

RANGER'S REPORT

PUKENUI/WESTERN HILLS FOREST CHARITABLE TRUST

(November 2013)

With the very generous grant from the ASB Community Trust, we are now in a much stronger position to benefit the Pukenui Forest. Already in the short term, our trapper's days have doubled and over the coming weeks and months we will need to organise meetings to discuss how our funding will be spent over the next three years.

Following the Committee's recent strategic decision to raise our profile with the general public, quite a lot has been achieved in the past few weeks. We gained excellent exposure with a Northern Advocate feature article in their weekend edition plus the promise of images taken by photographer, Mike Cunningham. The story prompted a phone call from an announcer from Auckland radio station, Radio Live. I spoke with announcer, Graham Hill for around half an hour about our work enhancing Pukenui Forest and our future plans. Graham was an ex-Whangaruvian from Maunu and was very happy to give us a plug.

I have contacted the A&P Society and we are now booked in for their annual show this December 7th and 8th at Barge Park. We will share the space with Kiwi North (Whangarei Museum) who have good resources. We can share such as a tent, stuffed kiwi and live geckos!

Ian Buckley has been working with Jonzone Graphic Design and they have been given a decent sized map of the forest (thank you WDC) which they will put on a board for use in our promotional work. Ian has also kindly offered free accommodation for our trapping gear on his farm and this will save us at least \$250.00 per month. Further to which, NRC has also generously given us several thousand dollars' worth of traps, meaning we have reached the number of traps necessary to allow us to apply for a kiwi transfer if we so wish. I am meeting shortly with the Whau Valley Landcare Group, to bring them up to speed with our work in the forest and our plans for protecting the forest around the Whau Valley Dam area.

Jane Norman, our Royal Society Science scholar, and I have finished nailing up several lines of lizard covers and these will be checked for gecko species this December. We have done the same in the Kiwi North grounds and we can't wait to check them out! The NZ Herpetological Society will provide us with the protocols and forms to fill in when the time comes.

I have been in discussion with Ross Johnson, Biodiversity Officer with NRC, who will shortly be giving us foot cleaning equipment to protect Pukenui Forest from the Kauri Dieback virus. We have been officially told that the forest does not have PTA and we want to keep it that way.

The seat kindly donated by WDC is currently being cleaned up by Ian and, when he has finished, the Council will secure it at the lovely little park behind the Quarry Arts Centre at the end of Selwyn Avenue.

Finally, I would like to thank Margaret's son, Chris for making, and gifting to us, two weta boxes which we will find somewhere appropriate to place.

Gerry Brackenbury
Ranger (Part-time)