



**RANGER'S REPORT TO THE  
PUKENUI/WESTERN HILLS FOREST  
CHARITABLE TRUST  
(June 2012)**



*Northland Hospitality*

'Tis the season for kiwi listening. Sadly, as far as Pukenui Forest is concerned, it is now an empty sound chamber. Myself and two volunteers went out on a perfect listening night recently and, over two hours, heard nothing. Pete Graham from DOC even lent us some automatic kiwi callers, but to no avail.

Better news is that another fifteen to twenty goats are no more, thanks to the goat busters. The last month has seen the goat shooters struggle to find goats to shoot and we now have to decide if we want to skip a year or two in the goat eradication programme which was originally for five years. We have just finished year three.

While still in the forest, the Autumn rata (*Metrosideros fulgens*) is now in flower and the volunteers continue to trap stoats and feral cats. The Sheryl Kill Quotient (SKQ) currently stands at 23 stoats, five ferrets and three cats...and counting. Further to which, the volunteers have had to switch from salted rabbit to hens' eggs. Unfortunately, while rabbit meat is free, hens' eggs are not.

With September being the date we plan to start our next pest knock down, with intensive trapping and poisoning in the "Ark-in-the-Park" area in Pukenui, this entails me going through the hoops again and filing returns for both the Department of Conservation (AEE) and the Ministry of Health (MOH). Fortunately, having been through all this last year, it will be slightly less arduous this time round.

Without funding this Trust, like any other, will not be achieving very much. Sue Milner and I made a ppp (PowerPoint presentation) to the Whangarei District Council on their Long Term Plan (please add any music you like here). We requested 20k and the nodding heads either meant the councillors were going to sleep, or were keen on what we want to do over the coming years. I would like to thank Sharon Morgan and Sue for their help and advice. The Trust is now waiting patiently to hear how we have got on with our other two big funding applications with ASB and the Pacific Development and Conservation Trust. We will know by the end of the year.

Finally, I am still working on our Trust's Health and Safety Plan. Margaret has kindly offered to help me work my way through it.

**Gerry Brackenbury**  
Ranger (Part-time)