



MEETING AND ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

All of our talks are open to the public – everyone is welcome. Talks are followed by supper and chat. A gold coin koha is welcomed.

We encourage families, particularly Kiwi Conservation Club (KCC) members to join us on field trips and outdoor activities, as well as friends of members, and, where there are no group limitations, non-members are also welcome. Please book in for field trips and other outings in advance, as it makes organisation so much easier and more enjoyable for us. Always let the trip leader know if you have any relevant medical condition, and always come prepared for unpredictable weather.

Prior to each activity/meeting we send out a reminder email to members. As our activities do not occur at the same time each month these reminders can be very timely. If you do not receive these emails and would like to, or have changed your email address, please email rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

All members are welcome to become involved with the Tikitapu pest control project, to lead field trips, assist in promoting the branch, and the writing of letters to MPs or the newspaper.

If you have any ideas for guest speakers or activities, please let us know by contacting a Committee member. Phone numbers are on the back page.

Rotorua Branch 2018 -2019

Rotorua Branch AGM

Rotorua Branch held its AGM for the 2018-19 year in April and all sitting committee members were re-elected at the meeting. We thank all those people, both members and non-members, who have contributed to branch activities in any way during the year. A special thank you to the Committee who have worked hard and accomplished much.

Financial Report: Financially the branch is doing well. The Branch had a comfortable surplus after meeting all expenses. Our main source of income is interest derived from Violet Bonnington's bequest and our Bank term deposits, and our main expenses were producing and posting our newsletter, and costs associated with Violet Bonnington Reserve and the Tikitapu Scenic Reserve pest control project. A change in the Forest & Bird financial year means that we will now align with the calendar year.

Communication: We communicate with our members through our twice-yearly newsletter which is printed or emailed. Events are also published in the Daily Post. If you are not receiving the Forest and Bird magazine (published quarterly), it is likely that F&B National Office does not have your current address or your membership has lapsed. We can check your new details and notify National Office of any changes on your behalf, if you provide us with your current address (email rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz with details).

Facebook: The branch has a Facebook page. "Forest and Bird - Rotorua Branch" with the user name [forestandbirdrotoruabranch](https://www.facebook.com/forestandbirdrotoruabranch). It is mainly an informative page with posts and photographs of recent news items and details of our own activities. The national website and Facebook page for Forest and Bird carry many interesting items - don't forget to check them out too. Also view the dedicated Facebook page for our Tikitapu pest control project. Any ideas for content - and any items, articles or photos - will be much appreciated! Please send them in to Heather (heathers@xtra.co.nz) or rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz.

Reports

Tikitapu Care Group (Manager – Frankie Blakely)

Bait lines have all been checked and cleared in preparation for the poison operation that started in late July. This year we will be trialling Romark bait stations alongside the existing Philproof bait stations and the Goodnature traps.

This project is dependent on volunteers and I wish to thank all those who have been involved over the past months. It is always good to have some new people involved in the project and new volunteers are most welcome. Working bees start at 9am and normally finish by 12noon at the latest. There is a “cuppa” and something to eat when you get back to base. I would love to hear from you if you are interested in becoming involved with this project.

Frances Blakely Ph 362 8480 email: jandfblakely@gmail.com

Working bee programme

Sunday 11th & Monday 12th August

Top up Pestoff Rat Bait and put out Ferafeed bait

Sunday 18th & Monday 19th August

Put out Feratox® & check remaining Pestoff Rat Bait

Sunday 1st and Monday 2nd September

Top up Pestoff Rat Bait and Feratox as required

Sunday 15th & Monday 16th September

Clear all stations of remaining Pestoff Rat Bait and Feratox®

Working bee dates are also included in the programme of events for the year.

Violet Bonnington Reserve (VBR) – (Manager Jim Rofe)

The VBR, under the able care of Manager Jim Rofe, provides access to the Mt Ngongotaha Bush Reserve from Paradise Valley Rd and is well used by the public. The Nature Walk in the bush has become a very popular short excursion and the Jubilee Track provides a longer walk up the mountain.

National Forest & Bird AGM Report

Committee member Heather Sayer attended the national AGM held in Wellington at the end of June. Heather provided the following report.

Te Reo o the Taiao “Courageous Conservation” Conference 29/30 June,

I attended the Conference at Te Papa, Wellington as Rotorua Branch Delegate. Our Branch also helped to sponsor Jess and Kaitlyn Lamb, both 15, to the Conference and Youth Day.

Speakers highlighted the huge scale of the issues facing us in our efforts to combat the effects of Climate Change. Other major issues included the state of our waterways, wetlands and groundwater; the ongoing need to reduce fisheries by catch; protection for endangered marine species.

In 2019/20 we face additional challenges with the mega mast of seeds leading to rapid growth in rat populations followed by an increase in stoats and consequent predation on many endangered species such as bats and mohua. There will be more large scale 1080 drops but much of the Conservation Estate will not be covered. We should lobby for more as at present DOC will be working to capacity to fulfil these programmes.

Many positive moves were highlighted. I was particularly impressed by the work of the small Forest and Bird legal team (1 full time and 2 part-time), with the amount of new legislation requiring submissions and the number of cases taken and appealed to ensure enforcement of existing laws and regulations, as at Te Kuha Westland and Motiti Moana BOP.

Trip Reports

Steve's "Special Place"



Nearly 40 years ago Lake Okareka residents Steve and Margot Goodin decided to tackle the head-high blackberry patch on the DOC reserve that bordered their home. Thus began a project in which invasive weeds have been slowly but steadily removed and the area restored to native vegetation. Eight people joined Steve and Margot on a sunny Saturday morning to walk through the reserve, first viewing the oldest area that was worked on, and then moving on to see the latest plantings. Steve collects seedlings from the local area, pots them up in his glasshouse and rears them through to a plantable size. Over the years there have been successes and failures. But the failures have always provided a learning opportunity; the various tree species have likings for different micro-environments. Browsing animals have also done their share of damage. But with commitment, persistence, and the input of their own resources Steve and Margot have rescued a sizeable part of reserve. "We won't live to see the really big trees but our great-grandchildren may. It is the vision for that future that has been a driving force behind the project".

Out thanks to Steve and Margot for sharing this "special place"

with Rotorua F&B members. We finished with morning tea in the sunny garden, and left feeling inspired by this achievement.

Waikite wetland and Te Kopia thermal reserve

On Saturday 20 July Forest & Birders were joined by Botanical Society members from Hamilton and Tauranga, and a group of Waikite Valley residents, to visit the Waikite Valley geothermal wetland. The Department of Conservation's Paul Cashmore, who has been working on the restoration of the wetland for the past 10 years, led the group of 24 people around the wetland. Paul had maps and photos taken before the project began to illustrate the changes that have taken place: it was clear that the area today is vastly different. Fencing to exclude stock, manipulation of water levels, predator control, removal of blackberry, broom and willow, followed by judicious planting of natives that can flourish in, or tolerate, the conditions has resulted in a functioning geothermal wetland. There are now thriving populations of "at risk" thermal fern species and developing numbers and species of birds. We were enchanted by the dozens of fantails that accompanied us during the visit.



Paul Cashmore pointing out features at wetland

Paul was a mine of information about the history, the problems and successes of the restoration project, and of the vision for the future. More information can be found at the website <https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/waikite-valley-restoration/>

Brian Pickering, a DOC volunteer who checks the ring of stoat traps each month, demonstrated the operation of the DOC 250 traps.



Brian Pickering demonstrating a trap



Mustelid ex-trap

The group then travelled to Te Kopia Rd to have lunch on the sunny, sheltered deck of Mike and Chris Bayes home (thank you both!). Mike Bayes then took everyone to view the geothermal area on his farm before we walked to the boardwalk of Te Kopia Geothermal Reserve (western side of Paeroa Range). Here Paul again pointed out the native plants specific to the geothermal areas and also described the dangers of navigating around the active zone in the course of DOC activities.

This was a grand day, full of information, and enjoyed by all attendees. The passion that Paul has for the area and his subject was evident and we are very grateful that he is so willing to share this with others.

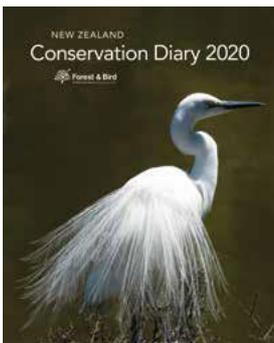
Kiwi Brooder boxes



Rotorua F&B have supported the National Kiwi Hatchery based at rainbow Springs in Rotorua by sponsoring a kiwi brooder box. A brooder box is a bit like an ICU for a kiwi chick. It's a safe, protective space for the chick to live in for the first few weeks while it learns how to feed; and while staff ensure that it is fit and healthy enough to live independently. Just like an ICU, a brooder box is specialised equipment, designed to give a kiwi chick the best chance of survival. The new boxes will act as the temporary home for dozens of kiwi over the coming years and are essential to the plan to grow North Island kiwi numbers.

Forest & Bird Calendars and diaries – Annual fund raiser

The 2020 New Zealand Conservation Calendar and the Conservation Diary which are produced in association with Forest & Bird will soon be on sale.



The calendars and diaries present images of both wildlife and wilderness habitat from New Zealand's extraordinary natural heritage and conservation areas and make great gifts. The calendar weighs less than 200 g for economical postage and there is an envelope included. The beautifully produced diary includes wonderful photographs of New Zealand landscapes, plants and wildlife. It has 'week to view' pages and is spiral bound so it will lie flat when open. These will be on sale in local bookstores



EVENTS CALENDAR August-December 2019

Talk – Tuesday 14 August

Saving Kakapo - All Hands on Deck

Helen McCormack - Kiwi Encounter

With a beech mast season and a record number of kakapo eggs laid, a call was put out for help with the incubation of the eggs and rearing of the resulting chicks. While experienced with kiwi eggs, kakapo eggs were a new challenge and Helen will talk about the role she played in helping with this iconic and critically endangered bird.

Venue: Netherlands Society Clubroom, Neil Hunt Park, Tarawera Rd (turn left immediately after Outdoorsman shop)

Time: 7:30 pm



Kakapo



Kakapo egg

Tree planting – Saturday 24 August

Tikitapu Scenic Reserve

We have 500 trees and shrubs to plant in an area that has been cleared of shrub weeds in a joint project with the Rotorua Botanical Society and Landcare Okareka.

Meet: Okareka Loop Rd, opposite Benn Rd

Time: 9am

Bring: A spade, gardening gloves, and good strong footwear. Also bring parka etc. if it is wet as the planting will go ahead regardless of the weather conditions

Morning tea, drinking water and hand washing facilities will be provided

For further information: Contact Sandra Goodwin, slgoodwin.nz@gmail.com or 07 3628865

Film afternoon

Sunday 8 September

We will be showing two acclaimed documentaries with strong nature and conservation themes. Titles and details will be advised

Afternoon tea will be provided

Venue: Netherlands Society Clubroom, Neil Hunt Park, Tarawera Rd (turn left immediately after Outdoorsman shop)

Time: 1:30-4pm

Conservation week

Field Trip – Saturday 21 September at Lake Okareka (repeat trip)

“Steve’s “special place”

Lake Okareka resident Steve Goodin has been restoring and nurturing a small area of the DOC Scenic Reserve behind his house for many years. Join Steve for a stroll around his ‘special place’ to see and hear about his successes, his failures, the issues he faces, and his goals for the future.

Meet: 7 Wattle Grove, Lake Okareka at 9.00am

Grade: Easy

Booking: Phone Steve on 3628138 or email: stevegoodin@slingshot.co.nz

(Numbers are limited so book early)

Work day - Saturday 12 October

Weed Control/Plant Releasing Okareka Mistletoe Restoration Project

Work will include releasing our plantings from weed growth and doing further weed control. Problem weeds include blackberry, Taiwanese cherry, jasmine, Himalayan honeysuckle – and many more. This is a Rotorua Forest & Bird and Rotorua Botanical Society joint project.

Leader: Paul Cashmore

Meet: Cnr Summit and Loop Rds, Lake Okareka (lake end) @ 8:45 AM

Grade: Medium-Hard – Activities suitable for all ages and abilities will be provided.

Contact: Paul Cashmore 07 349 7432 (wk) or 027 650 7264 or pcashmore@doc.govt.nz



Taiwanese cherry

Weekend Trip
Friday 1st—Sunday 3rd November
Tongariro National Park, Ruapehu

A weekend with KCC at the beautiful Forest and Bird Ruapehu Lodge in Rehua Cres., Whakapapa Village (<http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/whatwedo/lodges/ruapehu-lodge/>)



Ruapehu Lodge

This weekend will commence Friday evening. On Saturday the walks will depend on the weather but there are many options, both long and short and above and below the bush-line. We will have Sunday morning for activities before tidying up and leaving after lunch. All meals will be self-catering with Saturday night dinner as a Pot Luck shared meal. There is a comprehensive kitchen in the lodge. Sleeping arrangements are in 4-bunk and 6-bunk rooms, plus a dormitory of 14 bunks, and you will need to bring sleeping bags (or equivalent) and linen.

Costs: Contribution to driver: Suggest \$25 pp

Lodge Fees per person and per night

	Member	Non-member
Adult	\$35	\$55
Child	\$25	\$35

Please contact Rotorua F&B by email (rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz) or ring (345 7477, 021 109 3803) (Judy) to obtain a booking form.

Bookings and money to be in by 25 September 2019, non-refundable after this date unless a substitute can be found.

Forest & Bird North Island Gathering

Friday 8 – Sunday 10 November

F&B Ruapehu Lodge

These annual meetings are a weekend gathering for all members of Forest & Bird North Island branches; those keen to network, learn and talk conservation, as well as enjoy some interesting field trips.

Further information will be provided via email and on our Face Book page as it comes to hand.

November 3rd
Mokaihaha Kokako Recovery Project Open Day

Mokaihaha is a 2000 ha ecological reserve at the western end of Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park. It has beautiful old Mamaku plateau mixed podocarp forest and is the site of a pest control project, managed by the Waikato Branch of Forest & Bird, with the primary goal of protecting the resident kokako. The kokako population is original, genetically distinct and occupies an area of about 850 hectares. At last count there were over 100 birds. "We always see robin, tomtit, kaka, fantail, tui etc and sometimes if you are lucky kokako and whitehead".

Meet: End of Mossop Road in Tokoroa outside the sports ground

Time: 9.30am

Grade: Relatively easy, following baitlines, but as there is no track a walking pole may be useful

Take: Boots or good walking shoes, lunch, drink

Leader: Keith Holborow, Waikato F&B. Please register with Keith on 027 698 6514

Kiwi Conservation Club (KCC)

The goal of KCC is to connect Kiwi kids to New Zealand's amazing wildlife and wild places. This junior branch of Forest & Bird has great support from the national organisation. Members receive Wild Things magazine which has a range of articles, cartoons, games.

We welcome Darren van Hoof as a new KCC Coordinator.

**Rotorua Forest & Bird Committee
P.O. Box 1489, Rotorua 3040**

Email address: rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

Facebook: Forest and Bird - Rotorua Branch

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KCC Darren van Hoof ph. 027 811 7037

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