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South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group Inc

Newsletter - April 2014

Done and Dusted

Tree Protection Removal - 22nd March

A small (but dynamic) team of seven spent the morning removing the protective tree surrounds both in the riparian zone of the lake Onoke reserve and at the SWDC grey water planting above the Lake Ferry settlement. The team included three management team members, two grandchildren and two visiting WWOOfers from Iowa, USA who are staying with Heather and Ian Atkinson.

We had a great morning – starting on the lake’s edge we removed the surrounds that were ‘grown out of’ or had been shredded by the wind and were looking untidy. We then went to the grey water area at the base of the grey water fields above the Lake Ferry settlement – the growth since these plants were put in last winter is phenomenal with many of the surrounds ‘bursting at the seams’ and in need of releasing. This is a particularly pleasing result and is evidence that good planning, preparation and ongoing management are a vital component when undertaking planting and restoration work.



After 5 visit: Carters Reserve then Tiffen Hill - 18th March

Following a Management team meeting at the Gladstone Inn we met in the car park of Carters Reserve where the group was hosted by Gary Foster of DOC, who is a passionate advocate of the site who has been involved with its care for a number of years.

Carters Reserve is one of the few remaining remnants of patchwork landscape once typical of the Wairarapa - featuring grasses, wetland, shrubland, and forest. It is home to native birds, fish, lizards, bats and endangered plants. Gary took us around the 30 minute boardwalk stopping at various sites where he explained the history and points of interest.

Of particular interest was the way that the site was modified with regard to hydrology - increased water flows after some remedial work in the area impacted in some stress on ancient Kahikatea stands, who while happy with wet feet generally, don't appear to adapt to sudden change, and as a result many have died. However as with any dynamic environment there are a range of other plants that have come in and succeeded them, all of which appeared to be having a prolific flowering and seeding season. In addition the site hosts two rare plant breeding sites (Comprosmas) that have secured the future of these plants and saved them from extinction.

Around 7pm we headed up to Tiffen Hill, the home of Duncan and Jan (foundation SWBG members who used to live at 'Summerhills' on the way to Ngawi), where they also have 3 hectares of pasture land and garden. Duncan shared the very interesting history of the house - We enjoyed a wonderful evening there - fabulous food, warm hospitality, intriguing residence and spectacular views.



Thank you to everyone who helped make this evening the success that it was.

Country Hoe Down at the Lake Ferry Hotel - 1st March

Music started from 11.00am and carried through well into the evening - there was a really good crowd throughout the day with people loving the great music, the wonderful food, the friendly relaxed atmosphere and the spectacular setting that is Lake Ferry.

The South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group was fortunate to be chosen as the local community group to benefit from the day with \$350 being raised through donations and raffles. These funds will be used in the vicinity of Lake Ferry (Onoke) to build on the environmental work we have been doing. It is great to get support and endorsement from our community and visitors for the work we are undertaking in this highly visible and popular location.



Thank you Lake Ferry Hotel, Rimutaka Country Music Group and the Rimutaka Trail Band

February after 5 visit: Ted & Dawn Colton's Ti Tipua Farm - 25th February

The Colton's farm property is situated close to the eastern boundary of Lake Wairarapa, adjoining a lagoon created in mid-1900's by the diversion of the Ruamahunga River.

Indigenous plantings in 1982-83 along the lagoon's edge were funded by Dept. of Internal Affairs, with support from the local Catchment Board, Conservation Society and Fish & Game. The group traveled a short distance in two 4WD vehicles to better view the plantings.

At the lagoon's border the group viewed tree growth over the 30-year period. Some exotics were still in place to provide some wind shelter – significant wind damage regularly occurred, but native flora planted and re-generated (self-sown). Wind damage had been mitigated, although a 30-year Totara had been toppled in the Spring of 2013. Pine and eucalypts trees were becoming more of a risk with ageing.

Native varieties included: Kahikatea, Manuka, Kowhai, Mahoe (Whiteywood), Karo, Coprosma, Patu, and Ngaio. Another variety could not be identified and a sample was taken for further consideration (perhaps Olearia, ('Akeake') – rough-leaved tree daisy.

The event ended with a shared BBQ at the Colton's home, and a vote of thanks for the hosts.

Coming Up for your calendar:

(keep up-to-date by checking our [website](#))

Date: 17th May 2014

**What: Wellington Restoration Day 2014:
Connecting with Nature**

Where: 'The Lodge at the Inlet', Pauatahanui

Join Restoration Day 2014 "Connecting with Nature" and take part of this year's amazing line-up of workshops. The workshops will address methods for connecting different aspects of your restoration project. There will also be an invertebrate focus, including a keynote address from Ruud Kleinpaste and a lunchtime weta talk with George Gibbs.



Space is limited (we are only able to send 4 people and we already have 2 booked) If you are interested please contact Perry **ASAP** on pcameron@actrix.co.nz or 06 308 6938

www.naturespace.org.nz/restoration-day

(deadline is 1st May).

Note: This is a highly regarded event that all

New Initiative:

RESCUE RESPONSE FOR EELS AND OTHER AQUATIC ANIMALS DURING FARM DRAIN CLEANS



This initiative is lead by Vanessa Tipoki who spent hours over a two-day period last year returning short and longfin eel, brown mudfish, bullies, kokopu and freshwater crayfish back into the water from a couple of drains on their property. She found it to be one of the most rewarding (and eye-opening) experiences she's ever had.

Farm drains are cleaned out regularly – diggers are brought in to remove weeds and sediment and there is often a resulting loss of aquatic life in the process. While there is growing concern about the decline of habitat and indigenous species in our rivers, lakes and streams, drains are often overlooked – and these man-made structures are sometimes teeming with life.

Subsequently she is keen to lead real change in our community through the SWBG networks.

If you are interested in having people on your property returning eels and other fish back to the water during drain cleans or would like to be part of a team of volunteers together who could oversee drain cleaning

previous attendees have really gained a huge amount of value from – we are happy to recommend it to you! 'First in first served' in this instance people

Date: 20th May 2014

What: SWBG Management Team Meeting

We are meeting at Martinborough (at a venue yet to be decided) at 5.30pm. We are looking forward to hearing from our guest speakers Joe Howells and David Knowles who are developing a concept for a Ruamahunga River adventure walking and cycling trail.

Date: 24th May 2014

What: Migratory Fish day at Carter's Reserve

Time: 10.00am - 2.00pm

This is a fun family and community event... .. Ra Smith will be talking about the area's history and how important Native Fish were for the Iwi, we also have Dr Mike Joy coming along to share his passion for Natives as well as some activities provided by Dirty Fingers Ceramics (Sam Ludden)...

There will be a storyteller and fish posters to give away... as well as a chance to meet some of the incredible inhabitants of the reserve!!!

The event is being organised by a community group consisting of Kiwi Conservation club (Forest & Bird Junior), DoC, Local Iwi, Greater Wellington Regional Council and EnviroSchools. Keep your eyes peeled for further advertising closer to the date.



at short notice please contact Vanessa.

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Join

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Date: 13th July 2014

Postponement day: 20th July

What: Planting Day - Okorewa Lagoon Stage 2

We have scheduled a community planting day to build on the good work commenced last winter at the Okorewa Lagoon site.

This will involve planting around 500 eco-sourced plants including taupata, coastal flax, coprosma, saltmarsh ribbonwood and knobbly clubbrush. Toni DeLatour of the Biodiversity team (GWRC) collected seed in late summer from the Lagoon which has been successfully grown out by Jane Lenting and Toni, and will be replanted this winter - it is really exciting to have this succession being progressed from within the group and our supporters.

More details will follow - likely a 9.30am start with a BBQ to finish.



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FARMER EDUCATION SEMINAR

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'Will your business survive in the future of farming?'

Date: 25th June 2014

Where: Martinborough

We are excited to announce that we have two highly credentialed key note speakers secure.

- [Dr Alison Dewe, Waikato](#)
- [Fred Lichtwark, Raglan](#)

MAKE SURE YOU MARK THIS DATE IN YOUR CALENDAR

More details to follow.

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