

# Habitat



NORTH SHORE BRANCH

AUGUST – DECEMBER 2010

## ANTI-MINING CAMPAIGN KICKED OFF



FROM  
THE EDITOR



Protesters on the move.

Photo: Christine Ball

**T**he Soccer World Cup has recently been kicked off, and everyone – fan or no fan – was swept up by the fever in the air. In the same way, a well-organised conglomerate of likeminded environmentalists took to the streets on May 1st to march against the mining of conservation land in an attempt to stop a recent proposal by Government to put New Zealanders on par with their economic rivals within the next couple of decades no matter the cost. A people's wealth cannot be increased by destroying their environment!

**Case in point:** "Let no one say, and say it to your shame... that there was beauty here, until you came."

– Rudyard Kipling

## TUFF CRATER UPDATE

**A**mazing progress is being made at Tuff Crater. A massive excavator with a lethal rotary blade came through, pulverising large wattle, privet, phoenix palms and willow. A large area of nasty weed species, including pampas, has been transformed into mulch along the estuary track. This has now been planted with 950 plants, grown on contract by Kaipatiki Project, on our record-breaking planting day of June 13. In conjunction with the council's official Community Planting

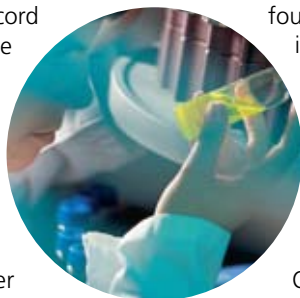
Day, 160 volunteers planted 2,250 plants in two hours, 1,400 of which went in along the top of tank sites 1-3. By the time you read this, we will have planted another 700 or so on the slopes behind these sites. All this weed control work and plants have been funded by grants obtained by the Branch from DOC and ARC. Work on the track has been delayed by the need to obtain resource consent. A contract has been let for weed control work at the kohekohe forest on the

southern side of the estuary. Our other weed control work days have been well attended with up to 25 people. Two volunteer sprayers are supplementing the contractor effort and volunteers are working in their own time around the crater on ginger, privet and moth plant. We are busy formulating a pest control plan for the site. So you can see a lot is happening! If you want to be part of the effort, please phone or email us.

– Richard Hursthouse

# IN THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY, BECOME A SCIENTIST!

When I was living in England, I joined the local Natural History Society and got involved with bird counts on a nearby nature reserve. The two ponds on the reserve had been drained in the Second World War and then allowed to fill up again in 1945. Bird counts had started at that time to record the return of species to the area as the wetland was restored. These counts were still going on in 1988 when I arrived and their records showed that they had documented the extinction of red-backed shrikes and many other changes to the avifauna over those 40-odd years. Such data is useful and if the records are carefully and accurately compiled they can be used in scientific papers many years after they are collated. These days I collect moths, and by keeping a record of when, where and how each specimen was acquired, I create a piece of scientific data that will



last for tens, even hundreds, of years. In New Zealand, there are very few people actively collecting and so significant discoveries can be made almost anywhere. Whenever you encounter something you are not familiar with, keep it and make a note of when and where you've found it. If you cannot identify it when you get home, bring it along to the branch meetings where there are people with knowledge in many fields. If they can't identify it, there are specialists elsewhere who can. The Botanical, Ornithological and Entomological Societies all have experts to resolve the most difficult challenges. As a last resort the Auckland Museum or Landcare Research happily accepts specimens for identification that are properly documented. Imagine the satisfaction when you are credited for making a significant discovery, as can easily happen. Your name will forever

be on the label associated with the specimen. A new species might even be named after you!

Biodiversity worldwide is declining. The rate of extinctions today far exceeds the background or natural rate. Some scientists believe that the rate of loss of species is on the same scale as has occurred following historical meteorite impacts with the Earth. Among plants and smaller organisms – especially in the oceans – species are lost before they have ever been named. By observing nature, keeping specimens and keeping records, individuals contribute to the understanding of NZ biodiversity, and thereby preserving it. It adds enjoyment to and greater comprehension of your natural experiences and serves as a good example to your children or other youngsters in your company.

– Alan Emmerson

**PLEASE NOTE: A Chair Report to the AGM of May 3rd is available from [emmo66@xtra.co.nz](mailto:emmo66@xtra.co.nz)**

## BioBlitz 2010 – finding nature in the city

With this being the Year of Biodiversity it was encouraging to see so many young people turn out for the 24hr BioBlitz held this year at the Auckland Domain – an urban ark in the centre of our biggest city. Sponsored by Landcare Research and supported by DOC, ARC, Auckland War Memorial Museum, University of Auckland, Forest & Bird and others, BioBlitz is a wonderful opportunity for all types of biologists to be working in the same place on the same project and to have the occasion to interact with young, future scientists and conservationists.

The children's passion and knowledge were inspiring. During the 24 hours, led by scientists, the students recorded the staggering number of 1,521 different species within the Museum surrounds. Among these were the following:

83 species of beetles

115 species of wasps, bees and ants

119 species of arachnids (spiders, mites, etc.)

18 species of nematodes (roundworms or threadworms)

394 flowering dicots (plants having double embryonic seed leaves)

It was a real buzz to take part in such a stimulating event and one can't help but feel that the future looks considerably brighter if these young people are in charge of our environment...

– Helene Willis





## Welcome New Members!

A hearty welcome to Blair & Jenny Forrester, Mrs P.J. Jackson, Mark Costello, Mrs Johanna Hasselton, Steve Stewart, Brett & Bianca Cornforth, Ron & Lynne Hewson, Adam Fraser, Mrs Adrienne Wright, Mrs Gwenda Pulham, Kristina Crane, Grant Lawrence, Frank Visser, Melanie Hollis, G.R. Fry, Superprint (Conrad Ellin), Jill Glass, Mr D.H.P. Mortimer, Barbara Hepburn, Lauren Williams and Chris Sedgrove, Dorothy & Jim Goodman, Carlene Pulfer-Ridings, and David & Dianne Darker who recently joined North Shore Forest & Bird. May you enjoy partnering with us in conservation initiatives on the Shore!

## A letter adding further dimension to the dilemma we face with regard to mining in conservation areas

"In the 1990s areas of New Zealand that were considered to be of 'high conservation value' (including many National Parks) were placed on Schedule 4 which recognised their conservation significance and proclaimed them as a 'No go' area for all other activities. The New Zealand government is now asking for public submissions about their proposal to remove some of this high conservation value land from Schedule 4 to open it up for mining (coal, gold iron ore and rare minerals). The areas to be mined include several long-term frog monitoring sites where the frog populations have been continually monitored for over 40 years – this represents the best data on frog populations anywhere in the world.

In addition, the proposed mining area includes the 'type' locality of Archey's frogs (Tokatea on the Coromandel Peninsula) and Hochstetter's frogs (Coromandel Peninsula). Archey's frogs only occur in two areas of New Zealand and the Coromandel is considered the 'stronghold' population.

'Save our frogs – stop the mining' really is the biggest issue in New Zealand conservation – of course saving the long-tailed bat, woodroses and a North Island brown kiwi along the way is important too!

I have often seen 'activists' getting so worked up about issues that they chain themselves to a tree or to a digger and have felt that it was more of a political statement than anything else – but if this mining proposal goes ahead then I'll be there, with my Victory chains, ready to stop any mining that will destroy the frogs' habitat.

These endangered frogs (Archey's are Critically Endangered having lost 88% of their population since 1996) are just hanging in there and without our help they will disappear. If we destroy their habitat then we will quickly lose a part of one of the most important pieces of New Zealand history as well as a large piece of the amphibian evolutionary tree. We have a moral obligation to protect these original inhabitants of New Zealand – the little 'people' of the forest.

For more information on how the frogs will be affected (including maps of distribution and proposed areas to be mined), go to [www.nzfrogs.org](http://www.nzfrogs.org)

To see some ppt about the mining issue during a recent panel discussion (including frogs), go to [www.otago.ac.nz/law/nrl/mining/index.html](http://www.otago.ac.nz/law/nrl/mining/index.html)

For more information about the mining in Coromandel, go to [www.forestandbird.org.nz/saving-our-environment/threats-and-impacts/-mining/-mining-coromandel](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/saving-our-environment/threats-and-impacts/-mining/-mining-coromandel)."

– Phil Bishop (University of Otago)

**Editor's Note:** Helene, committee member responsible for membership, works as an educator at Auckland Zoo and has met Dr Phil (no pun intended!) on one of his trips north. This was his letter, virtually unabridged, which has been circulated as an appeal against mining and the effect on indigenous frogs. He agreed to have it published in our local Forest & Bird newsletter.



Coromandel residents hold a peaceful protest at the Martha mine at Waihi.





## Maungatautari controlled epic one April day

It pays to take an emergency blanket on a day trip...

Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust is doing a fantastic job to restore the dawn chorus. A 47km predator-proof fence was erected around the perimeter of Maungatautari volcano (extinct) a few years ago. The traverse normally takes about six hours. The ascent to the 800m summit is quite steep once you leave the fence, if you are starting on the Cambridge side (recommended if you are staying at Out in the Styx). A narrow access road has been cut from the southern enclosure to the summit, using rock taken from numerous, small quarries along the way. The descent is easier, but tricky on steep sections where the gravel is relatively loose. Tramping boots are advised.

Mature tawa, pukatea, mangeao and tawari, with plenty of supplejack and kiekie, support tomtit, fantail, bellbird, tui and kereru; in other words, heaven for bush lovers like me!

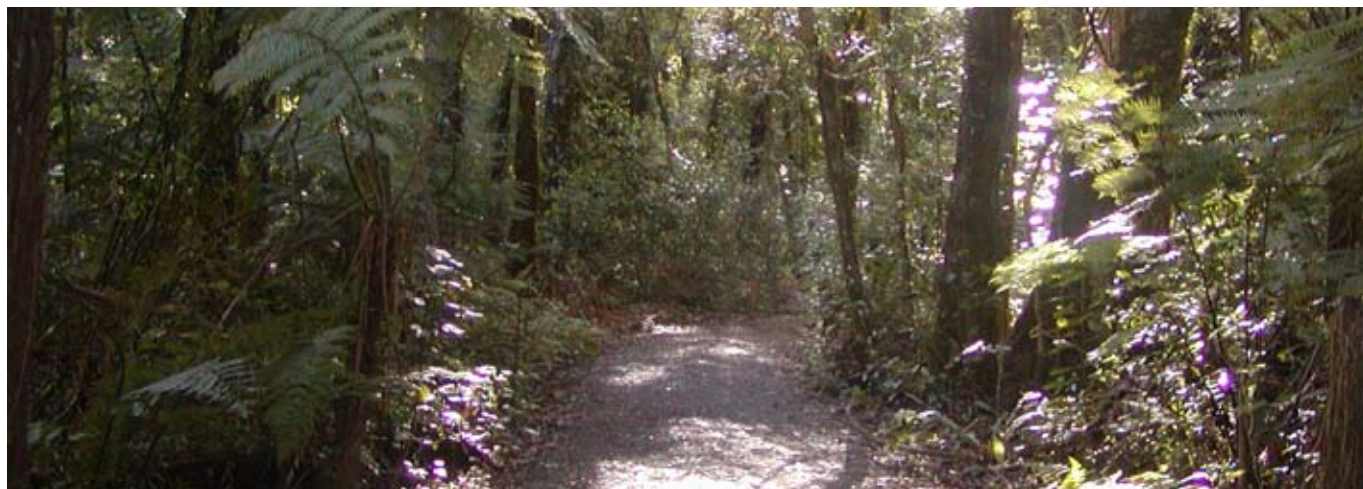
Descending after lunch, one of the women in my tail-end-Charlie group (five adults and two teenaged boys) slipped and hurt her foot. She couldn't walk. We were about three hours from our destination. Out came three emergency blankets, a torch, two disposable raincoats, woollen hats and gloves, homoeopathic arnica, and painkillers. We split up to deal with the situation. The boys took off with Fiona Miller. Cellphone coverage was limited to the summit and only a couple of other places so Darryl Ovens and I climbed back up to phone for help. An hour later we returned to see Darryl's wife Christine with her arm

around her injured friend, all wrapped up on the track. Lance passed us on his quad bike heading up the hill about half an hour later. It was a bruising, bumpy ride out for his two passengers. The traverse took Darryl and me eight hours. We passed a soldier who was doing a double traverse in one day, obviously at speed.

In the morning we explored part of the southern enclosure to see kaka and yellow-crowned kakariki. We climbed the viewing tower and marvelled at the wildlife. Richard made us identify all the trees in sight. Alan showed us a mahoe stripper (or green mahoe moth).

PS: Sue had fractured a bone but it wasn't picked up until a second X-ray three weeks after the trip.

– Margi Keys



### Fundraising: Volunteers needed

Do you have a passion for the environment and the ingenuity to raise funds for North Shore Forest and Bird? If so, please contact Claire on 419 1233 or email [claire.stevens@xtra.co.nz](mailto:claire.stevens@xtra.co.nz).

### North Shore Community Planting Days (10am-noon)

#### Sunday 15 August

Chelsea Estate Heritage Park,  
Rawene Rd, Birkenhead

#### Sunday 29 August

Hooton Reserve, Oteha Valley Rd,  
Albany  
Normal safety procedures apply.

### Forest & Bird vacancy: North Shore RMA representative

For many years Jim Lewis has been working behind the scenes protecting the North Shore environment by keeping tabs on RMA applications. This role is now vacant and in dire need of one or more people to step up. If you are passionate about trying to stem the adverse effects of development and have quality time to put into this, please contact Alan Emmerson ([emmo66@xtra.co.nz](mailto:emmo66@xtra.co.nz)).

Send newsletter contributions to Victor  
Meyer, PO Box 33873, Takapuna or email  
[victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz](mailto:victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz)

## Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society *Tiaki Taiao*, North Shore Branch

PO Box 33-873, Takapuna, New Zealand | [www.forestandbird.org.nz](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz) | [northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:northshore.branch@forestandbird.org.nz)

The Committee 2010

|                           |   |                         |  |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| <b>ALAN EMMERSON</b>      | – | Chairman                | 473 2216   |
| <b>RICHARD HURSTHOUSE</b> | – | Deputy Chairman         | 410 5339   |
| <b>JOCELYN SANDERS</b>    | – | Secretary               | 479 2107   |
| <b>LAUREN POWER</b>       | – | Treasurer               | 478 6103   |
| <b>LIZ ANSTEY</b>         | – | Committee               | 480 1545   |
| <b>ANNE DENNY</b>         | – | Committee               | 480 5570   |
| <b>CEDRIC HAY</b>         | – | Committee               | 410 5977   |
| <b>MARGI KEYS</b>         | – | Committee               | 443 6919   |
| <b>SARAH NOBLE</b>        | – | Committee               | 475 6338   |
| <b>CLAIRE STEVENS</b>     | – | Committee               | 419 1233   |
| <b>HELENE WILLIS</b>      | – | Committee               | 480 8851   |
| <b>BRIAN GANNON</b>       | – | KCC                     | 443 2479   |
| <b>KAREN WEALLEANS</b>    | – | Guest speakers          | 410 1995   |
| <b>LINDA JOHNSON</b>      | – | Habitat deliveries      | 413 9851   |
| <b>NICK KEENLEYSIDE</b>   | – | Electronic distribution | <a href="mailto:info@fragileworld.org.nz">info@fragileworld.org.nz</a> |

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

VICTOR MEYER, email: [victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz](mailto:victoranddebbie@paradise.net.nz)

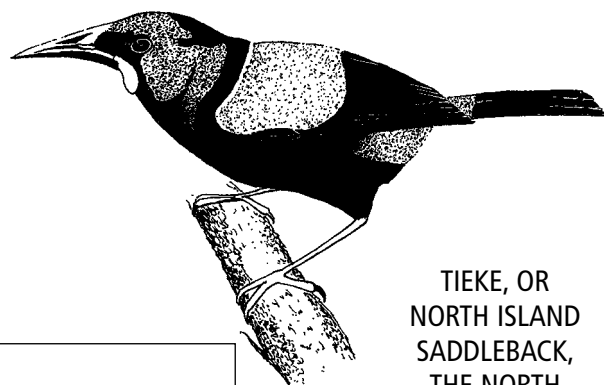
### BIRD RESCUE

SYLVIA 478 8819

Remember if you are concerned about any conservation problems in your area, get in touch with Alan or Richard.

# Habitat

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH SHORE BRANCH  
ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY



TIEKE, OR  
NORTH ISLAND  
SADDLEBACK,  
THE NORTH  
SHORE BRANCH  
EMBLEM



# Habitat

AUGUST – DECEMBER 2010

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY *TIAKI TAIAO*, NORTH SHORE BRANCH

## WHAT'S ON

## ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS

Public meetings take place on the first Monday of every month.

**VENUE:** Takapuna Senior Citizens' Hall,  
The Strand (behind Takapuna Library).

**TIME:** 7.45pm.

**ADMISSION:** Donation / koha (please  
give generously).

We'd like to see you there!

### AUGUST Monday 2nd

'A plan to extend marine protection around the Kermadec Islands' by Karen Baird (F&B Kermadec Campaigner/Advocate). Don't miss the promotion of a new concept in marine conservation, called BIG. Karen will explain how a campaign to increase marine protection boundaries around the Kermadecs is to be launched in partnership with Pew Environment Group (Pew Trusts) and WWF NZ. Come hear about this bold project for which Karen will be drumming up support!

### SEPTEMBER Monday 6th

'Transformation on Motuihe Island' by Jill Bishop and Phil Francis. Tonight's presenters will talk to us about their work on Motuihe – an offshore sanctuary island in the Hauraki Gulf. Jill and Phil have been volunteering on the island for many years, transforming a windswept farm into habitat for native species. Tree planting and bird translocation, such as kiwis from Kapiti Island, will also be discussed.

### OCTOBER Monday 4th

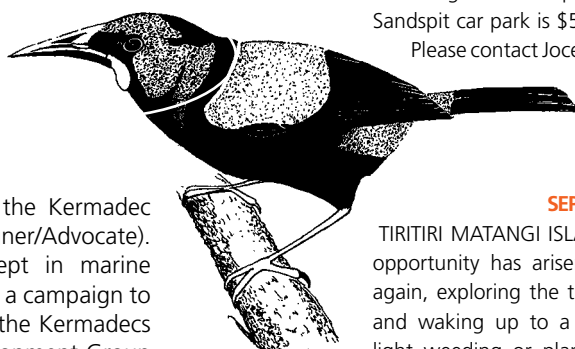
'How to catch a rifleman' by Simon the photographer. Simon has been specialising in wildlife photography since his first visit to Tiritiri Matangi Island nearly 20 years ago. He is a former chairman of the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi and now editor of 'Dawn Chorus'. For the last couple of years he has spent much time in pursuit of establishing a rifleman population on this island. Don't miss this presentation!

### NOVEMBER Monday 1st

'Waitakere kauri snails' by Kevin Barker. In 2008, Kevin was awarded a fellowship to research kauri snails in the Waitakeres. Tonight he will bring us up to date on their lifestyle and habitat. Come listen how this fascinating group of invertebrates, which is not often heard about in the greater scheme of conservation, has an important ecological role to play.

### DECEMBER Monday 6th

'Living and working on the Antarctic Peninsula – tales of a Marine Research Assistant.' Andrew Miller (NIWA Marine Ecology Technician) will give a talk about some of the science projects he was involved in whilst on a 2-year tour of duty at the UK's Rothera Research Station on the Antarctic Peninsula. These include recording the behaviour of Antarctic cod, studying the impact of iceberg scouring on natural communities, and routine oceanographic work. This evening is also our Christmas meeting so please bring a festive delight to share for supper!



### AUGUST, Sunday 29th.

MOTUORA ISLAND PLANTING/WEEDING, 8am (afternoon return). This is Forest & Bird and KCC's annual planting and/or weeding trip to Motuora, an island sanctuary. Ferry departs Sandspit Wharf at 8 sharp and returns from the island between 4 and 4.30pm. The fare is \$20 for adults, \$10 for children 5-15 yrs (under 5 free). A sausage sizzle is provided for lunch. Parking in the Sandspit car park is \$5.

Please contact Jocelyn Sanders to book (by 20 August) and for additional information:  
jocsanders@vodafone.co.nz,  
ph 479 2107.

### SEPTEMBER, Sat/Sun 25-26th.

TIRITIRI MATANGI ISLAND OVERNIGHT TRIP. A fantastic opportunity has arisen to stay on this splendid island again, exploring the trails, scouting for kiwi after dusk, and waking up to a magnificent dawn chorus. Some light weeding or planting may also be possible. Ferry bookings should be made independently and well in

advance through [www.360discovery.co.nz](http://www.360discovery.co.nz) or 0800-360-3472. It is the most cost-effective to depart from Gulf Harbour (free parking available; ferry leaves promptly.) Remember to bring your own sleeping bag, food, etc. Accommodation is in bunk-style rooms at \$35 per person, which is payable upfront to North Shore Forest & Bird. Places are limited to only 15 so please contact Sarah Noble (ph 475 6338) ASAP to secure your place.

### OCTOBER, Sunday 24th.

MANUKAU BIRDWATCHING TRIP, 10.00am. Join us for this adventure by meeting up in the car park at the junction of Creamery and Greenwood Roads, Mangere Bridge. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. BYO lunch and binoculars if you have and carry water. There will be a walk along the coastal path, past Mangere Lagoon to the hides of Ambury Regional Park. Depending on circumstances we may cross the causeway to Puketutu Island, where wading birds back from the Northern Hemisphere should be waiting to welcome us! Please express interest to Alan Emmerson on 473 2216.

### NOVEMBER, Sunday 28th.

KAURI GLEN AND CECIL EADY RESERVES WALKABOUT, 9.30am. Kauri Glen is one of the oldest bush reserves on the Shore which includes trees such as taraire, totara, kauri, tawa, rewarewa and maire. Kiekie and nikau are abundant in this sub-tropical rainforest. Smaller species of note are pate and karapapa. Cecil Eady Reserve contains emergent miro, tanekaha and a good-sized rimu



plus stands of wheki and mamaku. Meet at the bottom of Woodside Ave, Northcote. Numbers are limited and bookings essential so please ring Margi Keys on 443 6919 or email [makeys@nettel.net.nz](mailto:makeys@nettel.net.nz) (donations to North Shore Forest & Bird).