



**Waitakere Ranges  
Protection Society Inc**

# news

*PO Box 15668, New Lynn, Auckland 0640*

Website: [www.waitakereranges.org.nz](http://www.waitakereranges.org.nz)

Email: [wrps@waitakereranges.org.nz](mailto:wrps@waitakereranges.org.nz)

**Issue 148      February 2011**

## Your President's Report



This year is promising to be a very busy one for the Society. We are slowly finding our way with the new Auckland Council and the Local Board, but it is clearly going to take some time for the new Council to resolve the complexities of the amalgamation. It is also Parliamentary election year, and we intend to invite candidates standing in the Waitakere Electorate to a forum later in the year so that Society members can hear them speak on environmental issues in the ranges.

The Society has lodged appeals with the Environment Court on Auckland Council District Plan Changes 35, 36, 37 which were notified by the Waitakere City Council last year, and we expect these appeals to be heard this year. We are also a section 274 party to the application for declarations in relation to a number of District Plan Tree Protection Rules lodged by Waitakere, North Shore and Auckland Regional Council prior to amalgamation.

The rapid spread of Kauri dieback disease remains of great concern, and the Society has called for better government funding of the research into and management of the disease. We welcomed the closure of some tracks in the ranges over the summer period, and would strongly support more closures to ensure that areas of very high or

low infestation are quarantined to see if this slows the spread of the disease.

We were very pleased to hear that on the 1<sup>st</sup> February the Society was registered as a Charitable entity under the Charities Act 2005. In order to qualify for charitable status the Society had to revise its constitution, and the new constitution was adopted at a Special General Meeting in June last year. Our new constitution is on our website.

Notice of our Annual General Meeting is in this newsletter and members will also be formally notified by letter in early March. I hope that many of our members will attend and I can recommend our guest speaker for the evening, Auckland Museum botanist Ewen Cameron who will speak about our former patron, the late Dr Lucy Cranwell and her years researching the botany of the ranges, and also about his own research into the flora and fauna of the small islands off the Waitakere coast.

On behalf of the executive committee, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and wish you all a very enjoyable and prosperous 2011.

John Edgar  
President

## 2011 Subscription Renewal Notice

The 2011 subscription renewal notice has been sent to all members recently. If you haven't renewed your subscription yet, by post or online, could we urge you to do so as soon as possible. If you aren't sure whether or not you have renewed your sub, feel free to email me at [kemsdale@ihug.co.nz](mailto:kemsdale@ihug.co.nz) or phone 817 2788 to check. I'd rather that you did that than pay twice. If you've lost/mislaidd your invoice, we'd be pleased to send you another.

Sandra Jones  
Treasurer



## **WRPS Annual General Meeting**

**7 pm Monday 28 March 2011  
Arataki Visitors Centre  
Scenic Drive**

Please join us at 7pm for our AGM,  
followed by our guest speaker

**Ewen Cameron**  
who will speak on  
**"Lucy Cranwell's Museum years;  
and biota of the wild Waitakere islands"**

Ewen will cover some of Lucy Cranwell's field work and collections during her period at the Auckland Museum (1929-1944). This will be followed by one of Ewen's research interests - the flora (& fauna) of the exposed small islands along the Waitakere coast, and will include assisting his brother-in-law Graeme Taylor, a seabird specialist, with his research on the northern Te Henga islands, especially Kauwahaia which has four breeding species of petrels and shearwaters; it is the only island connected to the New Zealand mainland with more than two pairs of breeding petrels.

Ewen has been Curator of Botany at the Auckland Museum for nearly 20 years. He has had a life-long interest in natural history and a specialised interest in the wild (native & naturalised) plants of northern New Zealand and its offshore islands. Ewen knew the late Lucy Cranwell-Smith, the Society's past patron, well.

### **WRPS is now a Registered Charitable Organisation**

As mentioned in the President's report above, the Society is now a registered charity. Details may be found on the website of the Charities Commission New Zealand [www.register.charities.govt.nz](http://www.register.charities.govt.nz). Click on "Search the Register" button.

Our new Rules (aka Constitution) are posted on the websites of both the Charities Commission and the Society. If you don't have internet access but would like a copy of our Rules please contact the WRPS Secretary, Mels Barton (816 8337 or PO Box 15668, New Lynn, Auckland 0640) and she will post a copy to you.

Significant changes were made to the wording, if not the substance, of the Objectives of the Society in order to

comply with the requirements of the Charities Commission. The new objectives are as follows:

- (a) To protect and conserve the natural environment in the Waitakere Ranges.
- (b) To raise awareness through education, research, publication and promotional work of the importance and value of the Waitakere Ranges to New Zealand's environmental heritage, preservation and wellbeing.
- (c) To promote any scheme or activity that may benefit or help protect or preserve the Waitakere Ranges, including but not limited to restoration projects, where appropriate.
- (d) To oppose any scheme or activity which might significantly adversely affect the natural ecosystems and landscape of the Waitakere Ranges.

### **'Donee Organisation' status**

Now that the Society has been registered by the Charities Commission, the IRD has confirmed that it meets the qualifying criteria under LD3 of the Income Tax Act. This means that individuals can claim a donation tax credit & Maori Authorities and certain companies can claim for donations to our organisation. [Note: Even though we've only just been registered by the Charities Commission, WRPS was never taken off the list of donee organisations on the IRD website. But it is good to know that as a registered charity we now officially qualify.]

### **Pig Control Programme**

The Auckland Council is planning to undertake four rounds of feral pig control throughout the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park this year. The first two of these rounds are scheduled for Monday 14 February - Friday 11 March, and Monday 16 May - Friday 10 June.

No toxins will be used and the Regional Park will not be closed during this control programme, which will be run from Monday to Friday of each scheduled week (excluding Public Holidays). Signage will be placed at starting points of all major tracks advising of this control programme.

If you see any sign of pigs in the Regional Park over the next few weeks please contact the Arataki Visitor Centre so that the control teams can follow up these sightings. Ph: 817 0077 [arataki.centre@arc.govt.nz](mailto:arataki.centre@arc.govt.nz)

### **New Website Development**

Committee member Mels Barton has spent a considerable amount of time working on a new website for the Society, which she says is starting to come together nicely now. There is still much to do in terms of content but hopefully it will be online within a couple of months.

## Auckland Council Parks Recreation and Heritage Forum

Report from the Manager of Environmental Services  
17 February 2011

### Biosecurity

#### *Highlights and Achievements:*

- Biosecurity resource consent prepared for 360ha aerial spot spraying of **pampas** at Whatipu in the Waitakere Regional Park.
- Biosecurity **kauri dieback** programmes included ground-truthing of the aerial survey of over 2,000 diseased trees. This large project is now 60% complete, with over 70% of trees identified by the aerial survey as unhealthy returning as PTA-positive by symptomology.
- Spot spraying of **alligator weed** in the Te Henga wetland was completed, which was preceded by extensive community consultation.

#### *Key Focus for February:*

- **Kauri dieback** – completion of ground-truthing of diseased trees identified in Waitakere aerial survey; implementation of aerial survey in Hunua Ranges.
- Commencement of **large-scale possum control programmes** in Hunua Ranges, Whatipu catchment, Parau-Cornwallis catchment and Tamahunga Reserve.

## Obituary Bill Beveridge, QSM 24 January 2011, aged 86

The WRPS Committee extends its condolences to the Beveridge family in acknowledgement of Bill's many years of dedicated service to the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park/WR Centennial Memorial Park.

Bill and his family have lived in the Waitakere Ranges for many years. His association with the Ranges began when he joined the staff of Auckland City Council's Waterworks and Parks in 1956. By 1972 he was Head Ranger of the Waitakere Ranges Centennial Memorial Park, later to become Chief Ranger for the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park until his retirement in 1990.

Bill was known personally, or by reputation, by local residents as well as by many who lived further afield but who regularly visited the Ranges. He was a mine of information about the human history and the natural heritage of the whole area. When he retired, Bill continued his commitment to the Ranges in a voluntary capacity, in particular as a founding member and co-patron of the Friends of Arataki. In August 2010, the (former) ARC and the Friends of Arataki celebrated his contribution to the Waitakere Ranges by naming a track after him and his family. The 1.7km track runs from historic Mackie's Rest to the Arataki Visitor Centre.

*Information partly sourced from the tribute by Sandra Coney, Chair, Parks, Recreation and Heritage Forum, posted on [www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)*

## Tree Protection

As you are probably already know the RMA was changed by the Government last year to remove the blanket protection for native trees. This takes effect from 1 Jan 2012 for all private land in urban areas (including Titirangi and Laingholm in the west) and will mean that any tree can be cut down without the need to get consent or any permission whatsoever after this date.

For private land in rural areas without reticulated sewage and for public land there is no change and the blanket protection still applies.

This leaves many notable trees on private land at risk. As a last ditch effort to protect the most important trees in the urban Auckland Region the Auckland Council is calling for nominations for trees to be considered for listing in the District Plan Schedule as notable trees.

If you would like to nominate tree/s on your land or on anyone else's land if you think they are significant and should be protected, a form is available for the purpose. Please phone the WRPS Secretary, Mels Barton on 816 8337 and she will post one to you. Only highly significant trees will qualify. All trees nominated will be assessed by an arborist and the landowner will be consulted.

The form must be completed and should be sent to your Local Board office by 5pm on 31 March 2011. If your Local Board does not wish to receive your nominations then you can send them to Sandra Coney, Councillor for Waitakere Ward ([sandra.coney@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:sandra.coney@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz))

A list of all the Local Boards can be found here:  
<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/AboutCouncil/LocalBoards/Pages/home.aspx>

## Kauri Dieback Disease Update (previously generally known as "PTA")

The news is not good for kauri. The results are in from the "ground truthing" visits to all the trees spotted on the aerial survey as looking sick and they make grim reading. Over 70% of these trees have confirmed kauri dieback disease symptoms.

This means the disease has spread well off the tracks, probably due to pigs, and is rampant throughout the Waitakere Ranges. Aerial surveys of the Hunuas are about to begin.

Meanwhile the research goes on for a cure or a treatment and Auckland Council biosecurity staff would like to be able to test possible treatments for Kauri Dieback Disease on affected trees.

So if you have sick kauri on your land and wouldn't mind using them as guinea pigs for a possible treatment then



please let me know on [mels@waitakereranges.org.nz](mailto:mels@waitakereranges.org.nz) - after all, what do you have to lose?

Then out at Goldie Bush Dr Nick Waipara from Auckland Council is looking for volunteers to help protect this so-far Kauri Dieback Disease-free stand of kauri. As there are considerable disease zones in other parts of the Waitakeres, this reserve is at great risk.

However Goldie Bush is a “ranger-less” reserve and Council therefore need some volunteers to “Adopt A Crate” which means refilling the trigene bottles as required and reporting back any damage to signs or crates. DOC will supply the trigene bottles etc and install the two stations with signs, but Council need the people power (preferably locals who regularly visit the reserve), and will train the volunteers in the system.

See picture for an example of a functioning crate station. There needs to be two stations adopted, one at the Horsman Rd end and the other at Constable Rd end. The idea is to initially trial this idea and its logistics (eg time required and how often bottles need refilling), and public use to see if this is a practical solution to protect Goldie Bush.

Please contact Dr Nick Waipara on DDI 09 624 4918 or [nick.waipara@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:nick.waipara@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) if you can help.

The Society has advocated consistently for disease-free areas to be quarantined to protect the remaining kauri, and Goldie Bush would seem the perfect place to do this.

Mels Barton



## Heritage Area Coordinator's Report December 2010 - February 2011

### Submissions / Advocacy

#### Tree Protection Declaration

The Environment Court hearing is scheduled for 28 March. Fingers crossed it delivers the right answer for Titirangi's and Laingholm's trees.

#### Tree Protection, Auckland Council

I took the opportunity during a break in one of the Council Forums to talk to staff from the Mayor's office to find out what was happening to the proposal by the Tree Council to form a multi-organisation group to work with Council staff to develop future policy on tree protection. This spurred things on and the outcome was a commitment at the meeting to form such a group, which has subsequently met and a first draft proposal is currently in preparation.

Since then I have been advocating for Local Boards to advertise for the public to nominate the most important trees in their neighbourhood to be scheduled.

#### Kauri Dieback Disease workshops

I attended another field workshop with Dr Nick Waipara, this time at the Cascades. It was upsetting to see some of the larger trees with this disease. Council plan to re-route one of the main tracks away from the kauri to avoid spreading it among this special stand.

Council staff would like to be able to test possible treatments for Kauri Dieback Disease, so if you have sick kauri on your land and wouldn't mind using them as guinea pigs for a possible treatment then please let me know on [mels@waitakereranges.org.nz](mailto:mels@waitakereranges.org.nz)

### Consultation

#### District Plan Changes 35, 36, 37

The Society has appealed all three proposed Plan Changes to the Environment Court. The submitting of evidence has been delayed until April due to the Christmas break.

#### ERMA dung beetles application

This application to release dung beetles into New Zealand dairy pasture has been approved by ERMA.

#### Auckland Council Forums

I attended the first round of relevant forums of the new Auckland Council at the Town Hall. These included the Parks, Heritage & Recreation Forum chaired by Sandra Coney, the Environment & Sustainability Forum chaired by Wayne Walker and the Unitary Plan & Development Forum chaired by Cameron Brewer.

I also attended the first Waitakere Ranges Local Board meeting chaired by Denise Yates and the second Whau Local Board meeting chaired by Derek Battersby where I spoke about nominating trees for scheduling.



## Consents

### Karekare Surf Club

The Society did not appeal this consent. However there was an incident in which members of the surf club and the public dug a trench to the sea in an attempt to empty the lagoon over the holidays. A complaint was made and the Council investigated. The Society opposes the alteration of the natural environment at Karekare and this was part of our submission on this consent, so it was disappointing to see this activity so soon after the hearing.

### Lopdell House Redevelopment

The consent has been granted as proposed and the Society did not appeal.

## Other

### Piha Mill Gala Day

I ran a stall for the Society at this fantastic and very popular old fashioned event. It was a lot of fun and very well attended. The bullock team was most impressive!

### WRPS Information Email list

Are you on our email list? If not please email Mels on [mels@waitakereranges.org.nz](mailto:mels@waitakereranges.org.nz) to be updated on important issues affecting the Ranges.

Mels Barton  
Feb 2011

## WRPS Newsletter Email List

If you are receiving this newsletter by post but would prefer to receive it (as a .pdf file) by email, please let us know by emailing us at [wrps@waitakereranges.org.nz](mailto:wrps@waitakereranges.org.nz). You will have the added advantage of being able to view the photographs in full and glorious colour.



Photo: Sandra Jones  
Anawhata Beach Track, 19 Apr 2008

### *Hebe obtusata*

One of the special plants of the Waitakeres  
Flowering period approx. March – July

This prostrate sprawling shrub occurs only in coastal habitats, on steep slopes, cliff faces and in low windswept scrub. It was believed to be locally endemic (ie exclusively native to a particular place) from the Manukau Heads to Muriwai but has relatively recently been found as far south as Kawhia Harbour.

Characteristics: Numerous branchlets, aggregated toward stem tips, decumbent. The leaf is quite fleshy, and the tip is blunt (= obtuse, hence “*obtusata*”); the leaf also has fine short hairs along the margins, usually very conspicuously so, often tinged red.

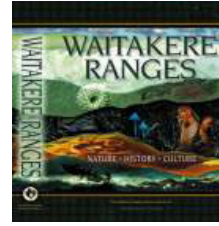
## WRPS Facebook Group

You can join our Facebook Group here:  
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/group.php?gid=156550153926&ref=ts> or by searching for “Waitakere Ranges Protection Society” on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

## Your Committee

**Committee meetings are held on the  
second Wednesday of the month**

President: John Edgar 812 8555  
jedgar@iconz.co.nz  
Vice-President: Anna Fomison 838 9665  
amfomison@gmail.co  
Secretary: Mels Barton 816 8337  
mels@waitakereranges.org.nz  
Treasurer: Sandra Jones 817 2788  
kemsdale@ihug.co.nz  
Committee:  
Kath Dewar kathdewar@paradise.net.nz  
Trixie Harvey brutrix@xtra.co.nz  
Graeme Ramsay gwramsay@orcon.net.nz  
Lynda Williams witch2@ihug.co.nz  
Tim O'Shea tim.o@ihug.co.nz



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