



No. 46 Summer 2006 ISSN 1170-3172

# CANOPY

Newsletter of the New Zealand Native Forests Restoration Trust

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## From the Chair

The work of the Trust continues to move at pace and, as it is with many other organisations, we are always faced with a dilemma: ensuring the protection of our existing Reserves, while being open to opportunities that enable the influence of the Trust to expand.

As I complete my first year as the Trust's Chair I write to reflect on our ongoing successes and future prospects. This year has seen continued work on the management and restoration of our 25 reserves, along with discussions towards future purchases. At each monthly meeting of Trustees we receive reports on each of our blocks presented by our Field Officer, Sharen Graham, by Trustees, or in written reports from our Honorary Rangers (whose names can be found on the Trust's website).

These direct reports note progress with pest or weed control, with contracts for fencing and various other management issues. Although new purchases have often dominated Canopy, the importance of reserve management is continually before us. It is here appropriate to acknowledge Sharen's excellent contribution to our work and the value of the Ridgway legacy which funds her salary and expenses. At the same time we warmly appreciate the work of our Honorary Rangers who, living close to our scattered blocks of land, act as the Trust's eyes and ears on the ground. Working as they do with our rural Trustees they ensure that the restoration value of our land is maintained and enhanced.

Four of our foundation Trustees continue to work actively with us, however we are conscious of the need to encourage new recruits to our number. People with an enthusiasm for our native bush and its protection and restoration and with the time to make the necessary commitment are welcome to consider becoming Trustees. Our practice is to invite potential trustees to join us in two or three monthly meetings to gauge the demands and the satisfactions of the position and for us to begin to get to know them. For those of us already involved the demands have been more than offset by the immensely satisfying rewards achieved.

To you, our supporters, we express our continued gratitude for your interest and assistance over the years. As I write we still require finance for the Tararu and Waiwawa blocks on the Coromandel Peninsula and, as indicated above, the need for financial assistance with reserves maintenance is ongoing. The aid of those who contribute to this latter cause by regular automatic payments is particularly appreciated.

Not all is good news. The recent vandalism of one of the twin kauris at Waipoua has a message for vigilance in protecting New Zealand's native forests. However, 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



## Improving the health of our Reserves

To improve and maintain the ecological health of our reserves most properties have animal pest control programmes in place. This work is possible because of funding from the Government's Biodiversity Condition Fund and through the untiring efforts of many of our honorary rangers and volunteers who put in considerable hours carrying out the work when contractors aren't able to be used. The NZ Kiwi Foundation is also providing great assistance with funding and manpower on reserves that provide kiwi habitat. We work in conjunction with the Animal Health Board, Regional Councils and the Department of Conservation to coordinate our efforts with theirs when possible, particularly in relation to possums.

A recent analysis by our Field Officer of pest control that is undertaken in sixteen of the Trust's reserves has given us a picture of the present situation. The primary pests are the usual problem animals; possums, rats and mustelids which are currently being targeted in the majority of our reserves. In addition, goats, deer and feral cats are receiving special attention in several of the properties. In most cases, animal numbers are satisfyingly low. Because of reinvasion from adjoining properties, it is a matter of maintenance to keep them that way.

*For more information about the Trust, visit our website: [www.nznftrt.org.nz](http://www.nznftrt.org.nz)*

# Honda's Helping Hand at Pigeon Bush

Funding from the **Honda TreeFund** has enabled the first major revegetation effort to take place at the Restoration Trust's 1,157 hectare Pigeon Bush Reserve. Located strategically between the Tararua and Rimutaka Forest Parks, just down from the Rimutaka Hill summit on State Highway 2 and nearly to Featherston, Pigeon Bush is a rich mosaic comprising secondary beech and broadleaf forest, regenerating shrublands, and gorse.

Open grassed patches are limited to the lower area of Princes Stream. Honorary Ranger David Burson selected the planting site in the only sizeable open area, which was alongside a small tributary stream. A secure fence first had to be built, as David explains: "Rabbits and hares made short work of small scale plantings in previous years so I realised that if we were to be successful an enclosure would be required". Fortunately, funding was available from the Honda TreeFund for both materials for the enclosure and plants to go inside. For every new car sold in New Zealand, the Honda company is prepared to fund the planting of ten native trees as a way of offsetting vehicle emissions.

David and his Tararua Tramping Club colleagues, who regularly assist in day-to-day reserve management tasks, constructed the 14m by 10m rabbit proof enclosure in May this year. After a few false starts, as a result of the particularly wet winter, planting took place on 25 July. "Because of the wet conditions we even had a bit of trouble crossing some of the adjoining farmland in a 4-wheel-drive but got there in the end", notes David.

Altogether 123 eco-sourced local native plants were planted by mid-afternoon with the energetic assistance of members of the Featherston Lions Club, one former NZ NFRT Trustee and tramping colleagues. The fine mix of species included - flax, manuka, kanuka, kapuka, karamu, koromiko, mapou, pigeon-wood, rimu, matai, maire, totara, hinau.

A photograph to record the occasion in the Trust's archives shows the group taking a well earned lunch break. The members are John McIvor, Rolf Kluger, David Burson, former Trustee Ben Thorpe, and Paul Rayner, with Lions, Peter March (President) & Stuart Hudson.

Access to the lower Princes Stream area where the planting occurred is across private farmland and unfortunately is not open to the public. The remaining upper very steep and rough areas of Pigeon Bush Reserve can be accessed from SH 2, but are only suitable for experienced trampers. Native forest restoration is the primary purpose of this very large reserve.

The Trust gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance from the Honda TreeFund for this project and also the helping hand from the Featherston Lions.

## Trust Receives Valder Conservation Grant

The Restoration Trust is very grateful for support of our Waiwawa purchase by the Waikato Branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society as a Valder Conservation grant of \$2000. These grants which honour Lilian Valder, a patron and active supporter of Forest & Bird for many years, are for conservation projects in the Waikato region. We are delighted to acknowledge practical help from a kindred organisation.

## Revegetation Issues

The Trustees have been made aware by some of our supporters of their concern about the large areas of grassland being rooted up by wild pigs at Rangitoto Station, so we think an explanation is required, writes Roy Dench.

Several years ago we hired a digger for an hour to dig up the thick grass thatch that was impeding regeneration of native species, as is recommended by the QE National Trust II in their magazine "Open Space" (No.67, page 16). The article is called "Revegetation by seeding - an alternative approach to restoring native plant communities". We tried this and found that it worked very well, with manuka regenerating on the soil that was exposed. Now the wild pigs are doing the same job and at no cost to us! Manuka is regenerating on soil exposed by old pig rooting areas. Another important attribute of the pigs is that they do a similar job to pigeons in that they are seed dispersers. They devour large seeds on the forest floor and eventually deposit them with a dose of fertiliser in other areas which can be the grass patches they have rooted up. However we do not like to see too many pigs about, so they are harvested whenever possible and our supporters enjoy pork or venison sausages at the Trust's barbecues.

While we are on the subject of venison sausages the Restoration Trust would like to thank Tony Punch, one of our Retaruke Honorary Rangers, for the large amount of venison he has donated for our use in these sausages which are appreciated by all who attend our various functions.

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## A Wonderfully Generous Gift

Earlier this year the Trustees were thrilled to receive a letter from one of our supporters who wrote as follows:

*My father Ron Rashbrooke died in Gisborne on 12 June 2004, aged 84. We have just sold his house for a rather higher amount than anticipated, so even split within our family, a significant gain has arisen.*

*After some discussion my wife and I thought we would like to donate \$20,000 to the Trust in Ron's name, in the light of this windfall. He was a very keen organic gardener, in earlier days a keen mountaineer, and very enthusiastic about native bush, so it seems eminently suitable. It would be particularly appropriate if you had a project in or near the Gisborne area to contribute this to, but please feel free to use it where it will do the most good.*

*As far as location is concerned, Coromandel would also be very suitable - at one time, while working at Waikato Training College and living in Hamilton, Ron had a bach at Whitianga which he enjoyed for a number of years.*

The Trust is extremely grateful for this very generous action. We seek to use gifts such as this one for an appropriate project and will ensure that Ron Rashbrooke's name is commemorated in the Trust's work.

# An Overview of NZ NFRT Reserves

*This issue presents the Trust's northern-most properties.*

*Further details of these and our other reserves can be found on the website: [www.nznftrt.org.nz](http://www.nznftrt.org.nz)*

## FAR NORTH RESERVES

**Puhoi Far North** 241 ha (Acquisition 1995)

Location: Honeymoon Valley, Peria, south-east of Kaitia.

Description: Mainly covered in good taraire and tawa forest, this block was destined for roller-crushing and pine plantation. It has an excellent bird population, including kiwi.

**Puketi Mokau** 318 ha (Acquisition 1987)

Location: Northern edge of Puketi/Omahuta Forest, 25 km west of Kerikeri.

Description: This reserve has a fine grove of maturing kauri and valuable stands of taraire and other Northland forest trees which provide a buffer zone to assist the long-term survival of trees and native birds in the Puketi Forest.

## NORTHLAND RESERVES

**Professor McGregor** 338 ha (Acquisition 1985, 1987, 1995, 1999)

Location: Katui, north of Dargaville, on the east side of SH12.

Description: Named after the man whose energetic campaign in the 1940s resulted in an end to logging of the Waipoua kauri forest, this kiwi habitat contains rapidly regenerating forest along with formerly grassed areas which are being restored using manuka. Four linked blocks adjoining the southern boundary of Waipoua Forest have been separately purchased to help protect the upper catchment of the Waipoua River. Two of these blocks have houses, which are currently being used for accommodating conservation workers.

**Elvie McGregor** 140 ha (Acquisition 1991)

Location: Katui, north of Dargaville, on the west side of SH12.

Description: This semi-coastal link between the Katui Scenic Reserve and the southern boundary of Waipoua Forest contains kiwi and has been planted with trees such as puriri to provide a good year-round food source for the native pigeon.

## NORTHLAND RESERVES (continued)

**Cynthia Hewett** 153 ha (Acquisition 2000)

Location: Parker Road, between Waimatenui and Mataraua.

Description: A block of high scenic and ecological value, it is a buffer to the adjacent Waipoua and Mataraua forests, and provides further assured habitat for nearby rare bird populations such as kokako, brown kiwi, kaka and red-crowned parakeet. It also offers good winter feeding for the native pigeon, kukupa.

**William Upton Hewett** 242 ha (Acquisition 1991)

Location: North-west of Whangarei, between Pipiwai and Titoki.

Description: Purchased under the Trust's Memorial Forest Scheme by Mr Basil and Miss Cynthia Hewett and vested in the Trust, this reserve commemorates their brother William who was killed in the Second World War. The reserve contains a swamp and many plants unique to the area, including a large variety of native orchids. Birds include kiwi and the fernbird.

## COROMANDEL RESERVE

**Waiwawa** 61 ha (Acquisition 2004)

Location: Tapu-Coroglen road, in the Coromandel Ranges north of Thames.

Description: This reserve protects several stream catchments in the headwaters of the Waiwawa River and is surrounded on three sides by DoC land. Although the bush has been cut over in the past, it is recovering and now has a good canopy including podocarps and kauri rickers. It is good habitat for rare and threatened wildlife such as kokako, kiwi, kakariki, North Island robin, and native frogs and wetas.



## Congratulations to the Friends of Mangarakau Swamp Society

on taking top place in the Tasman District Council's 2006 Environmental Awards. The Friends assist the NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust (who are the owners of the property) with looking after the swamp, recognised as a rare and fragile environment. Despite its wetland status, the vegetation has twice been damaged by fire in recent years. Sponsor of the awards, Fulton Hogan Industries, has gifted \$400 worth of plants towards restoration of the burnt areas, which is much appreciated.

*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, Email: [javn@xtra.co.nz](mailto:javn@xtra.co.nz)

## Please check your address

The Trust's data base is being updated to include the new codes, with addresses corrected to post office specifications. This is necessary so that we receive the bulk discount on our mailings.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS AND ADVISE US OF ANY CHANGES NEEDED.



# Puhoi Far North Reserve

*The Trust's most northerly property*

Approximately 30 km south of Kaitia just off the Honeymoon Valley Road, near Peria in the Far North District, is the Trust's 241 hectare Puhoi Far North Reserve. This was purchased in 1995 for \$120,000 with funds raised by an appeal and a grant of \$47,700 from the ASB Community Services Trust.

It is one of the largest remaining privately owned bush areas in the Far North not associated with the large forest tracts. At the time of purchase, plans were well advanced by the previous owner for the clearance of approximately half the area for planting in pine trees. The last logging in the block took place in 1978 and there are many old overgrown logging tracks visible.

The reserve is primarily an east-west valley system with the major portion on the south-facing side, through which the Peria Stream runs. The sides of the valley are steep, much of it around 20 degrees, rising from 100m a.s.l. to 475m at the highest point.

A number of notable large trees remain, including three fine puriri over 1.5 metres in diameter, and a pukatea tree approximately 2 metres thick at the base. There are numerous large northern rata and taraire. Most sizeable podocarps and kauri appear to have been logged.

Mature forest and regenerating shrubland provide a range of habitats for native birds. North Island brown kiwi, listed by the Department of Conservation as vulnerable, are reported in the area. Pied tit are present throughout and this will be almost the northern limit of their range. Wood pigeon (kukupa) are numerous and present in higher numbers than in other comparable areas within the same ecological

district. The kauri snail, another vulnerable species, is also present and can often be seen on the 'paper' road, especially after rain.

Animal pests include goats (both farmed and feral) as well as possums, pigs, rodents and mustelids and domestic cattle from time to time so that fencing is an issue. A regular programme to control these pests is in place. Predator control is now also being conducted by many other landowners in the same valley to expand safe kiwi habitat.

The reserve is inland from the main road and therefore not signposted, so locating it can be tricky for those who have not been there before. At Peria, turn southwards into the Honeymoon Valley Rd. 3.9 km along this road there is a group of letterboxes on the left and a house on the hill to the right. There is a road/drive branching off to the right which is the access to the reserve. The road is drivable with care for 1-2 km, but it is advisable to stop at the second ford and walk the last part (10 minutes) to the reserve boundary where there is a DoC Kiwi Sign. Take the lower bulldozed track which then winds along the south east boundary of the reserve with good views of the forest over the gully. There is a simple location map on the Trust's website [www.nznfrt.org.nz](http://www.nznfrt.org.nz).

It is recommended that visitors contact Terry Higginson, the Honorary Ranger, in advance for specific information. Terry's contact details are telephone: (09) 405 0892; address: 155 Wells Road, RD 2, Kaitia; email: [krisnterry@orcon.net.nz](mailto:krisnterry@orcon.net.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), Email: [jrhanbury@actrix.co.nz](mailto:jrhanbury@actrix.co.nz)**

## *Yes, I should like to give a contribution to the work of the Trust*

I would like my donation to be used for Waiwawa Reserve purchase, Tararu Valley Reserve purchase, reserve maintenance, general purposes, etc.

Here is my tax-deductible donation of \$ .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

..... Phone: .....

Please make cheques payable to **NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust**  
**Send to NZ NFRT, PO Box 80-007, Green Bay, Auckland 0643**