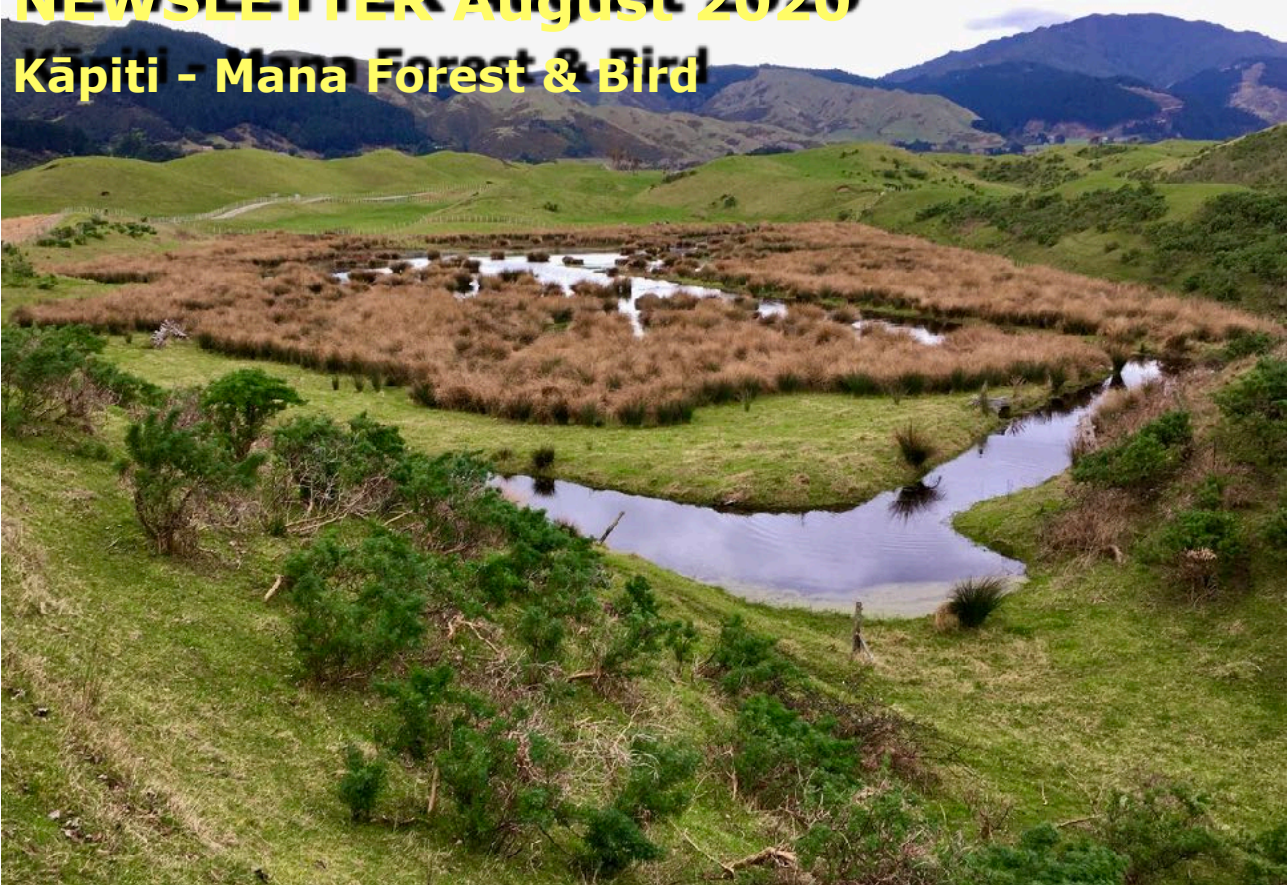


NEWSLETTER August 2020

Kāpiti - Mana Forest & Bird



Dunes wetland - This is a wetland that has seldom been seen by the public. It is locked away within a no access farm lease to a Wairarapa farmer. The farm lease covers over half of the park.

Editor: Russell Bell, Email russelljamesbell@gmail.com. Phone 0212266047. Your feedback on this newsletter would be most welcome as would contributions to future newsletters.

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Please use this to write a submission to GWRC

Greater Wellington Regional Council has started to consult on the Parks Network Plan.

The plan applies to all regional parks in the Wellington Region and we think it is pretty good. There is however one area we want to influence and that is the peatlands of Queen Elizabeth Park. We can influence the plan if you write a submission.

To make this easy, we have written a draft submission (Next Page) which you can cut and paste and send on the GWRC. You can, of course, add delete or change it as you wish and comment on other aspects of the plan. The documents can be found on line if you type in <https://haveyoursay.gw.govt.nz/parksplan>

Submissions need to be sent to parksplanning@gw.govt.nz before 23 October 2020

Submission to the Greater Wellington Parks Network Plan

This is an individual submission on the Parks Network Plan and is confined to the plan as it applies to Queen Elizabeth Park.

I ask that GWRC;

- does not graze or farm any peat or peaty land within the park,*
- that GWRC rewet all of the peatlands as soon possible and*
- assist the peatlands to restore themselves to wetland.*

I ask that all drains be partially and sufficiently blocked immediately to allow the wetlands to start their recovery and stop emitting carbon.

Supporting arguments.

Drained and farmed peat emits huge amounts of carbon dioxide, 29 tonnes/

ha/yr, whereas rewetted peat will become a carbon sink, so immediate partial blocking of these drains is consistent with GWRC declaring a climate change emergency. See <https://drawdowniitkgp.wordpress.com/2017/12/06/peatlands-a-secret-and-surprising-weapon/>

This rewetting should precede weed control. There are small wetlands throughout QEP e.g. Mackay's wetland, that show that wetlands that are sufficiently wet suppress the growth of woody weeds.

I accept that permanent blockages of drains, public recreation and the complete restoration of the wetlands may take some time to design and implement.

As often stated, the Wellington Region has less than 3% of its original wetlands remaining.

Otherwise I support the Parks network plan.

This photo shows the wetland that we stand to win.



Ecosystem services

An economist working for GWRC wrote in a GWRC paper that if the farming activities of Belmont Regional Park and Queen Elizabeth Park were abandoned, the land would deliver ten million dollars of ecosystem services per year.

So what are ecosystem services?

Provisioning services: Products obtained from ecosystems: genetic resources, food and fibre, and fresh water.

Regulating services: Benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes: the regulation of climate, water, and some human diseases.

Cultural services: The non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems: spiritual

enrichment, cognitive development, reflection, recreation, and aesthetic experience, including, knowledge systems, social relations, and aesthetic values.

Supporting services: Ecosystem services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services: biomass production, production of atmospheric oxygen, soil formation and retention, nutrient cycling, water cycling, and provisioning of habitat.

GWRC in the Parks Network Plan describe Ecosystem Services as including fresh water, air purification, wind and noise reduction, carbon sequestration, microclimate regulation, wildlife habitat social and psychological well being of people and economic benefits. Parks and intrinsic biodiversity are important natural capital for the Wellington Region.

GWRC's Parks Network Plan (PNP)

Above I asked that you write a submission on a particular aspect of the PNP. That is because it will give the maximum benefit to people and native flora and fauna. The plan is very large document covering some very large areas of land. This is to provide an insight into the overall plan.

There are 8 regional parks totalling 33,000 ha of land. They are Queen Elizabeth, Battle Hill, Akatarawa, Belmont, Kaitoke, Pakuratahi, Wainui and East Harbour. East Harbour is made up of 3 separated areas; Northern Forests, Parangarahu Lakes and Baring Head. Most parks are either recreation or scenic reserves under the Reserves act. The exception is Battle Hill which will be kept as a farm where farming practices can be seen by the public. Akatarawa has a large pine plantation that is leased for 60 years and there are plans that part of it it will become a water collection area in the future.

Conservation and recreation are the primary purposes of the parks and each park shows a



different landscape aspect because of its location and terrain. Some, like Kaitoke, are

hill or mountain covered forests. Battle Hill preserves the land where an early Maori/European battle took place. Parangarahu Lakes contain the best fresh water wetland lakes in the Wellington Region. Queen Elizabeth contains the only extensive sand dune, wetland forest complex in our region.

The major change that GWRC proposes is to phase out farming and increase conservation access and recreation through all of its parks except Battle Hill. This is good for us. The

Walks with Rob Cross

This is a series of videos you can watch make by Rob Cross and KCDC. I think they are very good and give us a good insight into the unique Kāpiti environment. They allow us to understand the environments we can all walk

Is this true?

Molly Melhuish in an article "Heal the Planet" says *The biomass of humans is 36% of all mammal biomass on earth, our livestock accounts for 60% and wild animals amount to a mere 4% of all mammal biomass.*

Pest Operation Hemi Matenga Memorial Reserve

Possum and rat control is planned for this year. Signs will be put in place so you know it is happening if you visit. DoC are using Feracol (Cholecalciferol) Vitamin D3. While it is a vitamin, it is dangerous to domestic animals especially dogs.

NZ Frogs

New Zealand had seven species of native frogs but three species are now extinct. The remaining four belong to the genus *Leiopelma*, live only on (or near) the North Island, and have changed little over the last 70-200 million years. They are all rare and are very well camouflaged, so you have to be smart (and probably lucky) to see them.

Planning department of GWRC has taken on board the earlier public comments it sought.

There are other issues that need to be addressed and Forest and Bird will be making a submission and covering many points. If you want to read or browse the PNP or discuss any issues that are of concern to you, please contact me or Amelia Geary, Regional Manager Lower North Island 022 039 9363 or A.Geary@forestandbird.org.nz Her work days are Monday - Wednesday 9.30-3.30.

through and appreciate the natural treasures we have in Kapiti. Just click the link to watch.

1. [Kohe kohe flowering](#)
2. [Ames St Reserve kororā](#)
3. [Barry Hadfield Nikau Reserve](#)
4. Sand dunes in Kāpiti

Scientists say we can have sustainability in a world sense if we give nature 30% of the earth.

In case you missed this news

The Supreme Court agreed with F&B over proposed West Coast mine at Te Kuha and the 150ha of land will become a reserve under the Reserves Act.

The High Court supported DoC decision to cull Himalayan Tahr in National Parks.

The release of the Biodiversity Strategy is very good but needs cross party support.

Our four barely surviving species of frogs are:

- Archey's Frog (Coromandel, and near Whareorino Forest near Te Kuiti)
- Hochstetter's Frog (upper half of NI)
- Hamilton's Frog (Stephen's Island in Cook Strait)
- Maud Island Frog (Marlborough Sounds)

Some unexpected characteristics include:

- they have round pupils (not slits, like most frogs)
- they do not have a tadpole stage
- they are nocturnal
- they are only a few centimetres long
- they have no external ear drum
- they don't croak (but some chirp)
- they catch live insects in their mouth (no sticky tongue)
- they don't have webbed feet (three of the four remaining species don't live near water, rather under rocks and in leaf litter on the forest floor).

There are also three introduced species of frogs in New Zealand.

Frogs are a good indication of ecosystem health, and are particularly susceptible to chemicals, ultraviolet light, and the chytrid fungus. If you catch a frog, please do not release them elsewhere to prevent the spread of chytrid fungus.

If you see a native frog, please take a photo and some notes on where, when and in what habitat and let NZ Frog know! Find out more here: <http://www.nzfrogs.org/NZ+Frogs/Native+frogs.html>

Hochstetter's Frog Photo by John Johns



Forest and Bird Dairies and Calendars

pb potton&burton **Forest & Bird**
TE Kōwhiri o te Taiao | Keeping Nature a Little

New Zealand Conservation Calendar 2021

Featuring superb photographs of our extraordinary wildlife and wilderness habitats taken by some of our leading nature photographers.
Weights less than 200g for economic postage.
Envelope included.



F&B Branches Retail Price \$17.99



New Zealand Conservation Diary 2021



F&B Branches Retail Price \$24.99



Every week brings a new photograph of our unique landscapes, plants and wildlife. This quality week-to-view diary features public holidays, and a lay-flat spiral binding.

The sale of Forest and Bird calendars and dairies is our branch's only annual fundraiser.

They are beautiful - with photographs by Craig Potton, make great Christmas presents, and are available early enough to post overseas, even in a COVID-world (and calendars come with an envelope).

We are keeping prices as low as we can - the same as last year - and well below the recommended retail price so it's a great deal all round.

\$15.00 calendar

\$23.00 diary

The flyer alongside shows higher prices than we are asking.

Our treasurer, Peter Kentish is the person to contact for your copy/ies

pk2003_595@hotmail.com

or 04 298 1255 or 021 027 70520

He'd also be delighted to hear from you if you are willing to sell to others for our branch!

You can pay by online banking account number 38-9020-0171967-00 (Forest and Bird Kapiti Mana Branch) or with cash when Peter delivers.

Wellington Region Forest and Bird Walking Group

The Wellington Region Forest and Bird Walking Group runs walks each Wednesday for two categories of members. Fit and moderately fit walkers have 2 to 3 walks to choose from. Walks may be anywhere in the Wellington region, normally begin at 10 and take between 4 and 5 hours. 4 hour walks are most common. Car pooling is encouraged and often walks are scheduled to fit in with public transport options. Another group

We would prefer no cheques as Forest and Bird Kapiti Mana Branch's bank no longer accepts these, but if necessary cheques can be made to "Peter Kentish – F&B Kapiti-Mana Treasurer", and he will arrange for the transfer of funds to the branch.

caters for walkers who want a less demanding walk taken at a more leisurely pace. New members are always welcome at any walk. Here's a link to information about the group. <https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/branches/wellington/tramping-and-walking-wellington>

Each summer a week long camp is organised out of Wellington, and there is a programme of walks over Christmas. Bill is happy to answer any questions +64 27 677 0180

Maara Roa celebrates 20 years

Congratulations to Friends of Maara Roa who have been transforming their area of Belmont Regional Park behind Cannons Creek for 20 years. Chairman Sef Truyens noted that since they started in 2000, with a planting behind Kowhai Grove, they have suffered losses from fire (3000 plants in 2003), flooding in 2004, disruption due to the sale of Whaitangirua Farm (2005), and the development of Transmission Gully but have kept planting 3000-5000 native plants each

year - something like 85000. That's impressive! As a group they, and their leaders, have rightfully received many awards in recognition of their efforts. Kia kaha team, and thank you from us at Forest and Bird.

Find out more about Maara Roa on their website: <http://www.maararoa.org.nz/>

More Volunteers are very welcome

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