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South Wairarapa Biodiversity Group Inc



Newsletter - February 2015

For your diaries:

Beach Clean
Wednesday 4th March 2015, 9.30am
Whangaimoana to Lake Ferry

This is our annual clean-up of our beach and it is being run this week to coincide with Sea Week and also because this is the best time to avoid disturbance to nesting birds. Seaweeek is an invitation to inspire all New Zealanders to renew their connections with the sea! What better way than to join us as we clean up our coastline. Check out sea week at - <http://seaweeek.org.nz> We will be joined by the children and families of Pirinoa school.



We start at 9.30am at the Whangaimoana car park where we will have a health and safety briefing then make our way along the beach towards Lake Ferry collecting rubbish as we go. Last year saw a marked decrease in the rubbish that we found (hopefully a result of increasing awareness of our need to look after our precious coastal line).

We will end up at the Lake Ferry Hotel garden bar for a cuppa for the adults and an ice block for the kids.

Bring: Sun hat and sunscreen (or a jacket should the heavens open), strong footwear and garden gloves if desired. We also need a handful of 4 wheelers or 4WD vehicles with trailers also thanks.

Contact: Deb and Colin Whiteman Ph 3077562 or 021 02303307

Cancellation day: 11.3.2015

Who are these people and what is this boat doing on our Lake?



I have it on good advice that this may be a new tourism venture at Lake Onoke – linking Western Lake and Lake Onoke – a great way to get those cyclists doing the cycle trail around ocean beach to check out this side of the valley – Watch this space!!

Speaker Meeting: Karen Schumacher from Inglewood, Taranaki Monday 9th March 2015, 5.30pm Martinborough Hotel, Martinborough

Come and hear about one regions inspiring response to threatened native biodiversity

Karen is the Chair and Executive Officer at East Taranaki Environment Trust and Trustee for the Taranaki Biodiversity Accord. The East Taranaki Environment Trust's "Purangi Kiwi Project" is a project about the community – people and kiwi within our diverse bio-diversity. Find it at <http://www.etet.org.nz>



Karen Schumacher

This project which has grown from 192 hectares to 13,000 hectares in 10 years has become one of the two priority sites for the long term survival of the western brown kiwi. The project is about landscape ecosystem management, has an integrated pest management strategy, and recognises there is multiple use of the ecosystem in our area and that people are part of this. Then project includes public and private land and many landowners. This is a success story with stage one of having 500 pair of kiwi within the project area reached. The kiwi are our indicator species, if they are doing well so are the many other native species.





Additionally Karen is a Trustee for the Taranaki Biodiversity Accord. This is an initiative where 19 regional signatories have agreed to work together to set out a strategic vision, outcomes, priorities and actions for the Taranaki. It includes many agencies, community groups and individuals that have an interest in biodiversity. Sometimes the interest is derived from a statutory function and responsibility, while for others it's a passion and we just want to do our bit. Until now, there has been no document that has attempted to set out agreed priorities and actions in order to coordinate and add value to our respective efforts. The group have now agreed to set up a charitable Trust with voting for the foundation Trustees closing on 10th March.

Check it out here <http://www.trc.govt.nz/taranaki-biodiversity-accord/>



Program for the evening is:

5.30pm Drinks

6.00pm Speaker and questions

6.45pm (ish) Optional dinner in the Martinborough hotel bar

There is no charge for this evening – come along and learn about these Taranaki initiatives. Bring a friend and/or potential new member. All welcome.

**After 5 Event:
Visit to Peter Gawith's property in Longbush.
Monday 23rd March
207 Mahupuku Road, Longbush**

Peter Gawith farms Waikoukou, an attractive dry hill country farm at Longbush, southeast of Masterton and is the project leader for the SFF Fodder Tree project and the Chairperson for the Ruamahunga Whaitua. The Gawiths have farmed sheep and beef animals at Waikoukou for 28 years. Of a total area of 460 ha, 420 ha is effective pasture, 22 ha is planted in trees for timber, and 135 ha is planted with trees primarily for soil conservation and also for other purposes, including supplementary fodder. Subdivision is well developed with 53 paddocks over the farm. The farm is on rolling hill country with some steeper gullies that are prone to erosion. Severe erosion occurred here during the severely wet winter of 1977 and Peter Gawith has planted trees since then to prevent any recurrence of this problem. The Gawith's grow trees primarily for soil conservation at Waikoukou, as the land is very prone to erosion in wet seasons. Peter Gawith also grows trees as a source of supplementary fodder during droughts, and also has areas grown for timber.





Peter Gawith

Check out his story at: <http://tinyurl.com/opdqzcx>

Program: Meet at the house 207 Mahupuku Road, Longbush (12- 15 km from Martinborough, 15 minutes) at 5.30pm SHARP (we are nearly at the end of daylight saving so the evening will be short). Click on the link for a map: <http://tinyurl.com/otrcxec>

Bring 4WD vehicles – we can pool together to fit in a few vehicles only. There is an all-weather access track to take us up to the top of Peter's plantings.

Following the farm visit we will head back to Martinborough to have a 'pie and a pint' or similar before heading home.



Other stuff you might be interested in:

Fensham Celebration - Forest and Bird

Belinda Crichton and Gerry Rotman kindly donated areas of land, contiguous with the reserve, for incorporation into Fensham Reserve. To mark the occasion, Hone McGregor, Forest and Bird CEO, is coming to Fensham to formally accept this momentous gift on Saturday 21 February. **We invite as many members, friends and family to attend a barbecue at Fensham.**

Come, enjoy the formal occasion and spend some time exploring the reserve. Start time is 11.00am. Bring some food to cook, a picnic and something to drink. Chairs and/or picnic blankets will be useful too.

If the weather is poor, the barbecue will be on the next day, Sunday 22 February; listen to Solid Gold Hits if you are unsure or ring Peta at 06 3774882

For those of you who are unfamiliar with Fensham, the reserve contains a remnant kahikatea swamp forest, as well as populations of kanuka, matai and titoki. The swampland within the reserve is home to a population of nationally vulnerable mudfish that is monitored by our branch members.





Public Meeting: Should the Mangatarere River be dammed?

The Mangatarere is one of five sites across the Wairarapa under consideration to be dammed. Why should you care? You are invited to a public meeting to find out.

When: **February 24th** Time: **7.00pm** Venue: **Carterton Events Centre – Auditorium**

Speakers:

Mike Bennett – Mike and Jenny have lived in the Mangatarere valley for 25 years. If the Mangatarere dam goes ahead their home will be taken under the Public Works Act and their property flooded.

Michael Bassett-Foss – Project Director for the Wairarapa Water Use Project (WWUP), an investigation of the viability of establishing one or more schemes to provide water for irrigation and other uses in Wairarapa.

Dr Mike Joy - A Senior Lecturer in Ecology and Environmental Science at Massey University. He researches and teaches freshwater ecology, especially freshwater fish ecology and distribution, ecological modelling bio-assessment and environmental science.

Entry donation. Entry is free but we would appreciate a gold coin contribution if you can, to help cover venue costs.

Contact: Michael Woodcock

Chairperson Email: dfm@kereru.com

Wairarapa Moana Event: Wetland Wonders - Community Expo

When: **Sunday 8th March** Time: **10am - 1pm**

Discover what lives in a wetland! Join us to chat with wetland specialists and to see first-hand what they investigate in their wetland work. The expert speakers are Mark Fenwick from NIWA talking on kakahi and John Rhodes talking about the geological setting of Wairarapa Moana. You'll be able to chat and observe at other presentation stations on the fishes, birds and plants of Wairarapa Moana, cultural values of wetlands and kakahi, pest plants and animals, wetland mechanics. Ducks Unlimited NZ will be there as wetland advocates.

Where: Lake Domain Reserve, Soldier's Settlement Rd, South Featherston Getting there: From SH2, turn into SH53. Turn into Murphy's Line then right into Ashby's Rd. Follow Ashby's Rd until you reach a T-intersection. Turn left into Soldier's Settlement Rd and this will take you to the entrance of Lake Domain reserve. Parking for the Expo will be to the right of the entrance (towards the yacht club building). (Postponement date - Sunday, 15th March 2015, starting at 10:00am)

Bring: Spare clothing (for cooler weather or if you choose to get wet), sturdy shoes, drinking water, hat and sunscreen, camera, binoculars (if you have them), smartphone (for nature apps)

It'd be great if you can make it as a participant. We would also very much appreciate a few volunteers on the day, to help the presenters with their activities and to guide visitors.

For more information contact Toni de Latour, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Masterton
Email: Toni.delatour@GW.govt.nz
Phone: 06 826 1535

Reports: Stuff we have done

SWBG Attend Ruamahunga Whaitua meeting 2 February 2015

Diane and Perry attended the 'catchment' workshop as SWBG representatives. It was 3.5 hours of great work, involving the core Whaitua Committee members (including our very own local member Vanessa Tipoki) totaling approx. 50 participants, in over 5 groups.

Perry took the opportunity to raise the scope of current water testing and subsequently asked for an undertaking for GWRC to undertake regular water testing of Lake Onoke and received a verbal acknowledgement to that effect.

Wairarapa was divided into five (water related) 'zones' marked on large scale charts: Wairarapa Moana, Urban Townships (Lake Ferry missed again); Tararua Ranges; Eastern Mountain Ranges; Valley Floor. Each group was assigned an initial zone and spent 15 minutes identifying and labelling features based on: current usage (e.g. hunting, trails, tourism, forestry...); potential usage; ideal futures – or something like that. Then each group moved on, scanned their predecessor's work and added to it. And moved on again... It was made clear that national standards of water management/use had to be at least complied with.

At the conclusion, the gathering was given a very brief summation by each group's representative, limited to general specifics and priorities. However, the GWRC 'staff' supporting the workshop are to provide a summary of the output; compare inherent 'values' with national direction, and the GWRC will then discuss 'next steps'.

Christmas After 5 Event

On Sunday 30th November we went to the Watermill Bakery, Carterton. Owners Bolly, Gerlinde (and Luca) Bollinger showed us around their diverse permaculture property sited just under the Tararua Ranges and adjacent to the Mt Holdsworth Forest Park.

Bolly grows berries for his baked goods and veges for his table and the place is nestled into the bush - Bolli has done a huge amount of planting of exotics into the gaps of native bush over the last 15+ years so the place is very special. Bolly kindly shared his journey 'from bare land to bakery' with us and then showed us around. We took in the recent terracing that Bolly has undertaken with the addition of many heritage fruit trees. Totally impressive and a fascinating property with a surprise around every corner.



To follow we enjoyed a selection of Bolly's wood fired pizza's made in his unique bakery (styled on a swiss chalet). It really is a very remarkable building and Bolly and Gerlinde have a remarkable product – the pizza's kept coming for a very long time and then we were delighted when they also bought out some sweet treats.

A fantastic way to end a very successful year

Warm regards,
Heather Atkinson

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Join as a member (\$10 per person annually) or join as a friend. It's made easier by having our bank details on the membership form for direct crediting - just remember to add your name as a 'reference'. Email swbg@hotmail.co.nz for a membership form or check out our website for any further information www.swbg.weebly.com

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