



ASB Community Trust

Te Kaitiaki Putea o Tamaki o Tai Tokerau

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RANGER'S REPORT PUKENUI/WESTERN HILLS FOREST CHARITABLE TRUST (December 2013)

I would like to start this report with a huge pat on the back to all those involved with our stand at the recent A&P Show at Barge Park. My thanks to those who helped set up, do printing, man the tent and take it down and return displays to all involved. The display was attractive, relevant and fun. Special thanks to Kiwi North for lending us their gear, especially the Auckland green gecko that had the younger visitors in particular, intrigued.

Thanks also to our fellow travellers next to our tent, the NZ Landcare Trust, for sharing their tent and their company over the weekend. Ian Buckley's kiwi beak and sugared worms were a standout!

The second possum and rat poisoning exercise has now been completed and predictions are that in over 400 hectares there will be less than 3% present of the hairy critters. A great achievement by Max Hutchings and his predator team. We have continued to walk more stoat boxes and traps into the forest and now only have about 20 more to walk in before we have completed the stoat lines to DOC's compliance.



The Northland Regional Council has generously given us more stoat boxes to complete the above and they have also given us cleaning gear for Kauri Die-back prevention. This will be put out over the coming weeks in preparation for summer visitors to the forest.

I recently met up with the Whau Valley Landcare group, and on greeting me thrust a glass of wine into my hand! My kind of people. I told them of all the things that we had achieved over the past three years or so, and they said they were very happy to support us as best they could. They were a very enthusiastic group and I look forward to a closer liaison with them as we cover more and more of Pukenui Forest in a protective mantle.

Jane Norman and I recently checked under the rubber covers we had put out earlier for geckos but sadly we did not see any. The covers will now remain undisturbed for another year before they are checked again.

Finally, I attended the Mangere Stream Catchment group meeting and learned a lot from the venerable Bob Cathcart about the fractured geology of Northland, and an interesting talk from a representative of DairyNZ.

Gerry Brackenbury
Ranger (Part-time)