



**RANGER'S REPORT TO THE
PUKENUI/WESTERN HILLS FOREST
CHARITABLE TRUST
(July 2013)**



Northland Hospitality

Another busy month has come and gone, which included farewelling two of our committee members, Grant Smith and Alan Martin. Both have done much for the Trust and, of course, Alan was our first Chairman, who set the course to many achievements from our early days back in 2008. Alan also kept us all honest as our Treasurer, and his professional advice to the Trust has been invaluable. Thank you both.

Weeds and pests have featured strongly this month, with some of our team heading north to Kaitaia for the Trapper's Workshop, while our own Sara Brill held her Weed Workshop at the NRC. I also attended our own Health & Safety meeting with our predator team, and two more of our people now have their Poison Licence. This will be very useful later in the year when we start our next pest knock-down in the AIP.

Further to which, I have started the process with the DHB to get our permit (MOH) to poison the enlarged Ark/Park this coming spring.

The NRC has announced the inaugural meeting of the Mangere Stream Catchment Group, and we meet this coming August. At least one of their committee is on our Ahi Kaa committee.

Margaret and I put a lot of effort into the latest ASB Community Trust funding application, which was even more demanding than the original one, and we just made the deadline by having to courier the application down to Auckland. Happily, we have heard that it was received on time. I wish to thank Margaret in particular for her hard work and dedication.

I met with Greg Innes, a professional marketing strategist, for coffee and a chat about ideas for the Trust, to find a major funder/strategic partner. He came up with some interesting ideas.

I continue to liaise with Jane Norman, our Royal Society science scholar, and we are developing some research ideas in Pukenui Forest. I also gave a talk about our work in the bush to her class, who are themselves keen to be involved through tree planting and other activities.

I have made contact with the Whau Valley Landcare Group, and have asked them to invite me to their next meeting so I can bring them up to speed with our activities and aspirations, and see how we can work together into the future. One told me he was sorry to see our native pigeon numbers plummet from 20 years ago due, no doubt, to possums, but also to certain human beings being implicated as well.

Finally, Chris, our trapper, has been on the job, plus helping Max and his team re-mark tracks through the A/P area. Along with a bunch of rats, he also caught a weasel. I read in a recent Country Life magazine that during the Middle Ages, people believed that a weasel conceived through their ear, and gave birth through their mouth! Some people will believe anything. Would you believe that I recently heard a kookaburra near Three Mile Bush Road?

Gerry Brackenbury
Ranger (Part-time)