



Te Puke Branch – August 2010 Newsletter

Indoor evening meetings

Monday 20th September

1080: Good News For Conservation

A documentary film about 1080. Dale Williams from Environment BOP will lead a discussion afterwards.
7.30 p.m. at Masonic Lodge, Oxford Street, Te Puke.

Monday 18th October

On the trail of Snow Leopards

Maurice Wilkie, Rotorua Lakes DOC officer, talks about his recent trip to Ladakh in Northern India, in search of snow leopards and other rare and endangered species.
7.30 p.m. in the Aihe Room, Papamoa Library.

Monday 15th November

Mauao, Wildlife at the Mount

There's plenty of wildlife right on Mt Maunganui's back doorstep. Presented by Mark Ray, TCC Park Ranger.
7.30 p.m. at Masonic Lodge, Oxford Street, Te Puke

Kokako release in Otanewainuku

After 8 years in operation, the Otanewainuku Kiwi Trust recently trapped its 500th mustelid (stoats and ferrets). The graph below shows the number of mustelids caught from 2002 to 2009, as monthly totals.

Now that the Kiwi Trust has been able to keep pests, including rats and possums, at sustained low levels, it's now practical to re-introduce kokako to Otanewainuku forest. Over the next few weeks a group of kokako will be captured and transferred from nearby Kaharoa and Rotohehu forests.

Some extra hands are still required to help catch kokako and baby-sit them in their temporary aviary, so if you would to get involved please contact Carole Long. **Phone 542 0224**

Outdoor film evening

1080: Good News For Conservation

An outdoor film evening on top of Mt Drury
Friday 17 September at 6:30pm.

1080: Good News For Conservation is a documentary film which reveals the benefits to our native birds resulting from the control of predators with 1080 poison.

Join us at the top of Mt Drury to witness the rejuvenated dawn chorus in those forests protected with 1080. You'll also see interviews with scientists and DOC rangers who work in the front line to protect native species, including blue ducks (whio) in Tongariro National Park and yellowheads (mohua) in the Landsborough Valley near Mt Aspiring National Park.



Open to everyone, and no need to book. Make sure you bring warm clothes and a torch.

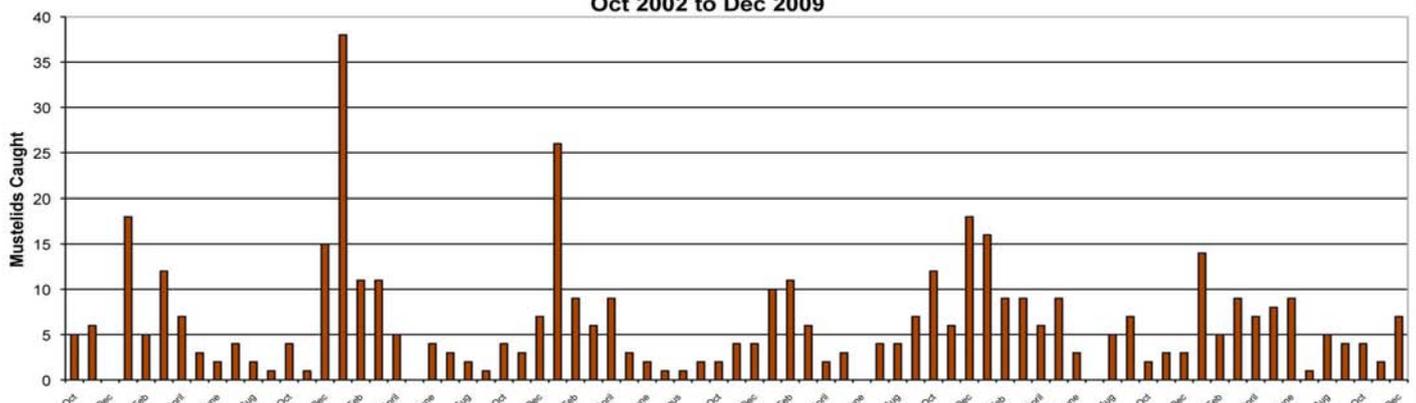
The easiest way to the top of Mt Drury is by walking directly from the car parks along Marine Parade. Bring a picnic and arrive early to enjoy the view.



Contact:

Neale Blaymires
Ph 07 573 4157

Otanewainuku Kiwi Trust Trapping Data Mustelids
Oct 2002 to Dec 2009



Recent Rambles

Papamoa Sand Dune study Saturday 27 March

Pim de Monchy of Coast Care led 11 people for a dune study at Papamoa.

On the fore dunes we learned of the importance of pingao and spinifex in producing a gentle vegetated slope to buffer storm erosion, as opposed to the more dense exotic marram grass which builds a steep high dune with wind action. Steep dunes become undermined by high tides and collapse. The dunes in some places have advanced many metres with planting of native species and sometimes fencing off the areas to protect from human damage.

Other plants growing in this zone were sand tussock (hinarepe), NZ ice plants and calystegia a member of the convolvulus family and euphorbias.

In the secondary zone we were fortunate to see the rare *Pimelea arenaria* which is being monitored, sand coprosma and carex. We conducted an unsuccessful search for skinks among the muelenbeckia. There were no katipo seen (or felt) although an interesting pair of little spiders tangled in the hairs on Pim's arm.



Pimelea arenaria



At the conclusion of our study we all spent time pulling the large leaved ice plant with the yellow flower, a South African native, not to be confused with the smaller, mauve flowered native ice plant. It was satisfying to view many large piles of the plants at the end of an interesting day.

There are about 23 Coast Care groups in the Bay of Plenty extending from Waihi Beach to Cape Runaway and we are indebted to the groups, who with their perseverance and hard work have made a visible difference in protecting our foreshore, plants and habitats.

Dorothy Mutton

Mystery Trip Sunday 23 May

This was organised by Roy Hooton to a farm near Swapps Quarry on the Matamata side of the Kaimais.

There were thirteen people who came and only 2 of us were kids. We parked at the quarry at 10am and walked uphill for 2 hours on a private road. The road zigzagged up next to lovely farmland with astounding views of the Waikato. As we got higher the air started getting colder and mist hung thick all around us. When we got to the Repeater Station and dome at the top we couldn't see 2 meters in front of us. We sheltered behind a rock and had lunch amongst the alpine vegetation, the mosses and tiny trees so different to our normal trees, I was amazed.



The walk down was hard because my feet were frozen.

Petra Reid (9 years old), with help from Cathy Reid

Rotoehu Reserve Kokako walk Saturday 19 June

Thirty five people lead by Johlene Kelly of DOC, Rotorua Lakes, spent an enjoyable day in the Rotoehu Forest where we hoped to hear and see kokako on our ramble.

Johlene played the kokako "mews and tooks" but it was not until we were leaving our lunch spot that three birds came to investigate us. Following that there were several other sightings and a few mews. Although they were not in full song we



felt privileged to share time with these often elusive birds as many people had not seen them previously.

Johlene is currently involved in the 10-yearly monitoring of an enclosure vegetation plot designed mainly to keep out deer and wallabies. Comparisons are made with a control plot of equivalent size of previous measurements of basal area, forest composition and seedling ratios. There are four smaller plots elsewhere in the forest.

June and July is the best time for finding fungi in the bush and we were not disappointed. The most interesting find was a green toadstool known as verdigris waxgill.

From information supplied to us, pest control for rats and

possums was undertaken from 1994-1997. In 1995 there were 41 birds which increased to 55 birds by 1997. No further pest control was carried out and in 2002 there were only 42 birds.

Timberlands did a 1080 drop in 2004 when the birds numbered 43. DOC followed with 1080 drops in 2007 and 2008 increasing the population to 69 in 2009. It is thought there could be close to 100 birds in the block at present.



File photo of kokako taken by Alex Mitchell

10 birds were translocated in 2009 to Secretary Island in Fiordland and there is another proposed transfer of 10 to Otanewainuku this year.

However there is no funding for any pest control until 2014-2015 that would allow successful breeding. At present the bush is healthy due to low predator numbers and it is to be hoped that lack of predator control in the next four years will not decimate the population again.

Dorothy Mutton

Sharpen those spades

The green fingers of our F&B tree growers have been working overtime and Bay of Plenty Regional Council are happy to use a couple of hundred of our plants to grace the Papamoa Hills Regional Park.

PLANTING DAY: Sunday 19 September

Meet at the carpark off the end of Poplar Lane at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday 19 September to help with the planting and take a walk in the Park afterwards.

April AGM: Report from the Chair

From 25th Annual General Meeting of Te Puke Branch 12 April 2010.

I am pleased to announce that this 25th year marked 2 well deserved high recognitions for 2 of our top branch members.

Last winter, Dorothy Mutton travelled to Wellington to receive the highly esteemed 'Old Blue Award,' the highest conservation award available in Forest and Bird nationally. On behalf of the committee and members (and the wild life) I wish to extend our gratitude to Dorothy for her unwavering hard work for years and years. We are proud and thankful to have you on our team. And I have personally been very thankful to have you helping me out this year in my role as Chair. Thank you and well deserved Dorothy.

Now, in the year previous, Carole Long was awarded the Old Blue Award too. In this last year, late in 2009, Carole once again won a prestigious award, this time locally, coming first in the Environmental Category of the Tauranga City Councils Community Spirits Awards, presented by the Mayor.

It was well deserved, not a week goes by without Carole attending several meetings or events, talking to children at schools, taking a guided walk, doing a working bee, advocacy or fund raising. On behalf of us all I would like to thank Carole for her enthusiasm and hard work.

On a different note, the committee held a strategic planning

meeting to set out guidelines for our financial and manpower priorities as a branch.

In summary, it was agreed that branch priority will be given to activities around the protection of our local native fauna, including birds (kiwi, dotterel, kokako,) bats, insects and the Ottawa Hochstetters frog.

Our Ottawa frog which was re-discovered in 1994, is genetically distinct from all the other Hochstetter frogs in the country. It has been making it into the news locally and nationally this year, alongside the Governments current proposals to mine more Conservation land. Landcare Research's annual report for 2009 states that the loss of biodiversity in this country over the past 10 years as a result of intensification of agriculture is as bad as it was during the first period of European colonisation. Large scale mining would bring a similar loss in conservation areas. Our humble frogs act as indicators of environmental quality because of their sensitivity to pollution. Our branch will continue to keep an eye on the developments 'on the ground' at Te Puke Stone Enterprises.'

This year we intend to start studying local bats, which are seen in the Ottawa area. You are all invited to come along in November to help. Details are all on the events calendar and will be advertised again in the next newsletter.

Since my time of living in the Papamoa Hills I have regrettably witnessed the demise of some of our endemic species in this neck of the woods. 15 years ago we could easily find a foot long centipede at our back door, (already at that stage the official records were showing them extinct from the mainland), we also would hear the occasional kiwi call from our bedroom window. We do not readily have either of these now. In response to reports similar to this, of visible decline of native forests particularly within our local forests the Kaimai Mamaku Campaign was launched last November in Bay Court in Tauranga. At present we are looking at an Integrated pest management programme across the Kaimai Mamaku area, to hopefully save what is hanging on by a thread, and then to reintroduce species which were once abundant here, but have now gone. An example of this is the coming re-introduction of kokako into the Otanewainuku forest, as a result of successful management programmes further south. The plan is to relocate some kokako this year and sound anchor them into the block to stop them flying back to where they came from. We are all looking forward to this.

Another hot topic locally is the damming of more rivers to produce yet more power. The Kaituna and the Motu are the last 2 major rivers in the Bay of Plenty that have not been dammed for Hydro, until now. Last December, a number of us here in the Bay joined the National campaign to focus on protecting the last remaining Wild Rivers in the country. The threat from this is still very real at present for our Kaituna River, and work is still needed on this front.

I am thankful to be able to work along-side so many of you who are here tonight. So many of you have skills and resources that you have willingly shared with us. I want to thank all of the Committee for their help and expertise over the last year, and the members of the branch that we have called upon to help out at various times during the year. Thank you for your support and hard work. It has been a pleasure working with you all.

We here, are all the voice for nature and I believe nature is crying out for our help.

Cathy Reid

Monthly Walks

You don't have to be a Forest & Bird member to join in on our walks – or super-fit either. We walk at *botanical speed*, so there's plenty of time to take in the sights and to puzzle over the correct botanical name for that fascinating fern...

Meet 8:45 a.m at Boucher Avenue carpark by Te Puke Woolworths to car-pool, but check with the contact person, as some walks have a different start time or meeting place. The contact person will also advise if trip is cancelled.



Saturday 21 August. Wairoa stream - view Ananui falls

Walking the Wairoa stream track. Stream crossings and some climbing. Woodlands Rd Katikati. 4 hours walk. Moderate grade.

Contact: Cathy Reid 573 9566 / 027 223 4991 Car \$15

12 to 19 September. CONSERVATION WEEK 2010

Watch your newspapers for events.

Sunday 26 September. Manawahae Kokako block

Must be up before the birds to catch the Kokako in full song. Meet **5.45am** Woolworths carpark.

EARLY START!! 3 hours walk Easy grade.

Contact: Bev Nairn 533 4247 / 027 293 7985 Car \$15

Saturday 30 October. Golden Cross mine - Dancing flat

Recently closed mine site at Karangahake and streamside. Walk through bush rich in Nikau, possibly as far as older mining ruins. 4 hours walk Moderate grade

Contact: Bev Nairn 533 4247 / 027 293 7985 Car \$5

Friday 5 November. Street Stall

From 8am outside the Te Puke Post Office, Jellicoe street. Te Puke contact: Dorothy Mutton 573 8152

Friday 26 November. In Sky And Stream - Ottawa night life

Look for bats at dusk. See the abundant life of a stream. Wet feet are likely, but not necessary. Meet **7.30 pm** in the evening at Woolworths carpark.

Contact: Red Charles 573 8151 / 027 2234 991

Here are the latest walks and activities for KCC kids. Due to the popularity of these walks you must book beforehand, and KCC members will be given preference over non-members. All children must be accompanied by an adult.



Friday 15th August

Nature Detective Hunt

Join the hunt for signs of ecological recovery in the predator-free sanctuary at Maungatautari. Track down rare birds and insects, and climb the tower to see the forest canopy up close.

Meet: 10am at the Gates of Maungatautari sanctuary. Take Arapuni Rd to Pukeatua and then Tari Rd. Allow 90 mins from Tauranga. Cost: \$5 per person.

Bring: Notebook, lunch, warm clothing, raincoat & camera.

Contact: Brigit Manning 576 3173 numbers limited

Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th September

Kaharoa Dawn Chorus & Raptor Experience

Sleepover at Kaharoa School Hall for pre-dawn visit to Kaharoa Reserve to listen for Kokako. BBQ brunch and games followed by Sunday afternoon trip to see raptors at Wingspan.

Meet: Kaharoa School 5pm on Saturday.

Bring: All food, outdoor clothing, camera, torch, bedding, including carrymats/lilos

Cost: \$10 - \$15 per person depending on numbers.

Book: Brigit Manning 576 3173

Sunday 3rd October

Wildlife Cruise with Butler

Meet: 8:30 am Tauranga Bridge Marina 'C' Pier.

Cost: \$30 per person. limited numbers – be in quick!

Book: Juliette Braun 5332522. Booking secured by payment.

Friday 21st November

Lake Okareka Board Walk

Meet: 10am at the corner of Boucher Ave, Te Puke to car pool.

Bring: Lunch, snacks, drink, sunhat, raincoat & walking shoes.

Contact: Sharyn Heayns 542 1789



Your Forest & Bird Committee

Position	Name	Address	Email	Phone	Mobile
Patron & Treasurer	Dorothy Mutton	3 Strathaven Way, Te Puke 3119	dotmutton@clear.net.nz	07 573 8152	
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	John Singleton	110 Jellicoe Street, Te Puke 3119		07 5739 730	027 711 2442
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