



CANOPY

Newsletter of the New Zealand Native Forests Restoration Trust

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From The Chair

We celebrate the 54th issue of Canopy with a reminder that, as autumn leaves fall around us, the continued work of the Trust is carried out by a relatively small team of volunteers plus one paid half time Field Officer. Several of our trustees are original founders of the Trust, ranging in years from their early sixties to the grand age of 94 and all still active in one capacity or another. We welcome inquiries from supporters willing to lend a hand with local reserves, whether it be with weeding/pest control, tree planting or putting together submissions on policies that impact on our work.

The Trust's practice is to allocate to each reserve a local Honorary Ranger in regular contact with the Field Officer and Trustees. Some reserves also have their own dedicated supporters, such as the wetland at Mangarakau, our southernmost property not far from the beautiful Whanganui Inlet in north west Nelson. If you have a passion for the environment and some spare time to become more involved in the work of the Trust, please contact us.

The wisdom of our elders constantly reminds us that political decisions operate in cycles and constant vigilance is necessary, particularly where environmental protection is concerned. The article on mining in this issue provides a case in point.

Colleen Newton



If you are not already a supporter and wish to join us, please send us your name & address, or visit the trust's website for more information www.nznftr.org.nz

Progress At Tupare

The summer months have seen much activity at the Trust's most recent property, the **Marie Neverman Wetland Reserve** on the Kaipara Peninsula, north west of Auckland. In February we were host to the South Kaipara Landcare group to mark World Wetland Day. Some 60 to 70 visitors showed a keen interest in the Trust's development of the lake and its environs as a nature sanctuary. A highly successful field trip by the Kaipara Branch of Forest & Bird in March reinforced the message and led to welcome offers of help with future activities, including tree planting and monitoring.

Predator control around the lake, begun last spring, has been extended using both DoC traps and bait stations. We are particularly indebted to students of Kaipara College and friends in the Landcare group for this work. Over the same period, small groups of Trust supporters have devoted considerable effort to weed removal with woolly nightshade as the primary target. Thistles that had escaped spray treatment were cleared from the paddock area. Professional help is being engaged for the next stage that involves the spraying of pampas grass before it invades open areas and clearance of climbing asparagus, unfortunately present in some bush patches.

Meanwhile, specialist studies of the bird, plant and insect life of the reserve are well underway. A recent highlight (literally, as UV-rich lamps are employed) was an evening search for moths, during which 65 species were attracted and identified. Next the bird population of the lake was tallied as part of the Ornithological Society's 2010 waterbird survey (a.k.a. Dabchick Census) of the Kaipara peninsula, held annually on ANZAC Day.

Restoration planting in the Marie Neverman Reserve at Tupare is to begin in the coming season, with dates tentatively set as the last Saturday in May, June and July. For information or to take part in activities such as those described in this article, please contact Sharen Graham (09 817 5537)

Appeal Progress

Thanks to the generosity of our Supporters, the current **Marie Neverman Reserve Appeal** has received \$40,055 to date. This is very encouraging, because it provides solid backing for the Trust to approach funding agencies for the balance needed to purchase the extra 113 hectares of marshland adjoining our existing reserve. The appeal remains open for donations using the slip that accompanies this issue of Canopy. Copies of the previous Canopy #53, with its accompanying leaflet promoting the appeal, are still available if you wish to know more about this project.

Financing The Protection Of Our Reserves A Big Thank You

Management of the Trust's reserves is a large and on-going part of our work. With 28 properties, situated from Kaitaia to NW Nelson, much of our effort is necessarily focussed on maintaining and enhancing the quality of these fine bush and wetland blocks. Predator removal is important, and this involves setting and maintaining traps or bait stations. Weed control also necessitates much labour-intensive activity. Altogether a great deal of work is done by Honorary Rangers and by volunteers; however there are still materials to be bought and, sometimes, contractors to be employed, which all costs money.

Some years ago we instituted a scheme whereby our supporters make a regular- usually monthly- automatic payment to help cover our work in the field. This dependable income allows us to plan ahead in land management and is very much appreciated. The Trustees take this opportunity to say a big Thank You to all our existing donors.

Other supporters who wish to help in this way may obtain a form for Automatic Payments from our Treasurer by sending a note to the Trust's PO Box address or to admin@nznfrt.org.nz. Those who currently contribute in this way have told us that the regular deduction of \$10 or \$20 a month – even more in some instances – is a painless way of helping the Trust. A donation receipt, provided at the end of the financial year, means that the sum qualifies for tax remission at 33.33%. From the Restoration Trust's point of view the cumulative value of such contributions is inestimable.

Payroll Giving

A fresh way to support community activities has become available this year. It is called Payroll Giving and is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Development. This system allows employees to make voluntary charitable donations through their employer and receive immediate tax credits for doing so. In the past, it has been necessary to save receipts and submit them at the end of the year to obtain a refund. Using the new system, donors simply select the organisation they want to support, off a verified list. To take the Ministry of Social Development itself as an example, their 10,000 staff will be provided with a list of about 1,500 charities to choose from (and to which others can be added).

The NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust being a verified charity, naturally we hope that our supporters will be able to take advantage of such an opportunity. Where the Trust is chosen, your specified donation will be automatically deducted from each payment of wages or salary, and your tax credit granted at the same time.

Whether you are an employee or employer, we invite you to find out whether Payroll Giving is a possibility in your situation. For further information, there is a website www.msd.govt.nz or a person to contact: Fiona Henry at the Payroll Giving Help Desk on 04 917 8100.

Donations by whatever means being the life-blood of our organisation, we should, of course, stress that the traditional method of keeping receipts for end-of-year submission remains in place for those who prefer that method, or who are not in employment.

To Plan, Or Not To Plan?

What is the best way to go about planning the Trust's affairs? Over many years, as the Trust has progressively purchased reserves, we have prepared management plans to assist the restoration of these properties. As different trustees and supporters have added their feel for a particular reserve, so the plans have reflected their interests. Generally the local rangers contributed their intimate knowledge of the area and provided vital continuity. Particular bents were revealed, as one person might add history, another botany, others expertise regarding fencing issues, pest control, or even the local politics of the area.

All this knowledge formed an amalgam that became our 'Management Plan' which in most cases was published and printed in what we now call 'hard copy.' There was no alternative in pre-computer days. Particular thanks are due to pioneers, Val Hollard, Shawn Baker, Jenny Rattenbury, and more recently Sharen Graham, for their contribution to progress.

However over the years these management plans have generally been relegated to a bottom shelf or stored in basement or attic. When dusted off, the contents had aged and the plans were no longer entirely relevant. New trustees, changing personnel, local rangers moving on, all resulted in breaks with what had gone before. Why were particular things done, or not done? Methods, reasons, actions, and procedures all changed over time. Although the Trust agendas and minutes record much of this, the actual management plans tended to remain static, as first written.

Today we are faced with the task of renewing those early plans, only to see them become outdated again! Perhaps there is a better way. By adopting modern technology and preparing our management plans 'on-line' they can be available for all concerned to read and contribute so that the plans are kept up-to-date. How does the bird count today compare with that 10 years ago? How many stoats have been caught this month? Where is the highest priority for new fencing? What are the costs? Where will the money come from? Questions like these can be tracked, and answers incorporated, by careful application of today's electronic version of a management plan.

A broader approach to planning: Some of the world's largest conservation organisations (The Nature Conservancy of Australia, IUCN, World Wide Fund for Nature, WCPA and others) have joined forces to adopt a set of principles and methods to manage their various conservation projects. Some projects cover whole countries, some even entire oceans and continents. Yet the same electronic planning tool can serve our Native Forests Restoration Trust. We are at present evaluating two models and have sought expert advice as to which one better suits our needs. Anyone with particular skills in restoration planning, computer software or simply time to assist is very welcome to contact us. We envisage a meeting where we will provide background information and outline what is involved. We encourage you to take a look on the internet at <http://conserveonline.org> to get an idea of what is out there, which includes software with intriguing names like Miradi and ConPro, besides the more explicit CAP (Conservation Action Planning).



Autumn Leaves

Nature's Guardians

This heading in the Listener of March 6, 2010, was sub-titled "The evolutionary fate of many plant species falls into the hands of a passionate few." The article made special mention of the native plant stocks maintained by the Prebble brothers of Texture Plants in Christchurch, Terry & Lindsay Hatch of Joy Plants, Pukekohe, and NZ NFR Trustee **Geoff Davidson** at Oratia Native Plant Nursery in Auckland's Waitakere Ranges. The Listener's Good to Grow feature by Xanthe White cited instances where the very survival of a rare species may depend on the nurseryman who has chosen to nurture it.

Former Trustee **Ben Thorpe** was in the news recently for his prowess in walking and documenting more than 2000 km of the Wellington region, including the Rimutaka Ranges, and as far afield as Levin. Ben was pursuing a retirement project spread over the past 15 years, which he describes modestly as undertaken to get to know the local countryside a bit.

Gateway Partnership Certificate

Kaipara College has acknowledged our assistance, in offering four students outdoor experience, by awarding the Trust a Gateway Partnership Certificate. Conducted at the Trust's Marie Neverman Reserve, the Papa Taiao programme aims to lift the wellbeing and academic achievement of Maori students through strengthened connections to their culture and the environment. In field work at Tupare led by Marty Taylor further students have installed predator traps and tracking tunnels around the lake, and are collecting data on the results. Others are monitoring the waterbirds, taking particular account of the swans, paradise shelducks and Canada geese to assess possible competition with the smaller species.

Te Mahia School project

The Trust is backing an application under the Hawkes Bay Regional Landcare Scheme for restoration work based at our Opoutama Reserve on the Mahia Peninsula. The project includes a shade house with equipment to grow native trees for planting in the vicinity.

Memorial to Arthur Dunn

On a recent Sunday in March, friends and neighbours of the late Arthur Dunn, QSM, gathered to unveil a plaque and seating area in his honour, within the newly established Puhoi River Park. As we reported in Canopy #50, Arthur, a staunch supporter of the Trust, died in August 2008 while engaged in protecting native bush on his covenanted property.

An Exciting Prospect In The Waikato

Over the past year we have been co-operating with Environment Waikato and the Department of Conservation to protect a fine piece of native bush in the Raglan ecological district. The 200-hectare block is next to the existing Four Brothers Reserve, donated to DoC by the late Michael Hope, a former Waikato District Councillor. The Council regards the area as important for the recreation of Hamilton residents through the creation of walking tracks and routes for mountain biking. Details are still being worked out. However all parties agree on the importance of conserving the bush, which is as a key component in the Hamilton Halo project to increase native bird numbers visiting the city. The opportunity for restoration planting appeals strongly to our Trust. We are hopeful of a favourable outcome from the present negotiations.

Preserving The Trust's Archives

The Native Forests Restoration Trust is now in its 30th year. During this period a vast amount has been attempted and a great deal achieved. Consequently we have accumulated a large body of written material including precious records which have been put into secure storage with Pickford Records Management (now called Iron Mountain but maintaining the service). However, there is much more to archives than simply preserving the documents; these need to be properly sorted and indexed to be of real use. That major task is now being undertaken with professional help, partly financed by a recent grant of \$1000 from the Heselstine Trust that we gratefully acknowledge.

The Trust's records occupy 15 boxes, with more being added as individual collections are handed over. The material relates to efforts in native habitat restoration, to the purchase and management of our many reserves and, more widely, to the conservation scene in New Zealand and its recent history. A variety of people have been involved as Trustees, Rangers and in many voluntary capacities, contributing their knowledge and experience over a wide field. A quick glance at some of the categories into which the Trust's archives are being sorted gives some idea of their value, recalling as it does past campaigns and achievements, not to mention the background administrative work that even a straightforward task entails.

Here are examples:

- Origins of the Trust
- Appointments of Patron, Trustees, Field Officer
- Forest Restoration at Pureora, Waipoua, Rangitito Ranges
- Cooperation with kindred organisations; QEII National Trust, Forest & Bird, Wetland Trust
- Submissions to government & local authorities
- Supporters and Volunteers
- Fund-raising Appeals
- NFRT Reserves (with accumulated records for every one)
- Publications; Out of the Ashes, The Living Forests of New Zealand, Native Forest Reserves, Using Local Forest as your Textbook
- Bequests & Memorials
- Loder Cup (awarded to the Trust and to Trustee Arthur Cowan)

The list is not endless, but it is impressive and presents a formidable challenge to our archivists!

Distribution Of Canopy

Recent issues of Canopy invited supporters to express a preference between three options for receiving the Trust's newsletter. Of 254 replies, 107 favoured a hard copy (in other words the present paper version), 28 were willing to refer to the Trust's website, while 119 opted to receive Canopy by email. This response comes from only 15% of the individuals on the Trust's mailing list, so clearly we need to continue printing and posting the newsletter, at least for the time being. While we recognise that some supporters would rather have Canopy sent by email, the cost savings need to be set against the extra work this would entail.

Thank you to those who have taken the trouble to reply. We are open to further expressions of opinion directed to admin@nznfrt.org.nz or posted to the address at the head of this newsletter.



What's Yours Is Mined

Don't worry! We'll put it all back and replant the native trees and everything will be all right again!

The appropriate answer might be 'Yeah right!' There are many glaring examples of the devastation caused by mining having never been restored long after a mine has closed down. And it takes hundreds of years to make a real forest again.

This is why NFRT tries to begin restoration with a piece of recovering forest adjacent to an area of significant forest. Here the birds and animals can quickly find their way back into the living community that makes a forest.

But we haven't acquired and restored 5000 hectares of forest round New Zealand for nothing. We of the Trust are committed to protecting and restoring native forests. Hence any attempt to mine for minerals in a piece of Schedule 4 Forest – by definition of high ecological value – is anathema to us.

New Zealand has already lost 77% of its original forest cover, and we cannot afford to lose one hectare more. The tourists don't want that and New Zealanders don't want it.

Mining – surgical or other – inevitably creates vast amounts of spoil in the tailings, pollutes rivers and streams and water tables with toxic chemicals, and creates noise and dust, all of which are disastrous for the life of any forest community. And all that this will achieve will mostly be profit for overseas mining interests. It's been calculated that New Zealand would receive less than 1% of the estimated value of the minerals removed by mining them.

We have written to the Government in these terms and we urge supporters to convey to the Government in whatever way seems appropriate to you your thorough disapproval of mining anywhere on Schedule 4 Conservation land.

Owen Lewis



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New Zealand
Permit No. 98632

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