

Kapiti-Mana Forest and Bird

Newsletter June 2021

Chair's Opinion

Forest and Bird has decided that Climate change is one of their very important issues. But F&B youth hub has decided to concentrate on F&B's more traditional value – biodiversity. I have been arguing for action against climate change because it will be responsible for the demise of many species. But am I am right?

Lets say that in about 50 years (and that is what it will take) climate change trends down to where it is about now. That will allow industrialism, growth, obsessive consumption, etc. to continue, just without producing (or reabsorbing) carbon dioxide before it adds to the atmosphere.

If we replace coal and gas with wind, solar and hydro, how much more land will that require to generate the extra power? If we use electric cars and store solar power at home, how much more relatively rare materials will we have to mine from the earth and how much mining will be needed to supply the materials needed for the changes. Will we mine farmland, residential land, national parks or the sea?

An article by Mike Joy suggested that conservationists like me, who worked to save flora and fauna, are now activists who are trying (perhaps unknowingly) to preserve the industrial/financial system (and growth), just without carbon.

Climate change is a symptom of the way we behave. So is the pollution in our rivers, the loss of habitat and biodiversity, and the loss of abundance in our seas. They are symptoms that appear when we use all the world's resources: eons-old coal, oil and natural gas, to keep our current generation living the lifestyle that I have become used to.

Will we ever control our burgeoning population? Will we ever control our demand

for more things, more trips, more excitement, more experiences.

Or can we achieve that while stopping our rapid elimination of the natural world. I will believe it when I see;

- No more loss of natural lands
- No more drained wetlands
- No more extinctions
- A good percentage of marine reserves
- The end of the pacific garbage patches
- An end to burning the Amazon
- Far less cows in NZ
- An end to the importation of palm kernel.



No more loss of natural lands

For Forest and Birders, we must fight climate change with all we have but we also need to be alert to the sacrifices climate change solutions will demand from the natural world. Think wind turbines (where will we put them?), pumped hydro removing wetlands in the Otago block country, deep sea mining for nodules containing minerals. Is this just the next level exploitation to maintain our insatiable appetite?

Will that save our flora and fauna? Will we become environmentally responsible and

value the earth's other landscapes and lifeforms? I doubt it. I must still fight to save our climate but I can understand Youth Hub's point of view.

Russell

Rescheduled Public Meeting 28 July conservation dog Rua

Unfortunately we had to cancel our meeting last week due to the COVID lockdown. The good news is our speaker Jo Sim and conservation dog Rua, are available in July, so our next meeting will be on 28 July (7:30pm in Waikanae).

Biosecurity YouTube Bonanza

Landcare Research does a series of lectures each year and these can be viewed on their [Youtube channel](#). There's lots of interesting talks on various related topics including wallaby control, toxoplasmosis, protecting rare birds through misinformation, developing toxins using genome mining, managing douglas fir and heather... and

Backyard Bird Count

Between 26 June and 4 July we are all invited to spend an hour in your garden or deck watching and recording what birds you see. These annual bird surveys help researchers figure out how well our birds are doing (and therefore identify problems). It's a fun activity, so why not schedule an hour to take part in the [Garden Bird survey](#).

Robin - Not on Kapiti mainland yet



Nikau Valley Restoration Society

This society turns 1 next month and Russell and I were invited to the AGM. The focus of the group is currently on the Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve (trapping and restoration) and the restoration of the Muaupoko Stream which is a tributary of the Waikanae River. Since their group started trapping in 2018 they've eliminated over 1800 predators and their trapping network has grown significantly. At the AGM we learned help and support they have received through the Waikanae Catchment Jobs For Nature project and what work will be undertaken as part of this - it will improve the wetland near the Nikau Valley entrance to the Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve. A planting day is planned in August. This is an example of how the \$9.5M allocated to the Waikanae River can work. To find out more, please contact [Wayne Mitchell](#). **Pene**



Forest and Bird National Conference and AGM

Last Saturday's conference contained a host of interesting presentations from past and present political leaders which provide insights into the challenges and opportunities facing our flora and fauna and our political landscape. There was;

Helen Clark - Coal has got to go. Fonterra still uses coal. We are presently headed to a 3.9 degree future. She's edited a book [Climate Aotearoa – What's happening and what we can do about it.](#)

As you can see, coal was a hot topic at the Forest and Bird conference, and how we cannot afford to keep using it with the climate challenges we face. Yes, there are still companies trying to get permission for new coal mines on the West Coast. This is why Forest and Bird has launched this petition, which they would love us all to sign and share. [No new coal mines petition](#)

David Parker Environment and Oceans. [Revitalising the Gulf](#) is the Government's strategy in response to the call for action in the 2017 Sea Change Plan - Tai Timu Tai Pari Hauraki Gulf Spatial Plan. It seeks to restore the health and mauri of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park through a range of actions, e.g. 6.6% to 17.6% protected. This document provides hope of positive change, and could set a new path for how marine areas around New Zealand are managed. The recent appointment of Hon David Parker as the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries is further indication that the government wants to see significant improvement in our marine environment, as is the announcement of the [wider rollout of cameras](#) to be installed on fishing vessels.

The government has just released an exposure draft of what will replace the RMA, which proposes three pieces of new legislation. The draft explains more about the proposed legislative changes, the reform process, and how to make a submission. [Resource Management Act Reform - exposure draft now available](#)

James Shaw Climate. Labour taking stronger action than last election cycle.

Ayesha Verrall Conservation. Treaty inclusion in Biodiversity strategy

Forest & Bird's AGM was held on Sunday and at this we heard about the outstanding work undertaken by Southland Branch (who won the branch award), and by Head Office - through the legal team and the conservation advocacy team. This made me realise afresh how important Forest & Bird is to keep our beautiful country beautiful and to keep its native plants and animals from extinction. It was exciting to hear the update from the Youth Hub leaders and to realise that their campaigns last year (Nature First in COVID recovery, and Vote for Nature) had a significant effect on the political outcomes. We also heard about how much of Forest & Bird's focus for the coming year will be making sure the Climate Change Commission advice leads to meaningful environmental outcomes. **Pene**

BOTSOC Trip to Field Reserve, 5 June 2021

Forest and Bird Kapiti-Mana hosted a field trip by Wellington Botanical Society, BOTSOC, to the Field Reserve, 3.76 hectares of kohekohe and tawa forest on old SH1 south of the Otaihanga roundabout owned by F&B. Kate Jordan led the trip for BOTSOC and I - Sue Boyde - accompanied the group. There were 22 people on the trip, including local BOTSOC members Viola Palmer and Ken Fraser.

Most of us parked at the rest area 100 m south of the Reserve along old SH1. We were all assembled and ready to go by 10:15. Within the Reserve, group members slowly moved up through the Reserve, paying close attention to the plant life. It was fascinating to learn about plants which I had noticed – the delicate creeper which is a native jasmine – and to see many things new to me – miro seedlings, two types of milk tree, (*Picture below*) an orchid and a native grass.



After more than two hours' botanising, group members filtered out of the Reserve, and we met back at the cars for a group photo. Then some members travelled to Kaitawa Reserve for lunch, and a look at the plantings, and the old trees that pre-dated the project.

I came away valuing Field Reserve even more. It also made me realise that people with some tramping experience, of any age, can safely travel through the Reserve – so maybe we should aim to hold trips there for Forest and Bird members.

Below is a link to the list of plant species found.

[Plant List – Field Reserve – Paraparaumu – Field Reserve 2021-06](#) **Sue Boyde**



Book Review: Invasive Predators in New Zealand – Disaster on Four Small Paws by CM King

A great book, a bit depressing as well.

Forest & Bird people will be hoping all Kiwis watch the wonderful Fight For The Wild series (now on [TVNZ On Demand](#)). The series focuses equally on the appalling damage wrought by mammalian predators and on the amazing efforts of DOC, iwi, commerce, science and the community to turn the tide to give our unique native fauna and flora a chance. Predator Free 2050 is the goal. One of the contributors to the series is Carolyn King, Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Waikato and a zoologist specialising in small rodents and mustelids. Carolyn King has written a wonderful book describing in depressing detail how mammalian invaders came to New Zealand and then documents the impact they have had. The book, published in 2019, is entitled [Invasive](#)

[Predators in New Zealand – Disaster on Four Small Paws](#) (available to borrow from libraries or to purchase).

The book is in four sections. The first three are historical, covering firstly before Cook, then the years of accidental invasions (1769-1900) and lastly the years of deliberate introductions (1852-1920). The last section is entitled 'What Now?' and reviews New Zealand's efforts at pest management including a look forward at prospects for Predator Free 2050.

The author looks at old shipping records and modern genetic analysis to work out how mammalian invaders got to New Zealand's main islands and to off-shore islands. In the nineteenth century our colonial forefathers went to considerable effort to bring mammalian predators that they knew from UK and Europe (especially stoats) to New Zealand. Looking back from the 21st century, it makes for appalling reading. As we know, the unintended ecological consequences were not recognised by authorities until it was too late. Professor King also shows that the extreme consequence for our native fauna (that is, extinction) was not recognised until the 1970s. Prior to that, ecologists believed a new 'balance' would evolve between native birds and introduced predators.

The book catalogues the introduction of rats, mice, cats, rabbits, ferrets, stoats and weasels. Luckily, we missed out on foxes and the mongoose. As well, there were some nasty surprises. No-one expected importing the brushtail possum for a new fur industry would lead to a new menace browsing its way through our native forests. To add to the horror, it was only in the 1990's that the role of possums in raiding birds' nests and killing eggs and chicks was recognised!

I was impressed by the book. It has detail and authority yet makes for a very informative read.

Don Brash, Waikanae

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