



## SEPTEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

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### Message from F&B Manawatū Chair

Following an excellent talk last month by Vicky Gane, Biodiversity officer, Horizons, called "Truth and Deer" we had a follow up field trip to Totara Reserve. Twelve members came and despite a few rain clouds looming up from time to time we stayed dry. A sociable lunch time was spent sitting around the fire pit in the sun.

This public reserve is managed by Horizons so Vicky knows it intimately. She led us through a track that fallow deer (the most prevalent in the area) use alot. They are seen crossing the road that runs through the reserve frequently

The trip included a discussion about the maintenance and cost of management by Horizons (with our rate payers money). We need to encourage people to visit and see the amazing totaras and bird life..

All the rat traps are now distributed and mixed results are coming in so far, which means our rat trap initiative planned for 12 months is under way. Thankyou to our members who have taken up the challenge.

I have called on some of the retirement villages around the city to see if they are happy to publicise our monthly meetings, with our good guest speakers, to their residents and I received a very positive response from them all. We will be sending them our meeting posters for their display boards.

Thats all for this month

*Margaret*

Chairperson

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**September 2024 Monthly talk**  
**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024 @ 7.30 p.m.**

PN City Library, George Street Entrance, Palmerston North

(will be streamed via zoom, see below for the link)

**Talk: "Myrtle rust research update - from Beyond Myrtle Rust and beyond**  
**Speaker:** Jenny Leonard, Programme Science communicator for Landcare Research  
(Our advertised speaker, Alby Marsh, regretfully, is unable to give his presentation)



**Synopsis of talk:** Myrtle rust was first detected on mainland New Zealand in May 2017. Since then, it has spread throughout the North Island, parts of the South Island, and the Chathams. In this talk, Jenny Leonard will be delivering a brief overview of the disease before delving into the research that has been conducted over the last few years by the Beyond Myrtle Rust research programme as well as other research groups, programmes and projects across New Zealand. Jenny will be choosing the bits of the research she finds the most interesting to provide a holistic overview of the current state of myrtle rust research in New Zealand. She will also be giving some tips for what the public can do to get involved.

Join Zoom Meeting

**Time:** 7.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.

**Zoom Link:** <https://forestandbird-org-nz.zoom.us/j/88526558443?pwd=bEclLF7qnqb2vPlbKv9ZqtPW0ThExx.1>

All welcome. Gold coin donation appreciated

**\*\* THE FORGOTTEN PANDEMIC** – an article in NZ Geographic

<https://www.nzgeo.com/stories/the-forgotten-pandemic/#:~:text=A%20VICIOUS%20STRAIN%20OF%20MYRTLE,BIGGEST%20P%20C%20DHUTUKAWA%20START%20TO%20FALL>

A vicious strain of myrtle rust is burning through our bush. Dozens of native species—and the ecosystems they support—are at risk....

## RECORDING OF OUR MONTHLY TALK

The Manawatū Committee apologises for not posting the Youtube link for our monthly talks. We have hit a technical issue with the conversion. As soon as this has been sorted out, we will publish the Youtube links.

\*\*\*On that note, we are seeking amongst our members, for anyone who has video editing skills who could help us with our problem. If you are skilled in video editing, please email me at [manawatu.branch@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:manawatu.branch@forestandbird.org.nz). Thank you

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## FOREST & BIRD 2025 CALENDARS AND DIARIES

Our F&B Calendars and Diaries will be on sale at the September and October meetings - and the Sept & Oct meetings until we sell out.

For those of you who have contacted me - your order will be there at the meeting to be collected (if you have paid by internet banking). If you have indicated you would like to pay cash for your order at the meeting, please see the Calendar sales table.

Please email me at [manawatu.branch@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:manawatu.branch@forestandbird.org.nz) if you would like a calendar and/or diary between our Monthly Meetings and I will arrange with you for collection. Please would you also, provide a contact number, in case I need to get in touch with you. Many thanks – Anthea

PS please note that overseas snailmail is taking longer these days



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## Predator Spotlight

### Manawatū Rat trap Initiative Reminder

Just a wee reminder to those members who have rat traps, can you please remember to advise us of your monthly results even if it is Nil. And add a note to let us know what bait was used.

Another tip is to put out a lure such as that made with flour, icing sugar and vanilla essence.

There is plenty of helpful information on the Predator Free NZ website and it is worth getting their newsletters. <https://predatorfreenz.org>

One more thing! Please wear protective GLOVES when dealing with your trap.

## Possums – postscript

### The possum control project using mayonnaise as a lure

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/350401451/possum-control-project-using-mayonnaise-lure>

A Taranaki possum control project is using mayonnaise to lure the pests near its cameras in an attempt to monitor numbers.

Taranaki Regional Council's Towards Predator-Free Taranaki team has been working to eradicate possums between the Timaru Stream and the Hangatāhua (Stony) River since January 2023.

Before that it targetted the area between the Timaru Stream and Oākura River, which has had no resident possum population for more than three years.

In an emailed statement, programme lead Nick Heslop said almost 3500 possums had been removed from the extension area.



Explore all the amazing candidates and campaigns by going to the [Bird of the Year website](#) – and remember to get your votes in for your fave five New Zealand birds before 5pm Sunday 15 September! The winner is announced on Monday 16 September.

In the meantime, read on to find out why hoiho numbers are plummeting, learn more about the secretive weweia, the lifestyle of the crafty cuckoo, and how kōkako numbers were boosted in Kaharoa Forest thanks to the Give a Trap initiative.

## OTHER CONSERVATION NEWS

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/aug/22/new-zealand-endangered-birds-vaccination-h5n1-avian-bird-flu-virus>

Small trial on native birds is part of preparations for arrival of deadly strain of H5N1 avian flu, which has not yet been reported in New Zealand. Go to the link to read the full story.

**Whitebait:** The Department of Conservation has urged whitebaiters to take care and stick to the rules once the season starts on September 1. Between 2019 and 2023, four people drowned while whitebaiting in New Zealand, None were wearing lifejackets

The Department of Conservation has urged whitebaiters to have fun at the river, follow the rules and keep themselves and freshwater habitats safe as the season approaches. The whitebaiting season begins on September 1 and runs until October 30. To read the full advise go to : <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/whitebaiters-urged-to-stay-safe-and-stick-to-the-rules/NT2DVF34NATFNDH5PTV6W4ZZ4/>

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## Department of Conservation

Our predator control programme has had a great year, achieving the best results to date. Over the last year we have delivered 24 aerial predator control operations across 735,000 ha of public conservation land. Monitoring has revealed exceptionally good results from this work, with rats consistently reduced to undetectable or very low levels, and stoats and possums effectively controlled.

The improved results are in part due to changes to the timing of operations in areas where beech forest seeding (known as a 'mast') caused a surge in rodent and stoat numbers last year.

In previous years we timed operations for late winter and spring to protect nesting forest birds from predators. This generally worked well, but we'd get poorer results during mast events, as heavy beech seeding creates a 'food glut' where rodents have plenty to eat. After a moderate beech mast affected large parts of the South Island and Ruapehu in 2023, we decided to test new timings and run operations either before the seed hit the ground or after it had gone. This meant the operations ran before the beech mast occurred, or the following summer and autumn, avoiding the food glut and targeting rodents when they were hungry.

We took a measured risk trialling this different approach, but we are stoked that it has proven highly successful with consistently good results. This new approach will stand us in good stead for the next big beech mast when predator numbers surge again, and help give ecosystems a chance to recover and native wildlife a chance to thrive.

Read more about the results here: <https://bit.ly/3ZeJ6CS>

Some of the many endangered species that benefit from predator control

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## Southern NZ Dotterel/Pukunui is at Stewart Island / Rakiura.

Remember your favourite endangered bird? The Southern NZ Dotterel?



We've got exciting news from Ngāi Tahu. The historic southern Māori name has been located and we can confirm that these amazing feathered friends should be known as pukunui! So that means we are no longer using the name Tūturiwhatu, that's the Northern NZ Dotterel's name [@nzdottterelbirdoftheyear](https://twitter.com/nzdottterelbirdoftheyear). With only 101 pukunui left in the world they are critically endangered and on the brink of extinction!

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## Department of Conservation

Masters of disguise! 🦋 Spot the bird in the photo

Conservation Week is the perfect time to take action for nature! One way to do that is by joining The Great Matuku Muster.

Shy and elusive, matuku-hūrepo are classified as nationally critical, with an estimated population of less than 1000 individual birds.

The Great Matuku Muster calls on people to visit their local wetlands for up to an hour before sunset, and listen for the "boom" or "whoomp" sound of the male birds.

The Great Matuku Muster events are one day each month on and around Saturday 14 September, Saturday 19 October and Saturday November 16.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3Tdrh3y>

Visit [www.lovebittern.com](http://www.lovebittern.com) or contact [lovebittern@gmail.com](mailto:lovebittern@gmail.com) for more information on taking part.

📷: Anita Spencer PS the bird is in the bottom right-hand of the photo

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## BIRDS NZ MANAWATŪ BRANCH ©

**Monthly meeting** Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024 @ 7:15 pm

Val Kenward Room at the PN Community Leisure Centre, 569 Ferguson Street.

**Speaker:** Associate Professor Phil Battley, Massey University

Talk: Red Knots reluctantly reveal their secrets

\*\*\* If you missed Phil Battley's talk about Red Knots to F&B Manawatū now is your chance to hear what Phil has to say about this fascinating bird.

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## REGULAR WORKING BEES

**Get your hands dirty!**

**Sept 24** [Dune Gardens, Foxton.](#)

**Sept 14** [Green Corridors Summerhill](#)

Help maintain corridors of native trees.

**Sept 22** [A Rocha Nursery](#)

Growing natives from eco-sourced seed.

**Sept 8** [Apollo Butterfly Park](#)

Planting for Monarch butterflies.

**Sept 15** [Pit Park Roslyn](#)

A restored urban native bush habitat.

**Most Sundays** [Manawatū Estuary Trust](#)

Keeping exotic species out of the wetland.

## A Request from one of F&B Manawatū members

Kerry Griffiths has set up a Givealittle page (Environment section) called "Search for extinct PioPio", considered extinct but he has recorded its song. Note: Piopio, New Zealand thrush

He wants to go back to Southern Fiordland to search for it and other lost birds such as Bush Wren, S I Snipe, NZ Quail, S I Kokako and Laughing Owl. Kerry is scheduled to talk to the Branch early next year.

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## October 2024 Monthly talk Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024 @ 7.30 p.m.

PN City Library, George Street Entrance, Palmerston North  
(will be streamed via zoom)

**Talk:** Toheroa are NZ's most protected shellfish, but their numbers aren't recovering. Why?

**Speakers:** Justin Tamihana, Ngatai Kikopiri Reservation Trustees Manawatū Estuary Management and  
Dr. Phil Ross, Fisheries Analyst position at Fisheries New Zealand



Toheroa are a large clam treasured by Māori coastal communities (Credit: Phil Ross)

Justin and Phil will talk about the toheroa collapse and what work is being carried out to help its recovery

The toheroa, an iconic surf clam and taonga species, were once plentiful on the west coast beaches of NZ and were a world-renowned kaimoana. But populations collapsed in the 1960s after decades of unsustainable harvest, and harvesting was banned. Despite more than 50 years of protection, wild toheroa populations haven't recovered. But now, it might be on the way back.

All welcome. Gold coin donation appreciated

That is all for this month. Hope to see you at our meeting in September.

Best wishes

*Anthea*

Anthea McClelland  
Editor

**F&B Manawatū Branch**

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