



COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

March 2014

I continue to work towards a sign-off for pest control above the Whau Valley Dam. Kay Smith, of the Whau Valley Landcare Group, has very kindly delivered a letter to most households in the Whau Valley area, and I have given the same letter, with a visit and chat, to Whau Valley Primary School and a nearby kindergarten, plus a visit to the Christian School in the Whau Valley Road. Following my visit I now have a date to talk to the pupils and teachers about the Trust's work and the creatures and community values we are trying to enhance.

I have spent a couple of days spraying for weeds at the end of Kauika Rd West and was able to chat up the folk who live at the end of that road right by the bush. They now have a better understanding of what the Trust is trying to achieve and are our eyes and ears when it comes to things like dog control. They also appreciate someone actually doing something about the weeds that are encroaching into the bush, and we have a source of water as well!

Jane Norman, our Royal Society Scholar, is now back teaching at Kamo Primary School. She has finished her time with us as a Society Scholar and presented us with her final report plus a DVD entitled "Reptiles in our Midst".

With Jane's input, we now have a very good, on-going study of the recovery of our gecko species in Pukenui Forest over the coming years.

I had an on-site visit with a WDC staff member at the Quarry Arts Centre re our park bench, and it should be in place fairly soon. Our thanks go to Ian Buckley for refurbishing the bench so well. All we need now is an appropriate plaque to go on the seat.

Royal Forest & Bird are holding a bat conference next week-end south of Nelson.. For obvious reasons I was very keen to go, but the tyranny of distance has meant it was too expensive to go. However I will endeavour to get the papers that come out of the conference that we may be able to use in our bat conservation here.

Finally I recently received a newsletter from the Kamo Vets. It contains a story of Potter the cat, who was taken to the vets with a throat problem. Under sedation it was found that an entire weta hind leg was jammed in its throat, reminding us that cats will eat anything.

Gerry Brackenbury

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