



canopy 67

Newsletter of the Native Forest Restoration Trust

Winter 2019

NFRT Chairman's Message

The successes of the Trust and contributions by you, all our wonderful supporters, have been highlighted again these past months. In this Canopy 67 issue there are wide ranging articles that I have found uplifting for what they show of NFRT's work. I hope that you are similarly inspired by those that resonate with your own experiences and interests.

The icon event for us recently has been the wonderful opening celebration in late March of our new Taranaki Mahood-Lowe wetland forest reserve on the lower northern slopes of Mt Taranaki/Egmont. The opening is described inside and the botanical and ecological importance of these remnants is explained by Professor Bruce Clarkson from Waikato University. As you will also read inside, our Founding Trustee Geoff Davidson could not attend the TML opening as it clashed with that for the new lodge on Motu Kaikoura, off Port Fitzroy, Great Barrier Island. Geoff, with support from NFRT, was a driving force behind the island's purchase and protection in 2004 for the public of New Zealand. This is yet another example of association with kindred groups to achieve

win-win results. Since these opening ceremonies I, together with three other NFRT trustees, have been privileged to visit Motu Kaikoura for the first time and take in the stunning views together with seeing firsthand the impressive predator control trap network and the dense regeneration now occurring there.

There has been continued practical activity in Northland, as described by reserve managers James and Bernard. Additionally, just when we thought we were on top of our purchase projects, three serious new purchase propositions have presented in central Northland, together with two others in Rotorua and Taranaki. These are currently being assessed and negotiated and may well lead to 2020 being a "mast" year for different land purchases for your Trust. This level of activity would be a fitting way to mark NFRT's 40th anniversary, beyond the planned revegetation planting and track development already approved for restoring the Ed Hillary Hope Reserve between Hamilton and Raglan. This project recognises our origins in restoring degraded native forests and also links with Sir Ed Hillary, our founding Patron for 28 years.



native forest
restoration trust

ISSN 1170-3172 (Print) ISSN 2463-2783 (Online)

www.nfirt.org.nz

f / NativeForestRestorationTrust

🐦 /NZNFRT

Native Forest Restoration Trust, PO Box 80-007, Green Bay, Auckland 0643

The major restriction of scale lies in growing sufficient eco-sourced plants to form adequate groves. One very generous bequest will cover much of this planting cost for the next year. We also hope to record oral history interviews with several retired trustees and supporters.

We shall need your help to achieve these lofty goals, but feel it is very important to stretch ourselves to honour the efforts, sacrifices, successes and donations of those trustees, volunteers and supporters who have gone before us and who laid the foundations upon which we are continuing to build today.

Significant changes to the national Health and Safety regulations have required us to review our policies and procedures throughout the organisation. As you will read, the initial direct change has been to hunting on Rangitoto Station Reserve, which is now managed directly by NFRT. We owe our thanks and appreciation to the Te Awamutu Deerstalkers' Assn for performing this role for over 25 years, and especially to Malcolm Dench, who not only ran the booking and key system, but also did any day-to-day maintenance and oversaw work performed by contractors on the Rangitoto reserves. Thank you Malcolm from all the trustees and visitors who have benefitted from your efforts on our behalf.

Sadly, this has also been the time to say thank you and farewell to Roy Dench, our oldest and second longest serving trustee – stepping down after nearly 40 years of unstinting volunteer service to NFRT and the natural environment. As a practical farmer, qualified mechanic and commercial driver Roy's assistance and expertise has been happily and generously given throughout these decades – covering five Chairs and over 30 trustees! Roy is a "doer" who avoids the limelight, and is a skilled outdoorsman who would still put most people less than half his age to shame. His practical rural outlook was a great support for Arthur Cowan and, always well thought through, Roy's opinions were a valuable foil to balance the sometimes more theoretical views of those he affectionately called the "shiny bums" from the city. He is still actively involved with other volunteer groups, especially around Tongariro/Ruapehu. I miss Roy's contribution and sound counsel, and all Trustees join me in wishing him many more years of healthy activity in the bush and hills that he loves.

Thank you again to you, our supporters, and to our staff, contractors and trustees for another busy and successful half year. I look forward to announcing details of several exciting new purchases in the next issue later in 2019.

Tim Oliver, Chairman, NFRT

Another Wetland Ecosystem and Its Inhabitants Safe

Taranaki Mahood-Lowe Reserve Officially Opened 23 March 2019

Formal though the opening may have been, the event proved to be very relaxed and friendly in warm sunny weather, although Taranaki/Egmont was somewhat shy in revealing its beauty.

This latest acquisition is one of the Trust's more accessible properties, being only a short drive from nearby towns and New Plymouth. Visitors began arriving mid morning, many taking the opportunity to take an initial look around the reserve on the clearly marked paths before the formal part of the day began at midday.

With visitors seated under the big open marquee, the opening ceremony was introduced by Trust Chairperson, Tim Oliver, who welcomed visitors and thanked them for coming along to share the occasion. He then introduced Professor Bruce



NFRT trustee Rosemary Davison with supporters from Upper Hutt.



Clarkson, a proud son of Taranaki who is Deputy Vice Chancellor Research at the University of Waikato and recognised as one of New Zealand's foremost experts on ecological restoration.

Professor Clarkson began by lamenting the length of time it has taken for this piece of forest to be protected, noting that he had been advocating for its protection for 40 years. He held up three major reports which he has either written or to which he has contributed, all of which recommended its protection. He spoke of the special significance of protecting a forest which contains the entire sequence from lowland to montane vegetation, of the "seasonal food elevator", the sequential ripening of seeds and fruit from the lower warmer zone to the cooler uplands, and of the need for not only fauna but also flora to be able to move up and down the elevational sequence, in response to climate and other environmental variation.



Speakers (from left to right): Professor Bruce Clarkson, University of Waikato; major donor Ray Lowe; Councillor Tom Cloke, Taranaki Regional Council and New Plymouth District Council Councillor and Wild for Taranaki Chairperson, Roy Weaver.

Professor Clarkson also spoke of monitoring already under way (covered separately in this edition of Canopy), of 4 species of epiphyte in the forest, thanking locals for their help in this work. The recovery of these and other plants will support birds and insects. He concluded, saying “This is a major win for biodiversity in Taranaki and nationally.”

The next speaker, major benefactor Ray Lowe, was accompanied to the opening by 25 members of the Mahood and Lowe families. Ray and Jan Lowe were the major donors who generously contributed \$250,000 toward the purchase of this unique wetland forest remnant.

Ray spoke of his late wife Jan’s wish to see the family’s generous donation used for the purchase of “wetland and good bush”. He recalled a family tramp 30 years earlier, from Hawkes Bay to New Plymouth, when on the 22nd and penultimate day, they had looked down from Holly Hut with appreciation on the area now protected. He and the Lowe Mahood whanau took pleasure on what was for them a particularly special day, less than 2 years after Mrs Lowe’s passing.

Roy Weaver, representing both New Plymouth District Council (NPDC) and ‘Wild for Taranaki’ of which he is Chair, expressed his pride in the awakening of interest in biodiversity, both in the people of the region, and in his Council which 5 years ago had very little engagement with their district’s biodiversity. His council now invests large sums in biodiversity initiatives, with a particular focus on predator control. NPDC contributed half the cost of fencing the Mahood-Lowe Reserve.

Councillor Tom Cloke spoke on behalf of Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) Chair David McLeod who had to send his

apologies at short notice. TRC has a long history of supporting biodiversity in light of the massive loss of indigenous vegetation in the region. They too prioritise supporting initiatives linking and enhancing the region’s remaining isolated areas with funding for many different groups as well as advice and financial support for individual landowners. For the Mahood-Lowe Reserve the TRC are contributing to the cost of pest control.

As the speakers presented, the enticing smells of food were wafting through the marquee. The formal part of the day ended punctually at 1pm, when everyone adjourned to the nearby lunch marquee. The community of Egmont Village School had prepared a magnificent lunch of home cooked quiches, scones and other goodies; they also barbecued the venison sausages, which are a long established NFRT reserve opening tradition. The school team also provided expert assistance with parking management and visitor direction – both critical aspects to the success of the day.

After a very sociable lunch, visitors had the option of a guided walk or of exploring on their own. The common commitment to habitat protection and restoration among everyone present generated a general sense of community and camaraderie among visitors and locals alike, sharing initiatives and ideas throughout the day. It was indeed a positive and fitting gathering to celebrate the opening of the Trust’s latest acquisition, and its protection “in perpetuity” for the people and environment of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Dell Hood, Trustee, NFRT



Lunch time

Working Hard in the Wekaweka Valley

Since the Wekaweka Reserve opening in March 2018 conservation work has steadily increased on the reserve. The Native Forest Restoration Trust and Wekaweka Landcare Group are working together on the reserve to better protect the forest and the greater Wekaweka area.

One of the big initiatives this year has been the creation of a Community Pest Control Agreement (CPCA) in the upper valley. A CPCA is an agreement between the Northland Regional Council (NRC) and landowners to undertake pest control on their properties, usually funded by the NRC. In this circumstance things are a bit different and the funding comes from many parties including DOC, NFRT, Kiwis for Kiwi and NRC. The proposal has been quite ambitious and spans 900ha of private land to join with DOCS 900ha of predator control for kokako protection in the adjoining Mataraua Forest. In total 1800ha of the upper Wekaweka will have best practice stoat trapping and 1200ha will have ground-based rat and possum control.

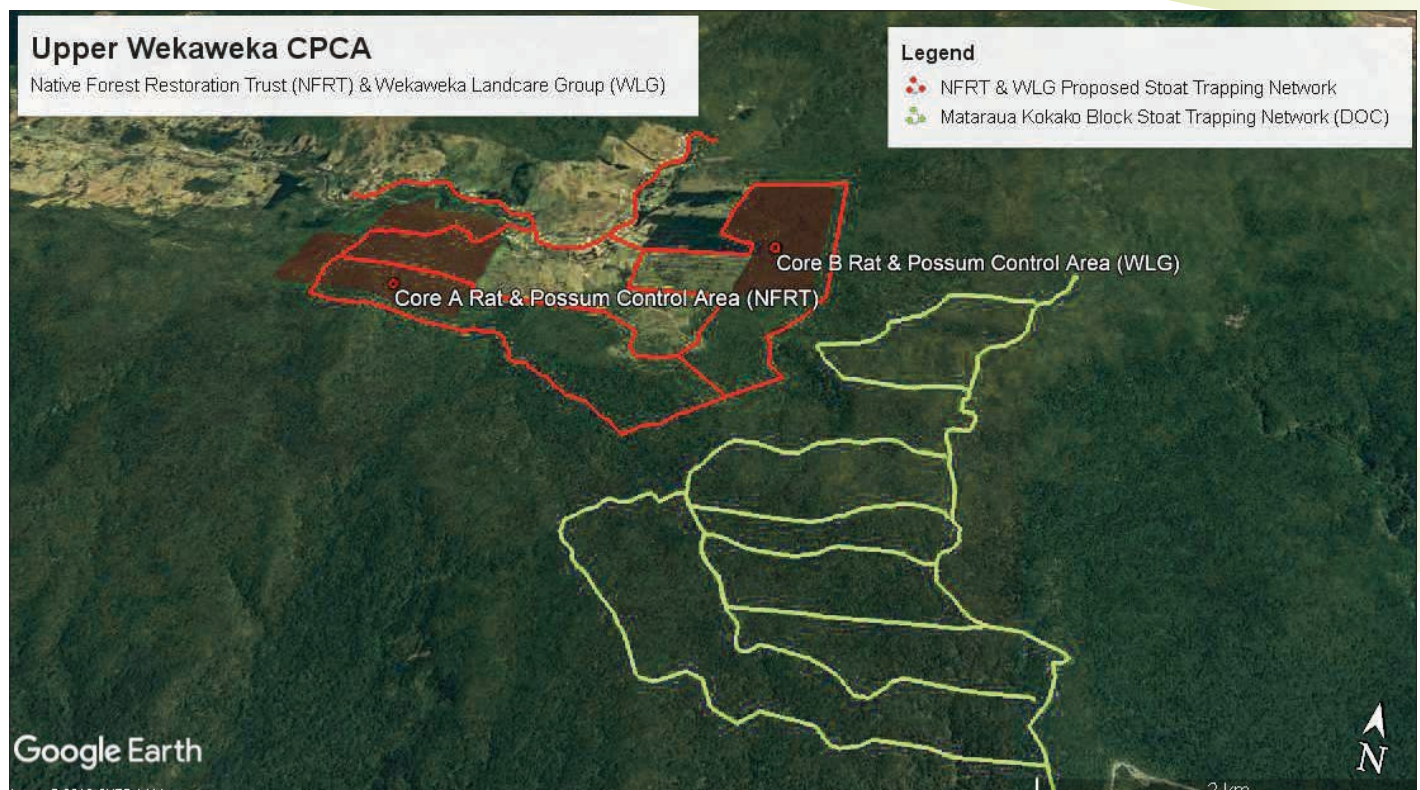
The adjoining DOC administered Mataraua kokako block is an interesting story. In 1994 four pairs of kokako were found. DOC quickly worked to set up permanent pest control which is supplemented with a 1080 operation every 3 years. At the same time a moderate kokako population within the Puketi Forest (near Kerikeri) was being monitored but pest control methods could not be agreed upon by the local community and DOC, and in the end limited pest control was undertaken. By 2009 there were no kokako left within the Puketi Forest with the few remaining birds having been caught and translocated elsewhere. Whereas in the Mataraua the kokako population had grown to 30+ pairs! Since 2010, ten pairs of kokako have been translocated from the Mataraua to the Puketi Forest by the Puketi Trust which has implemented landscape wide pest control. In the

Mataraua the kokako have continued to increase and are at 60+ pairs and are moving into the upper Wekaweka making the planned pest control very important for the protection of these amazing birds as the population grows.

Possum numbers on the edge of the forest and in the upper Wekaweka have exploded and pest control initiatives like the proposed CPCA are essential to protect a subset of the forest for future generations. In the spring of 2018, alongside the Wekaweka Landcare Group, rat and possum control was undertaken within the reserve. The possum numbers in the reserve were very high and it is estimated that over 400 possums were killed within the reserve. Possum control will be ongoing due to the re-invasion of possums into the reserve from the untreated areas outside the reserve boundaries.



Kokako photograph by Mark Darin.



In addition to the increased pest control programme, a new car parking area has been created. We are now working on a new interpretation kiosk and picnic area. We are also marking a track for day hikers which, once completed, will take hikers on an estimated two hour return trip up to a high point that looks over the valley.

We look forward to seeing more of our supporters enjoying this special area and the new facilities being added to the reserve.

James McLaughlin, Reserve Manager
Waipoua and William Upton Hewett Reserves, NFRT



Tomtit photograph by Mark Darin.



Whio Survey at Mahood-Lowe Reserve

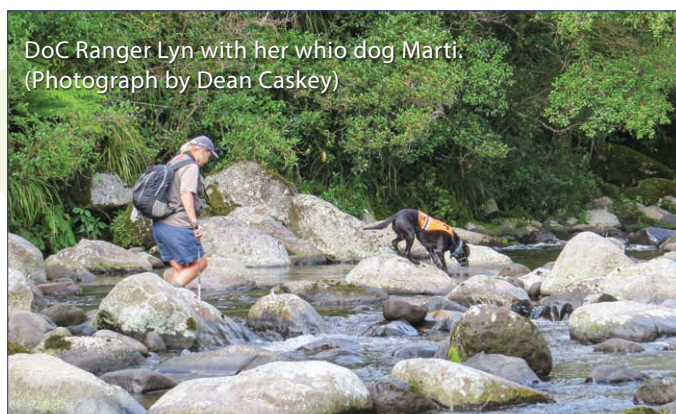
The pristine Kai Auahi stream forms the Taranaki Mahood-Lowe Reserve's western boundary. The stream was visited recently by Dean Caskey, Taranaki Regional Council's Senior Environment Officer-Biodiversity, and Department of Conservation Ranger, Lyn, with her whio dog Marti.

This team searched Kai Auahi Stream up to just beyond the National Park boundary for sign of whio. There was sign in the form of droppings as soon as they got into the stream. The team suspected these birds were downstream from their starting point, and below the Mahood-Lowe Reserve, but using the Reserve habitat. About two thirds of the way up, dog Marti indicated into a roost near where Dean found a pair last year

and on closer inspection with a torch, they located a pair which emerged onto the river. There was also fresh sign at the National Park boundary so it may be that another pair is coming down to that point.

It's very encouraging to see at least a pair still established on the stream and there is good scope for some ducklings in the coming season. Predator control in the Reserve along the Kai Auahi stream boundary is intensive to give this species the best possible chance of breeding success.

Sharen Graham, Southern Reserves Manager, NFRT



DoC Ranger Lyn with her whio dog Marti.
(Photograph by Dean Caskey)



Marti watches over whio.
(Photograph by Dean Caskey)

Community Contributions Clean Up Puhoi Reserve

Saved from roller crushing for forestry 30 years ago, the Puhoi Reserve in the Far North has been left to regenerate naturally. For most of those 30 years it has had regular pest control and as a result of this, and its isolation, is a stronghold for the Northland Brown Kiwi, some of whom frequent the front lawn of its nearest neighbour.

Situated just to the West of Honeymoon Valley, twenty minutes' drive inland from Doubtless Bay and on the northern slopes of the Maungataniwha Forest, the Puhoi Reserve is enthusiastically appreciated by members of the Honeymoon Valley Landcare Group. The Landcare Group was formed to organise and consolidate conservation work in the valley. A considerable ginger control project has been undertaken over the last 2 seasons and a regular trapping network has been established. Over the last couple of years it has become a real community project.

Each year the mahi of the Landcare Group is supported by the Native Forest Restoration Trust through payment for the hours spent and work undertaken during the working bees in the Puhoi Reserve. The community gets to spend a couple of days working in the Reserve, the NFRT benefits from having the reserve access protected and developed, and everybody benefits from the money contributed going back into pest control operations in the wider valley.

In January 2019 we (22 locals and travellers) split into two groups. One group spent the day maintaining the road access and clearing the 'campsite' area. Another group of us headed up the hill and spent the time clearing an old farm track that runs through the middle of the reserve. The track is almost completely overgrown but was once an old tractor track following the contour lines and running the length of the reserve. It passes through some beautiful mature native bush and opens up in places for views across the surrounding landscape.

It is a work in progress but hopefully we'll be finished sometime in 2020 and we can invite Trust supporters up for a grand opening!

The end of the day's work is always celebrated with a delicious home-grown shared lunch and a couple of hours socializing and bonding with our neighbours. We all have a great day and plan to continue meeting on these occasions for many years.

If you would like to know the date of our next working bee, email us at admin@nznfrt.org.nz, with Puhoi Working Bee in the subject line and we'll let you know when the date is set. You're all welcome to come along and lend a hand.

Bernard Coogan, Reserve Manager Puhoi Far North, NFRT



Hunting Management Change for Rangitoto Station

Following a Health and Safety review for all Trust reserves a new system for hunting bookings at Rangitoto Station is in operation. There is a separate system for non-hunting supporters (e.g. birders, botanists and trappers) to book the house and this is also currently under review.

Bookings are now managed by Trustee Rosemary Davison and local supporter Andrew Hamilton. Contact the Trust by email to admin@nznfrt.org.nz and our admin folk will pass on contact details to Rosemary and Andrew.

Hunting Rules

1. Safety is paramount. Please limit your group to 4 people at one time.
2. Stick to the boundaries. If you are caught poaching outside the designated boundary you will be asked to leave immediately, and you will not be able to return.
3. No spotlighting or hunting from dark until sunrise for safety reasons.
4. You must always wear a Hi-Vis Vest.
5. Dogs **must be** stock proof, wormed, kiwi proof (aversion trained), GPS tracked. We will request evidence to show all these requirements are met.
6. Please ensure that the gate is locked behind you and the key is returned to the person who issued it to you.
7. Be prepared for spontaneous checks from time to time.
8. No fires
9. Please leave the woolshed in the condition that you found it.
10. If you intend to go through Rangitoto Station and into DOC land you must have the appropriate permits.

Since the hunting season opened on 1st February, we have had constant bookings from hunters, some of whom have hunted Rangitoto Station Reserve for many years and are now taking the new system in their stride and continue to hunt the ranges as they always have.

In addition to those familiar with the reserve, we now have many new faces enjoying the opportunity to hunt in this magnificent reserve. The positive comments from people accessing the area for the first time have been truly encouraging.

Rangitoto is one of the Native Forest Restoration Trust's flagship reserves. Maximum plant and invertebrate diversity will help sustain the awesome population of native birds to be found within the reserve. Kereru (native pigeon), tui, korimako (bellbird), popokotea (whitehead), piwakawaka (fantail), riroriro (grey warbler), miromiro (tomtit) and toutouwai (robin) are common with kokako, kaka, kakariki, karearea (falcon) and matata (fernbird) less obvious but still in good numbers.

To allow the reserve to regenerate into healthy, diverse native bush we need to keep the numbers of browsing animals as low as possible. With the help of hunters, old and new, we aim to achieve this goal.

Rosemary Davison, Trustee, NFRT



Rangitoto Station 1990 when still a working farm.



Rangitoto Station 1996 after dismantling the yards, roofing and fences.



Rangitoto Station 2019. (Photograph by Rosemary Davison)

Using Shrub Epiphytes as Indicators of Forest Recovery in the Mahood-Lowe Reserve

It was a privilege to be invited to speak at the opening of the Mahood-Lowe Reserve on 23 March 2019 some 33 years after it had been listed as a Recommended Area for Protection (RAP) in the 1986 Egmont Ecological District Protected Natural Areas Programme report. Even before that a 1981 report to the Taranaki National Parks and Reserves Board had identified the need to add more semi-swamp forest containing waiwaka (*Syzygium maire*) or swamp maire to the Taranaki reserves network. As both reports noted, although the forest was second growth from previous logging, it was of a type poorly represented on the Mount Taranaki ringplain and in the regional and national reserves network.

The PNAP report specifically described Alfred Road (RAP 85) as a large remnant adjoining the national park, most of which had been logged resulting in secondary kamahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*) forest. Three forest types were listed: kamahi forest on interfluvium, kamahi-swamp maire forest on interfluvium, and kamahi forest on fluvium. The site was classified as lowland and the altitudinal range given as 380-480 m above sea level. The report narrative was necessarily concise and scientific, as befits a rapid reconnaissance survey of this style.

But as those who have visited the forest will know, there is much diversity and richness in the flora and fauna despite the long years unfenced without adequate pest control. Being located near the transition between the lowland and montane bioclimatic zones and bordered on the north-west by the picturesque Kaiaua Stream helps too. It is a transitional mixing zone of plants found at higher and lower altitudes and has a distinctive riparian zone flora bordering the stream. The ingredients are all there for a full recovery now that the forest is legally protected and intensive management has begun.

But what will be the nature and rate of the recovery? In order to find an answer to that question, we have begun a

research project focused on the guild of specialised shrub epiphytes that grow perched in the upper crowns and branches of the tall emergent trees, particularly northern rata (*Metrosideros robusta*), rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) and kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*). This distinctive group of shrub epiphytes is one of the special features of New Zealand's native vascular flora. It comprises four species: *Pittosporum kirkii* (thick leaved kohukohu), *Pittosporum cornifolium* (tāwhiri karo), *Brachyglottis kirkii* var. *kirkii* (kohurangi) and *Griselinia lucida* (puka). All of these species are good indicators of forest health as they are susceptible to possum browse; when possum numbers are high they decline and may even become locally extinct. *Pittosporum kirkii* is classed as At Risk – Declining and *P. cornifolium*, while not nationally threatened, is regionally uncommon. *Brachyglottis kirkii* var. *kirkii* is also classed as At Risk – Declining, while *Griselinia lucida* is not threatened because it has a wide distribution and is not as dependent on an epiphytic lifestyle.

Old growth forests generally have a fuller assemblage of these specialised shrub epiphytes as they tend to be associated with old trees that have fully developed clumps of *Astelia* (including *Collospermum*) nest epiphytes. *Pittosporum kirkii* and *P. cornifolium*, in particular, are usually found in such clumps while *B. kirkii* var. *kirkii* and *G. lucida* are less fussy. In the Mahood-Lowe Reserve there are fewer old trees of kahikatea, northern rata and rimu than in the adjoining unlogged Egmont National Park forests. That, combined with a longer history of pest control, means that the Park forests have considerably more shrub epiphytes than in the Mahood-Lowe Reserve. This scenario provides us with an ideal experiment to monitor. Will the shrub epiphytes recover in the Mahood-Lowe Reserve and will they spread more widely in the recovering forest canopy, either from within the Reserve or from the adjoining Park forests?



Left: Large kahikatea on the Egmont National Park boundary with well developed *Astelia* (including *Collospermum*) clumps hosting many shrub epiphytes. Right: Northern rata snag in Mahood-Lowe Reserve hosting *Brachyglottis kirkii* var. *kirkii*. (Photographs by Tony Green)

We are only in the early stages of our research but already we have documented the presence of all these shrub epiphytes on a good number of trees on the edge of the Park and fewer within the Mahood-Lowe Reserve. Our next steps will be to quantify their abundance and condition and try to understand more about their population structure and health. That is, do they exhibit any browsing damage, are they reproductively mature, flowering and producing seed, and regenerating? Once we have gathered sufficient data, we will be in a position to determine their rate of recovery and make some predictions about the viability of the populations. The results will help determine whether the pest control is sufficient to enable the recovery of these indicator species and therefore the broader plant assemblage and even the birdlife.

We should all be immensely grateful to The Native Forest Restoration Trust and the many donors who have enabled this valuable addition to the reserves network. I look forward to an even brighter future when the Mahood-Lowe Reserve becomes a cornerstone of a continuous ecological corridor extending from the Park down to the sea. Building on the excellent progress with riparian planting that should be a feasible goal within my own lifetime.

Bruce Clarkson, Environmental Research Institute, University of Waikato

Acknowledgements:

Sincere thanks to the Native Forest Restoration Trust and Dr George Mason for their encouragement to undertake this research, to Bill Clarkson, Cameron Johnson and Raul Johnson for field assistance, to Tony Green for a photographic record, and to the George Mason Charitable Trust for financial support.

References and further reading on shrub epiphytes:

- Bayfield, M.A.; Benson, M.A. 1986: Egmont Ecological Region survey report for the Protected Natural Areas Programme. Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington.
- Bryan, C.L.; Clarkson, B.D.; Clearwater, M.J. 2011: Biological flora of New Zealand 12: *Griselinia lucida*, puka, akapuka, akakōpuka, shining broadleaf. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 49: 461-479. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0028825X.2011.603342>
- Clarkson, B.D.; Clarkson, B.R.; Boase, M.R. 1981: Suggestions for a more representative reserve network in the Taranaki Land District. A report to the Taranaki National Parks and Reserves Board, November, 1981. Filed Department of Lands and Survey, New Plymouth.
- Clarkson, F.M.; Clarkson, B.D.; Gemmill, C.E.C. 2012: Biological Flora of New Zealand 13. *Pittosporum cornifolium*, tāwhiri karo, cornel-leaved pittosporum. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 50: 185-201. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0028825X.2011.645547>
- Kirby, C.L. 2014: Field guide to New Zealand's epiphytes, vines and mistletoes. Environmental Research Institute, University of Waikato, Hamilton. 261 pp. ISBN: 9780473283421. <https://www.waikato.ac.nz/eri/research/terrestrial-ecosystems/field-guide-to-new-zealands-epiphytes,-vines-And-mistletoes>
- Myron, K. J. 2012: *Pittosporum kirkii*: autecology of an endemic shrub epiphyte. Unpublished Master of Science Thesis. University of Waikato, Hamilton. <https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/6621/thesis.pdf?sequence=3>



Left: Northern rata snag in Mahood-Lowe Reserve with *Pittosporum kirkii* amongst thick *Metrosideros fulgens* cover. (Photograph by Tony Green) Right: Close-up of the same *Pittosporum kirkii* showing some northern rata foliage. (Photograph by Raul Johnson)

Motu Kaikoura and the Native Forest Restoration Trust

During its 39 year existence the Native Forest Restoration Trust has been involved in three projects for which we no longer have responsibility. Here is a history lesson on one of these projects to provide some detail for supporters.

The formation of the Motu Kaikoura Trust came about after a period of intensive lobbying by NFRT asking that the Government purchase Kaikoura Island. On 4 May 2004 the Government purchased the island with financial contributions from the Nature Heritage Fund, ASB Charitable Trust (now Foundation North) and Auckland's local authorities.

It all began at the opening of the NFRT's wetland reserve at Mangarakau (in NW Nelson) when the Government's Nature Heritage Fund's CEO Alan McKenzie suggested that the trust should look at Motu Kaikoura. "As an Auckland-based organisation it is on your door-step", he said.

Well, 90 kilometres from Queen Street across the Hauraki Gulf, nestled into Port Fitzroy on the western side of Great Barrier Island might be considered Auckland's doorstep but it does create some management problems. With this in mind NFRT chose to set up a separate informal committee to take on the challenge of raising public interest and seeking funding to buy the island. After much lobbying by the new committee, the island was purchased by the Government. The committee (registered in January 2005 as the Motu Kaikoura Trust), was subsequently appointed to be the sole managers of the island, unlike other Gulf islands such as Motutapu and Tiritiri-Matangi, which are DOC managed and have volunteer support groups. The following special conditions were imposed:

1. The reserve is to be available for outdoor/environmental education for youth in particular and for provision of facilities to achieve this.
2. The Motu Kaikoura Trust shall submit to the Minister for his approval a management plan for the reserve within two

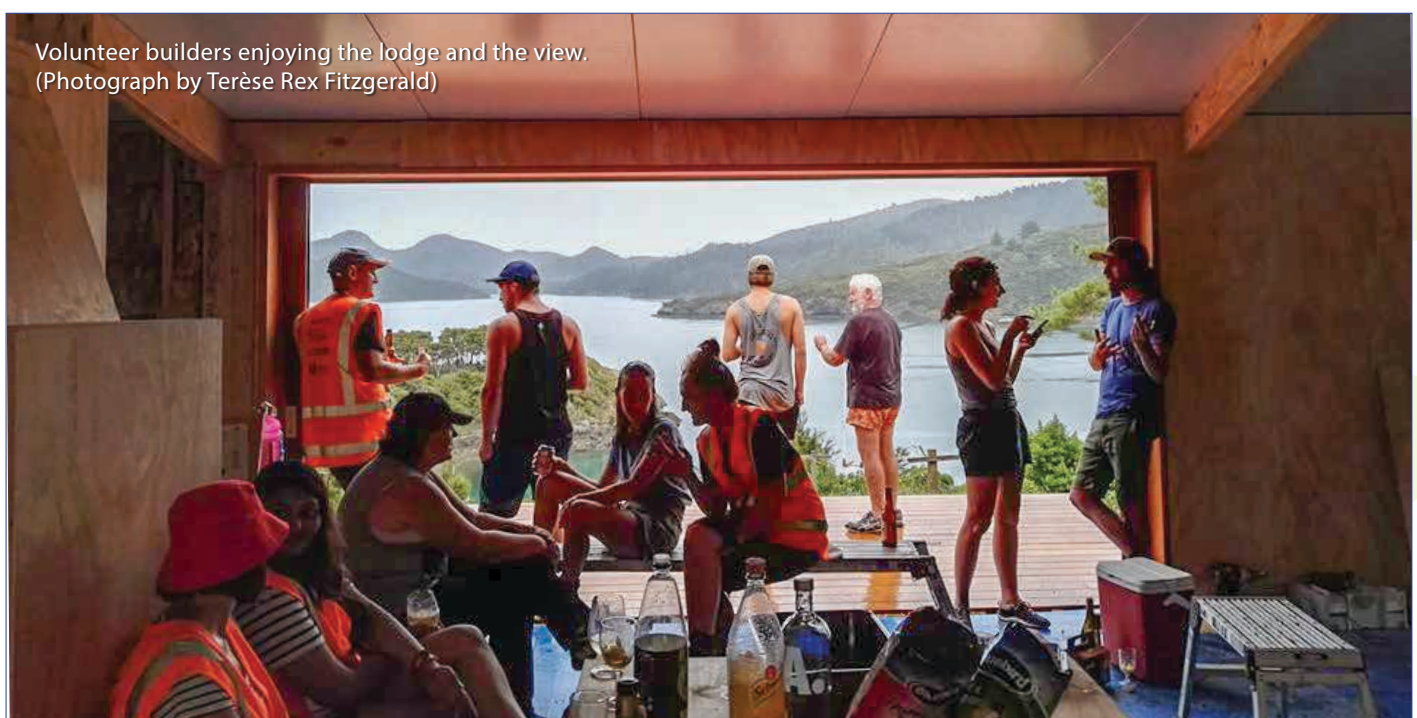
years after the date of its appointment (rather than the normal period of 5 years).

3. The appointment of the Trust as the administering body of the reserve is to be reviewed after seven years.

A caretaker was appointed and the task of ridding the island of pests began. Weeds were the target of the Kaikoura Trust's first effort and this project is ongoing today. There were unknown numbers of pig(s), rabbit(s), and cat(s) which all seemed to disappear, but large numbers of rats, and over 100 deer which had been farmed, but were by then feral, ranged freely across the island. After a prolonged period of hunting, the deer were reduced to small numbers and then in 2008 an aerial drop of poisoned bait to eradicate the rats was undertaken. A side effect of this was also the poisoning of the remaining deer. Unfortunately, six months later, rat sign was detected again, and the Trust has since been working to keep their numbers to below a 10% threshold based on a relative index level.

One of the difficulties of managing a remote island is finding staff who can cope independently in such isolated conditions. After 10 years of being on his own, our caretaker was showing signs of erratic behaviour and, seemingly as a protest against the trustees, he set fire to the lodge building. While that seriously disrupted planned works the Trust has recovered, and now benefits from a new lodge being built on the same site.

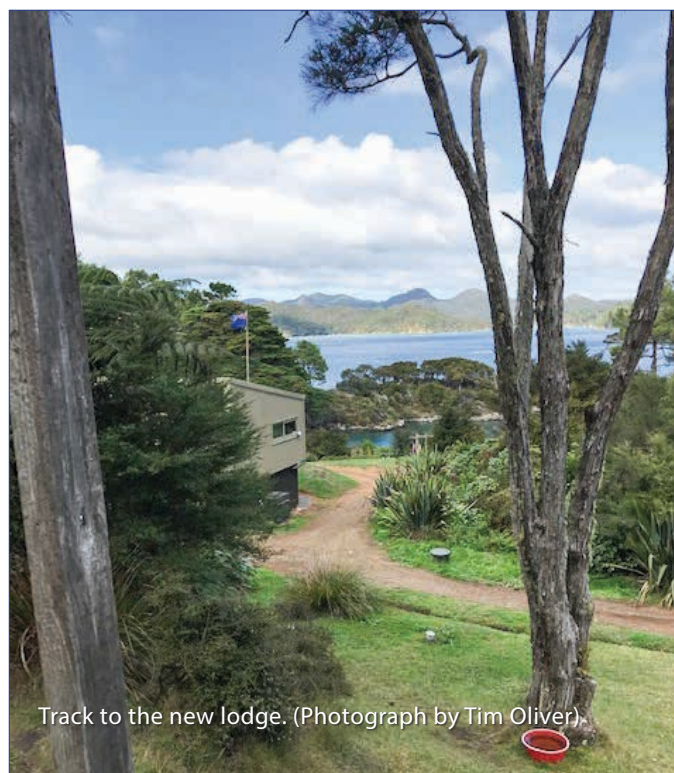
In March the opening of the new lodge was celebrated by a group of 150 supporters travelling to the island on the Kawau Kat catamaran from Sandspit near Warkworth. The Native Forest Restoration Trust renewed its support of the Motu Kaikoura Trust by helping sponsor the boat trip and inviting 20 of our long term supporters to join in the celebration. The day coincided with the Taranaki Mahood-Lowe property opening day and those who attended that event will recall what a beautiful day it was. On the Hauraki Gulf the sea was calm,



Volunteer builders enjoying the lodge and the view.
(Photograph by Terèse Rex Fitzgerald)

dolphins appeared en masse, and Motu Kaikoura glistened in the sun showing off the rapidly regenerating forest, as well as the dying pine trees which are being actively poisoned. The principle behind Kaikoura Island management is that of pest control and let nature recover in her way, without interference through planting or introducing new species. The few hours on the island showed us it is a successful strategy and the results are evident thanks to the advocacy efforts of the Native Forest Restoration Trust 14 years ago.

Geoff Davidson, Founding Trustee,
NFRT & Vice-Chairperson, Motu Kaikoura Trust



Combine Conservation with Recreation, Mangawhai, Brynderwyns, Kaipara

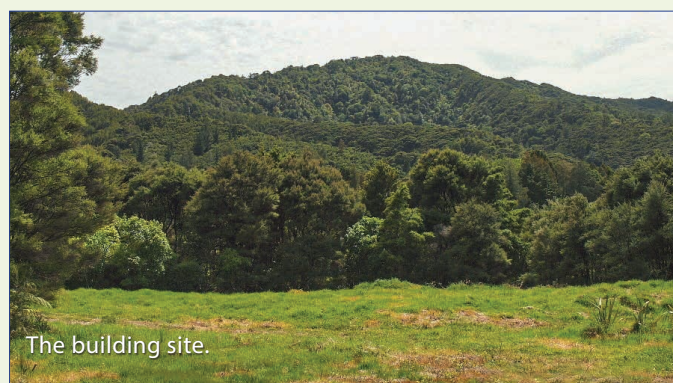
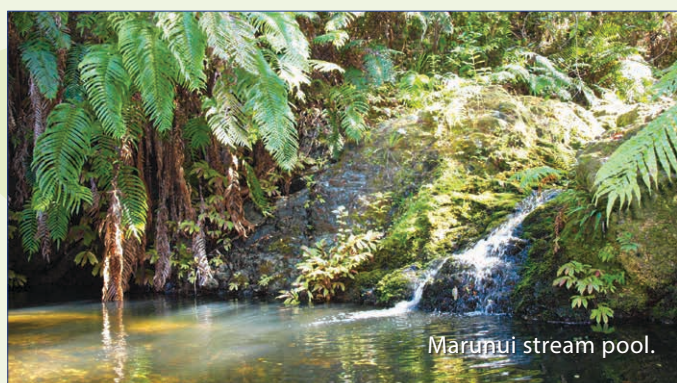
A share is available in Marunui, a 423ha bush property at the eastern end of the Brynderwyns, 10 minutes from Mangawhai Heads and 90 minutes north of Auckland. A sunny, open building site for your bach or permanent is included in the share.

Marunui is an established conservation property jointly owned and managed by 18 shareholders. Largely in native forest with high natural values and of national importance, it is covenanted with the QEII National Trust. It borders DOC's 236ha Brynderwyn Hills Scenic Reserve.

Houses are all off grid and discretely located in the bush, providing privacy to owners. You will have the friendship of other shareholders and ownership of a beautiful natural environment. Over 30kms of tracks enable you to enjoy and explore the bush, its abundant native bird life and clean streams. Northland brown kiwi were released in Marunui between 2013-2015 and their numbers have since increased. Shareholders, with the help of volunteers, keep predators under control to protect kiwi and other wildlife. This is a key activity. No pet cats or dogs are allowed. Mangawhai with its well-known swimming/surfing beach and a wide range of services and community facilities is a short drive away.

Shares in Marunui are tightly held. This is a rare opportunity to buy a share and become part of a conservation success story. We are looking for people willing to help and keen to commit to Marunui's future. It's a special place for special people. For further information, email marunui.share@gmail.com; Ph. 09 376 4069; or 027 262 7904

Disclaimer: The views, information and opinions expressed in this advert are those of Marunui Conservation and do not necessarily reflect those of the Native Forest Restoration Trust.



BECOME A FOREST GUARDIAN

Join us as a Forest Guardian with a monthly donation and help keep our native forests safe forever.

Your generous gift will help with the ongoing maintenance of our reserves, ensuring they're protected from invasive weeds, pests and predators. Thanks to you, native plants and animals will have a safe habitat where they can thrive.

For more information and to sign up, please visit www.nfvt.org.nz/forestguardian

Our Landscape Our Legacy – Protecting, Inspiring, Managing, Restoring

Come and stay at Mangarakau Wetland Field Centre, North-west of Nelson

Attractive 10 bed lodge situated amid wonderful scenery with walking tracks around the swamp. Close to outstanding natural wilderness areas with access to Kahurangi National Park, Farewell Spit and Te Tai Tapu Marine Reserve. Bring own bedding and food.

For more information and Lodge Bookings:

Ph: Robyn Jones (03) 524 8266 mangarakauswamp@gmail.com
www.mangarakauswamp.com



Come and stay at Rangitoto Station Reserve, The King Country

Modern 3-bedroomed house, 34km from Otorohanga, King Country. Well-equipped and ideal for small to medium groups but sleeping space depends on how many workers are there at the time. Camping permitted near the woolshed. Hours of walking tracks through bush or open country with superb views. Many native bird species including kokako, kaka and falcon.

Relax and enjoy the peace and quietness.

House Bookings: Ph. Judy (09) 817-7604 (pte) jrhanbury@actrix.co.nz

