



Forest & Bird **highlights**

In a year that New Zealanders coped with natural disasters and economic downturn, Forest & Bird maintained the momentum for protecting nature.

Many of our members, supporters and staff suffered hardship and great loss during the Christchurch earthquakes. Our thoughts are with them and we hold sincere hope that Christchurch will be rebuilt as a better city with a strong connection with nature.

Parts of New Zealand's environment came under intense pressure for economic development. Forest & Bird spoke forcefully to protect our natural heritage for its own sake, for the future of our economic and social wellbeing and for generations of New Zealanders to come.

With the launch of a new supporter recruitment programme, Forest & Bird membership grew by more than 2000 during the year, the first significant gain in 20 years.

Forest and Bird is a national organisation and draws its strength, mandate and credibility from its local branches, with members actively engaged in conservation in almost every community in New Zealand. This local empowerment, given its voice nationally through the Executive and staff, is the real secret of Forest & Bird's effectiveness.



Annual Report For the year to 28 February 2011



Saving nature on land

The nation got behind Forest & Bird's campaign to protect our national parks from mining. The government listened and shelved its development plans for Schedule 4 conservation land. But government and industry eyed up other parts of the conservation estate for mining, and Forest & Bird subsequently continued the advocacy work in speaking up for the native plants and animals in these natural areas.

There's fresh hope for the Mackenzie Country's tawny tussocklands after progress on Forest & Bird's campaign to halt further expansion of intensive farming and the colossal irrigation circles that now blot the landscape. After several Forest & Bird events and actions that placed the spotlight on the region, the government established the collaborative Mackenzie Sustainable Futures Trust, on which Forest & Bird is represented, along with farming, industry and recreation groups.

The Society advocated for better pest management, including the use of 1080 to control possums, rats and stoats that are threatening the existence of our unique forests and birdlife. We supported the Department of Conservation in managing introduced game animals – not the Game Animal Council that has been set up and that will benefit overseas trophy hunters.

At a community level, Forest & Bird branches continued their pest control and restoration of Forest & Bird reserves and the conservation estate, and work with private land owners to enhance nature. Forest & Bird represented nature in resource planning and local forums.

We continued important work at the top of the South Island surveying for endangered long-tailed bats and carrying out pest control and publicising their plight to protect remaining populations.

Saving nature in freshwater

The demands of the growing dairy industry have taken a serious toll on New Zealand's rivers, lakes and aquifers. Forest & Bird was represented on the government's collaborative Land and Water Forum, which delivered gains for freshwater, though the government stopped short of adopting the forum's recommendations for a National Policy Statement on Freshwater.

In Canterbury, where pressure on scarce water resources is especially critical, Forest & Bird continued to work on the Canterbury Water Management Strategy, to protect the naturally dry Mackenzie Country and to safeguard other waterways, including the Hurunui River.

On the West Coast, we continued to direct a spotlight on the wild Mōkihinui River, which Meridian Energy plans to wreck with a hydro dam, and we gained greater legal protection for significant wetlands.

In the North Island, staff trained river engineers on how to minimise the impact they have on native birds that nest and feed along riverbeds.



2011 nature numbers

38,000 submissions against mining national parks

200,000+ trees planted by Forest & Bird members

16 endangered kokako released at Ark in the Park

1551 different species found at Mana BioBlitz

Up to **40,000** seabirds estimated killed by fishing industry in NZ's EEZ

70,000 wonderful members and supporters of Forest & Bird



Saving nature in our seas and coasts

Forest & Bird worked to save coastal birds across the country, from yellow-eyed penguins in Southland, little blue penguins in Wellington and our 43 remaining fairy terns north of Auckland. The fairy tern project team studied the critically endangered species' feeding areas and searched for suitable alternative breeding sites since people are destroying fairy terns' favourite beach spots.

We continued our scientific work identifying New Zealand's marine Important Bird Areas, helping to join the dots in a significant global network.

A total of 1551 different species of plants and animals were found in Forest & Bird's BioBlitz held along the coastline, seas and land of Mana, north of Wellington, in February.

We continued to advocate for New Zealand sea lions and endangered native Hector's and Maui's dolphins, whose numbers are continuing to decline.

In Northland, Forest & Bird joined forces with local iwi to better protect the coast and marine life around Mimiwhangata, and adopted a rāhui tapu marine protection concept for the area, which we have continued to promote to government.



Saving nature with others

Forest & Bird staff, Executive and members achieved conservation successes by working with individuals and groups across many sectors. In communities throughout New Zealand, our branch members worked on ecological restoration, pest control and other nature projects with council, iwi and other partners.

Forest & Bird had a voice on the government-backed Land and Water Forum and Mackenzie Sustainable Futures Trust, and we regularly met MPs from all parties, government ministers and the Prime Minister. We worked to increase numbers of our unique birds as partners in the Kakapo Recovery Programme and the Kiwi Recovery Programme.

We forged closer relations with iwi around the country, especially in Northland working on better protection for the Mimiwhangata coastal area, and with Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Tūhoe.

With the Department of Conservation, the Animal Health Board and Federated Farmers, we promoted the use of 1080 to control possums, rats and stoats.

A Forest & Bird representative joined the global Marine Stewardship Council Stakeholder Council, which promotes sustainable fishing. We continued our involvement with the international Pew Environment Group in striving for greater protection of the seas around the Kermadec Island group.

We strengthened ties to BirdLife International with a seat on the worldwide conservation organisation's Global Council, and we offered practical support for conservation work in Fiji and Vanuatu.



Ruapehu lodge rises from ashes



Governor-General Sir Anand Satyanand and Ngāti Tūwharetoa paramount chief Sir Tumu Te Heuheu officially opened Forest & Bird's new lodge at Whakapapa Village in October. The \$1 million lodge replaced the original 1967 lodge, which burnt down in 2008.

Forest & Bird Executive member Jon Wenham led the five-month building project, which was financed by insurance and donations from individuals and branches.

The well-insulated, double-glazed lodge features 32 beds in five bunkrooms, three lounges, a large dining area, kitchen and a drying room. It is warm and comfortable, and is a popular base for members and many others to explore Tongariro National Park and the nearby skifield.



A stronger Forest & Bird

Forest & Bird's Executive recognised the need for a Strategic Plan to identify the challenges of the future and to clarify the Society's conservation and organisational goals. After consulting members and staff, a Strategic Plan was developed.

Through a new face-to-face recruitment programme we have significantly increased the number of regular donors contributing more than the basic membership fee. These contributions are building a more secure financial base for the Society, along with the Endowment Fund, which was set up in 2009.

A new membership and fundraising database was launched, which is improving our ability to serve our growing number of supporters.

New conservation advocates and another part-time lawyer were employed, thanks to generous support from donors.

Our volunteers in branches throughout the country put in thousands of hours planting, weeding, carrying out pest

control, doing bird counts, holding their local and regional politicians to account, making resource management submissions, helping children learn to value nature – and getting outdoors to enjoy our wonderful natural world.

Despite the challenges of 2010 and the lower ranking of the environment in parts of New Zealand society, Forest & Bird increased its public profile and played an important role as a voice for our unique plants, animals and landscapes.

Barry Wards
Forest & Bird President



Photos: David Hallett, Tim Higham, Ian Trafford, Peter Scott, Jon Wenham, Simon Hayward, Alan Reith/DOC, Jordan Kappely

Conservation Ambassadors



Sir Alan Mark



Craig Potton



Gerry McSweeney

Forest & Bird appointed three outstanding conservationists as Conservation Ambassadors for the Society.

Sir Alan Mark, Craig Potton and Gerry McSweeney have all made major contributions to Forest & Bird and conservation, and they will be significant voices for nature.

