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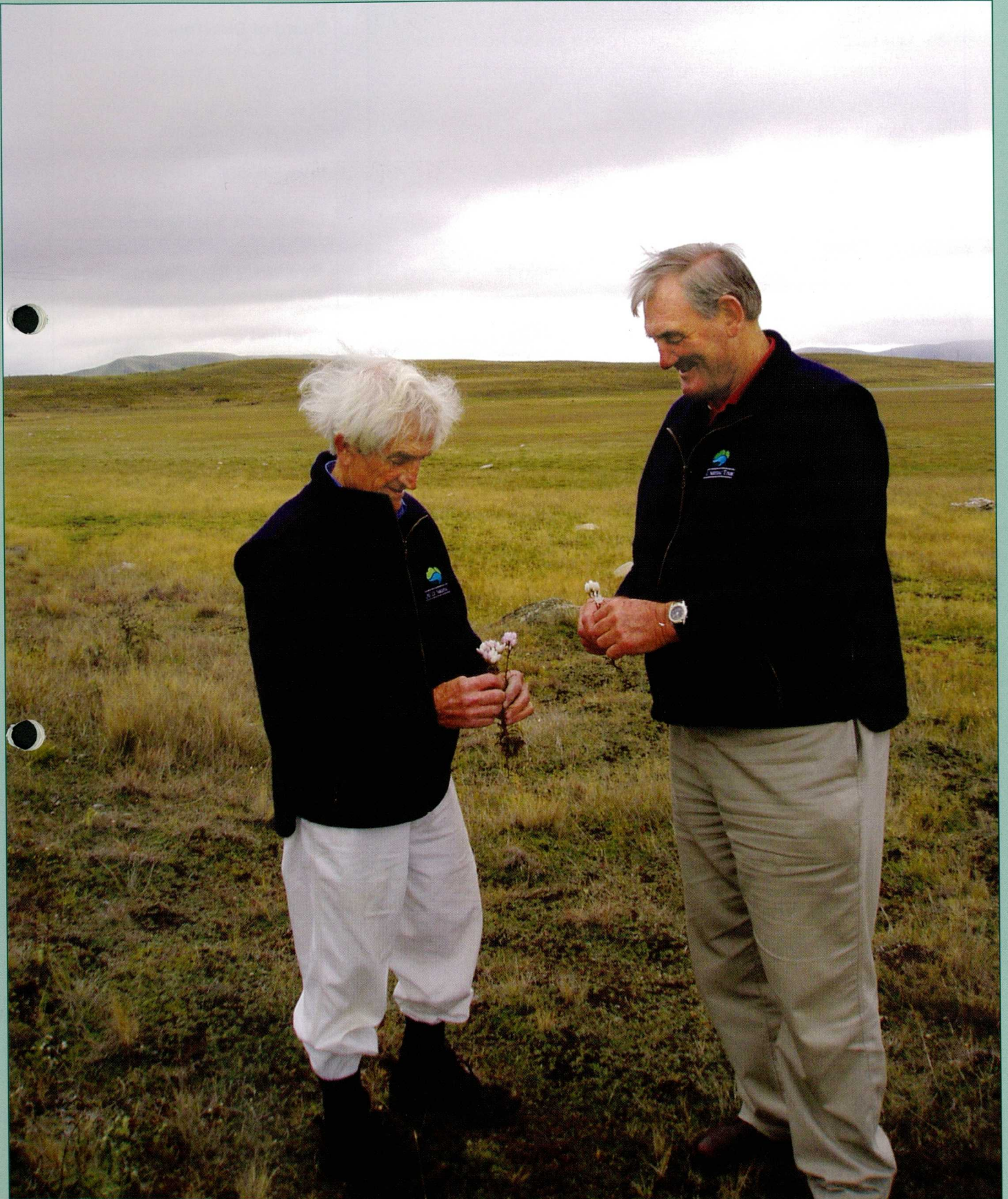


**QE II National Trust**  
For open space in New Zealand  
*Nga Kairauhi Papa*

# Open Space

MAGAZINE OF THE QUEEN ELIZABETH II NATIONAL TRUST

No.61, August 2004



**IN THIS ISSUE** Southland and Waikato Covenants • Ballance Farm Environment Awards

# Helping you protect the special nature of your land

QEII helps landowners protect significant natural and cultural features on their land.

Features protected include:

- Landscapes
- Wetlands
- Cultural sites
- Coastlines
- Archaeological sites
- Forests and/or bush remnants
- Tussock grasslands
- Streams
- Geological features

Landowners throughout the country have voluntarily protected some 67,000 hectares of their land through QEII covenants (or protection agreements). The Trust also helps by contributing funds for covenant projects and advising landowners on managing their covenants. *For more information see page 27.*

QEII also owns 29 properties which collectively protect over 1,500 hectares of significant habitat. These have mostly been gifted to the Trust. Effective stewardship of these properties is greatly assisted by local communities and management committees.

The Queen Elizabeth II National Trust (QEII) is a statutory organisation independent from Government and managed by a Board of Directors.

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Cover photo: Sir Brian Lochore,  
Chairperson of QEII, gets a  
lesson on *Gentiana* species from  
Dr Brian Molloy.

## Focus on: *Southland*

### Landcorp Farming's southern covenants

New Zealand's largest agricultural enterprise is actively working with QEII Trust to covenant more natural areas.

Landcorp Farming Limited has 110 farms around the country totaling 369,025ha, which includes some significant natural areas as well as productive agricultural land. Under its "Farm Pride" philosophy Landcorp farm managers aim to realise one of the company's core values, "to be environmentally responsible" while also developing the agricultural land for more intensive use and productivity.

This means having a management plan for every farm which, amongst other things, addresses ways to maintain and enhance landscape values, maintain a balanced nutrient budget and limit runoff into waterways. Bush areas, wetlands and waterways are fenced as land is developed and Landcorp uses QEII covenants to provide added long term protection for areas of high natural value.

Landcorp has also supported QEII's general covenanting work for several years with \$10,000 annual sponsorship. Chairperson Sir Brian Lochore says QEII is very grateful for the sponsorship support and greatly admires Landcorp's commitment to sustainable environmental management.



*Landcorp National Property Manager Gerry Soanes, QEII CEO Margaret McKee, Waiau Trust field officer Mark Sutton and Landcorp Director John Tavendale at Landcorp's Stuart Farm near Te Anau.*



*At Landcorp's Eweburn Farm, near Te Anau, 31.4ha of wire rush wetland and matagouri shrubland has been protected under a QEII covenant. Eweburn received the 2003 corporate award in the annual environment awards run by Environment Southland and received an award for "sustainable growth of a business in a challenging environment" in this year's annual New Zealand Deer Farmers Association Environmental Awards.*

*Landcorp's John Tavendale and QEII Chairperson Brian Lochore tread carefully amongst speargrass in tussock grassland.*



Landcorp Director John Tavendale and QEII Chairperson Sir Brian Lochore officially open Landcorp's newly covenanted Freestone Wetland.

### Southland Covenants Featured in this Issue



# A milestone year for Landcorp's Freestone Farm

It's been a satisfying year for Ross Ibbotson, manager of Landcorp's Freestone Farm. Not only were his sustainable farm practices endorsed when Freestone Farm won the corporate section of Environment Southland's 2004 environment awards but he also saw a special wetland on the farm protected with a QEII covenant.

The 2200ha farm is an intensive breeding unit, 7 kilometres from Manapouri in the Te Anau basin. It carries 23,500 stock units comprising 14,000 Landmark ewes, 4700 hoggets, 900 rising one and two year-old cattle, a 300-ewe terminal sire breeding scheme, and an 1100 wapiti breeding scheme.

The awards judges said the farm was "living proof that profitable farming doesn't need to come at the expense of our environment." Vulnerable riparian areas in the deer unit have been fenced off and planted to avoid the adverse effects deer are known to have on waterways and water quality.

The 68ha Freestone Wetland is the jewel in the crown of the catchment protection work that Ross has been implementing on the farm. It is a raised peat bog with an unusual range of vegetation, despite having been grazed in the past. Typical peat bog species occur, including sphagnum moss, wire grass, sedges, rushes and dracophyllum. Tall woody species, not usually associated with peat bogs, also occur in the manuka / coprosma shrubland on the drier eastern edges.

This wetland is part of a peat bog wetland ecosystem that is characteristic of the Te Anau basin. The 941ha Kepler Mire and the 96ha Home Creek wetland, located on the northwestern boundary of the deer unit and owned by the Department of Conservation, drain into the Waiiau River. Within the Freestone property, McLeods drain, which was modified by previous development, now has its



Ross Ibbotson, Freestone Farm Manager, is committed to improving the farm environment.



Native shrubland has been fenced off from the deer herd.



Sphagnum moss, rushes and dracophyllum in the foreground peat bog give way to coprosma / manuka shrubland on the drier ground behind.

riparian land fenced for the 3700 metres it flows through the deer unit and then flows through the newly-created QEII covenant to its confluence with the Waiiau River. The riparian fencing was erected by Landcorp with support from the Waiiau Trust.

The joint venture approach that was adopted in setting up the covenant has proved highly successful. Landcorp, the Waiiau Trust and QEII Trust worked together, having realised that they had similar objectives and complementary expertise when it came to managing the wetland. Waiiau Trust field officer, Mark Sutton, says the three organisations are working together on other projects in the Te Anau basin. (Mark has also become a QEII regional representative – see page 25).

# Covenants that inspire education

Protecting natural areas is just one reason three Southland landowners have covenanted their land – they also want to spread the word about habitat protection and restoration. The Gambles, Rances and Turnbulls encourage visitors (by arrangement) so they can share their experience and knowledge first-hand.

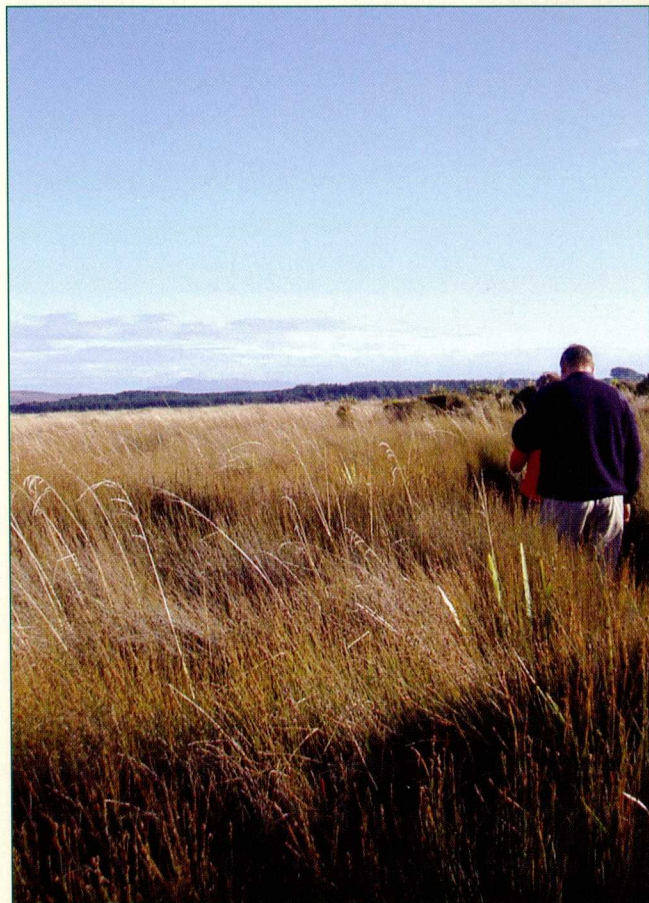
## Bushy Point Educational Area

Ian and Jenny Gamble know they have “an ecological gem” at Bushy Point and they are committed to educating others about its special value.

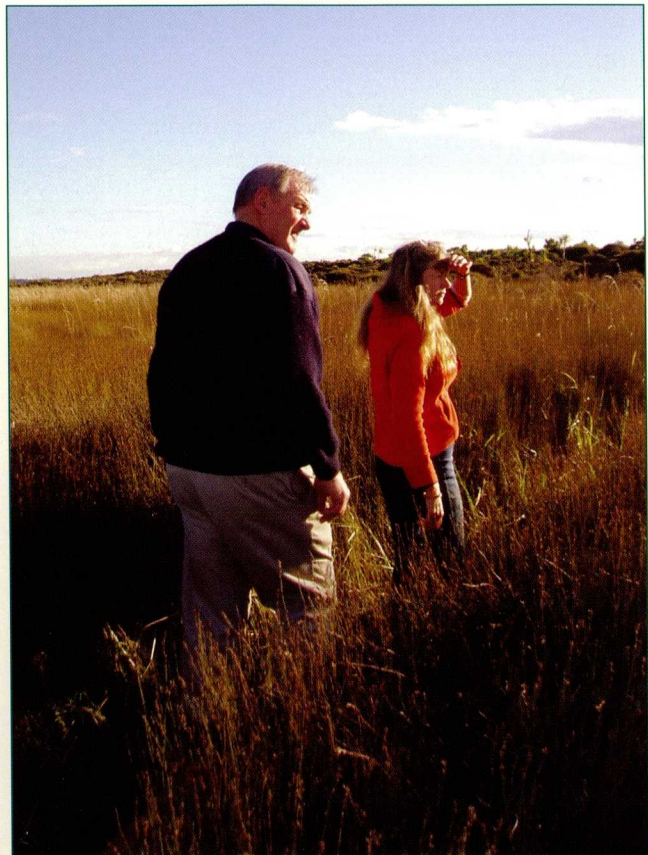
They host regular parties of visitors, ornithologists and school parties to their covenanted property six kilometres south of Invercargill and offer a voluntary guide service to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with visitors.

The diverse salt marsh, swamp shrubland and tall podocarp swamp forest on their land is an important part of the wider New River estuary ecosystem and landscape. It will soon become one of the few privately owned areas in New Zealand recognised as internationally important, when it is included in the extended Waituna Wetland Ramsar registration. Several threatened plants occur on the Gambles’ land, including tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia caespitosa* var *macrantha*) and the mistletoe *Korthalsella salicornioides*.

The plant communities are also habitat for a range of native birds, including the elusive South Island fernbird. Ian and Jenny are keen to support research into the natural values of their land, which was the site of the definitive 1983 fernbird study by Maida Barlow.



The jointed rush is a feature of the distinctive salt marsh landscape.



Jenny Gamble looks out for the elusive fernbird as she guides QEII Trust chairperson, Sir Brian Lochore, through the Bushy Point Educational Area on a recent visit.

Research and education are the main objectives of the charitable trust they have set up to administer the 5.1ha of covenanted land known as the Bushy Point Educational Area. The trust has been a useful means of managing funds and of planning their ongoing conservation and education initiatives. These initiatives have included the construction of 600 metre walking track and boardwalk to give visitors easy access through the otherwise impenetrable vegetation, and the installation of a visitor interpretation panel.

Together with their neighbours and fellow covenantors, Brian and Chris Rance (see next page), the Gambles are working hard to protect and enhance their land’s natural values. Active pest control of possums, feral cats, ferrets and rats is ongoing, and they are revegetating a once-forested grassy area using plants sourced from within their covenant that they propagate themselves.

Gay Munro, QEII regional representative says Ian and Jenny are excellent ambassadors for conservation. This view was endorsed when the trustees of the Charles Alexander Fleming Trust, a charitable trust that supports conservation work, made an unsolicited donation of \$1,000 after a visit to Bushy Point in 2002.

## Restoration Covenant



Sir Brian Lochore and Brian Rance inspect the pond that has recently been excavated for wetland restoration.

**N**ext door to Bushy Point, **Brian and Chris Rance** are also interested in educating people about conservation – in particular, revegetation and habitat restoration.

Since covenanting their 2.4ha podocarp forest remnant in 1998 they have set about improving the natural values on the rest of their property through a programme of enhancement planting and wetland creation. Planting has been carried out to protect the exposed forest edge and to provide riparian vegetation to shade a drain that borders the property. A wetland area was created in 1995 and just this autumn the Rance's have excavated another area for wetland restoration. A comparison of the two areas shows how quickly the native plants have grown around the earlier pond, giving it a natural appearance and encouraging wildlife to visit as well.

Brian, a Department of Conservation botanist and conservation officer who regularly assists QEII with botanical surveys of Southland covenants, is interested

in natural plant associations and has consciously planned specialist planting areas to reflect varied site conditions. These include tussock grassland, riparian and wetland

associations as well as a 'cabbage tree patch', similar to a naturally occurring group in the locality.

Excellent planting results have been achieved with plants reaching 3 metres height in only 7 years. The Rance's also fight an ongoing battle with Old Man's Beard, convolvulus and elderberry among other pest plants.

Gay Munro, QEII regional representative, says the Rance covenant is an excellent example of what can be achieved with revegetation work, so Chris and Brian's willingness to host several QEII field days has been a great opportunity to demonstrate their techniques and progress. The Southland Community Nursery, also on the Rance property, offers assistance to landowners wishing to learn about native plants and their propagation, while the Threatened Plant Garden gives people a chance to identify those species not often seen in the wild. More information is available at <http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~rances/>.



Photo: Brian Rance

The Rance's community nursery is still covered against the frost while sunlight warms the podocarp forest remnant behind.

## Sherwood Forest

**A** now rare example of the great podocarp forests that once grew on the Southland floodplains is protected by a QEII covenant on the Turnbull's property at Tussock Creek, 20 kilometres north east of Invercargill.

Eager to share this treasure with others, **Pat and Derek Turnbull** have promoted Sherwood Forest, as they call their bush, as a place for enjoyment, education and study and they host a wide range of visitor groups every year. Pat has produced an information sheet for visitors as well as organising an information kiosk at the start of an 800-metre forest walk. Identification nameplates, some supplied by the Forest and Bird Society, have been placed along the track to help visitors identify the native plants.

Two things make the area special – one is the matai dominant forest, with its towering giants up to 400 years old. The other is the threatened plant species (eight of them) found scattered throughout the area. Small trees like *Olearia hectorii* and *Melicytus flexuosus* would once have occurred right across the fertile floodplains but are now uncommon due to forest clearance.

When the Turnbulls bought the farm in the 1980s, the forest understorey was in poor condition due to stock browsing although the previous owner



Derek Turnbull and QEII Chairperson, Sir Brian Lochore, inspect recent revegetation planting at Sherwood Forest.



An example of the threatened *Melicytus flexuosus* comes under scrutiny.

had valued the mighty matai and was keen for them to be retained. Derek and Pat more than fulfilled this wish by fencing the area off and protecting it with the 47ha QEII covenant, which they registered in 1991.

The Turnbulls were devastated by the damage done by the big frost in 1996, which killed more than 200 trees including ancient matai. Gaps in the canopy formed which allowed some weed species to thrive and compete with the native regeneration.

The Turnbulls have been grateful for assistance from the YMCA Conservation Corps in recent years with track maintenance and weed clearing. NZTCV volunteers have also played a part in managing the forest and tracks. Further help came from Biodiversity Southland, a group involving agencies and organisations with an environmental interest across Southland, which was set up in 2002. This group successfully applied for government biodiversity condition funding to assist with forest restoration at Sherwood Forest, including weed and pest control, revegetation and a monitoring programme.

The Turnbulls hope that Sherwood Forest itself and the restoration work will be an inspiration to others. To this end, they opened up Sherwood Forest for a QEII field day last year with 60 people attending to find out about the new work and techniques used.





## Ballance Farm Environment Awards - sustainable farming is good business

*The winners of this year's Ballance Farm Environment Awards have shown that sustainable farming can be profitable and good for the environment as well.*

*The purpose of the awards is to encourage sustainable agricultural practices by recognising and showcasing examples of best practice. The judges review the whole farming system and look at how entrants are meeting their production targets while also maintaining or improving the long-term health of their farm environments. The judges ask the fundamental question,*

*"Can what is being done now, still be working successfully in 100 years?"*

*The awards ran in seven regions – Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Wellington, Manawatu/Wanganui, Canterbury, Otago and Southland. Award-winning QEII members are profiled on the following pages.*

### 2005 Awards

Entries will open from 1 October 2004. For more information please contact the National Co-ordinator Chris Keeping at 021 425 791 or [keeping@xtra.co.nz](mailto:keeping@xtra.co.nz).

## Southland Supreme Award Winners

**M**aximising financial return while using best farm management practices is the guiding principle for **Michael and Michelle Anderson** at their award-winning Hokonui farm. They are particularly mindful of stock welfare, the health of the whole farm environment and the farm's future sustainability.

The judges were impressed with the farm's productivity and the sound farm practices based on the Anderson's understanding of long-term sustainability.

The Lyndale property comprises 490ha, which includes 383ha of pasture/grazing, 37ha of forestry plantations and 70ha of non-productive land. In 2003 it carried 3680 ewes, hoggets and rams, and 162 rising two-year steers and rising one-year bulls. The five-year average lambing percentage on the ewes was 160% and lambs sold in 2003 averaged 17.5 kg. Silage and winter swede are also produced under a 12-15 year rotation cycle.

*continues page 10*



*Michael and Michelle Anderson with QEII CEO Margaret McKee and Chairperson Sir Brian Lochore at the BFEA field day held at the Anderson's farm.*



The Anderson's unlogged podocarp forest is protected by good fencing.



Photo: Southland BFE Awards

The Andersons hosted a field day as part of the Southland Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme.

*continued from page 9*

The Andersons have developed some 20ha of shelter, shade and amenity planting using a variety of species to meet economic and environmental objectives, sourced largely from their own tree nursery. Several ponds have been created and areas of steep land and native bush have been fenced off, including 18ha of land protected by QEII covenants and the Andersons plan to extend the fenced-off areas as time and finances permit, while they also develop a new 100ha block acquired last year.

The 1987 covenant covers three podocarp forest remnants dominated by tall specimens of kahikatea, matai and rimu. Kamahi, totara and pokaka are also present and groves of kowhai are a feature. Although the forest was badly damaged by extreme frosts in the winter of 1996, the remnants are in excellent condition with good regeneration and diversity of species. In 2000, a detailed survey was carried out by Department of Conservation officer Brian Rance who recorded 72 native species including two threatened mistletoe species, *Tupeia antartica* and *Ileostylis micranthus*. Brian says that mistletoes, while still reasonably common in lowland Southland, are highly palatable to possums so their presence is a good sign of forest health.

## Otago Supreme Award Winners

Clive and Elsie Jermy have transformed Bushey Park near Palmerston in North Otago since moving their leading deer stud enterprise there from the Waikato in 1998. The property was run down when the Jermys bought it but they recognised its potential, knowing it had a long history of good stock production.

The 950ha property, of which 750ha are grazeable, carries 3500 deer, including a commercial herd of 2800 and a stud herd of 700, as well as 120 Hereford stud cows. While 60% of the farm income comes from the deer stud it is augmented



Major redevelopment has included 120km of fencing to protect vulnerable steep and bush areas as well as to manage stock.



Photo courtesy of Rural News

Clive Jermy with antlers from his sire stags at Bushey Park.

by income from velvet and venison, as well as the stud cow herd. Clive is the Chairperson of Deer Industry New Zealand.

The coastal property is subject to drought, cold and wind and has some steep, erosion-prone gullies that the Jermys knew would be vulnerable to deer stocking. So, as well as developing and fencing 82 deer paddocks, 8 cattle paddocks, and 18 km of roading and water races, the Jermys set out to create a 'stock friendly' environment. This meant fencing off and planting about 100 ha of steep gully land in commercial forest plantations, initiating a long-term programme of shade,

shelter and riparian planting, fencing off and planting around 10 stock water supply dams, and rejuvenating pasture and fertility levels.

On the coastline, a number of important archaeological sites are clustered at the Shag River mouth, including a moa hunter site protected in the Onewhenua Historic Reserve. The Jermys have covenanted the adjoining site of a 14<sup>th</sup> century Maori village to protect its cultural and spiritual values and to allow access to local runanga. They are also planning two more covenants to protect 38 ha of salt marsh at the Shag River estuary and 16 ha of native bush, from which stock has already been excluded.



Photo courtesy of Rural News

*An important archaeological site on the spit at the Shag River mouth has been covenanted at the Jermy's deer farm.*

## Wellington Supreme Award Winners

Richard and Karen Kershaw have successfully diversified the economic base of their Wairarapa farming operation. Back in the 1980s they had felt very vulnerable to the unreliable livestock prices in the Rogernomics era and this led them to try cropping and seed production to supplement their sheep and beef business. Their first tentative trials have developed into a thriving business.

The Kershaws run two properties - the original 279ha family farm at Moiki and a 192ha property at Ruakokopatuna. They also lease other land in the district. They winter 1850



Photo: Natalie Campbell

*Covenantors Richard and Karen Kershaw run a diverse livestock and cropping operation in the South Wairarapa.*



ewes, 450 hoggets and 130 cattle and in summer buy in and fatten between 500 and 2000 lambs. Their crops include sweetcorn, peas, rye-grass, lucerne, triticale, brassicas, spring onions, squash and onions. Crops like lucerene and triticale are sold to the dairy industry while sweetcorn, peas and onions are grown for seed in partnership with Seminis Vegetable Seeds. Each tonne of onion planted yields between 70-200kg of seed with prices varying from \$27-\$35/kg.

*continues page 12*

*Fencing has been rewarded with good regeneration.*

continued from page 11

The judges were impressed by the complex planning needed to efficiently run such a diverse operation. Some seed crops, for instance, have to be grown at certain distances apart to ensure the seed stays pure, and the Kershaws lease small lots of land in the area to achieve this. They also programme their crops so there is about six months' continuous work for the 12 to 15 (sometimes up to 40) seasonal workers they employ as well as their two fulltime staff.

A variety of methods are used to sustain soil structure and fertility, including cropping rotations matched to soil type, extensive mulching to return organic matter to the soil and an energy-friendly trickle irrigation/fertiliser system. Shelter belts have been planted extensively to minimise soil loss and provide shade and shelter for stock.

At their Ruakokoputuna property they covenanted a 16ha area of secondary beech and podocarp forest in 1993 and have been rewarded with good regeneration since then. The forested area borders a steep-sided section of the Ruakokotupuna River, which has limestone outcrops and high scenic value.

A further covenant over 5.9ha of titoki-totara treeland on the home Moiki farm has just been approved and is awaiting registration.

*Limestone bluffs add to the scenic quality of the Kershaws' beech / podocarp forest covenant.*



## Other Award Winning Covenantors

### Waikato Region

**Niki and David Peacocke** won the supreme award for the region. Their 4ha covenant protects semi-coastal hardwood forest and bird habitat.

**Hilary and Nelson Lynch**, who won the Forest and Bird restoration award have protected 4ha of lowland swamp forest.

### Bay of Plenty

**Jan and Hans Pendergrast** won an environmental award. Their covenant protects 86ha of lowland forest.

### Wellington

**Di and Don Freeman** won a habitat improvement award. They have a 6ha covenant over remnant lowland hardwood forest.

**Rachel and Michael Blundell** and **David Blundell** won a merit award. They have protected 52ha of lowland hardwood forest.

**Sylvia and Neil Hayes**, who won a merit award, have an 8ha covenant over wetland and lowland podocarp forest.

### Canterbury

**Lorna and Max Winskill** won a merit award. Their covenant protects 24ha of semi-coastal podocarp and hardwood forest.

### Otago

**Pam and Neil Cullen** won a habitat improvement award. They have a 91ha covenant over lowland hardwood forest.

**Joy and Wayne Sim** won a merit award. Their covenant protects 1001ha of montane / sub-alpine tussock grassland.

### Southland

**Wendy and Warwick Day**, who won a habitat improvement award and innovation award, have 33ha of covenanted wetland, tussockland and shrubland habitat.

**Dorothy and Owen Horton** won a special merit award and have a 2ha covenant of lowland podocarp / hardwood forest.

**Carol and Russell MacPherson** won a merit award. They have protected 21ha of lowland-montane tussock grassland.

# Archaeological sites

*Landowners are playing an important part in protecting our irreplaceable archaeological heritage - the traces of early settlement left by our forebears.*

Archaeological sites in New Zealand are places where evidence of pre-1990 history might be found – while some sites are easily recognised, others may be hidden underground or beneath vegetation.

Archaeological sites can include:

- **Maori pa sites** – fortified places with banks and ditches, often found on cliffs, headlands or ridges;
- **Cultivation areas and gardens** – the remains can be seen in soils and from lines or walls of loose stones or stone mounds. Other types of site associated with cultivation and settlement include artificially levelled terraces, and pits used for storing kumara;
- **Middens** – former rubbish dumps that may contain shells, bones, artefacts, charcoal and, sometimes, oven stones;
- **Rock art** – such as paintings, drawings, carvings or engravings;
- **Shipwrecks** and other **historic sites** that contain evidence of whaling, trading and gold mining, or the remains of mission stations, military redoubts, buildings and structures.

Simple land management measures can make a big difference to preserving these historic treasures. In most rural situations, for instance, grass grazed by sheep generally gives the best protection as



*The large pines and macrocarpas were removed to preserve this Maori pa site in Taranaki soon after it was covenanted.*

regular trampling by heavier animals such as cattle, deer and horses can erode the site. If possible, large plants and vines should be prevented from developing as their roots can damage the site and further damage it when removed, harvested or blown over.

Some landowners choose to give added protection to their archaeological sites, even though such sites are protected under the Historic Places Act 1991. A QEII covenant is one way to do this – it ensures that subsequent owners will be aware of the site's location and significance when they purchase, and their role in looking after it.

This is the first in a series of articles about archaeological sites – subsequent issues will take a closer look at particular types of sites.

For advice and information about archaeological sites contact the Historic Places Trust at 0800 437482.



*Earthworks for this former Maori pa site can still be seen on this covenanted headland in the Bay of Plenty.*



*An example of Maori rock art within a QEII covenant near Timaru.*

# Hidden worlds - freshwater habitats

Some of New Zealand's most elusive and little-known native species inhabit our lakes, wetlands and waterways. What do we know about them and how can we look after them?

This is the first of a series of articles about our freshwater habitats and what we can do to manage and improve their health. We will look at life in our waterways, wetlands and springs; ways to improve in-stream habitat for our native fish; the place of invertebrates in freshwater environments; and ways to keep an eye on water quality.



**Smelt**  
(Adult length 60 - 120 mm)

**Migratory galaxiids**  
(Adult length up to 260 mm)



**Mudfish**  
(Adult length 100 - 150 mm)



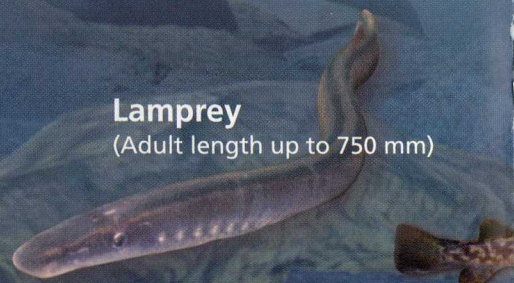
**Torrentfish**  
(Adult length approx. 100 mm)




**Bullies**  
(Adult length 60 - 240 mm)



**Lamprey**  
(Adult length up to 750 mm)






**Giant kokopu**  
(Adult length 200 - 580 mm)

## Freshwater fish – shy and nocturnal

New Zealand has about 40 native freshwater fish species but many are secretive and nocturnal so they are not well known. They occur in a variety of habitats including lakes, slow-moving rivers, wetlands and fast-moving gravelly streams. Unfortunately, their habitats are disappearing or being degraded as wetlands are drained, streamside vegetation removed, competing species introduced and water quality reduced. Some species are found only in one or two river systems, which makes them particularly vulnerable to even small changes like reduced river flows.



**Non-migratory galaxiids**  
(Adult length 90 - 150 mm)

About half of our native fish species migrate as part of their life cycles – either living in freshwater as adults and migrating to spawn at sea, like eels, or living at sea as adults and migrating to freshwater for spawning, as with lamprey. Barriers to fish movement in waterways can prevent migration and seriously disrupt the life cycles of these species.



**Eels**  
(Adult length 1.2 - 2.0 m)

The best way to discover which native fish live in your stream is to use a spotlight or a strong torch at night. To obtain copies of the identification poster illustrated, contact the New Zealand Limnological Society at [www.limsoc.rsnz.org](http://www.limsoc.rsnz.org). More information is also available at [www.niwa.co.nz/rc/freshwater/fishatlas](http://www.niwa.co.nz/rc/freshwater/fishatlas).



**Non-migratory galaxiids**

Photographs provided by R. Allibone, S. Moore, A. McIntosh, Taranaki Regional Council, Landcare Research  
Background art provided by Environment Waikato.

## Focus on:

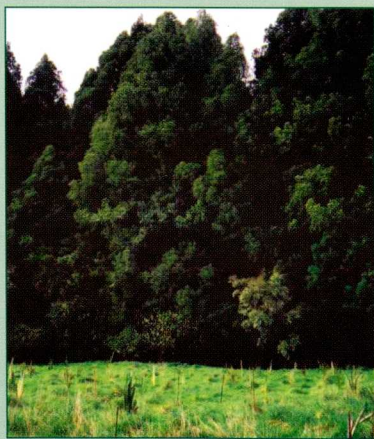
# Waikato/King Country

Known for its agricultural production, the Waikato carries a third of New Zealand's dairy cattle and the greatest area of planted production forest of any region in the country.

While perhaps best known for its rolling green pastures, the Waikato/King Country landscape also gains its distinct character from the great variety of its natural features - lowland peat swamps, volcanic cones, limestone outcrops, forest remnants and a rugged west coast, to name but a few.

Within this rural heartland, the seed of an idea germinated and grew into the QEII National Trust. That idea has continued to fall on fertile ground, with 7903 hectares of land now protected in the region under 344 open space covenants. A further 63 covenants have been approved and are being processed towards registration, and will protect 1627 more hectares.

## Recently Registered Covenants in Waikato/King Country



The Ross Bishop Memorial Reserve is very accessible on SH4 and the NZNFR is replanting the roadside area. Call Gerry Kessels (07-8259025) for further information

## Ross Bishop Memorial Reserve

The NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust (NZNFR) has purchased and covenanted a 6ha area of kahikatea forest on SH4 between Te Kuiti and Taumarunui, dedicated to the memory of Ross Bishop. Ross, a retired dairy farmer and an accomplished, self-taught botanist, was a tireless advocate for the protection of native forests and was the QEII representative for the Taumarunui district in his later years.

The covenant contains some giant matai and black maire as well as kahikatea, and has a diverse understorey including the beautifully scented karapapa *Alseuosmia macrophylla*, and the lesser karapapa *Alseuosmia pusilla*.

Appropriately nearby, is the magnificent 800ha Okiwiriki forest, protected by six adjoining landowners under QEII covenants that Ross helped to secure.

Waikato NZNFR trustees Arthur Cowan (featured next page), Roy Dench, Tim Oliver and Gerry Kessels are continuing the good work with restoration planting and pest control of these forest remnants while also keeping a lookout for more areas in need of restoration and protection.



# And the covenanting goes on...

Arthur Cowan had vowed he'd built his last fence but, when he discovered a new area to add to the 'covenant collection' on the family farm, he enlisted the help of a friend and got to work again.

He's had plenty of practice at fencing off such areas – over the years, he has progressively fenced off blocks of mainly secondary bush, gorse and scrub which he said "didn't look much at the time" but, he hoped, might regenerate. When QEII representative Tony Fraser saw them he was impressed at how well they had regenerated and confirmed Arthur's hope that they were now worthy of covenant protection.

The first block, featuring kamahi and mangeo, was fenced in 1980 and is in very good condition. The second block, fenced in 1988 was very scrubby at the time but now has a good canopy and understorey. A further area, fenced in 1997, was less advanced but its potential could be seen in the 2-metre kawakawa and mapou saplings, the



The first block of kamahi forest, fenced in 1980.



Photo: Tony Fraser

Arthur Cowan thought this would be his last fence until he discovered a new area that warranted protection.

mangeo, tawa and pigeonwood seedlings and the various native vines, including the yellow flowered clematis.

Arthur 'discovered' the new area, hidden over a ridge, when he was marking the fenced blocks on an aerial photo for Tony. Typically, he didn't want a contribution towards fencing costs but was simply happy to see his foresight rewarded with all four areas, totalling 11

ha, protected in perpetuity.

It's a reward he and his wife, Pat, are very familiar with. Twenty-five years ago, they were among the first people to contact the newly formed QEII National Trust to put a covenant over 50 ha of fine native forest on their farm, now managed by son Evan. None other than No 1 covenantor Gordon Stephenson, who was instrumental in establishing QEII, evaluated the forest in 1979 and found it to be an outstanding example of bush in the region. The covenant was registered in 1983 and since then Arthur, who is a NZNFRT trustee, has helped protect thousands of hectares of native forest in the Waikato, and beyond, through his advocacy, irrepressible fencing and the practical assistance of the volunteer native planting team he co-ordinates.



Photo: Tony Fraser

Arthur Cowan points out his covenant collection to members of ACRE, the Advisory Committee for Regional Environment during a farm visit last year.

## Rescued from the axe

Twenty years ago, when **Colin and Moira Dewes** bought a King Country farm with a fine 5ha stand of dense podocarp forest, they had to pay extra for the forest because of its timber value. They withstood pressure to help their finances by milling it and, instead, protected it with a QEII covenant registered in 1993.

The forest has regenerated well and is a delightful and awe-inspiring area to walk in with its tall matai, totara, kahikatea and rimu trees.

It is not surprising then, that the Dewes decided to also covenant a large tract of bush they acquired when they recently bought part of an adjoining farm. Quite different to the podocarp stand, this forest clothes a hillside bisected by small streams and is dominated by tawa with totara, matai, rewarewa and titoki the other main canopy species. Kaikomako, heketara, pigeonwood and mahoe are common in the understory, which also features abundant taurepo, or N.Z. gloxinia,



*The Dewes' latest covenant is a diverse native hardwood forest.*



Photo: Gerry Kessels

*Colin Dewes enjoys showing visitors an enormous totara tree in the new covenant.*

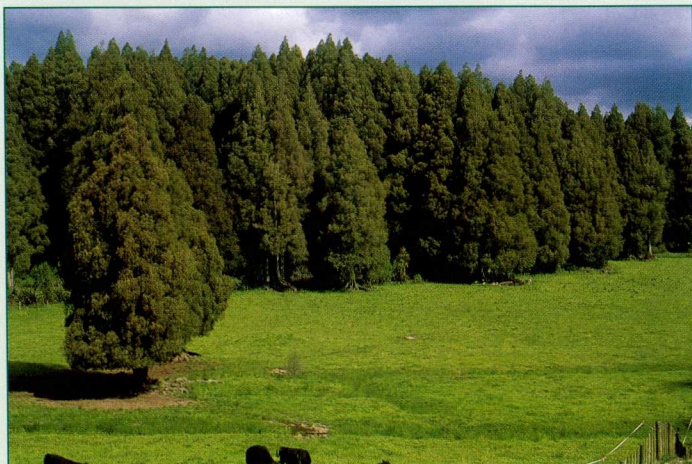
with its pretty orange trumpet flowers. Tui and kereru are present and the forest is part of an almost continuous 5km forest corridor.

Included in the 32ha fenced covenant area is an outlying stand of totara and some pasture where the Dewes plan to assist regeneration with native plantings once goats are better controlled or, preferably, eradicated. A field day was recently held on the property in conjunction with Horizons Manawatu who also contributed towards the cost of fencing the covenant.

## Hodge kahikatea gully

**W**ithin the intensively farmed landscape of the Hamilton basin **John and Margaret Hodge** are making room for native ecosystems too.

At their Te Kowhai farm they have lovingly restored to health a small kahikatea remnant, which they protected under a QEII covenant in 1984 (see *Open Space* No 50 December 2000) and they have now covenanted a further 2.3ha of remnant podocarp forest and swamp.



*The kahikatea remnant restored to good health.*

Most of the covenant is in a gully where the diversity of canopy and understorey species is promising for forest restoration. Some tall trees from the former primary forest remain, and there is good development of secondary regrowth, including a healthy variety of young seedlings coming up amongst the ferns and grasses on the forest floor.

Promising too is the birdlife. Tuis are abundant and kereru (valuable for seed dispersal) are often seen. This is probably because the area is within range of the sizeable areas of native forest that still remain on the western hills of the Hamilton basin.

At the lower end of the covenant the forest gives way to a swampy area with sedges and occasional flax where the small stream draining the gully flows out towards the Waipa River. Willows predominate nearby but young kahikatea are regenerating well amongst them and look likely to overtop and suppress them.

In common with most gully systems of the Waikato plains, invasive weeds are present, including Japanese honeysuckle, privet and wandering willie. Their control will assist forest recovery, as will restoration planting of open areas.

# Pehitawa Kahikatea Forest

The kahikatea forest of the Mangapu valley west of Te Kuiti was first recognised in 1975 by the Forest Research Institute as the best surviving remnant of the dense, tall podocarp forests that used to clothe the lowland plains of the North Island.

In 2001 the NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust succeeded in purchasing an 18.5 ha area, known as the Pehitawa Kahikatea Forest, which is now protected by a QEII covenant. The Nature Heritage Fund contributed substantially to the cost of the land purchase, and Environment Waikato and QEII National Trust also contributed to the protection of the area with fencing and survey costs.

Di Lucas, Chairperson of the Nature Heritage Fund, said she was



The Pehitawa Kahikatea Forest in the Mangapu Valley.



pleased to see such a fine area of kahikatea forest protected where the hydrological regime of a high water table and periodic flooding is still intact. This contributes to species diversity with kahikatea, pukatea and swamp maire in the wetter areas where numerous small pools are a feature, and matai and titoki on the drier higher ground. Several uncommon plants also occur including abundant climbing fuchsia *Fuchsia perscandens*, climbing carmine rata *Metrosideros carminea* and the endangered water milfoil *Myriophyllum robustum*.

Edge planting and possum control are among the restoration measures being carried out by the Native Forest Restoration Trust, with help from the Te Kuiti Tramping Club.

## The large and small of it

It's rewarding to protect giant kahikatea and matai but for Douglas and Shelly Heayns the small details that signal the health of their forest are equally rewarding.

A good understorey has developed in the first area they fenced, in 1985, including tree ferns, divaricating coprosma species, young long-leaved lacebark, seven-finger and marbleleaf and regeneration is now well underway in the more recently fenced area. A special feature is the presence of two locally uncommon ferns *Asplenium hookerianum* and the filmy fern *Hymenophyllum flexuosum*.



Totara and giant kahikatea at the Heayns' covenant.



Filmy fern, *Hymenophyllum flexuosum*.

Photo: Jeremy Rolfe

Recently an interesting plant was discovered that appears to be a hybrid between tree fuchsia and the uncommon climbing fuchsia *Fuchsia perscandens*. These two species are known to cross, producing a named hybrid *Fuchsia x colensoi*.

Glowworms signal the way down the river access track and the Heayns have been delighted to see kereru

increase from one pair to six – a good indicator of a healthy forest habitat.

It's no surprise, then, that the Heayns' 4 ha kahikatea / totara forest covenant was recommended for protection in the Taumaranui protected areas programme and the Heayns have done just that through their QEII covenant.

# Fencing kahikatea remnants is worthwhile

*The simple act of fencing enables even small and long-grazed kahikatea remnants to restore themselves and compete with most weeds, according to a Waikato Landcare Research study.*



Photo: John Greenwood

*Kahikatea remnants are an iconic feature of the lowland Waikato landscape.*

**T**he study focused on the kahikatea stands of the Hamilton and Matamata plains, which are an iconic feature of the Waikato landscape, despite occupying less than 1% of their original extent. Most of the kahikatea in these stands are comparatively young and even-aged, around 100 years old, having largely developed in clusters around 300–400 year-old ‘seed trees’ that escaped forest clearance. The remnant stands are often the only places left for native plants and animals in the intensively farmed landscape but continued grazing reduces the chance of their long-term survival.

Some farmers are reluctant to fence natural areas, believing it encourages weeds, so the research team decided to find out how fencing affected weed abundance as well as the recovery of

fenced-off kahikatea stands in the Waikato.

The 9 remnants studied ranged in size from 1 to 10 ha and were all on the seasonally waterlogged alluvial soil typical of the Waikato kahikatea stands. They had been fenced for periods ranging up to 75 years and also included some unfenced sites that were still being grazed.

Vegetation data was collected from 2–4 plots in each remnant, representing the edge and the interior environments. Such factors as the diversity of native and weed species, the basal area (area occupied by tree stems) and the density of different size classes of trees, shrubs and ground cover were recorded and modelled against the remnant size, the plot position within the remnant and the period since fencing.

Most of the 56 adventive (exotic)

species recorded were pasture grasses and herbs found only at the edge of recently fenced remnants and their numbers were found to slowly decline in the first fifteen years after fencing. After 20 years, most of these species had disappeared, having been overtaken by taller native species.

The diversity of native species was found to increase steadily after fencing, with increasing density of small trees and saplings. Native ground ferns and shade-tolerant understorey shrubs were found in remnants that had been fenced for 25 years or more – an important trend, as they are regarded as ‘indicator’ plants and their reappearance showed that recovery from grazing was progressing well.

Researcher Mark Smale says it’s remarkable just how much of the original native flora has survived despite

50 -100 years' of grazing. He says forest of this kind originally had about 120 species of ferns and flowering plants and 98 of these were found in the group of remnants studied. Even more surprisingly, two-thirds of these surviving species were found in remnants that were still unfenced or had been fenced for 5 years or less. The trouble is that many of the canopy and sub-canopy species will disappear and the diversity of native species decline when the existing mature trees die unless regeneration is allowed to occur. Encouragingly, the study results indicate that, because diversity still exists now, even long-grazed remnants can restore themselves once they are fenced.

Few of the most threatening native forest weeds were present in the remnants studied apart from Chinese privet. This was probably because the remnants were situated within relatively weed-free rural environments. Mark says their findings indicate that fencing within such environments does not encourage weed invasion but, rather,



Photo: Mark Smale

*Hen and chicken fern (Asplenium bulbiferum) is highly palatable to stock so its reappearance indicates good forest recovery.*



Photo: Mark Smale

*Prolonged grazing has destroyed the understorey.*



Photo: Mark Smale

*Diverse native understorey and ground species have re-established - in this case, 27 years after fencing.*

discourages it and fencing alone may be enough to allow the Waikato kahikatea forest remnants to return to a near natural state.

Active control of a small suite of threatening weeds will be necessary, however, if present. Although Jerusalem cherry, a small adventive shrub that forms dense thickets under grazed kahikatea remnants, was found to naturally decline over time, a small group of persistent invasive weeds such as barberry, ivy, wandering willie, and privet will need control if they are present. The only one of these that was widespread in the Landcare study sites was Chinese privet, mainly as seedlings. It was found to decline

slowly over time in the remnants studied but given its invasive reputation, control is nevertheless recommended.

Remnant size did not affect the rate or success of recovery, the most telling factor being the length of time since fencing. Proximity to other native forest seed sources could be an important factor in recovery but the remnants studied were within close range of seed sources so could not be compared with more isolated examples to see if this was so. Further research into this is planned. A parallel study is also underway to see whether the soils under the grazed kahikatea remnants have been altered by application of fertiliser on surrounding farmland over the years and what happens to the soils after fencing off.

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**Research team: Mark Smale of Landcare Research, Hamilton, and Craig Ross and Greg Arnold of Landcare Research in Palmerston North. For further information contact: [SmaleM@landcareresearch.co.nz](mailto:SmaleM@landcareresearch.co.nz)**

## Further information

Factors other than grazing and weed competition can also influence kahikatea remnant recovery, such as the degree of exposure along remnant edges and extent to which the water table has been altered. For further guidance about managing and restoring kahikatea remnants, refer to the excellent factsheet series produced by Environment Waikato at [www.ew.govt.nz](http://www.ew.govt.nz) or Freephone 0800 800 401.

- *Waikato Kahikatea Fragments*
- *Life in a Waikato Kahikatea Forest Fragment*
- *Managing a Waikato Kahikatea Forest Fragment*
- *What to Plant in a Waikato Kahikatea Forest Fragment*
- *Waikato Kahikatea Forest Fragment Planting Guide*

# Magpie control – when is it needed?

*Site-specific control is likely to be more beneficial in protecting native birds from aggressive magpies than large-scale control, according to a recent study.*

The study was initiated to find out more about the regional-scale impact of magpies on other birds to better evaluate the benefits of control programmes. Landcare Research and Waikato University scientists conducted the three-year study in partnership with a number of regional councils throughout the country.

The councils carried out magpie control in 900-ha blocks, removing an average of 548 magpies each year during 2000 – 2003 by trapping, shooting and some poisoning. Populations of magpies and 24 other bird species were then counted in each treatment block and in equivalent non-treatment blocks. In addition, Dai Morgan (a PhD student) undertook detailed observations of magpie behaviour with respect to other birds.

Results were that while magpie counts declined by an average of 62% in treatment blocks compared with non-treatment blocks, the magpies kept coming back and eradication was never achieved. Counts of six other species (blackbird, kereru, myna, skylark, song thrush and starling) increased by up to 2.5 times but the researchers were not sure that these results were due to increased population. Rather, they think it may have been due to the same number of birds being seen more often, an equally likely response to magpie removal.



Photo: Peter Reese

*Nesting magpies. Magpies are particularly aggressive during the breeding season but generally move other birds along a bit rather than killing them.*

Field observations of magpie groups carried out for more than a year revealed that other birds tended to avoid magpies. Yet, only 6% of those that passed within 50 metres of a territorial group were chased and in none of these instances did a magpie hit another bird. This suggests that fatal bird attacks by magpies are, in fact, very rare and the main effect of attacks is for individual birds to be moved along, usually a distance of about 50 – 100 metres.

Non-stop video surveillance of 21 bird nests showed no magpies visiting the nests and the main nest predators were harrier hawks and cats.

## Targeted control

The research team concluded that, at a regional scale, magpies do not adversely affect populations of other bird species. They think that introduced mammals that prey on eggs and chicks, such as ship rats, are more likely to limit bird numbers and that regional-scale animal pest control programmes would be better targeted at those species.

However, particular nuisance magpies should be controlled at specific sites where their aggressive behaviour is excluding birds such as tui and kereru from seasonal food sources or preventing them from moving from one area to another. Landowners are mostly likely to observe when and where this is happening and can seek advice on control methods from the regional council in their area.

Source: Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research New Zealand Limited



Photo: Dr Greg Sherley

*Tuis feeding. Particular magpies may impact native birds by disrupting local movement and access to food sources with their strongly territorial behaviour.*

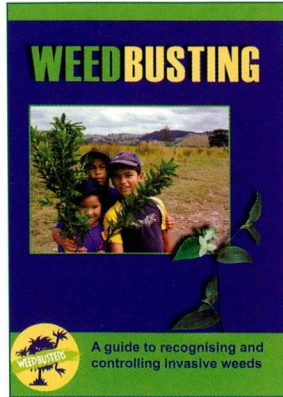
# FRAGMENTS

## Help with Weedbusting

A new website – [www.weedbusters.org.nz](http://www.weedbusters.org.nz) – is the place to visit if you want to find out more about invasive weeds and how to control them.

There's guidance on weed recognition, control techniques and wise weed waste disposal. There's also advice about how to help promote public awareness of weeds and public involvement in 'weed busting.'

A *Weedbusting* booklet has also been published, which can be obtained from (04) 471 3263 or Weedbusters, Department of Conservation, Private Bag 10420, Wellington.



## Biodiversity funding for landowners

Private landowners interested in improving indigenous biodiversity on their properties can seek financial assistance from the government in the latest round of the Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds. Projects can include activities such as fencing and pest control.

Individuals or groups (e.g. neighbours) can apply, either independently, through the local council or through the QEII Trust. Covenantors please contact your local QEII rep to help you decide the best way to apply for funding.

Applications will open in mid-August and close in late September. Further information, application forms and project criteria can be found on: [www.biodiversity.govt.nz/land/nzbs/pvtland/condition.html](http://www.biodiversity.govt.nz/land/nzbs/pvtland/condition.html)

## QEII Swann dri® Vest

If you would like to purchase a Swann dri®, merino wool vest, embroidered with the QEII logo please complete the form below and post with payment to QEII National Trust, PO Box 3341 Wellington or Fax to 04 472 5578 or Phone 04 472 6626



**Price: \$165** including GST and postage (Navy only)

Sizes available:	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL
<b>Chest (cm)</b>	94	99	104	114	124	134
<b>Waist (cm)</b>	80	85	90	100	110	120

Name.....

Address (for courier delivery).....

.....

Telephone.....

Size(s)..... Quantity:.....

**Method of payment** –  Cheque  Mastercard  Visa

Total \$.....  Please send a receipt

Credit card details – Number

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Cardholder name..... Expiry date.....

Signature.....



## SPIRIT IN NATURE

[www.eagle-tours.co.nz](http://www.eagle-tours.co.nz)

Dr. John Broomfield & Jo Imlay,  
(03) 576 5048, [eagle@ts.co.nz](mailto:eagle@ts.co.nz)

**Workshop on our Marlborough Sounds QEII covenant**  
Introduction to Shamanism, 12-18 Mar. 2005

**Eco-Tours – travel with time for reflection**  
Wildlife of Tropical Australia, 27 Oct.-14 Nov. 2004  
Spirit of South India, 15 Jan.-6 Feb. 2005

## Useful reference websites:

[www.bush.org.nz](http://www.bush.org.nz)

– for information about ecological restoration

[www.nzflora.landcareresearch.co.nz](http://www.nzflora.landcareresearch.co.nz)

– for information on native plants

[www.biodiversity.govt.nz/land/nzbs/land/condition.html](http://www.biodiversity.govt.nz/land/nzbs/land/condition.html)

– for funding information

[www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/people-and-their-issues/access](http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/people-and-their-issues/access)

– access information

[www.wwf.org.nz/conservation/habitat\\_protection\\_fund.cfm](http://www.wwf.org.nz/conservation/habitat_protection_fund.cfm)

– for further info about funding opportunities

[www.nzpcn.org.nz](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz)

– New Zealand plant conservation network

## Recently registered covenants

A summary of covenants registered from 1 March 2004 to 30 June 2004.

Covenantor	Area (ha)	Open space type	District Council
Macpherson	8.36	Lowland primary podocarp/hardwood forest remnant	Far North
Anderson	2.58	Coastal regenerating pohutukawa forest and archaeological site	Whangarei
Littler	1.22	Lowland taraire-totara-towai forest and landscape feature	Whangarei
Allbon & Everson	0.73	Coastal secondary forest and shrubland	Whangarei
Tapp	29.70	Lowland secondary broadleaf/podocarp forest with created wetlands	Whangarei
Chamberlin	1.55	Coastal modified primary totara-puriri-taraire forest	Auckland
Desloe Produce Ltd	0.80	Lowland secondary riparian taraire/puriri-titoki forest	Franklin
Gedye	17.83	Semi-coastal forest, wetland, wildlife habitat and archaeological site	Franklin
Auckland Regional Council	0.20	Semi-coastal modified kauri primary forest	Waitakere
Denize	27.41	Coastal wetland, coastal forest, frog habitat, archaeological values	Thames / Coromandel
Denize	11.52	Coastal wetland, coastal forest, frog habitat, archaeological values	Thames / Coromandel
Denize	0.61	Coastal wetland, coastal forest, frog habitat, archaeological values	Thames / Coromandel
Denize	6.80	Coastal wetland, coastal forest, frog habitat, archaeological values	Thames / Coromandel
Denize	5.52	Coastal wetland, coastal forest, frog habitat, archaeological values	Thames / Coromandel
Dewstow & Gulliver	2.50	Lowland primary forest, cultural, historical and archeological site	Western Bay of Plenty
Carter Holt Harvey Forests Limited	334.00	Montane primary podocarp/beech forest and geological feature	Waioira
Scott	32.93	Lowland primary & secondary rimu/tawa/matai/manuka/kanuka forest	Waitomo
Holdsworth	3.74	Semi coastal secondary forest, landscape and wildlife habitat	Gisborne
Bramwell	87.16	Lopwland or secondary forest and river system	Hastings
Tombleson	28.44	Lowland podocarp-hardwood forest remnant	Ruapehu
Dewes	32.17	Lowland primary modified tawa forest	Ruapehu
Brough	1.17	Lowland modified primary forest remnant and riparian margin	New Plymouth
Braddock	246.92	Lowland primary & secondary podocarp/hardwood forest	New Plymouth
Hann	0.53	Lowland modified primary kahikatea forest remnant	Stratford
Elphick	80.94	Lowland primary rata-rimu/tawa forest	Stratford
Hann	0.33	Lowland modified primary kahikatea forest remnant	Stratford
Braggins	35.80	Lowland tawa-mahoe forest remnant	South Taranaki
Schrider & Campbell	2.29	Coastal modified primary forest remnant, lake and sedgeland	South Taranaki
NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust	333.69	Lowland secondary rewarewa-pukatea/manuka forest	South Taranaki
Milne	9.80	Lowland tawa - mixed broadleaved forest remnant	South Taranaki
Penwarden	0.70	Lowland modified primary titoki-tawa-pukatea forest remnant	Wanganui
Hanui Land Limited	0.40	Arboretum amenity	Horowhenua
Anderton and Abigail	4.10	Lowland modified primary flaxland, ti kouka treeland and ponds	Kapiti Coast
Delany	5.30	Lowland modified primary tawa forest and secondary manuka scrub	Kapiti Coast
Milne	3.69	Lowland forest remnants with wetland and wildlife habitat	Tasman
Pogson	2.58	Lowland forest remnants with wetland and wildlife habitat	Tasman
Walls	2.53	Semi-coastal secondary wetland, scrub and wildlife habitat	Tasman
Hindmarsh & Walls	2.11	Forest and forest remnants with wetland and wildlife habitat	Tasman
Woodward	0.41	Semi-coastal manuka/raupo-flax wetland	Tasman
Greer	1.89	Semi-coastal wetland, scrub and wildlife habitat	Tasman
Hou Ngahere Limited	16.21	Secondary kahikatea forest, modified primary forest and gardens	Marlborough
Cameron	3.03	Montane modified primary forest and shrubland	Kaikoura
Horne	8.09	Primary lowland beech forest remnant	Hurunui
Gurnsey & Crane	8.09	Secondary semi-coastal hardwood forest remnant	Banks Peninsula
Allan	11.55	Modified primary and secondary lowland forest and wetland	Timaru
McKerchar Family Trust	7.45	Lowland secondary podocarp-hardwood forest	Timaru
Gable	2.67	Semi coastal broadleaf/kanuka forest and restoration project	Dunedin
Jenkinson	3.16	Semi-coastal secondary kanuka-broadleaf forest	Dunedin
Grut	9.36	Semi-coastal secondary kanuka-broadleaf forest	Dunedin
Pinckney	19.33	Lowland lakes, wetland and tussock grassland	Southland
Marshall's Braeside Limited	3.35	Lowland modified primary kahikatea/kamaha forest	Southland
Horton	6.86	Lowland modified primary podocarp forest and wetland	Southland

## Covenants Update

As at 8 July 2004, there were 1900 open space covenants totaling 67,258 hectares. In addition, there were a further 482 approved covenants, totaling 16,236 hectares, awaiting registration. The regional breakdown based on Regional Council boundaries, is as follows:

Region	No. of Covenants	Area Protected (ha)
Northland	281	5497
Auckland	156	1438
Waikato	306	9681
Bay of Plenty	116	8474
Hawkes Bay	102	7873
Gisborne	70	2332
Taranaki	103	2251
Horizons	190	3737
Wellington	148	4574
Nelson	9	400
Marlborough	22	765
Tasman	70	1508
West Coast	13	557
Canterbury	131	8646
Otago	73	7129
Southland	110	2396
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>67,258</b>



## TRUST PEOPLE

### Queen's Birthday Honours

**Bill Garland**, QEII National Trust Board member, was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to farming and conservation in this year's Queen's Honours. Bill is a well-respected advocate and leader of the farming sector and is also committed to promoting sustainable farming and conservation. He is the Chair and a judge of the Farm Environment Awards Trust and has a forest covenant on his Waikato farm. Bill also received the prestigious 'Old Blue' award from the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of NZ in July.

QEII member, **Jan Riddell**, received the Queen's Service Medal for public services. Jan is an active member of QEII, is a member of the Southland Conservation Board and has an approved QEII covenant on her property which is awaiting registration.

### Waikato

Gerry Kessels leaves the Trust after five years as QEII representative in the Waikato where his energy in a region with such a high number of covenants has been invaluable. Gerry will be dividing his time between his ecology consulting business, his young family and organic beef farming.



Gerry Kessels with field assistant son Taio.

### Coastal Otago

Rebecca Reid, the new QEII representative for Coastal Otago, brings with her plenty of experience in conservation and heritage management.

She was a hut warden and park interpreter for the Department of Conservation for 10 years – mostly throughout Otago and Southland – and managed the Fiordland National Park summer visitor programme. She was then the Otago / Southland Area Co-ordinator for the NZ Historic Places Trust for four years before coming to QEII.

She lives at Waititi, just north of Dunedin – conveniently central to her new area – where she's working on bringing her own patch of bush "up to scratch."



Rebecca Reid, checking a photo point for future monitoring.

### Waiau Catchment, Southland

Mark Sutton has been appointed the Waiau Catchment representative for QEII, which he will look after while Gay Munro will continue as QEII representative for the rest of Southland.

Mark has been a field officer for the Southland region of Fish and Game New Zealand for the last 28 years. During the last 5-6 years

he has been responsible for the field representative in the region.



Mark Sutton, the new QEII rep for the Waiau Catchment.

operations of the Waiau Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Trust, which funds habitat improvement within the Waiau River catchment as part of the compensation settlement for the Manapouri power scheme.

Mark is a born and bred Southlander and his father, Roger Sutton, was the first QEII

representative in the region.

### Director Vacancy

The QEII National Trust is managed by a Board of Directors. Trust members elect two of the directors and Government appoints the other four, having due regard to environmental and conservation values, the interests of rural landowners and the interests of the Maori community.

One of the appointed directorships will be coming vacant in February 2005 and preliminary notice of the vacancy is now given. Nominations will be formally called in August 2004.

# About QEII open space covenants

## How your covenant helps New Zealand

Many plants, animals and landscapes found in New Zealand are unique to this country. Their uniqueness helps set us apart and define us as a nation. Unfortunately, many of these species and features are under threat. The decreasing diversity of our indigenous flora and fauna is regarded as one of our biggest environmental problems.

While there is a network of publicly owned conservation areas, the vast majority (70%) of New Zealand's land remains in private ownership. Many habitats and features are found only in these areas. They can only be protected with the goodwill and action of landowners.

## Practical land management and farm productivity

Many farmers are motivated to protect natural features because it makes good land management sense. Bush and wetlands help filter rain and runoff ensuring water quality. They encourage recycling of nutrients and reduce soil erosion. Forest remnants reduce wind, and provide shelter and shade, enhancing stock management and production. Fencing areas not only allows the regeneration of the bush, but also helps protect stream banks, water quality and keeps stock out of hard to manage areas. Healthy bush and natural landscapes beautify and add economic value to farm properties.



**QEII is always in need of greater financial and moral support for its work. You can help by joining as a member.**

Members receive:

- A year's subscription to our magazine *Open Space* – three issues a year.
- Free entrance to properties owned or administered by the following organisations: The National Trust (UK), National Trust for Scotland, National Trust of Australia (all states), Barbados National Trust, Bermuda National Trust, National

Trust for Fiji, Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, Gibraltar Heritage Trust, Japan National Trust, National Trust for Zimbabwe.

- Entitlement to nominate and vote two members onto the QEII National Trust Board of Directors.

QEII covenantors become members automatically.

Please fill out this membership application form and send it to: **QEII National Trust, PO Box 3341, Wellington** or **Free-phone 0508 732 878.**

## QEII National Trust Membership Application

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone..... Email.....

**Membership Type** – tick appropriate category

- Individual \$30     Family \$45     Life \$550  
 Corporate – business (on application)  
 Corporate – non profit organisation \$50

**Donation** – optional (tick box): Donations over \$5.00 are tax deductible

- \$100     \$50     \$20     Other \$.....

**Method of payment** –  Cheque     Mastercard     Visa

Credit card details –                      Number

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Cardholder name.....                      Expiry date.....

Signature.....

Total \$.....                       Please send a receipt

**Please send me information on:**

- Making a bequest to the Trust     Open Space Covenants

**Gift Membership**

Gift to: name & address.....

Send next year's renewal to me                       to the recipient

# Helping you protect the special nature of your land

## What is a QEII open space covenant?

A covenant is a legally binding protection agreement which is registered on the title of the land. It is voluntary but once in place binds the current and all subsequent landowners. Private property rights are not jeopardised - the landowner retains ownership and management of the land. Visitor access is available only with the landowner's prior permission.

Each covenant is unique. It can apply to the whole property or just part of the property. There can be different management areas within a covenant with varying applicable conditions. Conditions can be stringent where rare or vulnerable natural features or habitats are being protected.

Open space covenants are generally in perpetuity though there can be a case for a variable term covenant. These include: **Kawenata**, on Maori land, which recognises tino rangatiratanga, and **Life of the Trees** where individual trees occur in a situation where they may not be self-regenerating. **Landscape protection agreements** are used where the land does not have title, such as roadside areas.

The average covenant size is around 35 hectares, the largest is over 6,500 hectares. There are currently over 2,000 registered and approved covenants extending from the Far North to Stewart Island from sea level to above the bush line.

## Managing an open space covenant

QEII helps landowners with ongoing management advice and support. A management plan may be prepared with the landowner when a covenant is established, which sets out ongoing management objectives and provides guidance on such aspects as species management, pest control and restoration methods.

Each covenant is visited regularly, usually every 2 years, to monitor its condition and trends, identify and address any threats, and advise the owner about how to meet the covenant objectives.

## How to covenant your special area

If you wish to protect a special area on your property, the following steps are typically needed to gain a QEII open space covenant.

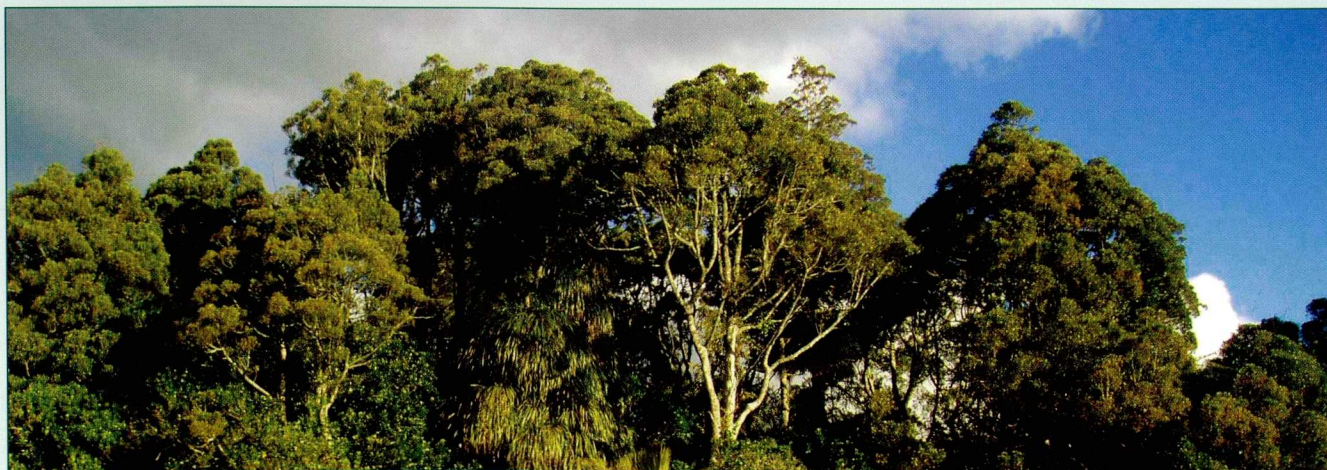
- **Enquiry.** Ask your region's QEII representative (see inside front cover) to visit your property.
- **Evaluation.** The QEII representative will evaluate your special area against a wide range of criteria including: ecological and biodiversity value, naturalness, sustainability, existing or potential value as an ecological corridor, wildlife, geological features, landscape values, cultural and heritage values. There will also be practical considerations including: management needs, threats to site values, your motivation and potential sources of funding.
- **Approval.** The QEII Trust Board will consider the evaluation, and approve the covenant if it meets the criteria. You will then be asked to sign a covenant agreement.
- **Fencing.** If required, the covenant area will have to be fenced next.
- **Survey.** An accurate survey plan or aerial photodiagram of the covenant area will be prepared, which you will need to check and sign.
- **Registration.** The covenant will then be formally registered on the title of your land with Land Information New Zealand. QEII will lodge all the necessary documentation.

## Funding assistance

You may be eligible for assistance in funding your QEII open space covenant in a number of ways:

- Fencing costs
- Rates relief
- Weed and pest control
- Restoration planting.

Your QEII representative will be able to advise you about possible sources of funding.



# “Waihoensis” Totara Covenant

Robin and Jenny Hodgkinson are the first farmers to formally protect hybrid “waihoensis” totara with a QEII covenant.

The “waihoensis” variety, which occurs only on the South Island’s West Coast, once covered the coast’s drier river flats but most of it has been cleared. Now only about 1% remains as small remnants on farmland and in the conservation estate.

Robin and Jenny began fencing the 1 ha bush remnant soon after they purchased their Harihari dairy farm. When they heard about the QEII Trust, they contacted QEII West Coast representative, Ian James, who immediately recognised the value of the young totara forest, dating back to around the 18<sup>th</sup> century. With assistance from QEII, Robin has now increased the fenced area and sprayed the gorse and blackberry that had invaded the forest during earlier years of neglect.



Photo: Ian James

The impact of cattle can be seen in the foreground area, which has only just been fenced, compared with the shrubby *Coprosma rotundifolia* in the background, fenced five years earlier.

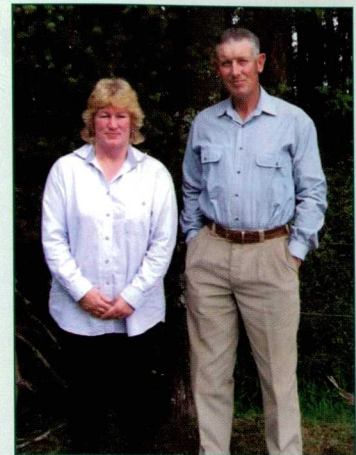


Photo: Ian James

Jenny and Robin Hodgkinson beside their “waihoensis” totara remnant.

Ian expects the whole character of the forest to change over the next decade as palatable broadleaf shrubs, such as kaikomako, manatu, konini and pate, gradually replace the browse-resistant mikimiki and weeds that have dominated while cattle have had access to the bush.

A healthy population of native birds, including kereru, tui and korimako (bellbird), already inhabit the bush. Totara forest provides vital habitat for kereru and tui, in particular, during late winter and spring when food is scarce elsewhere.

The covenant is only the first step in Robin’s plans for the farm. As he says, “dairy cattle play havoc with native bush” and he intends to fence several other smaller patches of totara over time.

See “South Westland’s special totara-matai forests” in Issue 60 of *Open Space* for the origin of “waihoensis” totara.

## Into the Mangrove Swamps

The mangrove forest ecosystem at Aroha Ecological Centre in Kerikeri can now be experienced close up thanks to the construction of a viewing platform. Visitors can enter the forest environment without getting their feet wet or damaging the distinctive aerial roots of the mangrove trees.

The opening of the platform coincided with the May QEII National Trust Board meeting at the ecological centre. Director Yvonne Sharp and Mayor of the Far North District Council, who lives in Kerikeri, did the honours assisted by local school children.

Greg and Gay Blunden, Centre Managers, say the education programmes and facilities at the centre, supported by the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board, are attracting school children and other groups in increasing numbers. The viewing platform enables visitors to observe and learn about the mangrove forest environment - the unusual ways in which mangroves survive and prosper in their tidal environment, the myriad life hidden in the fertile swamp mud and the important role that mangrove forests play in Northland’s coastal ecology.



Principal of Riverview Primary School, Ken Knight (right) and centre co-manager Greg Blunden consider the potential for on-site education.