down the scientist working on the disease and he put me in touch with the ARC scientist who is coordinating the campaign to contain the disease while more is found out about it. This person is Nick Waipara and he spoke to our branch at the November meeting. The profile of PTA, or *Phytophthora* taxon Agathis as it is correctly known, has been rising steadily. North Shore City Council has issued warnings, Nick Waipara has been on National Radio, and even the North Shore Times has picked up the story.

And it now turns out that we have it in our own Albany Scenic Reserve, close to the

biggest kauri on the Shore. This fabulous tree has a circumference of 6m and is about 600 years old. Thankfully it shows no sign of the disease. The disease, also known as 'collar rot', can be identified by:

- yellowing leaves
- thinning canopy
- large lesions that bleed resin
- dead branches
- eventual death of the tree

Keep an eye out for more cases and report them to the branch, or directly to the ARC. Vigilance will be required to contain what may turn out to be a devastating setback to the health of our dwindling kauri remnants.

by Alan Emmerson



REEF HERON *EGRETTA SACRA* - (MATUKU)



TUI *PROSTHEMADERA NOVAESEELANDIAE*

Habitat

DECEMBER – APRIL 2009

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

FROM THE CHAIR

KEEP FOCUSSED ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS

As the global recession starts to bite, one of the first calls heard was for an easing of greenhouse gas emission targets from business leaders in industrialised countries, looking to reduce their costs. Such calls must be resisted for while economic stress is normally short-lived, the consequences of failing to tackle carbon emissions will be very long-lasting indeed. We have to ensure that our politicians are reminded of the need to stay focussed on what remains the biggest challenge to humanity in the 21st Century – the threat of global warming caused by man-made CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions.

How can we do this? In New Zealand it is election year and we have far more access to our politicians at this time. Go

along to hear your local candidates when they speak in your area and make your concerns known to them. Politicians are particularly receptive to the opinions of their electorate as voting day draws near. You can also write to your local (and national) newspapers expressing your views and helping to keep the issue at the forefront of people's minds. Maintain your own vigilance by making lifestyle changes that reduce emissions. Use your car less and public transport more – here on the North Shore the bus service to Auckland has improved dramatically with the opening of the Expressway and the new Park and Ride facilities. Buy electricity-efficient appliances and cars with fuel-efficient engines. Switch off appliances at the wall and install low

energy lightbulbs – the list goes on and we all know what to do.

The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has declared that the rise in atmospheric CO₂ will have to be stemmed by 2015 to avoid the worst consequences of climate change. This means we have time to solve the problem, although Al Gore is expressing concern at the pace of change. As they say in his documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, 'We're all in this together.' Let's not lose sight of the important issues as the clouds of recession gather. Act to secure the future of your children and your children's children.

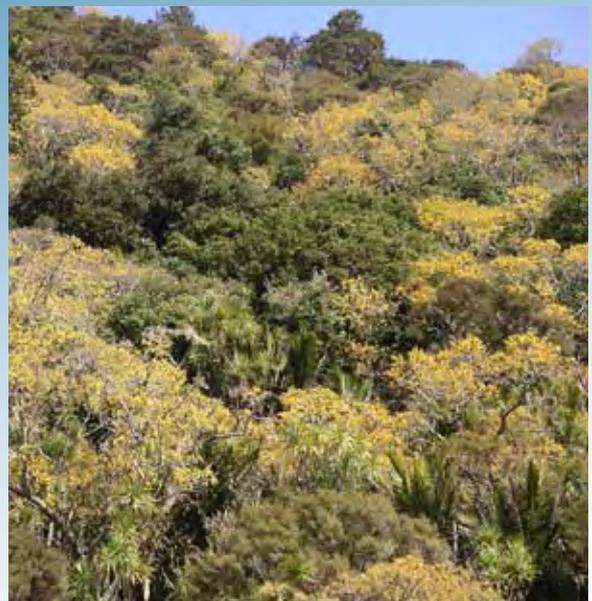
– Alan Emmerson

HOTELO RIVER IN SPRING

The Hoteo River runs east to west draining into the Kaipara. It forms the northern boundary of Atuanui (Mt Auckland), a DOC scenic reserve, which has considerable input from Forest and Bird Kaipara Branch. We were fortunate to have Suzi Phillips, Kaipara convener, on board for some first hand knowledge of the restoration work they are doing, in particular pest control. We joined the Amara, a sturdy launch east of the SH16 bridge at 1pm, cruising upstream at high tide. The trip was timed to coincide with kowhai flowering season and we were not disappointed. The kowhai on the north flank of Atuanui was magnificent, and when the skipper Mark Donaldson turned off the engines the bird song was fabulous. Tui and kereru were abundant. The north side of the river is in shade with good stands of taraire, nikau and rimu.

We reached the upper limit for the launch in an hour or so, but had to bide time for the tide to drop so we could pass under the bridge and venture into the Kaipara, towards Tauhoa. There we observed a shag colony in the mangroves before heading back to base by 5pm. The trip attracted the maximum of 25 people who had a great day out!

– Richard Hursthouse





NORTH ISLAND ROBIN - TIRITIRI MATANGI



CHATHAM ISLANDS BLACK ROBIN

Habitat

DECEMBER – APRIL 2009

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

TUFF CRATER RESTORATION REPORT

The planting down by the water's edge that was done on Community Planting Day, with Forest and Bird members and members of the public, is flourishing. We did a walk around the area recently and this year's plants have bedded in and started to grow. Last year's plants have done very well and we now have a large area in toetoe.

The planted and mulched area above the pond is also growing well. We are seeing the benefits of being able to put down a good amount of mulch. The puriri tree on the corner is the pick of the bunch at present.

Further along is the area we are presently working on. It has been cleared of gorse, partly planted, and some wattles removed. Our next working bee will concentrate on applying mulch to the new plants before the summer heat comes.

Higher up, near the commercial buildings, a number of pines have been removed and a few more are due to go. In the process of accessing the site there has been some disturbance of the track and some plants. These will all be restored and replanted when the work is done.

Working bees are usually held on the fourth Saturday of the month at 9am. We need to do a sweep through the planted areas to root out moth plant and pampas seedlings, and move the mulch onto the newly started area. If you can help, bring tools and a wheelbarrow. Love to see you there!

For information phone Anne (480 5570) or Richard (410 5339).



The facts speak for themselves. DOC's national database on reported Hector's dolphin (including Maui's dolphin) deaths shows that fishing is responsible for 70% of Hector's dolphin deaths where the cause of death is determined. Set-netting accounts for 63% and trawling accounts for 7%. A study by NIWA, with the Ministry of Fisheries, fishing industry and academic researchers, shows an estimated 110-150 Hector's dolphins are killed in commercial set nets every year. Deaths caused by recreational set-netting and trawling were not included in this research.

In April 2008 the Government released more up-to-date information on Maui's dolphin sightings. These figures, based on research surveys and sightings from the public, including several commercial fishers, showed that Maui's dolphins have been seen as far south as Oakura, around Taranaki. There are also records from people who have seen Maui's dolphins caught in set nets off Seal Rock, just off the coast from New Plymouth harbour, offshore from Bell Block, and near Mokau.

The fact that people don't see Maui's dolphins is because they are rare – not because they don't exist. We've not reached that point yet thankfully. Reports from commercial fishers prove that protection is needed and that burying our heads in the sand will only increase the rate of their demise.

In December 2007, 22 common dolphins were caught and killed in the nets of four boats trawling for jack mackerel off the west coast of the North Island. Maui's dolphins are much smaller than more abundant bottlenose dolphins. When the dolphins – which would fit in the average bathtub – get tangled in nets, their small, human-sized lungs quickly fill with water and they drown.

Whilst any costs and lost jobs are to be avoided, there is a clear need to take serious measures to protect Maui's dolphins – not just from set-net and trawl fishing, but from other harmful human activities.

A marine mammal sanctuary is the only measure that can protect Maui's dolphins from all known threats. A marine mammal sanctuary would still allow fishing, boating and other activities to take place, but would make sure that threats to Maui's dolphins are eliminated.

– Kirstie Knowles

Habitat



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

DECEMBER – APRIL 2009

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

Queen of the night survey update



The call for sightings of wild *Cestrum nocturnum* (queen of the night) has been very successful to date. Wild Cestrum has been located in Centennial Park, Sylvan Park, Tuff Crater, Smiths Bush, Chatswood Reserve, Little Shoal Bay, Hobson Rd and Mairangi Bay. This confirms that Cestrum is now naturalising and poses a threat to our native bush reserves.

Sites can be viewed online the Google map 'Cestrum Wild Locations'. Please report any further sightings of naturalising Cestrum to Richard Hursthouse (richard.hursthouse@xtra.co.nz, 410 5339). This information will be used to seek banned plant status for Cestrum.

A Plea!

If you get a chance to help fold and deliver Habitat to members:

- Area 509 - Braemar Rd, The Esplanade
- Area 802 - Deep Creek Rd, Waiake
- Area 807 - Glenvar Rd, Long Bay
- Area 809 - Cliff Rd, Torbay

Please contact Linda Johnson (ph. 413 9851).

Pest-free North of Auckland Project

The New Zealand Kiwi Foundation is researching the possibility of controlling mammal pests from Auckland to the top of the North Island. There are three main parts to the project:

1. Demonstration areas
2. Comprehensive research
3. Translocation of indigenous avifauna

For more information about the project, please contact Josephine Newman on 027 216 7611 or email Greg Blunden (NZ Kiwi Foundation Convener): greg@kiwifoundation.org.nz.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

A hearty welcome to Simon Edwards, Andrew & Janine Blackburn, MJ & AT Baker, Kent & Lisa Dickson, Harry Pollock, Diana Pipke and Jenni James who recently joined North Shore Forest & Bird. May you enjoy partnering with us in conservation initiatives on the Shore!

Motuora Island Planting, 31 August

After having bookings of 30 plus for F&B and KCC, only about six of our members ended up planting at Motuora Island. The catamaran was out of order and only three water taxis could go to the island, in what seemed enormous seas. Many elected to go elsewhere for the day. However, the intrepid bunch arrived at Motuora and straight away started planting. The weather slowly improved, which aided in the planting of over 3,000 trees (the last big plant of the season). The usual sausage sizzle and refreshments were enjoyed by the planters, who then were able to enjoy the island scenery for an hour, before being taken back to Sandspit by a repaired catamaran.

– Jocelyn Sanders

Tiritiri Matangi KCC Overnight Camp, 18/19 October

Several KCC families were treated to magnificent weather, combined with the flowering of trees and flax plants, to give them a welcoming feast of birds on the island. The families tramped around the island and delighted in spending time on some of the lesser known beaches and tracks on Tiritiri Matangi. Kiwi were heard, but not seen. Greg – the friendliest of the takahē – was seen often, especially when food was around! It was awesome to see children so interested and enthusiastic about native birds and the environment.

– Jocelyn Sanders

New websites to browse

- www.ecoevents.org.nz (Auckland's environmental network, previously Manawa)
- www.forestandbird.org.nz (Forest and Bird's revamped pages, same URL)

Send newsletter contributions to Victor Meyer, PO Box 33873, Takapuna or email victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz

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

PO Box 33-873, Takapuna, New Zealand | www.forestandbird.org.nz | northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

The Committee 2008/2009

ALAN EMMERSON	–	Chairman	473 2216
RICHARD HURSTHOUSE	–	Deputy Chairman	410 5339
JOCELYN SANDERS	–	Secretary	479 2107
LAUREN POWER	–	Treasurer	478 6103
LIZ ANSTEY	–	Committee	480 1545
ANNE DENNY	–	Committee	480 5570
CEDRIC HAY	–	Committee	410 5977
VICTOR MEYER	–	Committee	427 5774
SARAH NOBLE	–	Committee	475 6338
CLAIRE STEVENS	–	Committee	419 1233
HELENE WILLIS	–	Committee	480 8851
BRIAN GANNON	–	KCC	443 2479
KAREN WEALLEANS	–	Guest speakers	410 1995
LINDA JOHNSON	–	Habitat deliveries	413 9851
NICK KEENLEYSIDE	–	Electronic distribution	info@fragileworld.org.nz

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

VICTOR MEYER, email: victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz

BIRD RESCUE

SYLVIA 478 8819

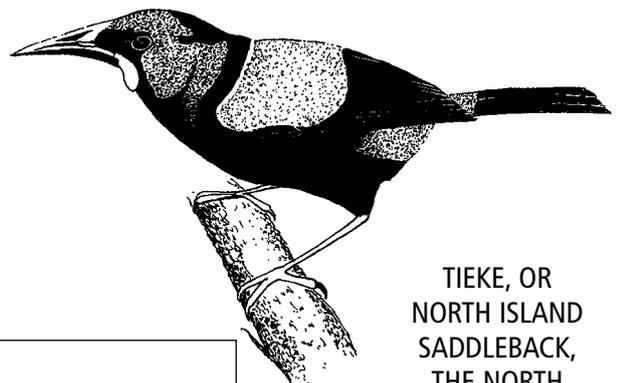
Remember if you are concerned about any conservation problems in your area, get in touch with Alan or Richard.

Habitat

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



FOREST
& BIRD



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



Habitat

DECEMBER – APRIL 2009

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 except 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!

DECEMBER Monday 1st

'Conservation education and enviroschools' organised by Kate Jackson of North Shore City. A couple of schools are going to give a short presentation each about the conservation work they are doing. Don't miss this exciting evening! It is also our Christmas meeting – please bring a plate to share and be festive!

FEBRUARY Monday 2nd

'The real NZ Anthem' presented by Carryn Hojem on the calling behaviour and pattern of North Island brown kiwi. Come and hear about this iconic species and its' repetitive, rising pitch at night. Don't miss out!

MARCH Monday 2nd

'Ways to increase urban biodiversity in our cities.' Robyn Simcock from Landcare Research will talk about Low Impact Urban Design and Development (LIUDD) as a sustainable living concept. Urban sustainability and health are achieved through effective management of storm water, waste, energy, transport and ecosystem services.

APRIL Monday 6th

'Nature Heritage Fund' presented by Allan McKenzie. This talk is about the purpose of the fund which is to protect pristine indigenous ecosystems in New Zealand by providing incentives for voluntary conservation. It is administrated by DOC and receives an annual allocation from the Government.

Watch this space:

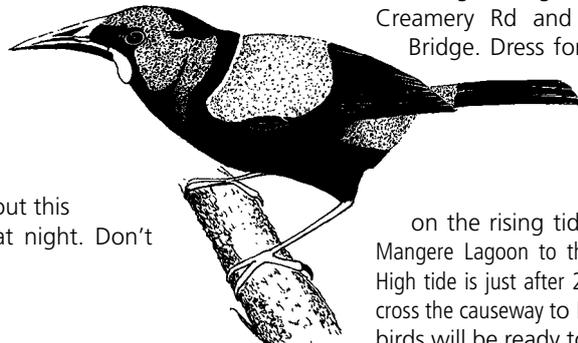
Richard Hursthouse from our own membership will talk to us in May about restoration work at Centennial Park and Campbells Bay Urban Sanctuary.



ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS

March, Sunday 15th. BIRDWATCH THE MANUKAU, 10am start. Meet in the car park at Mangere Lagoon. This is at the junction of Creamery Rd and Greenwood Rd in Mangere Bridge. Dress for the weather! Remember it is often cooler on the coast.

Wear sturdy shoes. BYO lunch and binoculars if you have and carry water. There will be a walk on the rising tide along the coastal path, past Mangere Lagoon to the hides of Ambury Regional Park. High tide is just after 2pm so if time permits we may also cross the causeway to Puketutu Island, where wading birds will be ready to migrate back to the Northern



Hemisphere and many will be in breeding plumage. Please express interest to Alan Emmerson on 473 2216 or email emmo66@xtra.co.nz. Carpooling will be organised.

April, Saturday 25th. ESKDALE PARK INTERPRETIVE WALK, 1pm (2hrs duration). Meet near the top of Domain Rd in Glenfield. The upper section of the reserve will be explored under guidance. Cost: \$2 each for members; \$5 non-members. Phone Margi Keys (443 6919) to book.

For further trip suggestions please speak to Richard Hursthouse or Sarah Noble.

Remember to buy a F&B Gift Membership for a special person this Christmas!