



**RANGER'S REPORT TO THE  
PUKENUI/WESTERN HILLS FOREST  
CHARITABLE TRUST  
(August 2011)**



*Northland Hospitality*

It is hard to believe a whole month has passed since my last Ranger's Report. My time has been spent both in the field and staring at my computer screen, not to mention a number of meetings and personal visits to schools, pre-schools and vets, and on the phone to tramping clubs and other forest users and forest neighbours.

Field work has been spent GPS mapping the 200 ha "Ark-in-the-Park", including a close encounter with a giant 400 year old Totara with a gbh of six metres! We also set up a native pigeon sitting on an egg...keep sitting pidgy...the cavalry are coming!

Another major milestone occurred this week when volunteers Max Hutchings, Marcus Bax, Mark Dudley and myself nailed up the first twenty of the 200 Philproof bait stations to go in the AIP... it really feels as if we are getting very close to some serious, practical conservation work.

Paperwork has included filling in the 35 pages for the Ministry of Health application to use Feratox in the modified bait stations, designed by Nigel Miller of DOC, to kill possums and rats. My thanks for invaluable assistance to achieve the above go to Steve Henderson of NRC, and Nigel and Lyn Davison for assistance with DOC's requirement to fill in their AEE.

Max and I had a meeting with Kane McElrea of NRC to start their process of getting stoat-killing traps (DOC 200's) to go on adjoining private property abutting the forest.

As part of our aspiration to return kiwi back to Pukenui Forest, I have written a comprehensive Kiwi Translocation Proposal to the Department of Conservation in Wellington. This is a big deal, and we have to prove beyond doubt that we can defend kiwi returning to the forest from dogs, stoats and wild cats. Goat hunters have reported the high numbers of feral cats in the forest. Their days are numbered.

Sharon Morgan and I met with WDC Parks Manager, Paul McDonald, to look at the "big picture" for the forest and to see how WDC and the Pukenui Trust can work together for the overall advancement of the forest, including possible funding to enhance the walking tracks, weed control and biodiversity of this important area.

Finally, further to the above, Steve Pohe wrote an excellent Progress Report for the WDC, covering all that we have achieved to date and our many options for the future.

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