



MEETING AND ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

All of our talks are open to the public – everyone is welcome. Talks are followed by supper and chat. A gold coin koha is welcomed.

We encourage families, particularly Kiwi Conservation Club (KCC) members to join us on field trips and outdoor activities, as well as friends of members, and, where there are no group limitations, non-members are also welcome. Please book in for field trips and other outings in advance, as it makes organisation so much easier and more enjoyable for us. Always let the trip leader know if you have any relevant medical condition, and always come prepared for unpredictable weather.

Prior to each activity/meeting we send out a reminder email to members. As our activities do not occur at the same time each month these reminders can be very timely. If you do not receive these emails and would like to, or have changed your email address, please email rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

All members are welcome to become involved with the Tikitapu pest control project, to lead field trips, assist in promoting the branch, and the writing of letters to MPs or the newspaper.

If you have any ideas for guest speakers or activities, please let us know by contacting a Committee member. Phone numbers are on the back page.

FROM THE EDITOR

Rotorua Branch 2016 -2017

Rotorua Branch held its AGM for the 2016-17 year in May and we can report that the branch is in good heart. We have an elected committee of seven people (names and contact details on the back page). We welcome the two new committee members and give special thanks to Heather Pearson who is standing down as she is transferring to Wellington. We thank all the people who have contributed to branch activities in any way.

Financially the branch is doing well. We were able to cover all regular expenses in 2016-17 and purchase possum kill traps for the pest control project in Tikitapu Scenic Reserve. A donation was made to Wingspan towards plants for their new location.

Violet Bonnington Reserve (VBR) (Manager - Jim Rofe)

Planting in the VBR has been completed and the trees are growing well. The piece of pasture purchased twelve years ago to provide public access to the Mt Ngongotaha Bush Reserve has been thoroughly transformed. Some track maintenance is required following recent storms and this will be undertaken shortly. We have taken over the maintenance of the toilets from the Mt Ngongotaha Bush Restoration Trust (which is in recess).

Tikitapu Care Group (Manager – Frankie Blakely)

A bait programme using Pindone and Feratox® (cyanide) was carried out from August to mid-September 2016. A satisfactory reduction in marsupials was achieved prior to the start of the bird's breeding season. However, the rat result was disappointing and we are looking at a new approach to managing the rat population. Forest and Bird purchased 50 possum kill traps to place in positions where higher possum numbers had been found over the years.

We continue to receive encouraging comments regarding the increase of the mistletoe, the regeneration of the bush in the reserve and the increase in bird life. There was an excellent result with the mistletoe count at the Okareka end of the project area. In 2001 before the pest control started, DOC surveyed the area and returned a count of 218 plants. In 2016 the same area had 2,034 healthy plants.

The pest control programme for 2017 has commenced with the first working bees to trim the lines and to check the bait stations. See the dates for the remainder of the year on the next page.

Full annual reports for the Tikitapu Care Group Project and Violet Bonnington Reserve, and the Financial Report, are available on request. Phone 07 357 2014 or email rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz.

EVENTS CALENDAR July – December 2017

TIKITAPU WORKING BEE PROGRAMME

Trimming Lines, checking stations etc.

July - Sunday 2nd & Monday 3rd

Bait laying – Pindone and Feratox®

Prefeed non-toxic bait bags out – Sunday 30th & Monday 31st July

Pindone bait and Toxic bait bags out – Sunday 6th & Monday 7th August

Top up – Sunday 20th & Monday 21st August

Clear stations and Toxic bait bags–

Saturday 7th & Monday 9th October

Volunteers to assist with the pest control programme are welcome.

Contact Frankie Blakely Ph: 362 8480 for more information

KCC Walk - Saturday 8 July Ohope Kiwi Reserve

Carla Knott will lead us on a night walk through the Ohope Scenic Reserve to listen to kiwi and the other abundant night life in the reserve.

Find more information on the reserve at <http://www.ohopebeach.info/business/whakata-ne-kiwi>. We will return to Rotorua after the walk, departing Ohope at approx. 9.00pm.

Meet: For carpooling from Rotorua meet at Tui House, Te Ngae Rd at 5.15 pm. Estimated drive time 1 hour 20 mins.

Cost: \$20.00 to drivers

Grade: An easy walk on a well-marked track with seats along the way (for a spot of supper).

Booking: Margaret (07 35 7 2024) or emailrotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

Bring: warm clothing, headlight / torch, snack and hot drink in thermos.

Back-up date: Saturday 15th July.

Talk - Wednesday 2nd August at 7.30 pm Studio1, RAVE, Hinemaru St., Rotorua Julian Fitter - Maketu Ongaroto Wetland Society

The objectives of the Maketu Ongaroto Wetland Society (MOWS) are to support ecological restoration of the Lower Kaituna River, Ongaroto/Maketu and Waihi harbours and their associated ecosystems. Julian will talk about how the MOWS started, current projects and plans for the future. He will then discuss their new venture – Bay Conservation Alliance – four community conservation groups working together.

Walk - Saturday 19th August Waiorongomai Valley High Level Track

We will have an hour and a half drive, with views of Wairere Falls in the Kaimai Range, to the carpark on Waiorongomai Loop Road and will then spend 2-3 hours exploring the High Level Track. This is an old gold mining area set amongst native bush and there are many things of interest to explore including the famous Butler's incline. On the return trip we can stop at the Opal Hot Pools for a dip (<http://www.opalhotsprings.co.nz/>). (<http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/bay-of-plenty/places/kaimai-mamaku-forest-park/things-to-do/tracks/waiorongomai-valley-tramping-tracks/>).



Old machinery near Butler's incline

Meet: For carpooling from Rotorua meet at Tui House, Te Ngae Rd at 8:30 am.

Cost: \$20.00 to drivers

Grade: Medium

Booking and further information: Judy 07 345 7477 (home), 07 343 5536 (work)

What to bring: Good walking shoes clothes for all weathers, lunch, drink, togs and towel

Talk - Wednesday 6 September at 7.30 pm Studio1, RAVE, Hinemaru St., Rotorua Forest & Bird Climate Roadshow Adelia Hallett, Climate Advocate

The disruption caused by climate change threatens our prosperity, our way of life and the wildlife and landscapes that make New Zealand unique.

Forest & Bird plans to get to every region of New Zealand to talk about how climate change might affect nature in your area, and to discuss what we can do to prepare for it.

And it's not all one-way; by helping nature become more resilient to the now-inevitable impacts of rising seas and more frequent droughts and storms, we can also start to help ourselves.

Talk - Wednesday 11 October at 7.30 pm
Studio1, RAVE, Hinemaru St., Rotorua
The Tikitapu Care Group Story
Nell Ranson and Frankie Blakely

Rotorua Branch of Forest & Bird and the Rotorua Botanical Society have been working since 2002 to protect a regionally significant mistletoe population in the Tikitapu Scenic Reserve by controlling plant and animal pest threats. Nell and Frankie will discuss the programme, the monitoring and the highs and lows of the project.

Friday 27th—Sunday 29th October
Tongariro National Park, Ruapehu

A weekend with KCC at the beautiful Forest and Bird Ruapehu Lodge in Rehua Cres., Whakapapa Village
<http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/whatwedo/lodges/ruapehu-lodge/>



Ruapehu Lodge

This weekend will commence Friday evening. On Saturday the walks will depend on the weather but there are many options, both long and short and above and below the bush-line. We will have Sunday morning for activities before tidying up and leaving after lunch. All meals will be self-catering with Saturday night dinner as a Pot Luck shared meal. There is a comprehensive kitchen in the lodge. Sleeping arrangements are in 4-bunk and 6-bunk rooms, plus a dormitory of 14 bunks, and you will need to bring sleeping bags (or equivalent) and linen.

Costs: Contribution to driver: Suggest \$25 pp

Lodge Fees per person and per night

	Member	Non-member
Adult	\$35	\$55
Child	\$25	\$35

Please contact Rotorua F&B by email (rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz) or ring (345 7477 or 357 2024) to obtain a booking form.

Bookings and money to be in by 25 September 2017, non-refundable after this date unless a substitute can be found.

Saturday 11th November – Okataina Tracks

We will explore a number of the shorter bush tracks around the Okataina Outdoor Education Centre. These will include the Ngahopua Track



which passes the twin volcanic crater lakes of Rotongata and Rotoatua, and Tarawhai Track where a fenced-off area has been created to illustrate the effects of introduced browsers on the native vegetation. Additional options include waterfall and lake walks.

Meeting: For carpooling from Rotorua meet at Tui House, Te Ngae Rd at 8:30 am.

Cost: \$8 contribution to driver

Grade: Easy

Booking: Phone Margaret 07 357 2024 or email rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

What to bring: Good walking shoes, clothes suitable for the weather, lunch, drink (togs and towel if a swim in Lake Okataina is desired)

Back-up date: Saturday 12 November.

KCC Saturday 10th December – Awahou Stream Restoration Project

Join us for a visit to the Awahou Stream Restoration Project at Central Rd, Ngongotaha, a dip in the cool spring-fed stream followed by a Pot Luck barbeque. We will be hosted by Jaap and Sue van Dorsser who have been working on this project for 25 years.

Meeting place and time: For carpooling from Rotorua meet at Tui House, Te Ngae Rd (opposite Countdown) at 2:30 pm.

Or 3.00 pm at van Dorsser home.

Cost: \$2 contribution to driver

Grade: Easy

Booking and further information: Judy 07 345 7477 (home), 07 343 5536 (work)

What to bring: Good walking shoes, clothes suitable for the weather, contribution towards the pot luck barbeque

TRIP REPORTS

Birds at Lake Okareka - Tuesday 28 February



A dozen members and friends joined local bird enthusiasts Heather Pearson and Katie Hodgson for an early evening walk along the Lake Okareka Walkway. The initial rain dwindled to a drizzle which did not greatly dampen the enthusiasm of the participants who bird-watched their way along the wetland and lake margins. A number of different bird species, both water and land birds, were spotted. Many of the participants were keen to repeat the walk at different times of the year.

Pureora Forest - Saturday 1 April 2017

Titiraupunga appears

Six people made their way through the fog to Pureora Forest on the western side of Lake Taupo. They were promised beautiful podocarp forest, clear and clean running streams and a pleasant walk. They got much more, including teapots high in the sky and views of clouds as if from an aeroplane.

Driving through forestry country to the start of the track there were plenty of pig hunter's cars visible in side roads, this is good to see as Pureora needs a few less pigs. Arriving at the track after we stepped out into the fog and cool air.

The forest was sparkling and often dripping with rain from the previous day, this always makes it look like it has had a spring clean. With the arrival of autumn have come toadstools and a small bright blue *Entoloma hochstetteri* encouraged many 'oohs' and 'ahs'. A moss covered old tree trunk captured someone's imagination with its silhouette against the sky looking like a teapot. Our plod up the many steps was rewarded with a view of a sea of cloud, as if looking out of an aeroplane.

The view at the trig was 360° with Titiraupunga piercing the clouds, Pureora Forest stretching southward to Ruapehu and Mt Taranaki in the far distance to the west.

On the return we stopped at the Kakaho Campsite. Some stayed by the cars and enjoyed the sun while others wandered up the stream over the bridge and onto the Rimu Walk. One can only feel humbled to see the giant rimu and be grateful for the people who stood up for nature in the past.

Trip members: Andrew, Tania, Judy, Julie, Margaret and Brian.

Pureora Forest

In 1946 Pureora Forest was one of the last native forests to be opened up for logging. One of New Zealand's most significant conservation battles took place there in 1978. Protestors occupied platforms built in the treetops and their actions led to a government-imposed logging moratorium. Eventually this brought about the end of native forest logging throughout all of New Zealand.



Maungatautari - Saturday 22nd April 2017

Too cold for Tuataras

Tali, our southern Enclosure, Maugatautiri Sanctuary Mountain Guide was like a breath of fresh air and never tired of the endless questions regarding both pest control and the wildlife that the five of us asked. It was a cold morning and the tuatara were nowhere to be seen but two takehe came out for morning tea and we were all captivated by these beautiful birds. After leaving Tali some of us went into the main part of the sanctuary to have lunch entertained by the kakas before heading home inspired and delighted.



Stacey - delighted with the takehe

Rotorua Forest and Bird Programme Summary - July to December 2017

Date	Time & Place	Activity & Topic	Contact person
Saturday ^{KCC} 8 July	5.30 pm Depart Rotorua	Ohope Kiwi Reserve An evening walk to hear the kiwi and enjoy the bush at night Led by Carla Knott	Margaret Dick Ph: 357 2024
Wednesday 2 August	7.30 pm RAVE Hinemoa St	Presentation by Julian Fitter The Maketu Ongatoro Wetland Society	Judy Gardner Ph: 345 7477
Saturday 19 August	8.30 am Tui House Te Ngae Rd	Trip to Wairongomai Valley Led by Judy Gardner	Judy Gardner Ph: 345 7477
Wednesday 6 September	7.30 pm RAVE Hinemoa St	Presentation by Adelia Hallett Forest & Bird National Office Climate Roadshow	Margaret Dick Ph: 357 2024
Wednesday 11 October	7.30 pm RAVE Hinemoa St	Presentation by Nell Ranson and Frankie Blakely The Tikitapu Care Group Story	Nell Ranson Ph: 347 7819
Friday – Sunday ^{KCC} 27-29 October	From 5 pm Ruapehu Lodge Rehua Cres, Whakapapa	Weekend at Forest & Bird's Ruapehu Lodge Whakapapa	Judy Gardner Ph: 345 7477
11 November	8.30 am Tui House Te Ngae Rd	Okataina Tracks	Margaret Dick Ph: 357 2024
Sunday ^{KCC} 10 December	2.30 pm Tui House Te Ngae Rd	Visit the Awahou Stream Restoration Project, followed by a pot luck bbq Central Rd, Ngongotaha	Judy Gardner Ph: 345 7477



Forest & Bird calendars and diaries

Annual Fundraiser



The 2018 New Zealand Conservation Calendar and the Conservation Diary which are produced in association with Forest & Bird will soon be on sale

The calendars and diaries present images of both wildlife and wilderness habitat from New Zealand's extraordinary natural heritage and conservation areas and make great gifts. The calendar weighs less than 200 g for economical postage and there is an envelope included. Rotorua Forest & Bird committee members will be selling the calendar for \$18.00

The beautifully produced diary includes wonderful photographs of New Zealand landscapes, plants and wildlife. It has 'week to view' pages and is spiral bound so it will lie flat when open. It will be available from committee members at \$25.00.

See names and contact details of committee members on the back of this newsletter.

**Rotorua Forest & Bird Committee
P.O. Box 1489, Rotorua 3040**

Email address: rotorua.branch@forestandbird.org.nz

Jim Rofe (Treasurer) ph. 348 6636

Nell (Helen) Ranson ph. 347 7819

Frances Blakely ph. 362 8480

Margaret Dick ph. 357 2024

Mike Goodwin ph. 362 8865

Judy Gardner ph. 345 7477

Heather Sayer ph. 3323352

Brian Pickering ph. 0273020057

Claire Armstrong (KCC) ph. 3460468

If you have any contacts with people who would be interesting and informative speakers, or thoughts about places for a field trip, please let one of the Committee members know. We are always looking for new places to visit.

