

Forest & Bird

Te Reo o Te Taiao

Rotorua Branch

Newsletter - Autumn 2021

Dear Members

Welcome to new members. Linda now has a page of information about the Rotorua branch, explaining our main areas of involvement. This is a useful introduction for new members.

In early March, at the Netherlands Society Hall we heard from Scion's Andrew Pugh & Toni Withers about Native Beetle populations and efforts by Scion scientists to control invasive species. A fascinating, educational presentation given to a smaller crowd, under level 2 conditions. Stories of climbing mountains, saving lost trampers and bashing trees kept us all entertained for the evening. A very well done to Toni and Andrew.

Heather

Events coming up

- May 02/03** - Tikitapu pest control working bees begin
 - June 02** - Speaker Michael Bartlett Update on myrtle rust
 - June 16** – Field trip to Okataina
 - June 20 – 26** Garden Bird Survey
 - June 26/27** - F & B National AGM & conference - zoom meeting
 - July 07** – Speaker Greg Steward Indigenous forest plantations
 - August 03** – Speaker Kelvin Hastie Predator control in an urban environment
 - September 04 – 12** Conservation week
- Royal Society Talks
- 08 June** – Speaker Neil Gemmell 'Tuatara genome'
 - August 10** – Speaker Shirley Kerr 'Exploring fungi from Rotorua/Kaimai bush'

AGM Speaker - April

Introduced by Craig Morley from Toi Ohomai **Kathryn Ross** spoke on a current research project **Avian Invaders**. Since the early arrival of colonials to New Zealand many birds have been introduced for a variety of reasons. A good percentage of these birds established themselves and have made NZ home. In a fenced area of a small lake/wetland in the Waikato hundreds, then thousands of these birds now roost as predators disappeared. Peat and sphagnum moss that was thriving has become affected by the droppings from these birds, creating a problem that was totally unexpected and detrimental to the environment. Work is being done to solve the problem, with little success to date. Watch for how progress is made on this.

Speaker: Michael Bartlett

Investigating the life cycle and seasonal progression of myrtle rust in New Zealand.



Greg Steward Talk



Greg Steward has undertaken research on indigenous forestry at Scion for over 40 years. The term indigenous forestry covers a lot of territory, today predominantly the focus is on establishment and management of native tree species for a range of outcomes. Greg will try to capture his experience from conversion of native forest to other land uses, to today where native tree species offer a range of potential opportunities for landowners and the wider community.

He Pou a Rangi – the Climate Change Commission: This message is from Kevin Hague – CEO of Forest & Bird

I encourage the Commission to be more ambitious in its draft advice to the Government on reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. I support:

- **Doing our fair share.** We must make a stronger global commitment to cutting our emissions and helping developing countries. New Zealand's targets should reflect our economic status, ability to take action, and high current and historical per-capita emissions.
- **Cutting emissions first.** A commitment to faster emissions reductions must come ahead of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. We need a transformation to a clean green economy, and that means producing and consuming things without generating greenhouse gases. The Commission needs to support faster emission reductions than its draft plan proposes.
- **Nature-first emission reductions.** The methods used to cut emissions must protect our native plants and animals. This means no new big hydro, stopping mining on conservation land, and ensuring new wind farms, biofuel production and transport infrastructure don't harm nature.
- **Better land use.** Marginal and erodible land needs to be returned to native forests and shrublands, regenerative farming is needed to cut emissions, and there should be fewer cows.
- **Helping each other.** We need a just transition that helps communities and workforces to adjust, makes sure vulnerable people are not left behind, ensures new technology and ways of working are available to all, and gives effect to the Treaty of Waitangi.

Forest Archaeology Field Trip

Six people joined trip leaders Robin Black and Sarah-Jane Luoni for a visit to Kinleith Forest to see some of its hidden history. We first crashed our way through the undergrowth to see one of the Maori rock shelters where Robin discussed the possible history of its use. A second rock shelter, in recent cutover, was visible from the road and was reached down a steep bank.



Photos to left: Markings in the rock shelters. Unusual red ochre used. Etched initials, possibly the earliest surveyor.

Then we visited a long-abandoned pa site perched on a cliff and now over-grown with vegetation, where many features only apparent to the trained eye were pointed out.



We then shifted focus and followed a marked (barely) route to a tunnel that was once part of a bush tramway delivering logs to the now-demolished sawmilling town of Te Whetu. The sides and roof of the couple of 100 meters long tunnel provided a fascinating view of the geological history of the area. After stopping to look at some large trees in a patch of remnant native bush we rounded off the day with a visit to an unexpected wetland. This beautiful spot within the plantation has been restored over many years with grey willow (and other weed) removal, and native plantings around the margins. We are grateful to Robin and Sarah-Jane for sharing their passion for this area and its history with us.



Margaret

Youth Hub

Report from Jessica

This year Forest & Bird Youth Rotorua had an amazing opportunity to participate in Sustainable Backyards 2021. On Saturday the 31st of March we ran a compost and growing from seed workshop at Te Puea Orchard.

We started with making a compost pile using the lasagne method, where you layer your green and brown waste. This then caused the pile to steam by the lawn clippings. Next, we planted seedlings in the garden that I grew from seed. Lastly, we made some seed raising mix from coir, compost and pumice sand, which everyone planted seeds in to take home and plant in their garden.

We also made some kamokamo relish and learnt how to plant kumara with the other people there.

“Medicine is not health care.
Food is health care.
Medicine is sick care.”

Note: Youth Hub also had a camp at Mokoia Island where they checked the predator traps.



TIKITAPU SCENIC RESERVE PEST CONTROL PROGRAMME

A note from Frankie

“Dear All,

James and I are both thrilled with the book of Nicholas Dillon's bird paintings. They are really beautiful and we find it fascinating to learn how he sits and watches his subject for hours through his spotting scope, sketches them and gets the colours right, before going home to paint the birds. I was lucky enough to be on a Homestead Gardens bus tour some years ago and we visited his studio and met him. I will miss being on the committee in many ways, especially the times with all of you. Tikitapu has been very special for us but the time comes to step back.

With our very best wishes to you all and many, many thanks for a book that will be treasured. ”

James and I have decided it is time for us to reduce our involvement with Tikitapu. Unfortunately, the years do creep up! We have thoroughly enjoyed our time with the project and hosting the “get togethers” afterwards. A wonderful way to meet people. I will continue to send out the emails for volunteers and be the contact for you, regarding working bees.

**Working Bees: Sunday 2nd and Monday 3rd May
Sunday 6th and Monday 7th June**

Objective: To start trimming lines, checking, cleaning, and if required, re-nailing stations, and marking lines.

Time: Meet at 9am.

Place: The grassy area on Loop Rd, opposite Benn Rd.

Bring: Backpack and liner, drink, snack, parka, loppers, secateurs, hammer and if you have one, an old dish brush for brushing stations.

Footwear: Good footwear is essential as the lines are steep and can be slippery.

Book: Please book with Frances Blakely

ph. 362 8480

email jandfblakely@gmail.com

It is appreciated if you book with us if you intend to come, as not only does it mean we can have the day planned but we also know who to contact should severe weather force a cancellation.

Sunday 16th May – Okataina Tracks

Trip led by Margaret Dick

We will walk the short Tarawhai Track through native bush near the Outdoor Education Centre, where a 5 m by 5 m fenced-off area has been created to illustrate the effects of introduced browsers (notably, wallabies) on the native vegetation. We will then follow the Ngahopua Track which passes the twin volcanic crater lakes of Rotongata and Rotoatua. and the Tarawhai Track. Lunch will be on the shores of Lake Okataina.

Meeting place and time: For carpooling from Rotorua meet at Tui House, Te Ngae Rd (opposite Countdown) at 9:00am.

Cost: \$8 contribution to driver

Grade: Easy

Booking and further information: Margaret ph. 07 3572024/
0274202022 or email: rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

What to bring: Good walking shoes, clothes suitable for the weather, lunch, drink



SPEAKER 3rd August Kelvin Hastie

Kelvin Hastie is an urban predator hunter working on ridding Wellington of rats, stoats and possums. With the willing engagement of many members of the community there have been some astounding suburban successes.

Tikitapu Care Group (Managers – Margaret Dick/Judy Gardner)

The programme for 2021 begins the first weekend in May with a volunteer workday to check and clear bait lines and bait stations. This year we will be trialling Double Tap in the bait stations – this is a mix of two toxins. This project is dependent on volunteers and we wish to thank all those who have been involved over time. 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 12 noon at the latest, This year we will be meeting on the grass area at the corner of Benn Rd and Okareka Loop Rd for the briefing and distribution of equipment. There is a “cuppa” and something to eat when you get back from the bush. If you are interested in becoming involved with this project, please contact Frances Blakely, Ph 362 8480

Email: jandfblakely@gmail.com

Tikitapu Working Bee Programme 2021

Trimming Lines, checking stations etc.

May - Sunday 2nd & Monday 3rd

June - Sunday 6th & Monday 7th 8th

July - Sunday 4th & Monday 5th

Bait laying

Double Tap out – Sunday 15th & Monday 16th August

Double Tap top up– Sunday 29th & Monday 30th August

Clear all stations of any remaining bait - Sunday 19th & Monday 20th September

Committee members 2021

Treasurer: Tania Heasman

Secretary: Margaret Dick/Judy Gardner

Health & Safety: Mike Goodwin

Membership/Communication: Linda Johnson
(Branch Web page/ Facebook page)

Programme/Publicity: Heather Sayer

Violet Bonnington Reserve: Margaret

Tikitapu Care Group: Margaret/Mike/Judy

Newsletter & Minutes Sue McGrath

Note: *Chairperson rotates*

Other duties/activities are shared between committee members.

BRANCH CONTACTS

Margaret Dick	3572024
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Heather Sayer	3323352
Tania Heasman	3502021
Mike Goodwin	3628865
Jim Rofe	3486636
Linda Johnson	3481669
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Contact details:

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Remember, check out our branch **Face Book** page for activities and general news at Forest and Bird Rotorua