



Waikato Biodiversity Forum Newsletter May 2011 Number 31

Kia Ora/Greetings to all Forum Members

A land ethic...reflects the existence of an ecological conscience, and this in turn reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land. Health is the capacity of the land for self-renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity." - Aldo Leopold from A Sand County Almanac

Funding Advice

The Forum's website has a comprehensive list of funders. Moira is available for funding advice.

Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust (WCEET) Update

The 2011 WCEET funding meeting was held on 8th March 2011. The Trust received 20 applications for projects this year requesting \$1.9 million in funds over the next 3 years. Eleven projects were approved totalling \$486,000 as follows:

Tongariro Natural History Society – Wetland Restoration, South Taupo Wetlands
National Wetland Trust – Contribution towards construction of the National Wetlands Centre at Lake Serpentine
Ngati Tahu Ngati Whaoa Rununga Trust – Riparian Enhancement, Ohaaki
Ngati Rongomai Hapu – Restoration of the Waiotaka River Catchment, South Taupo
Waikato RiverCare – ongoing support of their Lower Waikato River bank enhancement programmes
Waikato Regional Council – Riparian Planting, margins of Lake Waahi, Huntly
Tui 2000 Inc– Waiwhakareke Heritage Park planting, Rotokauri, Hamilton
Advocates of the Tongariro River – River bank restoration, Turangi
Pukawa Wildlife Management Trust – Pest control, Pukawa, Lake Taupo
Mighty River Power – Downstream Eel Migration Research Project, Karapiro Dam
Department of Conservation – Pest Fish barrier installation, Lake Serpentine
WCEET look forward to working with these groups over the next few years to help them achieve their ecological enhancement goals. Michelle Archer

Five Minute Bird Count



There are still 5 training places available on an upcoming Five Minute Bird Count training course in Thames on 14 and 15 June. The five minute bird count (5MBC) technique monitors the abundance of forest birds over time. The 5MBC course is based on the Dawson and Bull field method and uses innovative techniques, such as an e-learning programme and pre-recorded bird calls, to help you identify common forest bird species. A lot of time is spent in the field undertaking five minute bird counts.

The course is targeted at field staff with a role in monitoring ecosystem health - including rangers, programme managers and technical support officers. The course is also available to the public.

Community members are able to sign up via the [DOC website](http://www.doc.govt.nz) under "Getting Involved " or they can send an email to the Training@doc.govt.nz to register for a course. The costs to community members is \$200.

Waikato River Trails Trust

Waikato River Trails Trust and Waikato Regional Council have recently assessed the Huihuitaha Wetland adjacent to Lake Karapiro. This is a genuine and intact wetland with valuable biodiversity values. As a result of this assessment a programme of improvement has been agreed. This will be a phased approach over a number

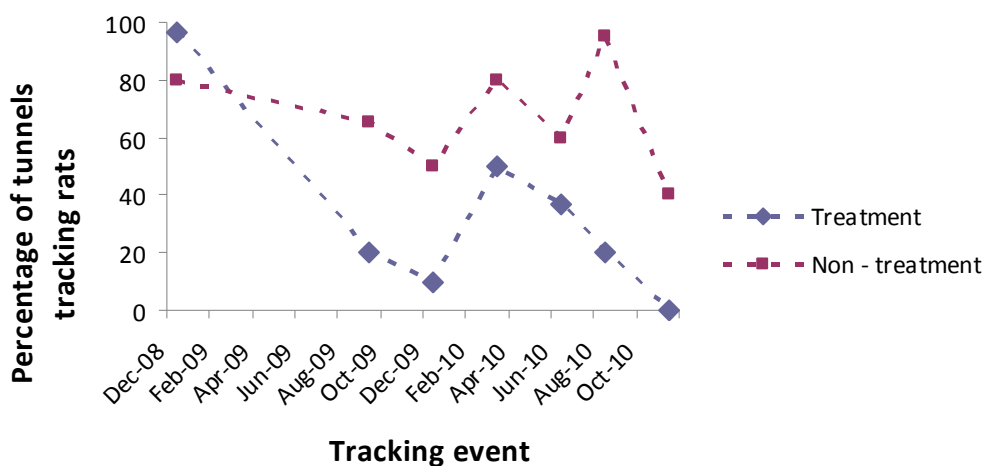
of years. The first phases are to eliminate the animal and plant pests and to replant some areas with native trees. Recently some of the willows and yellow flag have been poisoned and just last week volunteers planted over 1000 native plants. Supervised by Herman and Thea Van Rooijen and assisted by Katie Bayes and Brian Pepperell students from Putaruru College and Forest View high have carefully planted a wide range of plants. These vary from Carex and Cabbage trees to Totara and Kahikatea. Observations from Glyn Wooller , General Manager of Waikato River Trails are that the students are a credit to their families and schools, "they planted a large number of trees with real care and attention to detail, the trees are off to a good start".

The Huihuitaha Wetland project is one of true collaborations and community involvement. Waikato Regional Council science and environmental restoration background has been of huge value. Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust has provided funding for native trees. Dave Salmon from Summit Quinphos with associate Clive Sinclair of Pacific Biofert have kindly donated fertilizer. Cath O'Connell, Gateway coordinator has facilitated discussions with local secondary schools. Last but not least are our Trustees and the school students who have done such a fantastic job. Glyn Wooller

Waiaro Sanctuary (north of Colville on the Coromandel Peninsula)

Waiaro Sanctuary is now into its third year of its intensive pest management project with around 800 Kamate rat traps on the ground plus numerous possum and cat traps. Waiaro Sanctuary pest control officer finds Kamate rat traps extremely effective. Their recent tracking result showed zero rats and mice in the treatment area while outside of our grid the tunnels still showed high infestation. While this was a hugely encouraging result for them it was even better to see invertebrates such as weta making their first appearances in the tracking tunnels, and even a gecko had a wander through. So it is great to get statistical proof of what they have been observing - that not only are the rats declining the native fauna is recovering as a consequence. This is a very heartening result.

Waiaro rat tracking



An ecological assessment by Red Admiral Ecology (Patrick Stewart) confirmed the presence of Hochstetters frog in the Waiaro Sanctuary streams. Waiaro Sanctuary is now into its third year of its intensive pest management project with around 800 rat traps on the ground plus numerous possum and cat traps. Their recent tracking result showed zero rats and mice in the treatment area while outside of our grid the tunnels still showed high infestation. While this was a hugely encouraging result for them it was even better to see invertebrates such as weta making their first appearances in the tracking tunnels, and even a gecko had a wander through. So it is great to get statistical proof of what they have been observing - that not only are the rats declining the native fauna is recovering as a consequence. This is a very heartening result.

Te Whangai Trust PB3 plants for sale

The Trust has a large number of seconds that are PB3 that they don't wish to carry over for the next growing season and would like to make them available for landcare groups first ..These are karo, lemonwood, five finger

akeake, lace bark and cabbage trees. They have been discounted to \$1.50 for community groups and landcare groups.

The Trust also has an excellent range of PB3 plants for sale.

Please contact John 092327725 or 021952659

Mangakotukutuku Stream Care Group

A fish ramp has been constructed on the culvert of Mangakotukutuku Stream at Peacockes Rd to help native fish, such as juvenile giant kokopu, access habitat upstream. Construction of the ramp was co-ordinated by



Mangakotukutuku Stream Care Group member Brenda Aldridge with the work carried out by Spartan Construction with funding from WCEET and Hamilton City Council. The fish pass consists of a sloping concrete ramp at the down stream end of the culvert with rocks embedded in the concrete to break up the flow and provide resting areas for fish. Monitoring in an upstream tributary was carried out before installation of the ramp and will be carried out at the same time next year to document change in fish abundance. Photos of the ramp can be found on the stream care group's web site (www.streamcare.org.nz). Kevin Collier

Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park

Tui 2000 Inc and Friends of Waiwhakareke are delighted that the Department of Conservation Waikato Community Conservation Fund has made a contribution of \$1000.00 towards the potting up and propagation of enrichment species for the Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park project. Potting up takes place at the Tamahere Gully Nursery in Devine Rd, next to the Tamahere Primary School. If you feel you could help with this work (usually on a Friday morning from 9-12noon) please contact Catherine Smith 07 8558296) or 2smiths@wave.co.nz

Friends of Waiwhakareke receive information re working bee dates etc through the Friends email list. Contact Moira 07 8465066 or email m.cursey@xtra.co.nz to be placed on the email list.

TaiTec Animal and Insect Pest Control

Taitec continue to primarily target possums and mustelids. Feral cats and rodents are controlled to a lesser degree with other predator pest species dealt with on sight or request basis. Possums are controlled by the use of loaded raised bait stations, trapping, and shooting. Taitec currently services 140 bait stations throughout 41 properties.



When loaded with calciferol or anti coagulant baits, the bait stations provide a limited degree of rodent control. Mustelids are controlled by servicing 200 plus Fenn mustelid traps per month. The twelve trap checks are necessary to maintain a perimeter defense and reduce the numbers of kiwi killers infiltrating into the protective boundaries of the Whenuakite Kiwi Care's core zone of operation. Seventy six stoats were caught during the previous 12-month period. There was a nil ferret catch within Taitec's area of operation. Taitec's most recent communications (May 2011) with NAWAC (National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee) is that there is "No immediate intention to restrict the use of Fenn Traps". However, there is a possibility that Fenn traps

will be restricted or phased out in the future in favor of the current D.o.C. developed and approved D.o.C.200 or similar trap. M. and D.Boyd.

Forest and Bird Thames

A grant from Lion Foundation has enabled Thames Forest and Bird to form a bird corridor in the Kirikiri Valley, just South of Thames, linking the Coromandel State Forest with the settlement at Kopu. The dozen or so residents of the district have come together and agreed to form the corridor, which covers over 1,000 hectares. Funds for buying predator traps and supplies have been received and when laid will allow the recovery of some of the forest remnants long under threat. The group plans to implement the corridor on a semi-permanent basis, and to supplement it through the transfer of some of the original tree species, several of which have long since gone from the Valley. Ken Clark

Te Kauri-Waikuku Trust Rat or Tui? Programme Sponsorship

Te Kauri-Waikuku Trust's aim is to restore Te Kauri Park to a complete living forest, able to nurture and sustain our native wildlife, including the tui. The Trust has developed a *Rat or Tui? Programme* to help carry out essential pest control of the destructive rats, mice, possums and stoats in this forest. The programme involves sponsoring bait stations for one year at \$25 a station. There is also a Gift programme. See the website www.tekauri.org.nz for details or email info@tekauri.org.nz



Robins Return to Maungatautari

A small crowd of MEIT staff, trustees, volunteers and well wishers was on hand on Friday 6 May 2011 to welcome the first translocation of 40 North Island robins (19 females, 21 males) to the Maungatautari Ecological Island. Wally Papa offered a short karakia before the birds were individually released into their new environment. The robins were captured in the Pureora Forest during a 10 day MEIT operation conducted in association with the Department of Conservation (who were also capturing robins for translocation to the Coromandel Peninsula). The entire operation involved much logistical planning as the robins were trained and fed during the weeks leading up to their capture. At Pureora their final capture and subsequent custodial care involved some 35 people - MEIT staff, DOC staff, graduate students and volunteers who carefully trapped the birds, which were then weighed, measured, sexed and banded by Massey University's Dr Kevin Parker. They were then transferred to overnight care, separately accommodated in a specially modified pet carrier complete with mesh ventilation screens, forest floor litter, perch, food and water containers. Whilst in captivity breakfast, lunch and dinner was provided by attendants who made up meal packs of 50 mealworms and 10 wax moth worms per bird.

From MEIT website www.maungatrust.org

Opito Bay Conservation Group

In Easter 2010 we planted 1200 dune grasses on eroding dunes. We had 15 volunteers who did a great job, ably assisted by Jim Dahm from Environment Waikato who supplied the plants. A year later the grasses are flourishing (refer before and after shots attached) and TCDC have put up poles to show the whereabouts of the beach



access tracks. We have asked TCDC if they could place chain boardwalks over the sand to further reduce erosion. We carry out pest control and Brian Thompson who lives in Opito Bay regularly sets traps around the Bay. The kill results for the 12 month period to 11th April 2011 are 88 hedgehogs, 52 stoats, 32 rats and 17 feral cats. Because of Brian's commitment to pest control nine NZ dotterel fledged in Opito and one in Matapaua Bay. This is in spite of summer storms, which destroyed quite a few nests. This winter a large slip behind the houses will be planted with kanuka and manuka. Manuka/kanuka slash has already been put in place on the slip. A

further 500 plants in addition to the slip planting; mainly kauri, plus also pururi, taraire and kowhai will be planted. We also undertake weed control with spraying already carried out in April on arum lily, wild ginger, pampas as well as cutting down and stump swabbing of tobacco weed, cotoneaster and the pulling out of wilding pines.
Chris Severne chris@obsidiancommunications.co.nz

Lower Mangapiko Streamcare Group - Congratulations

Congratulations to the Lower Mangapiko Streamcare Group who won the Heritage and Environment award at the Waipa District Council award ceremony earlier this month. The group has been restoring, enhancing and protecting the Lower Mangapiko Stream, getting the community involved and practising sustainable land management. Around 300 volunteers have helped work towards this mission through organised weed control sessions and planting days that plug up the stream's banks to prevent further erosion and flooding. Close to 7,000 plants were planted last year alone and to date 27.3 km of the stream's bank has been cleared.

The group brings together neighbouring landowners, businesses and schools to help achieve its goals and to ensure this project is well looked after in the years to come. The group involves the community in project decisions and they encourage neighbouring landowners to keep stock out of the waterways, improving the water quality. School children learn about native plants, riparian plantings and their benefits and local businesses support the project and provide staff to help out at the planting days. Water quality is improving along with the increased stream life. The final part of the project is to have a walkway along the stream's bank for the public to enjoy.

Waikato Conservation Management Strategy Review



The Department of Conservation is seeking information from the public about their favourite conservation places in the Waikato region and why they are important to protect into the future. Work has resumed on a review of the Waikato Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) and the first stage of public consultation is open until the end of June. We would like to hear from people about the conservation places and values they think are important, the opportunities they most enjoy at those places, and what they would like their favourite place to look like in 10-15 years time. We would also welcome ideas about what people think is needed to make that happen.

For more information about the Waikato CMS review, please visit our website at www.doc.govt.nz/waikatocms. While online, you can send us feedback via our CMS places survey and register for email updates. For more information contact Amanda Haigh at Waikato Conservancy Office on (07) 858 1000.

Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society

A new extension to the bait station grid set up by Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society on Mt Pirongia is currently being worked on, thanks to funding from Lion Foundation, DoC and Pub Charity. This will take the total area under control by the society to 880ha and brings them within reach of their goal to cover 1,000ha of the Forest Park. Volunteers to help with bait station filling in spring are always welcome, and a range of fitness levels can be catered for. The filling takes place twice in spring on a Saturday morning and only requires a time commitment of between 2 to 4 hours. If you would like to be involved please contact Steve McClunie on (07) 871 9474 or stephendale@ihug.co.nz. The society also has options for sponsoring 1 hectare of pest control which starts at \$30-00 annually and details are available off their website: www.mtpirongia.org.nz.

Te Pahu Landcare Group

The tradescantia leaf beetle (*Neolema ogloblini*) was released for the first time in the Waikato Thursday 14th April 2011. Members of the Te Pahu Landcare Group, including the next generation, helped staff from Waikato Regional Council release around 300 beetles into their new home in the Karamu Reserve. The Waipa District Council Reserve is overrun with *Tradescantia fluminensis* (wandering jew) and volunteer members of the Te Pahu landcare group have undertaken various weed control methods over the past nine years but have never been able to get on top of the weed. Darion Embling from Waikato Regional Council, who oversaw the release, said the aim in releasing the beetle was to reduce *tradescantia fluminensis* by 80% in order for native seedlings to have a

chance to germinate and grow. The conditions for the release were perfect and the site will be monitored over the next two months to see how well the beetles have established themselves. Further information about the release see www.tepahu.co.nz

Kauri2000 Plantings

There will be plantings on the 11 and 18 June, Matarangi Reserve, Coromandel Peninsula. For details contact info@kauri2000.co.nz or phone 07 866 0468.

If you want to contact people whose details are not in the newsletter you can go through the Contact Us page on the Forum website and send an email to me. I'll put you in touch with them.

The newsletters are all placed on www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz for easy access.

Cheers Moira