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National Trust

For open space in New Zealand

Open Space

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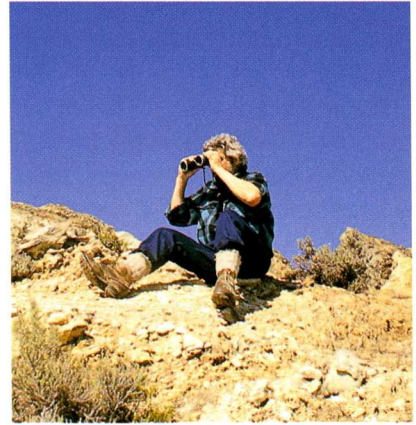
Nga Kairauhi Papa

Lone island stalwart guards Cook Strait gem

Both ends of rugged Puangiangi Island now fenced and protected by covenant



Top right: Covenantor Ross Webber is known to keep a close eye on his island domain. Above: Both ends of rugged Puangiangi Island are now covenanted. (Photo: Martin Conway)



It is quite an adventure just to get to Ross Webber's home. He lives on the remote Puangiangi Island, one of three islands which make up the Rangitoto Group just off the east coast of D'Urville Island.

The first part of the trip is the twisting drive to French Pass, then a boat charter of 21 kilometres to the island, and finally, a dinghy row ashore.

Regional Representative Martin Conway reports: "Visiting Ross and his island brought together all the good things about my job: a little adventure getting there, a remote island with many interesting plants and features, and meeting Ross, who has an enduring passion for caring for his island."

Continued on page 2



IN THIS ISSUE

- Kiwi alert at Aroha 5
- Yellow mud and old bones 6 - 8
- Recently registered covenants 10 - 28
- Tips and techniques 29

Continued from page 1

Puangiangi is about 2.5 kilometres long and no more than 500 metres wide. Its main ridge rises up to 150 metres above sea level at its highest point, there are precipitous faces on the eastern side and moderately steep faces to the west. The island also has very visible sites of Maori occupation throughout the farmed area.

Ross has lived alone on the 38 hectare island since 1957. Until eight years ago he farmed the whole island, but then decided to fence off the north and south ends, and now only farms the middle third, running about 70 sheep to keep him supplied with meat.

The northern end of the island - 24 hectares - is covenanted with the National Trust, and the southern end is being left to regenerate naturally. "I wanted to cut off that piece of the island and not use it. I didn't like the idea of planting and encouraging trees and then have a future owner want to plant it in pine trees," he says.

An Aucklander by birth, Ross worked on farms in Nelson, the Sounds and as a possum trapper before moving to the island.

The farm was looking fairly sad then, having been burned regularly by previous owners.

Ross didn't set out especially to buy an island. "I was trying to buy a small farm, and this was the only place which was then for sale." Now it's much easier to buy land in the area, but perhaps more difficult to buy a whole island.

Ross is a self-reliant person who is very much in tune with his environment, and he has an excellent knowledge of the plants and wildlife of the island. He has grown and planted many native trees, particularly taupata *Coprosma repens*, because it is useful as a firebreak on an island with few natural freshwater sources.

Recently the Nelson Botanical Society visited the island, compiling a list of 175 species.

The steep and cooler eastern faces of the island have resisted fires and have been too steep for grazing, so the coastal forest is mostly intact. Kohekohe, taupata, puka, koromiko, mahoe, kawakawa, mapou, akiraho, ngaio, kaikomako, kohuhu and flax are the dominant plants of this community.

The drier western slopes which are more exposed to the prevailing winds are more sparse and dominated by tauhinu, coastal tree daisy, flax and aki raho.

Birds are abundant, with kereru, fantails, long-tailed cuckoos, shining cuckoo, tui, bellbird, tomtit, morepork, falcon, grey warbler, white-faced heron, pipit, blue penguin and sooty shearwater breeding on or visiting the island. Geckos are also present.



Above: The fierce lancewood *Pseudopanax ferox*, a rare plant in the South Island but abundant on Puangiangi. (Photo: Martin Conway)

One particularly dramatic species, which is abundant on the island, is the fierce lancewood, *Pseudopanax ferox*. "Yet I have never seen the berries ripe," Ross says. The berries can stay on the plant for two years and still not ripen.

Other special plants present include: *Ileostylus micranthus*, the green-stemmed mistletoe, and *Korthalsella salicornioides*, the ring-stemmed dwarf mistletoe, both of which are abundant; *Streblus banksii*, the large leaved milk tree which is locally rare and near its southern limit; *Anemanthele lessoniana* the native bamboo grass; kohekohe which is near its southern limit; wharangi; and the Cook Strait forms of kowhai and kohuhu.

Soon Ross' sheep will be grazed off the island for several months as the three Rangitoto Group islands are poisoned for their only remaining predator, the Norway rat. Once the islands are free of the rats - which are present in very low numbers on Puangiangi thanks to Ross' vigilance - the islands have potential as an animal sanctuary.

The predator-free status, uncommon plants and remote location make this land a special part of New Zealand's protected natural estate.

Trust Manager moves on

In mid-July Tim Porteous, one of the National Trust's longest serving employees and its Trust Manager, resigned to take up a position co-ordinating the protection of biodiversity on private land with the Wellington Regional Council.

Tim said he left the Trust with mixed feelings. "It has been an honour to work for such an effective organisation which achieves so much in the important area of private land conservation. I am however looking forward to the challenges of the new position."

His long association with the National Trust began as a student in the early 1980s, assisting with landscape awareness projects.

He took up full-time employment with the Trust in 1987 as landscape architect, later becoming project manager. In this latter position Tim had diverse responsibilities including the Trust's garden properties, the Banks Peninsula landscape awareness project and the introduction of a computer-based information system.

After short spells as acting manager in 1990 and 1991, Tim was appointed Trust Manager in early 1992. Since then the Trust's core activities have continued to grow steadily. In early 1992 the registration of the 500th open space covenant was celebrated. Today there are 1262 registered covenants throughout New Zealand protecting 47,600 hectares.

A priority for him was setting up robust financial tracking systems to accurately monitor expenditure on each individual covenant project and to keep tabs on the not-inconsiderable liabilities the Trust incurs in approving 80 to 90 covenants a year.

"We now have an accurate fix on the likely financial commitments faced by the Trust up to three years out. As importantly, the Trust now has provision in its accounts for all these commitments, insulating the Trust from the immediate effects of changes in funding levels," he said.

"... the Trust's core activities have continued to grow steadily.

In early 1992 the registration of the 500th open space covenant was celebrated. Today there are 1262 registered covenants."

However it is for the publication of the Native Forest Restoration Manual that Tim will be better known to covenantors

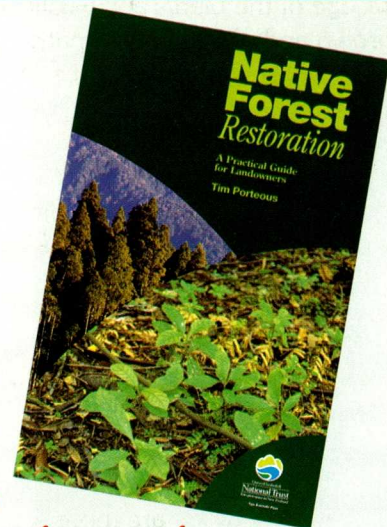
and the many others involved in restoring indigenous forest. Over 5000 copies have been sold to date. The manual is a valuable reference source.

The manual was produced to pull together what had been dispersed information on weed control, plant and animal pest control and revegetation, and to make this information readily accessible to busy, practical people. "I think we succeeded in that goal."

Tim notes his time with the Trust gave him an invaluable insight into the effectiveness of many tools used by agencies in attempting to bring about protection of conservation and open space values on private land. "Rules and regulations have their place but their effectiveness is limited when compared to the gains which can be made with voluntary protection and committed landowners. This is a lesson I will be taking to my new position."

Native Forest Restoration

a practical handbook for people creating, enlarging or enhancing areas of native forest



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Welcome to our new Taranaki Regional Rep.

The National Trust is pleased to welcome its new Taranaki Regional Representative Neil Phillips.

Neil and his wife Denise run a dairy farm in the Pukengahu district, just east of Stratford. As well as this they have developed the Waihapa Native Plant Nursery.

After completing a diploma in parks and recreation from Lincoln College in 1982, Neil worked for six months as a ranger at Nelson Lakes National Park before moving the same year to Egmont National Park.

Despite being brought up in Te Awamutu, he had never been to Taranaki until then! He worked for the Department of Lands and Survey as a ranger and then the Department of Conservation as a conservation officer. At Egmont National Park he was responsible for huts and tracks and also outdoor education for

children.

Nine years ago, Neil left to go farming at Pukengahu, where the Phillipps milk 130 cows.

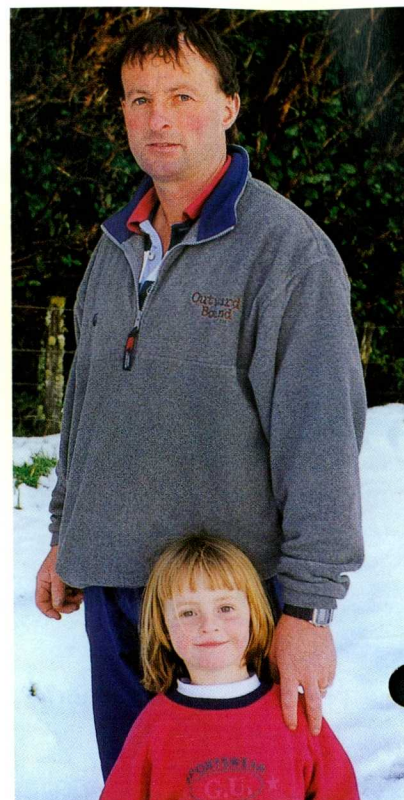
Denise, a primary school teacher, works at Pembroke School on the edge of Egmont National Park, west of Stratford. Their two eldest children, nine year old Daniel and seven year old Timothy, go to school there too. They also have a four year old daughter, Hannah.

The Phillipps employ one part-timer on the farm and two part-timers in their nursery.

Neil is delighted to be working for the Trust as the role has been a long-held dream.

"When I left DoC I said to Denise my ambition was to work for the Trust, because the Trust works alongside farmers in a good way, helping to advise them."

Neil's region stretches from Awakino in the north, to



Above: Neil Phillips and his youngest daughter Hannah, aged 4½ years.

Kohuratahi in the east, to Patea in the south. However, the Taranaki ring plain bush, which is fast disappearing, will continue to be a priority for Trust action, he says.

STOP PRESS New Trust Manager

The board are pleased to announce that the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Trust has been filled.

Tim Cossar will start work for the Trust on October 4.

He has a strong background in financial management, planning and marketing, both in local government and the private sector.

Farewell Bill Messenger

After five and a half years as Taranaki's Regional Representative, Bill Messenger has retired.

During his time 21 new covenants have been approved and many progressed through to registration.

The small forest and wetland remnants which have been protected are valuable reminders of what the Taranaki ring plain, now generally intensively farmed, was once like.

Bill's close association with the farming community, the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and Ornithological

Society have contributed to the progress and maintenance of the Trust's good name in Taranaki.

Bill says:

"I have enjoyed my time with the Trust, especially meeting conservation-minded farmers. And it was exciting coming up against new native plants and trees and learning their names."

"I'd like to wish all the regional representatives, head office staff and Trust directors the best for the future," he says.

The Trust reciprocates best wishes to Bill and Rosemary Messenger for the future.



Friday 14th May: Kiwi Alert at Aroha

Fridays are generally the quietest day of the week for visitors to Aroha Island, Kerikeri. May 14 was no different until a local resident telephoned during dinner to tell us that he thought he had run over a kiwi outside the gate to Aroha.

We met the driver of the car at the gate shortly afterwards, and began looking for a dead or injured kiwi. It was a dark night. Being Friday, there was a bit of traffic using Kurapari Road, which leads to the village of Rangitane on Kerikeri Inlet - extra care was required.

We began checking the area where kiwi had been seen crossing the road many times during the previous three weeks; the birds cross the road to feed in the paddocks opposite Rangitane Scenic Reserve, and they often hide out in the thick kikuyu grass on the roadside.

A bird was located after about an hour, and I caught it in the road ditch. It was a large female (photograph), and she appeared to be in good condition. We took her to the ecological centre at Aroha, got on the telephone to see if someone could check her health, and to see if she could be

banded. Well, Friday night is Friday night wherever one is. Everyone who could help was unobtainable - simply out or away for the weekend. The kiwi appeared to be OK so we let her go from a cardboard inside the gate to Aroha.

The following morning, I spent several hours searching the roadsides and likely places in the reserve - all to no avail, well, no dead kiwi anyway. I listened at the gate for three hours on the following two nights to determine whether there was a lonely female calling for her mate. There were no unusual calling

patterns so I assume that a kiwi wasn't run over in the first place. I certainly hope that is the case, as it would have been the eighth killed on the road to Opito Bay (from Kerikeri) since Sept 1998 - all adults, so bad news for future kiwi numbers in the area.

Anyway, that was our Friday night at Aroha. Oh, and drive carefully if you are passing through a kiwi area, and remember that kiwi don't look anything like possums!
*Greg Blunden,
Manager Aroha Island
Ecological Centre*

Aroha Island

A peaceful and tranquil place to visit and stay

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Tel (09) 407 5243 Fax (09) 407 5246
email: kiwi@aroha.net.co
or write to Box 541 Kerikeri



Diversity in Covenants

By Charlie Palmer

Moa bones preserved in ancient swamps feature at two National Trust covenants in North Canterbury, highlighting the diversity of areas now under formal open space protection.

Despite having moa and a yellow, alkaline mud in their common heritage, two North Canterbury covenants - Treasure Downs and Pyramid Valley - are significantly different, requiring site-specific management to maximise the value of their natural history.

"One thing is for sure," notes Ira McNabb who, with his wife Yvonne, owns Treasure Downs farm, "Without the willow roots you'd sink".

His comment is little consolation to David Webster and Dr Neville Moar who, with Ira, are wading around in the wetland inspecting the results of their willow control trials.

David is the National Trust Canterbury Regional Representative, Neville is a former employee of Botany



Above: Ira McNabb (left), and Neville Moar discuss pussy willow control trials at Treasure Downs. More trials are underway to further refine herbicide type and application rates. (Photo: C. Palmer)

Division DSIR and is currently chairman of the Moa Swamp Advisory Committee. This committee includes experts in zoology, botany and geology, plus landowners and the National Trust.

Their task is to oversee management of these two unique open space covenants in North Canterbury which contain so many valuable plant and animal remains.

While the covenants protect the buried remains in perpetuity, excavation is not prohibited. Instead, the Advisory Committee assesses any applications for archaeological activities and ensures that the insensitive excavations of the past are not repeated.

A major infestation of pussy willow is a problem at Treasure Downs because the roots are physically disturbing moa bones buried under the swamp, and chemical activity associated with the roots is causing the bones to collapse.

The bones found their way into the swamp when the now

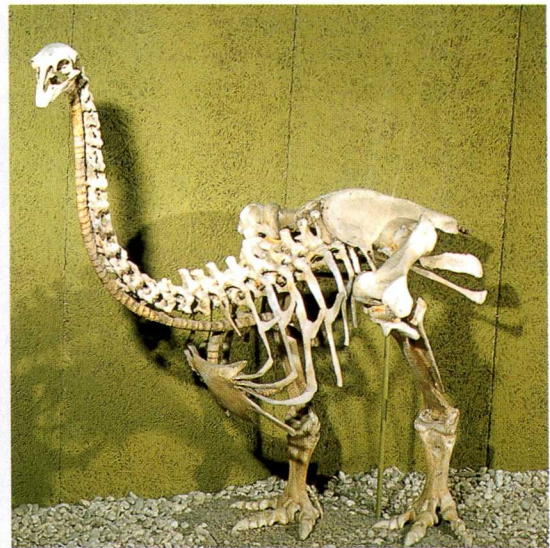
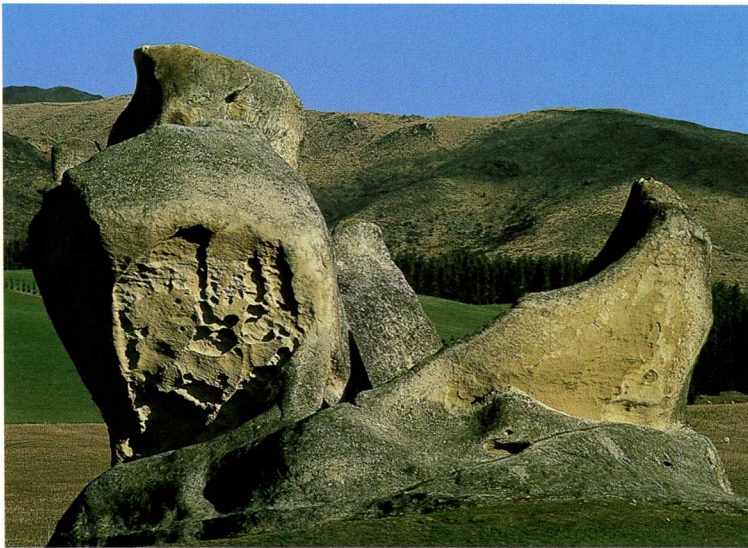
extinct birds and other animals strayed onto the apparently firm surface of an ancient lake that, during the Holocene period (the last 10 000 years), became covered with sediments.

Rather than giving the moa firm footing and access to water and vegetation, the sediments were actually a deep, jelly-like, yellow substance that trapped the animals. Springs, which once fed the lake, maintained a moist, sub-surface environment that, along with a lack of oxygen and acids, preserved the remains.

Pussy willow, or as it is some times called goat willow, forms dense thickets which grow from an entwined mat of roots.

The vast amount of material under the surface is difficult to kill because of its sheer bulk. In addition, any root material not killed is able to produce new stems. Thus it is difficult to control effectively, a fact mirrored in the scant literature available.

This forced David, Ira and Neville to design a trial testing different techniques and herbicides (see fact box). So far



Above: Two limestone tors in a covenant adjacent to Pyramid Valley Swamp. Below: An overview of Pyramid Valley Moa Swamp. (Photo: E. Taylor)

Above: This impressive moa skeleton now on display in Canterbury Museum was recovered from the Pyramid Valley covenant.

their efforts have resulted in a technique that is successful, but damages non-target native plants in the wetland. They are continuing their trials to find a method that is less damaging by using penetrating agents with non residual herbicides - which are manufactured to break down into non-toxic chemicals as soon as they touch the soil.

Farther south, near Waikari in the rolling downland of inland North Canterbury, Michael and Jan Hogden's Pyramid Valley

Moa Swamp is vastly different. While it too has moa remains, it was formed differently and faces different management issues.

Pyramid Valley Moa Swamp is sandwiched between two bands of limestone. One of these, in the east, is the same Weka Pass limestone that is familiar to travellers on the Lewis Pass Road as they pass *Frog Rock* and *The Seal* - both large limestone tors in the Weka Pass area.

In the west is a parallel, younger and less distinctive band

of Mount Brown limestone. The Pyramid Valley swamp was formed in the depression between these two rock bands when drainage was blocked.

Numerous, almost intact moa skeletons have been found in this swamp since the first bone was discovered by Joseph Hogden (grandfather of one of the present owners) in the 1930s.

In the same way as moa bones were preserved in the

Continued on page 8



Continued from page 7

moist, oxygen-free, alkaline yellow jelly, plant parts too are preserved. In particular, pollen with its hard coat, but also wood and often the cellulose rich 'veins' of leaves, have been found preserved at Pyramid Valley.

Some plant remains have been found in the gizzards of moa at Pyramid Valley, which has given us an insight into what these birds ate.

By matching dates - derived from radio-carbon analysis of material at various depths in the swamp - with pollen found at the same depth, scientists can build a picture of the plant communities and climates at various pre-history dates.

Since 1988, a revegetation project supervised by the Advisory Committee has been underway around the margin of the Pyramid Valley swamp.

The goal is to re-create the pre-human vegetation to the point where it may be possible to plant podocarps, which were a significant component of the vegetation of the area 3500 years ago.

Analysis of plant remains in the swamp, by Neville Moar and his colleagues, has guided the Advisory Committee in their choice of plants. It is so dry here that the standing water in the swamp disappears each summer - this has enabled excavations of the remains under the swamp.

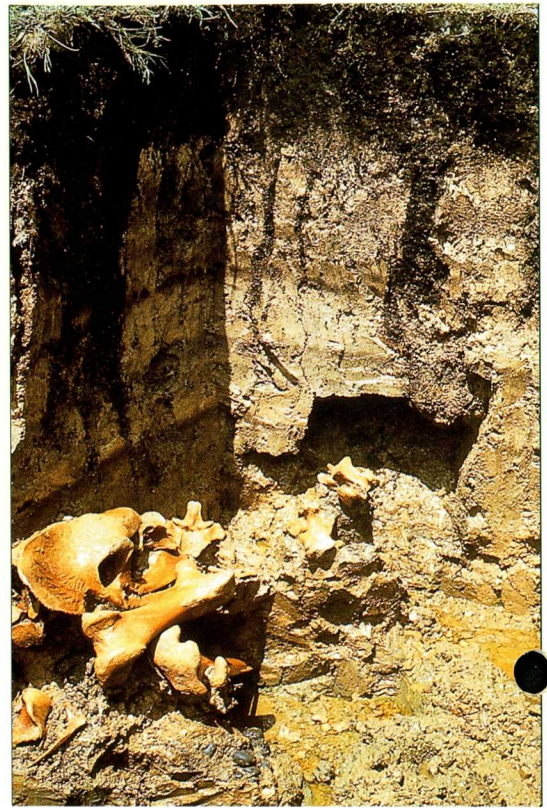
These very dry conditions have taken a toll on the plantings. Only hardy *Carex* sedges (cutty-grasses), ribbonwood, manuka, cabbage trees, flax and *Coprosma* species can survive the conditions. Local schools, community groups and the Canterbury Botanical Society have carried out much of this work.

Recently, another issue brought about a flurry of activity. David Webster and Neville Moar unexpectedly found hundreds of

poplar seedlings in the swamp.

The source of the infestation remains a mystery because all the surrounding trees were allegedly sterile hybrids. The rogue trees were felled, and laborious hand pulling of the seedlings has now begun. But constant vigilance will be required to ensure no more grow from any seeds that remain in the swamp.

These two covenants once again show how co-operation between landowners, the scientific community, and the National Trust has secured protection and wise management of important areas.



Above: Ancient bones revealed in an excavation at Pyramid Valley.

Pussy Willow Control Trial Results

Both residual (Escort & Tordon) and non-residual (Roundup) herbicides and spraying and cut-stump techniques were trialled. Using non-residual herbicides alone was ineffective.

Surprisingly, cutting the stems and painting with a residual herbicide also proved ineffective, probably because not enough herbicide to kill the plants can translocate to the great mass of pussy willow root material.

Spraying using a residual herbicide provided the best results. Larger plants, with correspondingly greater leaf

area, were most susceptible. Unfortunately, this technique also led to the greatest impact on the non-target vegetation. However, this impact was weighed up against the almost certain damage to the moa bones beneath the wetland.

To achieve less impact on non-target vegetation, further trials are under way in the swamp using non-residual herbicides with penetrating agents.

The results of these trials could herald a technique more sensitive to native plant species and less damaging to the environment.

Winter project time at Trust gardens



Above: Winter sun lights the back of the main building at Tupare.
Right: Healthy bloom at Hollard gardens.

Neighbour a big help at Hollard Gardens

At Hollard Gardens in Taranaki, a number of winter projects have been undertaken. Some involved structural maintenance and some exciting new developments including a new native rockery adjacent to the Main Lawn. This project would not have come to fruition without the help of a friendly neighbour who sourced, transported and placed the rocks with his large machinery.

Some of the plants in the rockery include *Gnaphalium kerriense*, a much under-rated semi-shade groundcover, and the New Zealand primrose *Ourisia macrophylla* var. *robusta*. In the brighter area, *Helichrysum* 'Graeme Paterson' has been planted.

In the car park area, it is now true to say that this native area is indeed exclusively that. After eight years of growth, the nurse crop of tree lucerne has been culled, leaving totara, kawakawa, rimu and pukatea as the backbone of this area.



In the garden itself, a locally severe storm on July 2 caused a great deal of damage. The last of the damage was cleaned up in mid-August. Unfortunately there were some sad losses, namely a 15m miro by the house and the partial uprooting of one of the finest late flowering specimen rhododendrons in the garden, a *Rhododendron nutalli* x *lindleyi*.

The Hollards' collection is really a temperate-plants-of-the-world garden and we are always delighted with new additions to our plant family, whether native or exotic (as long as they're not weeds!). Garden staff continue to actively work with individuals and DOC on rare and endangered plants and have had support from the George Mason Trust to construct a propagation shed to aid in this work.

Home grown timber used at Tupare

Winter has been spruce-up time at Tupare.

On the River Flat the judicious crown lifting of the mature deciduous trees has made the area more accessible and inviting. This comes after the construction of picnic tables using timber grown on the property.

In the established garden areas of Tupare, a number of moribund and unsightly rhododendrons have been removed. These sites were replanted with a greater variety of plant material. The reasons for this are twofold:-

Firstly, some of the plants had reached the end of their effective life (the hardier will regrow from pruned stumps).

Secondly, spraying insecticides throughout the growing season was not effectively controlling a thrip infestation. (Thrips are tiny insects that feed on the underside of leaves, especially rhododendrons, causing greying of the leaves, and ultimately draining the vigour from the plant.) One of the reasons for the proliferation of thrips has been the mild winters (this is the third in a row). A decision was therefore taken to remove the susceptible plants and replace with hardier species (rhododendrons and others).

Now garden staff are busy preparing for the main visitor season. There is a real freshness and vitality emerging. The majesty of the mature trees is more pronounced since the moribund understorey was removed and a new cycle of exciting plants introduced.

Recently registered covenants



Above: Tom and Noeline MacBride looking out over one of their newly covenanted areas. (Photo: M. Tapp)

Northland

MacBride Covenant

Tom and Noeline MacBride's property at Tahere (15 km east of Whangarei) is a good example of the inter-relationship possible between farm forestry and the protection of native bush.

The rolling, steep to very steep property had been developed into pasture, with patches of native bush left in the steepest areas.

Now much of the 147 ha is covered with pines and approximately 17.5 ha of native bush in two blocks has been protected with the National Trust.

While much of the bush has been modified by stock in the past, some of the understorey in the steeper areas of the gullies

has survived providing a good source for natural regeneration.

The larger block has a high diversity of vegetation that provides an excellent mixed food resource for birds, particularly kukupa and tui. There is a good stand of pole kauri and totara, as well as kahikatea, puriri, rewarewa, rimu, tanekaha, matai, kohekohe, nikau, pungu, titoki, tawa, supplejack, rata vines, cabbage trees and taraire.

A similar type of vegetation is found in the smaller forest remnant, but with only the odd large kauri.

This is the only registered open space covenant in the area, however several proposals have recently been approved further out on the coast towards Pataua North.

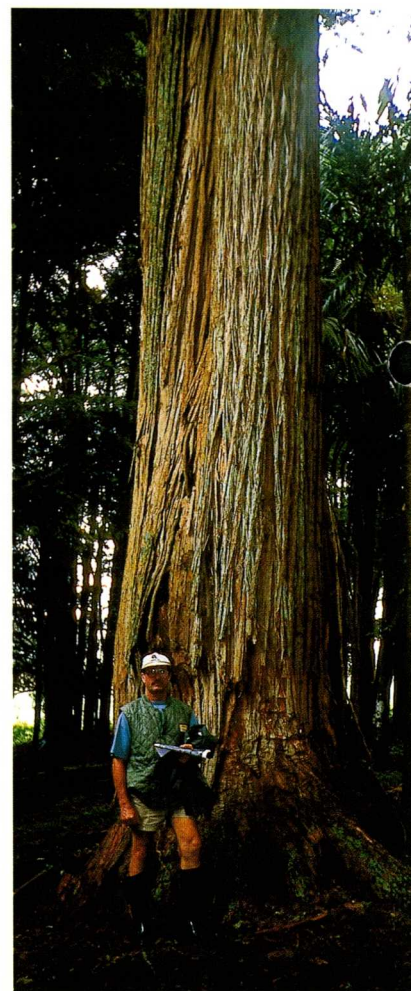
Tell a friend about the
National Trust
and get them to join the Trust
to help continue its work.

Mason Covenant

Derek Mason's covenant protects a type of habitat that is increasingly rare around Kaiwaka, and Northland in general. His 3.4 ha lowland riverbank bush remnant features matai and kahikatea as well as some large totara.

Botanists have identified the following plants found in the covenant as being reasonably uncommon in the district - *Pellaea rotundifolia*, *Coprosma rigida*, *Pennantia corymbosa*, *Streblus heterophyllus* and *Melicope simplex*.

Funding assistance from the Northland Regional Council's Environmental Fund has also enabled Derek to restore a remnant wetland.



Above: Derek Mason and large totara. (Photo: M. Tapp)

Reed Covenant

An area "too steep to farm" at the back of his 100 ha dairy farm is one good reason why Barry Reed decided to protect this bush remnant near Kaihu, south of Waipoua Forest.

Barry, who has lived in the area for more than 30 years, was initially encouraged by his former neighbours Gavin and Sue Stilwell, who wanted to protect a smaller area which was contiguous with the 5.6ha of bush on his property.

About four years ago the Stilwells sold their land to the Reeds and the two proposals were amalgamated into one 8ha covenant.

Located in a steep gully, the bush is vigorous and healthy, with a sound upper canopy and excellent regeneration trends.

It has a rich diversity of plants including taraire, kauri, totara, rewarewa, miro, tanekaha, nikau, putaputaweta, rimu, kahikatea, pigeonwood, rata, puriri and kohekohe and also features a stoney bottomed stream and a good sized waterfall.

Banbury Covenant

Phil and Ros Banbury have planted more than 7000 native trees in an attempt to revegetate and restore the natural coastal habitat of their property about 4 kilometres south of Waipu Cove.

The plantings compliment the magnificent mature pohutukawa that grow along the foreshore, which is also noted for its limestone rock formations.

The first stage of the project involved felling pines, eucalypts and other exotics that had been planted by previous owners.

This small 1.2 hectare covenant compliments the



Above: This stoney bottomed creek and waterfall are now part of the Reed covenant. (Photo: Fenton Hamlin)

McKenzie covenant, less than a kilometre south, and should help provide important coastal habitat for wildlife, particularly threatened bird species, in the years to come.

McGregor Centre Covenant

Protecting and extending the southern fringes of the Waipoua Forest - New Zealand's largest and internationally acclaimed kauri forest - is a long term vision of the New Zealand Native Forest Restoration Trust.

Slowly but surely, NZNFRT

has purchased private land adjoining the forest.

This latest 50 hectare covenant is mostly reverting farmland, but it has a strategic location adjacent to the McGregor Reserve and is at the head of the Waipoua River catchment.

NZNFRT's aim is to revegetate the property, helping establish kiwi habitat as an extension of the kiwi area already in the McGregor Reserve.

The existing house on the property is used as accommodation for Restoration Trust volunteers and other visitors.



"Bush remnants that for half a century had been threatened by livestock browsing faced new enemies - the chainsaw and the roller-crusher."

Blaxall Covenant

Guests staying at Doug Blaxall's Kauri House Lodge in Dargaville have the added bonus of a guided walk through his 13.6 hectare open space covenant.

Doug is more than happy to show visitors his regenerating area of bush and, if they're lucky, even some live kauri snails and resident kukupa.

Regeneration in the larger of the two blocks is particularly noticeable now as it has been ungrazed for some time.

Fencing on the smaller block was completed with the help of extra money from the Dargaville and Waikato branches of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society.

Local RFBPS member Stephen Soole supervised the fencing.

Above: From left Covenantor Doug Blaxall, Department of Conservation education officer Gerry Brackenbury and Stephen Soole with the Blaxall covenant behind. (Photo: M. Tapp)

The forest is a podocarp/hardwood remnant dominated by taraire, kohekohe, puriri, rimu, kahikatea, manuka and some kauri.

More intensive pest control using bait stations is being planned by Gerry Brackenbury from the Department of Conservation and Mr Soole in an effort to further enhance the food resources for kukupa in the surrounding area.

Mr Blaxall dedicates the covenant to his late wife June, who died in 1996. The Blaxalls purchased the property on their silver wedding anniversary.

Simpson Covenant

Initiated by a previous owner, Ian Harvey, in 1993 and recently completed by present owners Rick and Wendy Simpson, this new open space covenant protects an attractive forest remnant on a hill country farm at Waimatenui, south of Kaikohe.

An association of totara and kahikatea dominates the forest remnant over a sub-canopy of kohekohe, mamaku, titoki and pigeonwood, with kowhai along an adjacent stream bank. The bush is a significant feature of the local landscape with the stream itself providing several delightful swimming holes.

The past decade has seen major sociological changes in Waimatenui and the Mangakahia valleys as traditional farming has diminished and exotic forestry increased. Bush remnants that for half a century had been threatened by livestock browsing faced new enemies - the chainsaw and the roller-crusher.

Ian Harvey had placed an OSC on part of his previous property at Pahiatua and was anxious to see the same form of protection applied to the bush on his Northland farm. However, events took an unexpected course and it was six years later and with new owners that the bush was finally fenced and the covenant registered.

Selling Covenanted Land?

If you are selling land with a covenant on it please notify the Trust or the regional representative in your area.

We need to know who the new owners are so the representative can visit them, go through the covenant document and discuss ongoing management.

Also, if you are the initial covenantor we need your new address so we can continue to send the newsletter and Trust information to you.

Fascinating Remnants in Far North



Caldwell and Johnston Covenants

Two open space covenants have recently been registered over land on the southern flanks of Berghan Point, north of Mangonui Harbour. The peninsula contains some of the region's most fascinating remnants of flora and fauna, including the northernmost example of hard beech. Kiwi, pied tit and kauri snails are present, and Northland green peckos have been reported.

Covering some 260 hectares of coastal broadleaved forest on Whakaangi, Neil Caldwell's open space covenant safeguards a significant portion of the

Berghan Point landscape. Although the bush has been milled and cut over, substantial pockets of forest remain. Kauri, tanekaha, towai, rimu, totara and puriri are all present, with a fringe of kanuka-manuka forest on the lower slopes.

Neil purchased the property many years ago, and, although he is presently resident in the United States, he hopes to make his home on Berghan Point in the not-too-distant future.

To the west of Neil Caldwell's covenanted land, 20 hectares of regenerating native shrubland and tall coastal forest on Phil Johnston's lifestyle property is also now protected.

Phil Johnston's bush is

*Above: Looking across Mangonui harbour to the high country behind Berghan Point.
(Photo: Gordon Roberts)*

secondary kauri forest with a wide range of podocarps, plus kohekohe and puriri. Kauri, rimu and rewarewa are regenerating through the canopy, and there's a rich understorey and a deep litter layer on the floor of the forest.

The lush forest is a wonderful backdrop to Hihi settlement, and the covenanted land is easily visible from Cooper's Beach and State Highway 10.

The Trust now has a high presence on Berghan Point, with the Seon and Langridge open space covenants also on the peninsula.

Bartlett Covenant

A new one-hectare covenant on Evan Bartlett's Pakia Hill lifestyle block is a useful link in the chain of protected areas along the South Head of Hokianga Harbour.

There are magnificent views over the Hokianga Heads from Evan Bartlett's property. The native vegetation is still immature and dominated by tall kanuka, which protects a

developing sub-canopy of forest species. However, occasional old kohekohe and kowhai survive in the damper gullies.

Native bush on two other Pakia Hill properties is already covenanted and it is hoped that, eventually, the other regenerating bush on this prominent hill face will be protected, forming a continuous protected bush corridor.

Auckland

Green Covenant

Protected by David Green and his sister-in-law Maureen Green, this 1.3-hectare covenant covers a forest remnant on the edge of the idyllic Matakana River estuary, northeast of Warkworth.

This district, which has been intensively farmed in the past, is likely to be the subject of

Continued on page 16

Covenantors wish they had started taking pictures sooner

A 7 hectare remnant of kauri forest in Rodney District is protected in two adjacent covenants.

Easily missed from the road, it is a deep bush gully that seems to have thrived on being unattended. When Jan and Errol Kelly purchased and built a home on the property in 1971, they were the first landowners to live on the land.

Jan and Errol started looking into the land's history when they discovered, amongst its 200 or so regenerating kauri, eight kauri stumps, some old bottles dating from around the turn of the century, and traces of roads. A search of the title deeds of the original 80 acre Crown Grant failed to reveal who had logged the gully.

Curiously the block has spent nearly two thirds of its life in women's ownership: a Birkenhead hotelkeeper (27 years), and two widows who held it in estate. Other owners included a Takapuna carpenter in 1868, a farmer, a gardener in

Uncovering clues to forest's chequered past

By Jan Kelly

Otahuhu, and a commercial citrus grower.

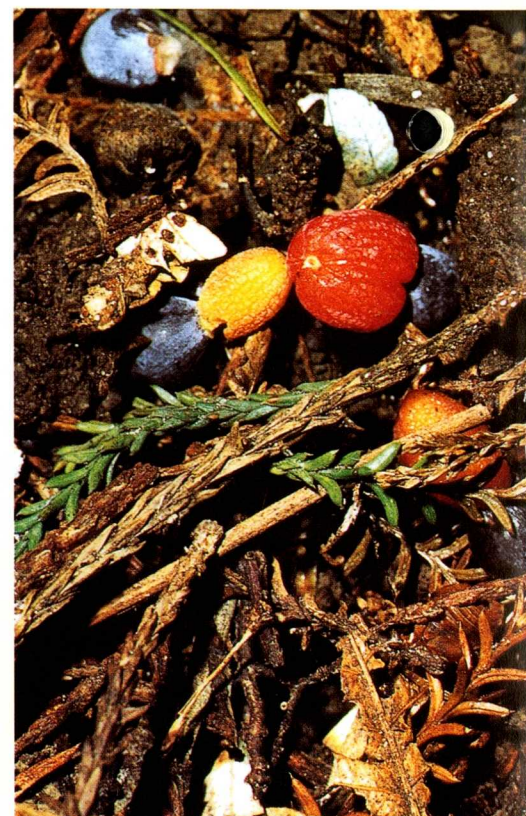
In the 1880s an orchardist neighbour brought trees into the district from all over the world. His ideals of landscape beauty are epitomised in gracefully placed copses of pines on the hills.

It is possible that the kauri were logged before organised settlement began, as part of the extensive, and sometimes random logging operations from Lucas Creek and Silverdale, and that the bottles come from a different time.

The bush shows the effects of its chequered history, and bears traces of what it may have been like. Its trees vary from some respectable-sized kauri and maturing kauri ricker groves to very old puriri, nikau, taraire, karaka, kohekohe, rewarewa, maire and tawa. Huge kanuka

line what may have been open space beside the creek, and tanekaha and olearia are being crowded now by wetter forest. There is one adult rimu, one totara, and one miro, first generation trees with multiple seedlings that are invading even the pines. Kahikatea almost outnumber the kauri and there is a precious seedling matai. Beautifully scented alseuosmia, hangehange and dracophyllum are significant among the shrubs present.

In the 28 years the Kellys have been there, growth and change are evident, with much less sunlight now reaching the ground. Possum and rat trapping contribute to some of the difference. They have documented the bush in photography over the past 12 to 15 years but sincerely wish that they had started earlier.





Far left: The distinctive bark of kauri rickers. Above: Perching lilies contribute to the dense subcanopy and understory. Below: Ripe kahikatea berries litter the forest floor. Below right: A healthy nikau inflorescence. (Photos: Jan Kelly)



Auckland

Continued from page 13

peri-urban subdivision in the next 10 years or so, and this covenant will be one of the few protected areas on the fringe of the river estuary.

It is intended that the covenant area be extended in the near future to include coastal forest remnants and mangroves.

Barnes Covenant

This extension to Janet Barnes' existing 20 hectare covenant is over a podocarp and kauri forest remnant near Puhoi.

On steep hill country, the lowland forest is part of a recommended area for protection in the Rodney Ecological District, where increasing population is gradually encroaching into the few remaining natural areas.

Separated from the initial covenant by Klippner Road, the new extension includes a totara, rimu, tanekaha and rewarewa dominated canopy with emergent kauri.

Regeneration of kauri, mahoe, lancewood, kawakawa and hangehange similar to that seen in the initial covenant is also expected in this new extension.

Strewe and Buchanan Covenant

Last year, a whole title covenant was registered on Dianne Carter's lifestyle block on Lone Kauri Road, just inland from Karekare, in the heart of the Waitakere Ranges. Now, a second area of native bush on Lone Kauri Road has been protected, this time thanks to the

efforts of Helga Strewe and Dean Buchanan.

The Waitakere Ranges are remnants of the great Waitakere

". . .has aided the survival of several bird species in the district such as pied tit, New Zealand falcon and kereru, together with migrant North Island kaka and long-tailed cuckoo."

Volcano that was formed between 22 and 15 million years ago (early Miocene period). The extremely rugged, deeply dissected topography illustrates the erosion resistant nature of these volcanic rocks.

Today, the Waitakere Ranges are characterised by a large continuous block of forest and scrub that has aided the survival of several bird species such as pied tit, New Zealand falcon and kereru, together with migrant North Island kaka and long-tailed cuckoo. Other wildlife species, such as Hochstetter's frog and the kauri snail, have survived because of the high quality of habitat present.

Helga and Dean's entire 4.2 hectare lifestyle property is protected by open space covenant. The land is covered in manuka and kanuka, with some kauri, rimu and puriri and abundant flax. Their home is on the only flat land within the block and enjoys magnificent views over the Tasman Sea. The property is adjacent to the Auckland Centennial Memorial Park, which enhances the sustainability of the area.

Waikato

Frederikson Covenant

A covenant has recently been registered over 2.8 hectares of riparian kahikatea forest, west of Waitomo Caves.

Putting the covenant in place has been a family affair, being initiated by John and Lois Frederikson, and completed by their son Mark, and daughter-in-law, Mary, who recently took over ownership of the property.

The Waitomo Stream meanders northwards along the west boundary of the covenanted area, in an attractive valley surrounded by limestone hill country. The stream plunges underground to the east of the covenant area to flow through the Ruakuri and Aranui caves of the Waitomo Cave system.

This part of the cave system is protected by the extensive Ruakuri Caves and Bush Scenic Reserve, which has high tourist use for walking, blackwater rafting, abseiling, scenic viewing and geological activities.

Much of the reserve is thickly forested, and it is rich in birdlife such as silvereye, fantail, grey warbler, kingfisher, tui, bellbird, whitehead and kereru. Tomtit, kiwi and falcon are also present, as well as numerous exotic species.

The new covenant area forms a habitat buffer zone for the reserve, and, as the bush improves, this birdlife will spread into it. The trees within the kahikatea forest are healthy, although somewhat scattered due to past grazing. It is expected that now the forest is fenced, the good rainfall and seed source in the vicinity will result in early recovery and

Landcare project secures Waitomo Caves catchment



Above: Mary, John and Mark Frederikson at the edge of their new covenant protecting part of the Waitomo Stream. (Photo: Gerry Kessels)

natural regeneration.

To augment nature, many trees have been planted with the untiring assistance of former Trust director, and well-known conservationist, Arthur Cowan. The kahikatea seedlings planted six years ago are now over three metres tall.

A feature of the protected area is the 25-year-old Californian redwood trees, planted by John. They are an attractive addition to the landscape amenity of the valley and protect the replanted areas of native bush from the southerly winds.

The Frederiksons actively control possums, magpies and feral cats to enhance the habitat value of the forest. John comments that the trees are full of tui in the spring, which is why the farm was called "Tui Glen" by early settlers.

However, the biodiversity is not the only value of the covenant. A significant length of the Waitomo Stream is now fenced from stock access, assisting with the protection of the water quality of the most significant

tourism asset in the district - the Waitomo Caves.

Cavers use the covenant area to rest in and as an access link between major cave systems in the locality. Mark and Mary welcome visitors to use the covenant area and to enjoy the sound of dozens of tui chattering in the kahikatea.

The Frederikson covenant is a jewel in the crown of the Waitomo Landcare Trust.

Most of the landowners in the catchment, with the assistance of the tourism industry, Iwi, Environment Waikato and the National Trust, have protected and fenced the margins of the Waitomo Stream and its tributaries, as well as covenanting large tracts of bush.

The word has spread and now farmers in an adjacent limestone catchment are planning a new Landcare project.

If you would like to find out more about this extremely successful Landcare project, please contact regional representatives Tim Oliver or Gerry Kessels.

Gujer Covenant

Halfway up Manaia Hill on SH25, just south of Coromandel, the striking Te Kouma Harbour Farms sign invites visitors to enter and drive slowly along a driveway flanked with tree ferns.

Behind the driveway is a fine example of a forest remnant comprising a kauri-taraire-tanekaha-mamangi association.

Teresa and Heini Gujer's sheep, cattle and deer farm forms the head of Te Kouma harbour, lying between Manaia and Coromandel harbours.

There are eight self-contained chalets for tourist farm stays on the property. Te Kouma harbour contains an oyster farm and is renowned for its great snapper fishing.

Teresa and Heini are part of the new breed of environmentally conscious landowners. Already they are discussing future protection of another gully and remnant on the property.

Heini is progressively improving the walking tracks and is ringbarking or felling wilding pines in the covenant.

In addition to the podocarp and taraire canopy, this 11 hectare block also has kohekohe, karaka, puriri, narrow-leaved and white maire, with an understorey of nikau, tawa, kahikatea, pukatea and rata. Heini and Teresa have just covenanted it as part of a subdivision proposal.

Much of the bush is regenerating coastal scrub and extends up-slope from a larger regenerating Maori block fringing the upper reaches of Manaia Harbour. The bush is home to about three pairs of kereru, together with smaller native birds.

Continued on page 18

Waikato

Continued from page 17

This covenant is quite different from the nearby Clayton and Heubner remnants and the very large Willigers block, which lies just to the east.

Bay of Plenty

Reg Turner Associates Covenant

On Williams Road, Pyes Pa, some 27 kilometres from Tauranga, a new covenant has recently been registered on land owned by Reg Turner Associates. It covers 6.5 hectares of bush extending down to the Kopureua River and protects kamahi, tawa and rewarewa forest. On lower slopes near the river, large rimu and miro are scattered among the canopy, which here includes hard beech. Sheltered gullies are full of titoki, pukatea, kohekohe and pokaka forest.

This covenant was required by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council to protect natural vegetation during a subdivision development. The result is over 23 hectares of almost continuous forest, including the neighbouring Smith and Patti properties, protected by National Trust covenants.

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Central Plateau

An oasis in a monoculture of pine

King Country Hunt Club Covenant

Protection of 2.3 hectares of lowland podocarp-hardwood forest is now in place, thanks to the owners, King Country Hunt (Inc.), and the enthusiasm and determination of previous owners, Eric and Sue Taylor. The forest block is on a low ridge immediately south of Takiri Road and Mapiu.

The bush features a strong regeneration of rimu and to a lesser extent, matai which are starting to emerge from a mainly tawa canopy. The understorey has thickened up

considerably since the bush has been fenced, and the ratio of palatable to unpalatable plants has improved, illustrating that pests are under control.

Regional Representative Ross Bishop has identified 61 native plant species in the covenant.

"There have been extensive plantings of pine forests in the district in recent times, and this covenant will soon be an oasis in a monoculture of pine trees," Ross says.

Butler Covenant

Ten years ago, Alan and Avis Brough entered into the covenanting process with the National Trust to protect native bush on their Benneydale property.

The Brough family had considerable input into the success of this covenant, with two of the sons, Richard and Simon, doing much of the fencing over difficult terrain. The National Trust assisted with some of the costs of this exercise. Unfortunately, Alan and Avis sold the farm and retired to Te Kuiti before the covenant could be registered. Sadly, Alan has since passed away.

The new owners are a partnership headed by John and Barbara Butler who have proceeded with the protection of 21 hectares of regenerating forest on steep land to the rear of the property and three small areas close to the homestead.

The largest area, although logged in the past, has many young rimu showing through. One of the smaller areas bounds

Mangapehi Scenic Reserve and has some healthy young rata trees. Another is tawa dominant and protects the farm water supply, and the third is a remnant of tall podocarp forest with large totara, matai and kahikatea trees.

These protected areas are close to the two covenants on Ian New's property. One of these is the Benneydale buried forest covenant which protects preserved plant material valuable for scientific studies.

Johnston Marsh Covenant

High numbers of waterfowl and other bird species use the 5.3-hectare wetland Ann and Dave Johnston have created on their Broadlands dairy farm, just south of Reporoa. Their property lies on terrace flats, with the Rautawiri Stream, a tributary of the Waikato River, flowing northwards through the farm.

The Johnstons began developing the wetland wildlife habitat 14 years ago, after becoming aware

Wildlife wetland 14 years in the making



Above: The Johnston Marsh wetland, a wet paddock cum flax swamp 14 years ago, is now a highly productive wildlife habitat appreciated by trout and a wide range of birdlife. (Photo: Ross Bishop)

of how many habitats had been destroyed elsewhere.

Norman Marsh, an overseas visitor who lives on the property for six months of the year and takes a great interest in the wetland's development, assisted their work.

Beginning with a five acre paddock and a flax swamp, "the wetland just got bigger and bigger," comments Dave. "We have two other wetlands further downstream which we haven't covenanted yet," he adds.

The protected area comprises two main ponds and two auxiliary ponds linked to the main ponds via channels in the earth retaining walls. The surrounds of the wetlands have been planted, mainly with English ornamental trees. Flax and sedges have been planted on islands and around perimeters of wetlands. There is a wide range of ornamental and utility plantings, including species of acacia, oak, liquidamber, willow, Fagus and

Prunus.

Among the native sedges and rushes on the stream margins is a population of the threatened plant *Urtica linearifolia*. Only two other sites for this plant are known in the Department of Conservation Bay of Plenty Conservancy.

"Fernbirds, spotless crane and a visiting pair of arctic terns have also been sighted."

The wetland is an excellent habitat for a wide range of water-bird species including: Canada geese; black and mute swans; white-fronted and black shag; carolina, paradise, shoveler, grey and mallard ducks; grey teal; Australasian coot; dabchick; spur-winged plover; white-faced heron; pied stilt and pukeko. Fernbirds, spotless crane, and a

visiting pair of arctic terns have also been sighted. Forest birds such as tui and bellbird also visit the protected area. Large numbers of trout live in the ponds and are not difficult to spot in the crystal clear water.

Captive breeding of endangered native brown teal and blue duck (whio) has been successfully carried out in special enclosures on one of the ponds, and they are still breeding mute swans. "It has worked out better than we expected. It has been a very good duck habitat, and high numbers of game birds are often observed here." They do banding exercises for Fish and Game on the wetlands.

Water depth within the wetland is controlled, and varies from 45cm to just over a metre deep. Recently, for the first time in 15 years, they needed to clean out part of the wetland as sediment from erosion on intensive

Continued on page 20

Central Plateau

Continued from page 19

dairying land upstream had partially silted it up.

Dave, a director of Ducks Unlimited, says he was always concerned the wetland could be drained again, so that's why they decided to covenant it. "Having created the wetland we wanted it to stay." Throughout New Zealand, Ducks Unlimited has spent \$55,000 on creating wetlands in the past year, Dave says. "We always ask that the wetlands be covenanted with the National Trust," he says.

The wetland management plan allows licence holders to fish for rainbow and brown trout and shoot mallard ducks during the appropriate seasons. As there is an emphasis on waterfowl breeding in this wetland, there is an on-going programme aimed at the control of pest animals using traps and bait stations.

Gisborne

Seymour Covenant

Nick Seymour and his wife, Pat, who is a National Trust Director, farm Wensleydale, an 800 hectare, medium to steep hill country property at Whangara, just north of Gisborne on the East Coast.

They have a newly registered covenant over three blocks of semi-coastal forest.

All three areas had been fenced for many years before covenanting with the National Trust. In 1978, two small remnants of coastal podocarp forest were fenced. These were trial areas to see if blackberry from a neighbour's property would become a problem.

Redwoods, and tagasaste for the pigeons, were planted and have proved to be ideal companion trees.



Above: One of the special enclosures built in the Johnston Marsh wetland for the captive breeding of the endangered brown teal and blue duck. (Photo: Ross Bishop)

In 1982, prior to it being recommended as an area for protection in the Waiapu Ecological District survey, a 26 hectare remnant was fenced. The fencing allowed the tawa, kohekohe, puriri and rewarewa forest to regenerate well. Whau, pigeonwood, nikau and pukatea also grew strongly. Permanent legal protection, through an open space covenant, for this and the other areas was the next logical step.

"Fencing off the bush was the best thing we ever did," Nick says. "It is a gem. You go into the trees in a drought and it is a different world. It just takes the stress out, and when you come out the other end it is all brown and burnt," he says.

Having worked for and with top bosses on good farms in his early years, Nick Seymour developed an eco-friendly approach to farming. While he spent two years as a head shepherd at Matarua Station in the Waikura Valley near Hicks Bay, Nick learnt the significant forces of nature. "With 150 inches of rain per annum you develop an awareness of nature's forces and the impact it has on the bush, soils, rivers and roads."

Wensleydale's clay soils over a

papa base are very mobile, and required lots of conservation planting. He began planting in 1962 with the help of the then East Cape Catchment Board. Since then he has planted 22,000 poplars and willows and put in 93 debris dams to hold the soil on the hills. As well, the Seymours have 30 hectares of agroforestry and small plantations, and 144 hectares of steep country in the East Coast forestry project.

It's no surprise the Seymours were awarded the North Island Husqvarna Farm Foresters of the Year award in 1997. And this year they were awarded the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry award for innovation and sustainability in farm forestry.

"In the Farm Forestry Association there are role models in every district who lead the way in wise land use. We have adapted ideas and goals from many to suit our property," Nick says.

"We are only the caretakers of the land for a short space of time. Planting many tree species and conserving natural blocks of trees creates a feeling of satisfaction and some achievement."

Manawatu

McKean Pinetum Covenant

By Bruce Kirk
Regional Representative

A recently registered covenant in the Rangiwahia area, tucked under the foothills of the western Ruahine Ranges, the McKean Pinetum has had a long gestation period.

Unlike most of our open space covenants, the McKean Pinetum, features predominantly exotic specimens. Developed by the late Ian McKean over a number of decades, the pinetum contains conifers collected from all over the world.

When I first met with Flora and Ian McKean in May 1994, I realised my predecessor, the late Eddie Suckling, and Trust stalwart Hew McKellar had spent some time with Ian since 1990 trying to persuade him the pinetum was a most valuable resource. Therefore it surely should have a covenant placed over it for the benefit of current and future students and lovers of conifers.

Ian was a strong member and resource person of the farm forestry organisation, and shared his knowledge with all who cared to approach him. However, he seemed to think the considerable pinetum he had created was merely a personal obsession on his part and had no other value. "Just a mad hobby," he called it.

Fortunately, a more recent Farm Forestry Conference was based in Manawatu and part of the programme was a visit to the pinetum. When Ian discussed this with me he was terminally ill but still displayed a strong spirit. It was agreed that if conference delegates thought it worth it, he would agree to a covenant over the pinetum.

The conference was unanimous in the pinetum's unique value to the nation. The good services of Hew McKellar, a



Above: The late Ian McKean with pine cones from two of the species in the pinetum. (Photo: Graeme Brown, Manawatu Evening Standard). Below: Volunteers at work on the McKean Pinetum. (Photo: Bruce Kirk).

long-time friend, helped in getting this valuable resource registered.

Hew recalls: "He didn't have time to go and hear a visiting world-famous botanist on one occasion, so I hesitated asking him to do a botanical study on my property of areas being proposed to covenant."

"I did ask in the end. 'Sure,' was Ian's reply, 'any time you want me to come'. He always had time for that sort of voluntary work, and he never arrived here without a bundle of trees, and likewise we never went away from the McKean property without being very well fed. A group of us is trying to repay some of this by carrying on where he left off."

The McKean Pinetum now has a management team, of mainly farm forestry members, as well as regional and district council staff, working according to a management plan prepared by the National Trust and Ian shortly before his death.

The eight hectare

pinetum is only 100 metres from one of Manawatu's heritage trails, and has the Ruahine Forest Park as a backdrop. Trees in the pinetum have had their position fixed by a Global Positioning System (GPS) and every species recorded along with its botanical name, area of

Continued on page 22



Manawatu

Continued from page 21

origin and donor source. There are around 1200 conifers planted.

Up until the GPS survey was carried out, family members ensured all Ian's records were on a computer database. When fully completed, the plotted survey and database will be available for researchers and interested parties.

A series of working bees has been organised by the management team with excellent results. Tracks have been established, a large sign marks its location from the road, shelterbelts have been planted, pruning carried out, tree protectors fitted where needed, and a very successful possum control programme begun.

The result is a covenant easily accessed from the road and with excellent wide walking tracks which are well graded down the steep north-facing slope on which the pinetum has been planted.

Virtually all members of the public could now wander through this feature without undue exertion.

Although Ian McKean began planting about 40 years ago, the pinetum is still very much in its infancy. As the new millennium gets underway, successive generations that visit this attractive part of the country will appreciate the "mad hobby" of Ian McKean.

Conifer lovers can find the McKean Pinetum by travelling by road from Feilding through Rangiwahia. Turn right to take the road to Apiti. The pinetum is just past the first T-junction. Permission is required from the farm manager, Ian McKean's grandson-in-law, who lives in the nearest house to the T-junction.



Above: Roger and Karen Bird with their second covenant along the Kiwitea Stream (Photo: Bruce Kirk)

Bird Covenant

*By Bruce Kirk
Regional Representative*

This is the second covenant to have been registered through the Trust by Roger and Karen Bird of Kimbolton. They run a well managed 400 hectare sheep and beef unit on dissected terrace and medium hill country.

This second block of 5.7 hectares is on a steep slope that is almost sheer in places. It overlooks the Kiwitea Stream and is only a few hundred metres downstream from DOC's Neslow Scenic Reserve.

The steep slopes have protected the rimu, tawa, miro, rewarewa, ngaio, rata, ponga, titoki, lancewood and orihou remnant from disturbance.

To complement this canopy, an understorey of mapou, twiggy coprosma and pittosporum species is present through much of the bush, adding to its very balanced and attractive appearance. The covenant also includes a small piece of kahikatea wetland on its margin.

The block stands out very strongly as one drives down

Junction Road, Kimbolton, and is undoubtedly an asset for its landscape values, quite apart from its strong representativeness for this part of Manawatu.

Priest Covenant

Well-known sheep and cattle stud breeders Russell and Jane Priest, of McBeth Road, Kiwitea, recently made up their minds to change their direction and lifestyle.

They decided they wanted to get out of stud stock farming, but wished to retain some interest in the beef industry - Russell is National Beef Genetics co-ordinator - and their rural lifestyle.

The Priests' property had been in the family for three generations, Jane's grandfather settling on the property in 1907. It was decided to sell the bulk of the farm but retain the original homestead and approximately 11 hectares.

True to its rural subdivision policy, the Manawatu District Council approved the subdivision subject to the landscape values

of the forest remnant being protected by way of an open space covenant.

The majority of the area the Priests retained is untouched tawa-dominant forest. It has been fenced off for many years, and has an effective conifer shelterbelt, hence its very good condition when the National Trust was invited to register an open space covenant over the forest.

The exotic shelterbelt planted by Jane's grandfather is quite spectacular in itself, especially in autumn, but some of it is coming to the end of its life, and so Jane and Russell have plans to revegetate this section systematically with native and complementary exotic species.

Located on the terrace tread, which rises from the Manawatu Plains at Cheltenham through Kiwitea and on to Kimbolton, this native forest remnant looks to be totally self-sustaining. Masses of seedling material will ensure the tawa, kahikatea, miro, rewarewa, totara, titoki, lacebark, pate, kohuhu, three species of climbing rata, native iris and 18 recorded species of fern will all continue to survive in this now-protected piece of Manawatu landscape.

Wellington

Whyte & Hollow Covenants

Among the diminishing rural landscape between Porirua East, Tawa, Grenada North, and the Western Hills of the Hutt Valley, two neighbouring landowners have protected regenerating forest remnants on their lifestyle properties by way of whole title covenants.

Most of the steep, dissected countryside in the district was denuded of its original rimu-miro-tawa forest cover years ago, through logging, successive fires and pastoral development. Now, exotic forestry and urban expansion is adding to the

Covenant springs from cyclone damage

Taranaki

Donald Covenant

Kohekohe is the dominant species in Bill and Val Donald's coastal covenant at Omata, just south of New Plymouth. The bush is in the steep gully of Wairere Stream and protection of the vegetation also aids water and soil conservation. Other species present in the bush include karaka, puriri, kawakawa, *Coprosma areolata* and whau, *Entelea arborescens*. The presence of whau is significant, as it is at the southern limit of its natural distribution.

Bill's grandfather purchased the dairy farm, which runs down to the coast, in 1933. When Bill and Val took over the farm from Bill's father in 1975, the bush was unfenced, and it remained this way until 1988, when Cyclone Bola stripped the leaves from the

trees and swept all leaf litter away. Within six months, the ground was sprouting hundreds of native seedlings, including nikau, which had never been known there before. At this stage the Donalds decided to fence the bush to keep stock out. This allowed a healthy understorey to develop at the same time as the canopy was recovering.

As this regrowth occurred, possums became a major problem, but after three years in the Taranaki Regional Council self-help possum control programme, they are now no longer a threat.

The bush is now very dense, and the *Tradescantia* (wandering willy) which had been a problem, is slowly disappearing through lack of light. A fresh water spring within the bush supplies the house and farm with good quality water.

pressure on the few enduring areas of native vegetation.

The properties of Sandy Whyte and Janet and Keith Hollow have a total area of about five hectares, and lie on the northern side of Takapu Road, 2km east of Tawa. The vegetation cover on both properties is predominantly senescent gorse and broom, over a layer of native shrubs such as mahoe, wineberry, rangiora, hangehange, tree ferns and *Coprosma*. In the damp gullies, particularly on the Hollow property, there are older native canopy trees, dominated by mahoe, but also including rimu, totara, lancewood, fuchsia and tree ferns.

Both the Hollows and Sandy Whyte have planted native species on their land. In

particular, Sandy has planted over 500 locally sourced native trees around the margins of his magnificent garden, which borders on the native scrub portion of the property. These revegetation plantings and the natural regeneration have flourished recently, seemingly not hampered by the dry summer.

The current good regeneration in these two covenants will continue, and the potential for a complete native forest canopy is high. Janet and Keith Hollow have named their covenant Whakaoranga, which means 'saved'. Certainly the rapid ecological changes to the forest over the next few years should justify Janet and Keith's use of such a name.

Wairarapa

Montgomerie Holdings Covenant

While small this is a very special covenant, protecting the largest recorded population of the green-stemmed mistletoe *Ileostylus micranthus* in the Wellington region, plus other uncommon species.

Formerly owned by Lorna Montgomerie and her family, the forest remnants, on the edge of Greytown, cover terrace edges of old riverbeds.

Their canopies are made up of totara with occasional titoki and matai.

Areas that have been fenced longest contain an understorey of shrubs, however, much of the area under the canopy is barren.

The green-stemmed mistletoe grows on totara within one of the three pieces of forest.

The tiny ring-stemmed dwarf mistletoe *Korthalsella lindsayi* also grows in the covenant, on the small-leaved trees *Melicope simplex* and *Coprosma virescens*.

Other uncommon species present include the *Coprosma virescens* itself, narrow-leaved maire, small-leaved milk tree (turepo), *Lophomyrtus obcordata*, and one plant of *L. bullata*.

Many of these shrub species are uncommon because there is little lowland east coast forest (their favourite habitat) remaining.

Recently, the property was sold to a local farmer, Bob Tosswill, and the protected forest will form the backdrop to a series of smallholdings. Bob is keen to manage the area and is in discussion with the National Trust over the best practises for this.

Covenant now protects a population of green-stemmed mistletoe



Above: Neil Montgomerie with his mother Lorna beside one of their covenants. The totaras in the background are host to many clumps of the rare mistletoe *Ileostylus micranthus*.

Petrie Holdings Covenant

Neil Petrie and his family, who farm at Sulphur Wells, 12 kilometres north east of Masterton, have protected a complex of lowland forest remnants on their farm.

The 48 hectare primary and secondary podocarp forest is in six discrete areas, with varying canopy composition including kahikatea, totara, maire, matai, hinau and tawa.

On this large station, the bush

areas form a mosaic of habitats in the catchment of the Tauweru River.

Other covenant areas on the opposite bank, on the Bunny and Dossar properties, complement them, creating a locally concentrated resource.

Hawke's Bay

Graham Covenant

Murray and Maire Graham's 12 hectare covenanted area of black beech forest was hit hard by last summer's long drought in Hawke's Bay. About 40 trees died.

However, the current wetter year, assisted by fencing and possum control, is proving to be better for regeneration and the covenant is recovering well.

Murray and Maire farm 572 hectares of medium to steep hill country, 54 km south of Waipukurau, and 20km west of Orangahau.

The beech forest is on a north-facing argillite slope which runs beside Te Uri Road.

From their home, which looks out on the bush, it was easy to count the trees with brown leaves that died as a result of the long dry period.

Rewarewa, emergent through the beech canopy, provides an attractive forest view. Mahoe, titoki and kamahi are also present. Many juvenile podocarps, including totara, matai, kahikatea, miro, and rimu are present.

The Hawke's Bay Regional Council helped with fencing funding for this covenant, and assists with on-going possum control.

Nelson and Marlborough

Te Kaainga Tawhai Covenant

Conservation has always been part of everyday life for Maria Deutsch and Scott Nicol.

Involved in conservation activities since their youth, Maria worked for conservation organisations both overseas and in New Zealand, and Scott has

Conservation advocates covenant for physical and spiritual values



Above: Maria Deutsch and Scott Nicol in their Clark River valley property. (Photo: Martin Conway)

previously worked for Native Forest Action Council, Department of Conservation, and the Maruia Society. He has been an active member of the Nelson Conservation Board for the last six years.

Both work with community training trusts, providing instruction in personal development, plus outdoor and conservation skills.

They have now protected their entire property, a 38 hectare area of native forest, which forms a buffer between Kahurangi National Park and land developed for farming and production forestry.

The property is located 65km southwest of Motueka, alongside the Clark River. It contains some flat river terraces, steeper slopes and ridges, and ranges in altitude from 200 to 350 metres above

sea level.

The main cover of vegetation is red, silver, hard and black beech, with individual stands of rimu, kahikatea, southern rata, pokaka, kamahi and Hall's totara. The deeply trenched river prevented access for milling, so very large kahikatea and rimu remain on the riverbanks.

Ongoing animal pest control is reflected in the dense understorey and the resurgence of soft-leaved species like tree fuchsia, koromiko and karamu.

Regular wasp control for the last five years has shown a positive effect on the local bird life. Beside the usual tui, bellbird, fantail and woodpigeon, one can also find fernbird, weka, shining cuckoo, grey warbler and morepork. NZ bush falcon and kea are occasional visitors to the

Continued on page 26

Nelson and Marlborough

Continued from page 25

property.

When asked about their vision for the property, Scott said: "There is not enough wilderness in people's lives. This covenant is our way of reaching wilderness out to people." He believes gaining a full title covenant is an investment in the future, earning interest in areas of conservation, wilderness and spiritual values as well as financial security.

The late Rora Kurupo Raheke, a local wise woman who approved of the vision for the property, gifted the covenant name Te Kaainga Tawhai. The name's meaning is two-fold: it describes both a home among the beech trees, as well as a home for the beech trees, indicating their commitment to protection.

Scott and Maria are aiming at providing opportunities for people to experience wilderness,

learn about our native ecology, become bush-wise and make a spiritual connection with the land. All buildings and facilities on their land will be designed to reflect principles of ecological living.

"We bought this piece of land to stop someone else from wrecking the forest, as we could see the richness and the potential to preserve it for the use of current and future generations," Maria says.

"On a small scale we already provide educational activities and have opened it up to families with children as a safe environment to explore the bush. We are open to be contacted both by educators and the public who have similar values and would like access."

About the process of covenanting, the owners were very positive. "I was impressed the Trust listened to our input and allowed us major participation in the design of the management plan," Scott says. "I would like to encourage others out there to follow suit."

Davey and Norriss Covenants

A handsome stand of black beech forest near Woodstock, is now completely protected thanks to the collaboration of two neighbouring landowners, Ian Davey, and Lynda and Trevor Norriss. The boundary between their two properties bisects the forest, which covers 10 hectares of steep hillside facing State Highway 61.

Although dominated by black beech, the forest includes emergent totara and rimu, and a range of mixed broadleaved species forms a fringe. While the understorey has been severely depleted by goats, it is now regenerating well.

Two plants of note within the bush are the strap fern *Grammitis pseudociliata*, which is uncommon in the South Island, and a parsley fern localised in Nelson.

This new protected area is just a river boulder's throw up the Motueka River valley from the Emmaus and Loughrey open space covenants, and was initiated by the Motueka Valley Residents Association.

Beech Covenant

Ross and Chris Beech have protected perilously steep bluffs at the head of a small river valley in the Medway River catchment. Ross and Chris were the inaugural winners of the Marlborough Rural Environment Award in 1997.

Their environmental efforts have continued this year with the registration of a new covenant over 20 hectares at the back of their 1017 hectare improved tussock hill country farm, *Stronsay*, in the Awatere Valley. The covenant is mainly kanuka, covering just over half of a mudstone gully, with kowhai, matipo, cabbage trees, mingimingi, broadleaf,

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Above: Brian and Chris Rance beside the pond area in their covenant. Note the log positioned deliberately over the pond as a roost for shags. (Photo: Gay Munro)

lancewood, five-finger, olearia, manuka, flax, tauhinu, tussocks and *Pachystegia* also present.

An on-going goat control programme ensures the block stays free of this pest. Old man's beard, which is out of control in parts of the Medway catchment, is a potential threat that Regional Representative Martin Conway is monitoring.

Very little similar terrain and vegetation is protected within the ecological district.

Dawkins Covenant

Clematis afoliata, the leafless native clematis, is one of the more unusual inhabitants of a newly covenanted shrubland beside the Avon River. The shrubland is within *The Pyramid*, the farm property of Chris and Julia Dawkins, and extends for three kilometres along the riverbank.

The site, a deep and rocky gorge near the confluence with the Waihopai River, links protected esplanade strips upstream and downstream.

Chris's father John first fenced the 8.5 hectare area in 1973, and he continued to carry out plantings and control weeds. These efforts have seen strong regeneration occur.

Regional Representative Martin Conway says the flatter land at the top of the bluffs was probably once covered in a forest of tree broom, kowhai, kanuka, matai and totara. Of these, only kowhai and kanuka remain. It is now more of a shrubland but is a potential site for the reintroduction of tree broom.

The clematis clings on to the steep and precipitous bluffs of the gorge, along with *Pachystegia* (Marlborough rock daisy), koromiko and native broom.

Chris Dawkins says covenanting the riparian margin was the logical thing to do after the efforts his father made. Another local covenantor, Chris Bowron, also encouraged him.

He first heard of the National Trust at a farm forestry field day at Charles Waddy's property. "It's almost fashionable to have a covenant now," he says.

Rance Covenant

By Gay Munro

Regional Representative

It is a real pleasure to see covenant protection over the property of Brian and Chris Rance at Bushy Point in Otatarā, near Invercargill.

Brian and Chris are enthusiastic and active conservationists, and for them it is the fulfilment of a goal to know this very important area of coastal podocarp forest at Bushy Point has a secure future.

The Rances' three hectare covenant comprises three adjacent sections, including their original section to the north where a restoration project is well advanced. Colonising species such as pittosporum, wineberry, and fuchsia were

Continued on page 28

Southland

Continued from page 27

established first, and the project now includes a cabbage tree zone, a riparian forest with kowhai and ribbonwood, and a wetland including a pond and red tussock.

All the material used in the revegetation project was propagated in the local community nursery.

Brian and Chris established the community nursery scheme, with the assistance of various grants and organisations, to encourage interested people to propagate natives for restoration work.

They have developed a threatened plant garden, where people may see and learn to identify those plants that are at risk of being lost in our natural environment, not only in Southland, but other areas as well.

The revegetation project complements the established kahikatea dominated forest that covers most of the property. Regeneration has been strong here since it was fenced in 1988. Bird life too is prolific.

Their covenant is a wonderful addition to the neighbouring, equally superb property of the Gambles and the DOC Bushy Point Reserve, making this a real plus for our community.

Both the Rance and Gamble covenants offer excellent educational facilities for the future benefit of conservation.

**1,262 covenants
throughout
New Zealand
totalling
47,602 hectares
had been
registered with
the National Trust
by June 1999**

Weeds follow savage frosts but covenantors are battling on

Brand and Brookland Covenant

When Barry and Gwenda Brand decided to subdivide their farm property, eight kilometres east of Invercargill, they took the opportunity to initiate open space covenants over coastal forest remnants on the land.

Peter and Leigh Brookland, who purchased one of the sections, willingly continued with the process, and a total of 2.3 hectares of forest is now protected on the Brand and Brookland properties.

The two bush areas are kamahi dominant with totara, Pittosporum, red matipo, Coprosma, horopito, pate and Pseudopanax species in the understorey.

Unfortunately, the native cover was severely damaged in the winter of 1996, when the Invercargill district endured the

worst frosts since records began. As a result, invasive and smothering weeds, particularly Chilean flame creeper and elder, are now serious threats to the remaining native vegetation.

Although the bush areas are small and in poor condition, the paucity of native vegetation in the district means that they are worthy of protection.

The Brands and Brooklands are now facing the challenge of enhancing the bush through weed control and revegetation plantings.

Peter and Leigh Brookland are involved in the community nursery run by Brian and Chris Rance, and Leigh is enthusiastically replanting the bush with seedlings sourced from there.

Milled and grazed for 100 years but still remarkably natural

Canterbury

Yates and Alxiere Covenant

Although milled at the turn of the century, and grazed by stock since 1890, the vegetation in Karl Yates and Margaret Alxiere's Banks Peninsula forest remnant retains a remarkable degree of naturalness.

A four hectare block of the forest was recently protected by open space covenant, adding to the adjacent three hectare block that was covenanted in 1987.

West of the stream through the covenant, a forest of

totara, matai and hardwood species is dominant.

The east is shrubby with a dominance of kanuka, mapou, hoheria, mahoe, coprosma and corokia species.

A prolific understorey includes olearia, native broom, koromiko, kawakawa, cabbage trees and vines of parsonsia, native clematis and bush lawyer.

Many species in the forest are at the limit of their natural distribution. Pigeonwood, titoki, kawakawa and NZ passionvine are at their southern extreme here and *Olearia fragrantissima* at its northern limit.

Beating

around the bush

tips and techniques for native ecosystem management

A tell tale system for evaluating your possum control programme

By Charlie Palmer

Canny managers of ecosystems who run possum control programmes prefer using tell-tale responses in plants, animals and the environment to assess increases or decreases in possum numbers.

These secondary environmental responses are called indicators. They are used in preference to direct counting of possum numbers because they are easier than undertaking a census, which can be time consuming and requires specialist knowledge.

While indicators do not give a quantifiable number of the possums present they can show whether the population is increasing or decreasing.

By adjusting possum control programmes according to these trends, managers can use resources more effectively.

The most useful indicators are those that are very sensitive to change - they react quickly and unambiguously to increases or decreases in possum numbers.

Such highly responsive indicators can be very specific to individual ecosystems. Some ecosystems, such as beech forests with low natural diversity, are difficult to monitor using indicators, however there are some generalities.

“Ice cream“ plants

Just like humans, possums have a preference for yummy things. They like; succulent - often young - shoots, flowers, and certain species above others. I call these ice cream indicators and the little fur balls will go out of their way to get to them. They include:

- Delicate white kohekohe flowers sprouting from trunks - if your trees lack these you probably have a possum problem.
- Kiekie flowers - are favoured by possums.
- Rewarewa flowers that fall to the ground - can indicate possum activity in the canopy.
- Supplejack shoots - useful because they are sensitive and common.
- Nibbles on broadleaf, five finger, pate (seven finger), rata, mamaku and tree fuchsia.
- Any seedlings - favoured for easy access and succulence.
- Highly palatable mistletoe - susceptible to even low possum numbers.

Getting physical

While moving around, possums leave indicators of their antics.

Look on the ground first, the critters are lazy and, despite being good climbers, they will feed on the ground in preference



Above: A kohekohe seedling showing good growth after possums, which ate its lower leaves, were controlled. (Photo: Ian Wilson)

to being in the canopy. Look for:

- Width and number of possum pad runs (possum highways through undergrowth and the long grass on forest margins).
- Possum droppings - how many? Are they fresh?
- Scratch and bite marks on trees. Possums often have a favourite tree they play in.

An example

The Far North Branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society owns a 70 hectare hardwood/podocarp forest adjoining Herekino Forest near Kaitaia.

In the first year of possum control the indicators they used showed not only the effectiveness of their control methods but also the value of using indicators to monitor change.

Eight small vegetation plots on average showed an increase in both seedling diversity - up 60% and seedling density - up a massive 546% after one year of

Continued on page 30

Beating around the bush

Continued from page 29

possum control.

The result of this change will increase both regeneration and bio-diversity.

Additional data from bird counts showed a small increase in bird numbers and diversity following possum control.

Far North Forest and Bird members note "plant growth is tremendous" after control.

To sum up

- The type of ecosystem you are monitoring will dictate the type of indicators to use.
- To find suitable indicators look for differences between your area and similar areas you know to be well controlled for possums.
- Use the knowledge of people in your region skilled in observation of natural areas to aid you in choosing indicators to assess change.
- Don't restrict yourself to using indicators to monitor possums only. They have been used to show almost anything from ungulate browsing to levels of pollution (lichens are very sensitive to pollution).
- Be inventive - write to the National Trust with indicators you know to be useful in ecosystems you are familiar with. We will publicise them in this column.

Thanks to Geoff Walls, Gerry Kessels, Ian Wilson & Peter Handford for correspondence used in the preparation of this article.

Questions or practical native area enhancement ideas you'd like to share with others? Send 'em to:

Charlie Palmer,
QE II National Trust,
PO Box 3341, Wellington.

Congratulations Covenantors

Malvern Hills

A rugged hill country property at the head of Marlborough's Avon Valley has won the pastoral category of the 1999 Marlborough Rural Environment Awards.

Farmed by Chris and Pam Bowron, the 1400 hectare Malvern Hills includes 1126 hectares of grazeable country. The remainder is steep hill country with areas of bush and scrub, including 36 hectares under National Trust covenant.

A Merino flock of 1500 ewes, 850 hoggets and 700 wethers is run, and suits the 1050mm annual rainfall. Cattle comprise 110 Angus Hereford cross cows and 130 steers and heifers.

Judges commented that the management of the whole property was well thought out, with many native areas regenerating.

They were impressed at the continuity of cover around waterways, shade and shelter provided for stock and the variety of vegetation.

Andersons of Hokonui

Hokonui farm foresters and covenantors Michael and Michelle Anderson are the winners of the 1999 Husqvarna South Island Farm Forester of the Year award.

Michael planted his first trees at the age of 12, and Michelle planted her first trees on the farm, a shelter-belt of *Eucalyptus nitens*, 15 years ago.

As well as 25 hectares of productive forestry woodlots on their 390 hectare farm, they have 32 hectares of bush, half of it protected by covenant with the National Trust.

Open Space Covenants

In June 1999 there were 1,262 registered covenants totalling 47,602 hectares, with a further 252 areas assessed, approved and proceeding towards registration.

The breakdown by Land District (which differs from our Regional Representatives' boundaries) is as follows:

REGISTERED OPEN SPACE COVENANTS AS AT 30/6/99:

Land district	No. Covenanted	Area protected (Hectares)
North Auckland	262	4,996
South Auckland	287	8,190
Gisborne	61	8,565
Hawkes Bay	56	1,726
Taranaki	83	2,428
Wellington	215	10,201
Marlborough	11	603
Nelson	64	2,006
Westland	6	180
Canterbury	95	3,086
Otago	45	3,943
Southland	77	1,677
	1,262	47,602

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Taranaki - Wrightson, Kiwi Trading.

Cen. Plateau - Wrightson, Anchormart.

Manawatu-Wanganui - Wrightson, Farmlands, Levin Dairy, Kiwi Trading.

Hawkes Bay - Wrightson, Farmlands.

Wellington - Wrightson

SOUTH ISLAND

Marlborough - CRT, Wrightson, Pyne Gould Guinness.

Tasman/Nelson - Wrightson.

West Coast - Wrightson, Westland Farm Centre, CRT.

Canterbury - Ashburton Trading, CRT, Pyne Gould Guinness, Wrightson.

Southland - CRT, Reid Farmers, Wrightson.

Otago - CRT, Reid Farmers, Wrightson.

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Farm foresters flock to see mix of trees

An ambitious revegetation project in a steep tawa-filled gully is already bringing its rewards to Kotemaori covenantors Margaret and Ross Haliburton.

The Kotemaori district is steep coastal hill country 70 kms northeast of Napier, and there is little bush left on the hills.

Ross and Margaret's covenant, which was registered in 1997, covers an area of 39ha. As the fence was erected in the most stable positions - mainly along the top of steep ridges - a substantial area of pasture was included within the protected area.

The Haliburtons are industriously filling these margins with home-grown trees from Margaret's impressive nursery. One of her more ingenious greenhouses is an old covered tent frame. As well as providing seedlings for her own projects, Margaret has native trees and shrubs for sale.

The bush, impenetrable when Ross was a child on the farm, is now coming back to that level.

The Haliburtons' property was a real draw-card for Hawke's Bay farm foresters who visited recently. Interest was also shown in the exotic and native



Above: Margaret Haliburton pictured centre explains their revegetation project to Hawke's Bay farm foresters. (Photo: Marie Taylor)

plantings undertaken by Ross and Margaret's son David in

collaboration with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

Dow sponsors Grazon weed attack

Tradescantia fluminensis, commonly known as wandering willy, is a ground cover plant with succulent stems capable of tolerating low light levels. It can form a dense mat under forest, inhibiting natural regeneration of native species.

While small infestations can be physically removed, a very thorough job must be done as the plant does not reproduce from seed but from the smallest segments of stem.

Grazon (a trademark of Dow AgroSciences) herbicide has proven to be most successful in

controlling larger infestations. The National Trust has been fortunate to secure sponsorship of a significant quantity of Grazon from the manufacturers, Dow AgroSciences (NZ) Ltd, to assist in the control of *Tradescantia* in selected registered open space covenants.

The total value of this sponsorship is \$11,000 and the National Trust is most grateful for the support of Dow AgroSciences (NZ) Ltd.

More information on the use of Grazon on *Tradescantia* will be in the next Open Space.

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