



# CANOPY

Newsletter of the New Zealand Native Forests Restoration Trust

PATRON: Sir Paul Reeves, ONZ, GCMG, GCVO, QSO

PO Box 80-007, Green Bay, Waitakere 0643  
[www.nznfrt.org.nz](http://www.nznfrt.org.nz)

## From the Chair

Spring brings with it the joy of new beginnings and the Trust is well on the way to cementing the joint purchases of land at our latest conservation property, the Marie Neverman Reserve at Tupare on the Kaipara Harbour - please refer to the Appeal Brochure mailed out with this issue of CANOPY.

The Tupare group of supporters and volunteers has been diligent in weed and pest control and a recent visit by Auckland Regional Council's Natural Heritage team acknowledges the high value of this Reserve. The Trust will continue to develop its potential as a wetland, so anyone interested, and especially those who were able to attend the opening in March, can contact the Trust for further information.

Turning to the wider scene, the Trust has many of its reserves contiguous with Department of Conservation reserves, and therefore we await the outcome of the Government's revised policy on Schedule 4 lands held in their domain with caution. Many of you will recall the hard fought gains to protect our resources both above and below ground. The integrity of New Zealand's resources cannot be taken lightly, given the delicate balances that involve flora, fauna and this country's lands and waterways.

The Trust continues to explore the area of Carbon Credits in the light of fluctuating Governmental policies, so as always those supporters with knowledge or experience in utilising this specific area are welcome to contact the Trust via email - see links on our website.

To end on a positive note, we extend compliments of the season and best wishes for the coming year to all supporters of native forest restoration.

Colleen Newton

## The Marie Neverman Reserve Extension Appeal

With this issue of CANOPY we are distributing a brochure about the Trust's current appeal for funds. The object is to purchase a block of reclaimed land on the Kaipara to increase the size of our most recent acquisition - the Marie Neverman Wetland Reserve, on the South Head Peninsula, north west of Auckland - by a factor of five. The enclosed covering letter from Colleen Newton and Brian Davis the Trust's Chair and Vice-chair stresses the importance of the project and invites all supporters to back the appeal with a donation to the Trust.

In considering your response to our appeal, please take into account a couple of points which are especially relevant at the present time. First, economic circumstances are depriving the Trust of opportunities to seek major grants. In particular we hoped for backing from the ASB Charitable Trust, which has given large sums to charitable projects in former years but has turned the Trust away because no fresh applicants are being entertained. Secondly, the removal of the limit on personal gifts to charities means that you are refunded 33.3% of any such donations up to an amount equal to the income on which you have paid tax. Hence, there has never been a better moment to give to a worthy cause.

NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust has Registered Charity status to receive donations under this new regime, one third of which will come back to you from IRD after making your tax rebate claim at the end of the financial year.

## Grant for Entomological Studies

Congratulations to Entomologist Rosemary Gilbert whose invertebrate survey of the Trust's Marie Neverman Reserve, South Head Kaipara, has been awarded \$4959 from the Environmental Initiatives Fund of Auckland Regional Council. The survey uses pitfall traps and special nets that resemble small tents (called malaise traps) to capture ground-active and flying insects at an array of sites in separate habitats. Further methods involve aquatic sampling of the lake and streams, leaf-litter searching, sweeping open areas to catch insects (the time-honoured butterfly net method), as well as beetle collecting and moth trapping at night. The first results of Rosemary's harvest are now being examined and analysed. A lot of material has already been gathered for identification, and a reference collection of micro-hymenoptera (a highly specialised topic) is being established with specimens identified by John Early, Entomological Curator at the Auckland Museum.

# Planning for management of the Marie Neverman Reserve

In July we hosted a team from the Natural Heritage section of the Auckland Regional Council on a visit to the Tupare wetlands. Their draft report raises a number of issues to be addressed by the Trust in managing our Marie Neverman Reserve. First, we need to strike a balance between restoring former ecosystems and maintaining unnatural habitats, already in place and supporting good levels of native biodiversity. Weed control is essential and should concentrate on plants that out-compete native species. Woolly nightshade has already been targeted by volunteer work directed by the Trust's Field Officer; climbing asparagus is present in bush areas and a local contractor will be engaged to deal with this; pampas fortunately exists only in small clumps, but requires attention before it spreads over the adjoining marshland, where sharp rush (*Juncus acuta*) also needs to be controlled. The presence of kikuyu grass is another issue where ARC knowledge

should be very helpful. The ARC has lengthy experience of weed control measures and regeneration programmes in some regional parks with problems similar to those at Tupare. A further issue is the hydrology of the lake and the adjacent marshland; here again ARC advice should prove invaluable.

The Natural Heritage team identified highly positive features of the reserve, which back up the findings of surveys for the Trust by members of the Auckland Botanical Society. The site has important stands of kowhai and is very significant for its abundance of ngaio which is a regionally threatened species. Native mistletoe (*Ileostylus micranthus*) has been found on a variety of hosts and a programme to encourage and monitor its spread is recommended in the ARC report. A general recommendation is to use local kanuka and manuka as a buffer around the lake to replace existing trees and to supple-

ment the areas planted five years ago when Tupare was being developed into rural blocks. Fortunately the South Kaipara Landcare group, whose involvement with Tupare we much appreciate, has a nursery from which the Trust can secure the required stock.

We are grateful to the Auckland Regional Council for their interest in the Trust's work and especially welcome their decision to incorporate Tupare Swamp into the Wetland Biodiversity Monitoring Programme. This programme will keep a watch on vegetation, water quality and birds at 200 wetlands across the Auckland Region, with a particular focus on ten ecologically significant sites where restoration is taking place. The good news is that our Marie Neverman Reserve has been chosen for monitoring in this high value category.



## The Friends of Mangarakau Swamp Restoration Project

Beautiful Mangarakau Swamp - capable of changing forever any preconception one has about swamps - is a national treasure, a unique and special place; the largest remaining wetland in the Nelson/Marlborough region, and almost as big as all the other freshwater swamps in Nelson combined. A total of 160 hectares is owned by the NZ NFRT, the rest is under Department of Conservation stewardship. The whole is managed by a local group the Friends of Mangarakau Swamp, an incorporated society.

Situated on the extreme North Western coast of the South Island, just below Farewell Spit, Mangarakau Swamp is a wetland which has defied every attempt made in the last 150 years to drain it. Mined for timber, flax and coal, it has remained remarkably weed free and harbours rare flora and fauna including its own brown mudfish. The swamp exists in all its glory, one of the still diminishing number of wetlands to survive in New Zealand

One of the few traces of early settlement is the Mangarakau Community Hall, standing by itself in a grassy paddock which was once the village. The Friends of Mangarakau Swamp have converted this building into a Visitors' Information Centre and museum. A new house, also included in the original purchase, has been turned into an incredibly beautiful Lodge for members, regularly promoted in *Canopy* and also the *Forest & Bird* magazine. Around the perimeters of the swamp on one side is an amphitheatre of huge turreted limestone cliffs, on the other are the rolling hills and distant mountains of Kahurangi National Park. Separated from the swamp by a short channel is the Te Tai Tapu marine reserve.

Currently a proposal is being advanced to develop Mangarakau Swamp into a Ramsar site, as a wetland of international importance. This proposal also encompasses three other wetland types lying within the same geological formation.



## The role of Honorary Rangers

Each of our reserves is in the care of an Honorary Ranger and the Trust is currently reviewing exactly what this task entails. In outline, the main responsibilities are to seek harmonious relations with neighbours; to monitor key ecological aspects including bird life, regeneration, canopy closure, invasive weeds and pest species; to maintain tracks, markers and signs for pest control operations and for the benefit of visitors; to ensure adequate fencing, employing contract labour if necessary. Each Ranger reports to the Trust through the Field Officer, liaises with the local QEII representative as part of the Trust's covenant responsibility, and contributes in preparing and implementing the management plan for the reserve under his &/or her care. Fuller details will be posted on the Trust's website as they become available.

# Progress at Opoutama

The fire in the Trust property at Opoutama, on the Mahia Peninsula south of Gisborne, did considerable damage but provided opportunities for further development of the reserve, for instance with paths to facilitate access to the wetland, as described in Canopy #52. Since then, significant progress has been made largely through the efforts of our Honorary Ranger, Ian Pickering. Measures include shooting of rabbits, trapping for possums, mustelids and feral cats, and spraying of blackberry. Water levels are being maintained, using a digger if necessary, and new ponds will be formed to add habitat for waterbirds.

Te Mahia School, a small rural school 8 km from the wetland, will soon begin seed collection of plants suitable for revegetating the wetland. A shade house is being built in their school grounds so that the children can grow on the seedlings and ultimately take part in the planting.

The felling of undesirable pine trees has been undertaken by Treescape and mulch is being spread. The wetlands appear to hold a lot of frogs and perhaps because of this as many as four bitterns have been seen or heard calling simultaneously. The Trust's Field Officer, Sharen Graham, recently visited this reserve and was very impressed by the positive attitude of everyone involved in the various Opoutama operations.

## *Veronica jovellanoides* a new species of parahebe

A Canopy article last year described a botanical surprise from the Ernest Morgan Reserve at Riverhead, north west of Auckland. During a visit to the reserve Geoff Davidson, with our Field Officer Sharen Graham, had come across a number of unusual alpine plants growing well outside their known range. One of these later bloomed from a cutting into a possible new species with dainty white flowers.

Studies at Auckland University, backed by DNA analysis of material sent overseas, have confirmed this fact and the discovery has been named *Veronica jovellanoides* - given its scientific title from the resemblance of the foliage to that of *Jovellana repens*, a ground-cover from south of Auckland. It seems to be a new member of the parahebe family, endemic to this region. Meanwhile however the original plant had disappeared! Luckily, a very determined search by 40 members of the Auckland Botanical Society was able to find another small patch. A practical way to ensure its survival as a species is for people to adopt this precious native ground-cover in their gardens. Oratia Native Plant Nursery has seedlings for sale. Contact Geoff Davidson, tel. (09) 813 0229.

# Oral Archives

The Native Forests Restoration Trust, having been established in 1980, is fortunate in having several of its founders among the present Trustees. Arthur Cowan, Owen Lewis, Stephen King and Geoff Davidson are all still highly active in forest conservation matters. So as to keep alive the records of the early years and the contributions of the pioneer members, the Trust plans to store a set of oral archive recordings. This job is on a professional basis, the interviews being conducted by Julia Stace Brooke-White of Wellington and preserved in DVD format with copies on hard-drive, along with written biographical information helpful to future researchers.

The four Trustees mentioned above have already been interviewed and the associated documentation is being assembled. Arthur & Pat Cowan, or Owen & Joy Lewis, can be heard talking about their background, how they became involved in native forest protection and the stirring times through which the conservation movement has passed. Theirs are fascinating stories which form a vital part not merely of the Trust's affairs but also of New Zealand history.

### News Flash:

Trust supporters will be interested to know that Donald Cowan, the academic scientist son of Arthur & Pat, has gained a rare and special honour in having the Cowan name attached to a new species - to what appears to be a unique genus, in fact. This life form is a previously unrecognised insect, with a wing-span of about 3 millimetres, found in Westland National Park. We hope to tell you more about *Cowanomyia hillaryi* and its discovery in the next issue of Canopy.

## Tributes to friends of the Trust



**Margie Maddren**, a good friend of the Trust, died peacefully on 25 September in her 87th year ending a selfless lifetime's involvement in horticulture and conservation. Besides the Trust, other causes close to her heart were the Kiwi North Project and the Whangarei Forest and Bird Protection Society of which she was the mainstay. Margie was a personal friend of several of the Trustees who will remember her with affection and respect.

We were saddened to learn of the accidental death of **Joyanna Cleary**, an enthusiastic supporter who had acted as our Minutes Secretary in the Trust's earlier years. Joyanna was an extraordinary person, committed to many worthy causes which she supported, including conservation - so much so that during her recent service, at All Saints' Church in Howick, a family member was moved to remark "I didn't know there were 30,000 charities in New Zealand - it seems as if she gave to them all."

## New Plant Handbook

Specific field guides have a vital role in nature conservation. A fresh example is the **Tahuna Torea Nature Reserve Plant Handbook** by botanist Alan Esler and Leslie Haines. This 26 hectare public reserve is situated beside the Tamaki Estuary, within Auckland City. The booklet of 44 pages, A4 size, gives a full description of the plant life of the reserve with a wealth of diagrams and vegetation maps, supplemented by 57 detailed plant drawings to enable identification. Another useful feature is the 35-year record by Honorary Ranger, Chris Barfoot of a practical approach to planting and weed control within the reserve. This guide, priced at \$10, can be obtained from Tamaki Estuary Protection Society - tel. (09) 575 6142 or fax (09) 575 4836.

# Canopy Must Get Through... the continuing saga

Rest assured the Trustees have not made an arbitrary decision to deliver future issues of Canopy via electronic media only. We want to keep all supporters informed about matters relating to the Trust, so we are very keen to circulate our newsletter Canopy to as many people as possible. While we listed some options we are not planning to decide on just one method to keep in touch. We are most likely to use several systems, therefore if you have already replied nominating your preference we have noted that fact.

However if you did not reply, please do so because we would like to meet everyone's preferred option. The alternatives are:

**Option 1:** Print and post hard copy of Canopy to our mailing list - nearly 2000.

**Option 2:** Provide the current copy of Canopy to be downloaded from our website [www.nznfrt.org.nz](http://www.nznfrt.org.nz). This service has been available for some time and we have built up a library of back issues.

**Option 3:** Email direct to each supporter via their personal email address.

Would you please consider the options and email your first, second, third preference to [admin@nznfrt.org.nz](mailto:admin@nznfrt.org.nz) with "Canopy circulation" in the subject line. Comments are valued.

When replying by email, please state your supporter number or your name and address as per the Canopy address label - use of a nom de plume from your email address makes cross checking difficult. If you do not have access to a computer

please feel free to put a simple reply in an envelope to our post box address, located under the heading of this Canopy. Thanks.

There will be no changes to our mail out practice in the immediate future. Your replies will be carefully analysed and we will keep all supporters informed of the outcome. Thank you for your interest and support.

**A Message from Canada:** This request for supporters to contact the Trust prompted a nice message by email from Ottawa. Iola Price who works in Canada on invasive species removal and forest restoration cherishes 'magnificent memories of NZ forests and the wonderful people she met - Arthur & Pat Cowan, Alison & Stuart Chambers, among them.'

## Bequest for forest restoration on marginal land

We were very sorry to learn of the death at 86 years of Eric Geddes. Before moving to Tauranga, he was a very active member of the North Shore Branch of Forest & Bird and a highly committed volunteer of the Tiritiri Matangi Island open sanctuary where, besides nursery work and tree planting, he made some of the first nesting and roosting boxes when saddlebacks were released on the island in 1984.

Eric has made a special bequest to the Native Forests Restoration Trust, intended for the purchase of marginal land for reversion to native forest under permanent protection by a QEII National Trust covenant. This generous action guarantees lasting results and we will seek suitable opportunities to use the wonderful gift in accordance with his wishes. Eric Geddes will be remembered with sincere gratitude by all who admire his example in nature conservation.

## Access to Rangitoto Station

Rangitoto Station in the Range south east of Otorohanga is one of the Trust's premier reserves where many supporters have enjoyed tramping visits and stays in the house. We are glad to report that problems affecting the road and river crossing en route to the property which were explained in issues of Canopy No. 50 & 51 have been eased. Access by two-wheel-drive as well as 4WD is possible but vehicles should have good ground-clearance to cope with the ford. This precaution allows the reserve to be visited, recognising that the road is steep in places and care is necessary.

Judy Hanbury will provide any necessary contacts and current information when arranging bookings for visits and accommodation. See the Rangitoto Station box on this page for further details.

*Come and stay at*



### Mangarakau Wetland Field Centre, NW 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/fax Jo-Anne Vaughan (03) 524 8072  
[javn@xtra.co.nz](mailto:javn@xtra.co.nz)

*Come and stay at*

### Rangitoto Station Reserve



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)

**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.nznfrt.org.nz](http://www.nznfrt.org.nz)