



Tauhou, Te Henui cemetery, May 2024

North Taranaki Forest & Bird news, summer 2024-25

P.O. Box 1029 New Plymouth 4340

December 2024

COMING SOON

When I look at photographs of recent events, it's very obvious that largely the same people come to each occasion — and most of them are on the committee! We know there are many more of you out there (something like 170 memberships as of today), and we understand that you have full, busy lives, but we would love to see more of you and wonder what we might do to attract you? (Suggestions welcome — place in plain brown envelope and mail to PO box 1029, New Plymouth 4340).

Meanwhile, here's our programme for the next few months.

• **Sunday 2 February: World Wetland Day 2025**

Barrett Lagoon is the setting for a couple of wetland environments—the lake fringe and a wetland slough and forest behind it. We have two wetland ecologists from the Wild for Taranaki team lined up to take us through and tell us all about it. And afterwards, if you fancy it, Local's Café just up the road serves tasty food and drink.

Meet at the gates on Roto St, off Wallath Rd, at 10:00.

• **Taranaki Anniversary weekend, 8–10 March: Forest & Bird's Ruapehu Lodge**

Depending on numbers, we will either travel in private vehicles or hire a rental van. Accommodation is in bunkrooms. There are walking tracks from the lodge, ranging from short and easy to longer and more challenging. **We must have numbers by Friday 31 January in order to make a booking: email janethuntz@outlook.com**

• **16 April: AGM. Community House, 7:00.**

We are in the process of deciding on a speaker and will let you know by email and in the next newsletter.

• **17 May: Rotokare Scenic Reserve. Meet in the carpark at 11:00.** The walk around the lake takes about 90 minutes. Bring lunch to eat beside the water afterwards. It's always a great trip.

• **June: A seed propagation workshop** run by Vince Naus — this will be a useful event to learn the best methods to raise native plants from seeds. **Date and venue to be confirmed.**

BELOW: Forest & Bird's Ruapehu Lodge offers warm, comfortable accommodation. It overlooks the Whakapapanui River and is surrounded by native beech forest with a spectacular view of Mt Ruapehu.

It's close to a number of interesting day walks where you may see a range of native wildlife. There are cafes and restaurants in the village, just a 10-minute walk away.

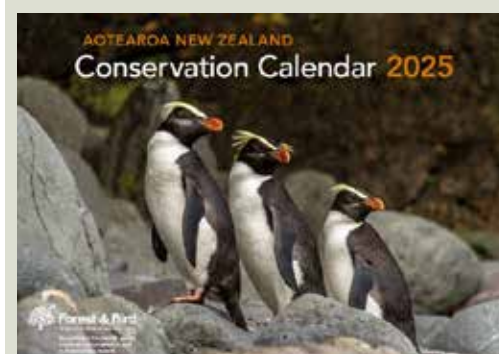


COMMITTEE NEWS

Roles have altered on the committee. After nine years as secretary, Anne Collins has passed the pen to Amy Mills while Janet Hunt has handed off oversight of the reserves — Te Wairoa is now under the watchful eye of Peter Winter while Karen Hamer is keeping tabs on Tom & Don's.

Other responsibilities remain the same and Anne and Janet are still on the committee.

See the 'Who's who' on p.4 of this newsletter.



These beautiful calendars are still available. Get yours from New Plymouth Vet Group or from Dawn \$20.00

Te Henui stream and cemetery walk & picnic, 23 November

Our end-of-year event was a walk from East End beach south along the walkway beside the tranquil Te Henui Stream, beneath two bridges where pigeons roost and up a side path into the very old Te Henui Cemetery.

It's a special place, not only for the deep sense of history and the reminders of people and events past, but also, and especially, for the plantings on the older graves that are tended weekly by a dedicated small team of volunteers. It's stunning at all times of year. Monarch butterflies cruise past, there's always birdsong and overall, a great sense of peace.

Afterwards we had a small picnic on the lawn back at East End before going our separate ways. That's it for 2024: roll on, 2025.

BELOW LEFT: R. Mills, Amy Mills and Anne Collins lead some of the group up the hill.
BELOW: past chair Carolyn Brough beside the headstone of her great grandfather Edward Metcalf Smith, Taranaki MP for 13 years.



RESERVES REPORTS

TE WAIROA DOROTHY BAKER RESERVE

Peter Haines and Janet Hunt recently went out to the reserve to try out the new boardwalk in the lower reserve. Len Rodenberg and friend have done a fine job of extending it across the boggy patch. It's looking great, thanks Len.

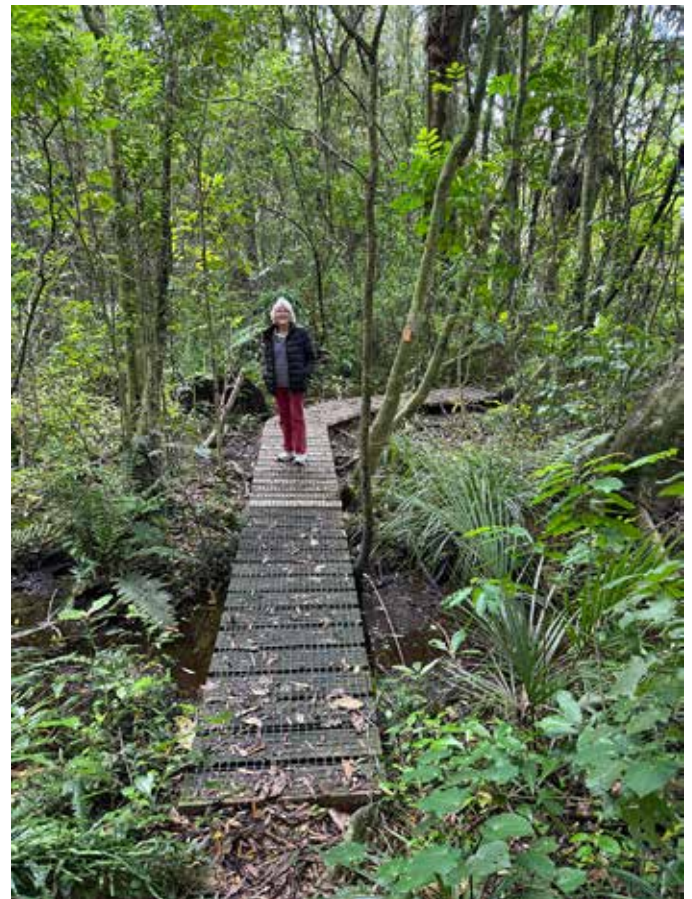
While we were there we spotted this beast below — proof if we need it, that we can never let up on pest control.

If you are interested in joining the trapping team, please let Peter Winter know (contact details are on p.4.)



RIGHT: There's a pest hot spot at the North West corner where the stream flows into the reserve. The rat traps in that area most often have catches.

FAR RIGHT: The boardwalk extension.



TOM & DON'S

Tom & Don's (or the 'Kings' Block' - as it is referred to by the TRC) is situated within the Zero Possum area. Members of the committee recently met on site with Nick Heslop from the TRC Zero Possum project.

The Zero Possum Project has an area of around 10,000ha that is confirmed or almost possum free — the first in the world to achieve a mainland possum free area of this scale. There is genetic evidence that possums either side of the Stoney River are two distinct non-mixing populations — meaning the Stoney is a very good natural barrier.

TRC are primarily using trapping with a combination of disruptive (ie loud) hunting and thermo-camera night (ie quiet) hunting. Not much poison has been used due to being on private farmland and the risk to animals.

Scat dogs are also being used to determine and target remaining areas of possum activity, although, because the Kings' block has had Neosporosis (a severe parasitic infection in dogs) in the past scat dogs are not being used there.

Instead, the TRC have installed five AT220 self-resetting traps and 3 associated cameras in and around the Kings' Block to mop up the last few possums (if any do remain). We noticed the one AT220 placed outside the bush on our visit with Carol Burgess of QEII, and four more are within the bush.

The last couple of wax tag surveys have not shown any possum presence and the expectation is that they will be at zero possums by the end of this summer.

There will be a virtual barrier placed around the zero possum area by autumn with 50 cameras between the maunga and the farmland and 300 around the sides, as well as AT220s. There will be mayonnaise lures — the possums apparently get used to the timing of the release of each new dollop and come each day.

—Karen Hamer



TOP RIGHT: QEII rep Carol Burgess with committee member, Karen Hamer, checking the fenceline in June. One of the possum traps is visible on a post.

BELOW: This was an interesting discovery for the team — a very old section of boardwalk spans one of the streams to the west of the block. Clearly, people have known about it in the past but with the passage of time, it's origins have been lost. Likewise, not far from here but in the bush itself, we found a number of abandoned pots from a long-ago planting day. We will return sometime soon to collect them.

Who's who at North Taranaki F&B & KCC

Secretary: Amy Mills:
northtaranaki.branch@
forestandbird.org.nz

Treasurer: Dawn Mills
(06) 758 3252
rjmills58@gmail.com

Peter Winter | (06) 752 0167
peterjwinter@hotmail.com

Karen Hamer | 021 026 47206
kanhrac@gmail.com

Janet Fleury
janetfleury@hotmail.com

Anne Collins
anne.dkc@gmail.com

Janica Amoore: waiongona@
woodleigh.co.nz

KCC: Lee McCracken
027 755 6729
northtaranaki@KCC.org.nz

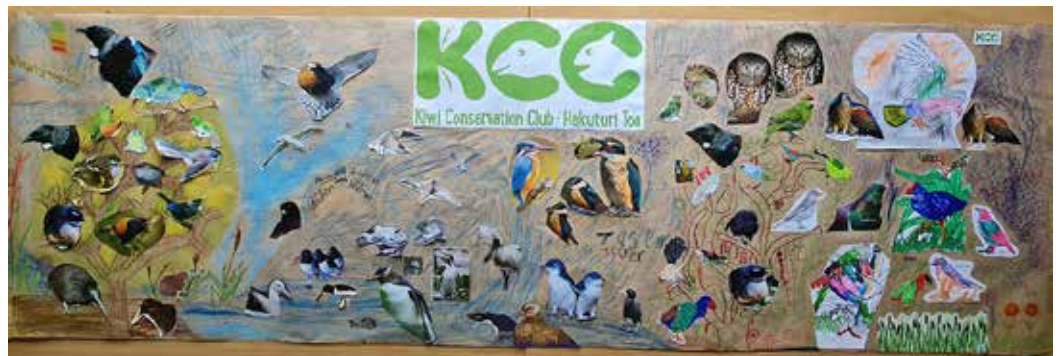
Newsletter: Janet Hunt
0274 715169
janethuntnz@outlook.com



WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

Zoo Discovery — Saturday 31 August

15 KCC'ers and 12 Adults had a fantastic time at our Zoo Discovery activity. Zoo Keeper Eve gave us a general address, a specific talk on Meerkats (assisted by Zoo Keeper Max) and then a behind-the-scenes look at what goes on at the zoo with the browse food area, the kitchen, the room for making up play and interactive equipment for the animals & birds and a look at the zoo and office area. We saw some great art work done by the otters and a cast of otter prints.



A treasure hunt was a great way for keeping warm on a bleak day.

From the zoo we went to the Enviro Hub where we learnt all about different bird beaks and how they help particular birds with their food preferences. We then had an awesome time making a mural with different groups of birds we had discovered — tying these in with their particular beaks.

Wetland Visit & Vet Talk — 21 September

14 KCC'ers and 13 Adults had the privilege of visiting a developed wetland owned by a long standing Forest & Bird member and local vet. Dawn and Rob explained the process of making the dam, removing pines, digging out the wetland and making a fish ladder. Their before-and-after pictures — some 9yrs later — were appreciated by the parents and KCC'ers alike.

The KCC'ers enjoyed walking amongst the flaxes — easy to get lost in the height of them — and seeing the fish ladder. The water was so clear running out of the wetland — evidence of the filtration taking place. We saw a pukeko family



and a duck keeping well away from us and it was lovely to hear the birds.

We walked up to Dawn & Rob's home where Rob gave a very educational talk to the KCC'ers and parents about wild birds he has treated for rehabilitation back to the wild or into captivity if they were not able to be released.

KCC'ers learnt how to tell the difference of whether a bird is just hopping about on the ground, learning to fly and being fed by Mum, fallen out of a nest or injured. And of course, best action to take in each case.



The Junction Zero Waste Hub - 4 October 2024

We had an informative tour of the Junction Zero Waste Hub. A lot of children had already visited with their schools but there were still 9 children who came along. The Educator took us on a tour of the Re-use shop and then into where the recycling trucks deliver our recycling. There wasn't much to see beyond the conveyer belt as it's done a lot by robots and machines now. But we could see the process also on screens inside.

The children and adults learnt a lot more than about recycling – what can and can't be recycled and what some of our recycled products are made into.

I recommend a public tour if you've never been before. The re-use shop is also worth a visit – there's lots of things there which can be repurposed – it's not just a second hand shop.



Adventures in Barrett Domain — 9 November 2024

Object of today's activity was to learn and identify two native trees. We did some bark rubbings with a focus on identifying the leaf structure of the trees and using a resource to work through a process of identification. The aim was to remember these trees in the future.

We enjoyed a scavenger hunt as we walked the tracks and measured the diameter of the widest tree circumference we came across. Sadly it was not a native but it did measure 7.5 KCCers around, so quite large.

This was our last activity for the year.



Are you interested in joining KCC – for ages 5-13 years? Visit <https://kcc.org.nz/about/> to find out more.