



Newsletter

Issue: 68

August 2011

Our 10th anniversary party!

The night was a great success, despite our Patron, Helen Clark having to pull out of the event at the last, due to the death of her mother. Helen apologised for not being able to attend, but naturally, everyone totally understood and we sent our condolences to her and her family on behalf of all FoF volunteers and supporters, at this sad time. We are sure to see her here sometime in the future.

A number of others also had to pull out at the last moment, mostly due to ill health, but we still had a pretty full house (or should I say, castle!), with 100+ people attending.

Our Chair, Peter Adams, opened the evening, thanking everyone for attending, and running over the events of the evening. Our Nelson/Marlborough DOC Conservator, Neil Clifton then thanked all FoF volunteers for the work we have done over the past decade – for Kahurangi NP, as co-founders, Maryann ran through a PowerPoint display on the past 10-years, and Bill spoke briefly on the future of FoF.



It was with thanks to one of our 'kiwi minders' Robin Toy, for stepping in to fill the gap as our guest speaker. A tall ask for Robin to be filling in for Helen, but what a great job he did! His talk was, funnily enough, on kiwi. But he didn't just talk about 'our' kiwi, he told us all about kiwi in general, about how strange they are, and that us KIWI's, are obsessed with them! His talk was spoken with a great deal of tongue in cheek humour and knowledge. So a huge big thank you to you, Robin!

It was great watching people mingling for the rest of the evening. Many were meeting others for the first time, whilst others were catching up with people they haven't seen for some time. The down side of FoF's growth has been the separation of volunteers into various lines, so we don't get to catch up monthly, as we used to.

There are a number of people who must be thanked for their time and effort to ensure our 10th anniversary was a night to remember;

The Party Planners; Clare, Lesley and Maryann

Cindy Coleman (a founding FoFer), who was our caterer. She did a wonderful job of supplying our 'finger food' for the evening, and she gave her time to FoF as a donation. Thanks also go to her wonderful team of volunteers, who helped on the evening – most of whom are FoF volunteers.

Michael Douglas and his girlfriend, Brigit, who were the 'traffic controllers' for the evening, and spent quite some time out in the cold, to ensure all attending knew where to go.

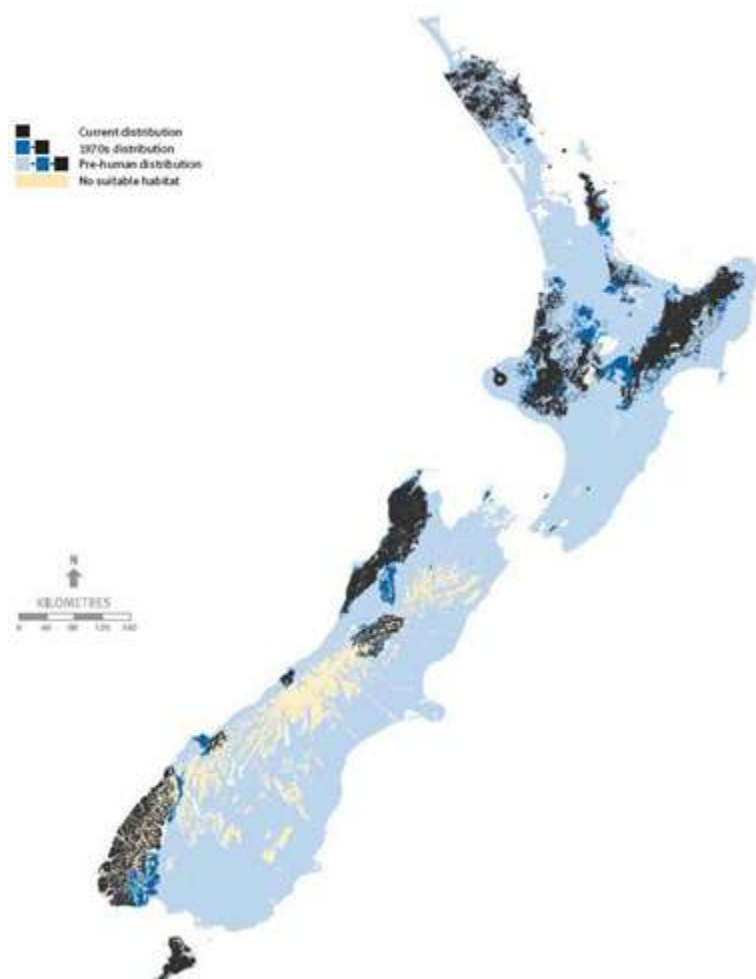
Kevin and Glenys Johnston – our hosts at The Mudcastle. I'm sure everyone will agree with me in that we couldn't have had a lovelier or more apt venue for our party. Kevin and Glenys very kindly donated the venue for our occasion. We highly recommend this venue for any group wanting that 'somewhere a little different'. Their website is: www.themudcastle.co.nz

Kiwi Update – Sandy and Robin Toy

While the kiwi in the Flora have been hunkered down under the snow, we've been pondering their wider distribution.

The first map shows how the distribution of all kiwi species has contracted from pre-human times in pale blue, to the 1070's in dark blue and the present day in black (MfE, State of the New Zealand Environment, 2007), that's an 83% reduction in range – no wonder most people don't ever have the opportunity to hear their haunting calls. The second map (Kiwi Recovery Plan, 2008-2018) breaks the current distribution up into the different species. The species have disjunct distributions, but this has not always been the case. Little spotted kiwi used to be widespread from Fiordland to the Marlborough Sounds and up into the North Island, a distribution that overlapped with that of many other species. But it

is now restricted to a few predator free off-shore islands and fenced sanctuaries. The other species probably never shared habitat, but some of their distributions might surprise you. The rowi of Okarito brown kiwi were present prehistorically in the northern South Island and southern North Island as far north as Hawke's Bay, while the North Island brown kiwi didn't extend south of the Manawatu Gorge. Turning to 'our' kiwi, the great spotted kiwi appears to have three distinct populations shown hatched on the map. However, in contrast to the North Island brown and the tokoeka, each of which have four geographically and genetically distinct forms, there is no marked genetic variation between the great spotted kiwi populations. The three blobs on the map are probably just an artefact of their current distribution which is restricted to the uplands.



Kiwi update cont.

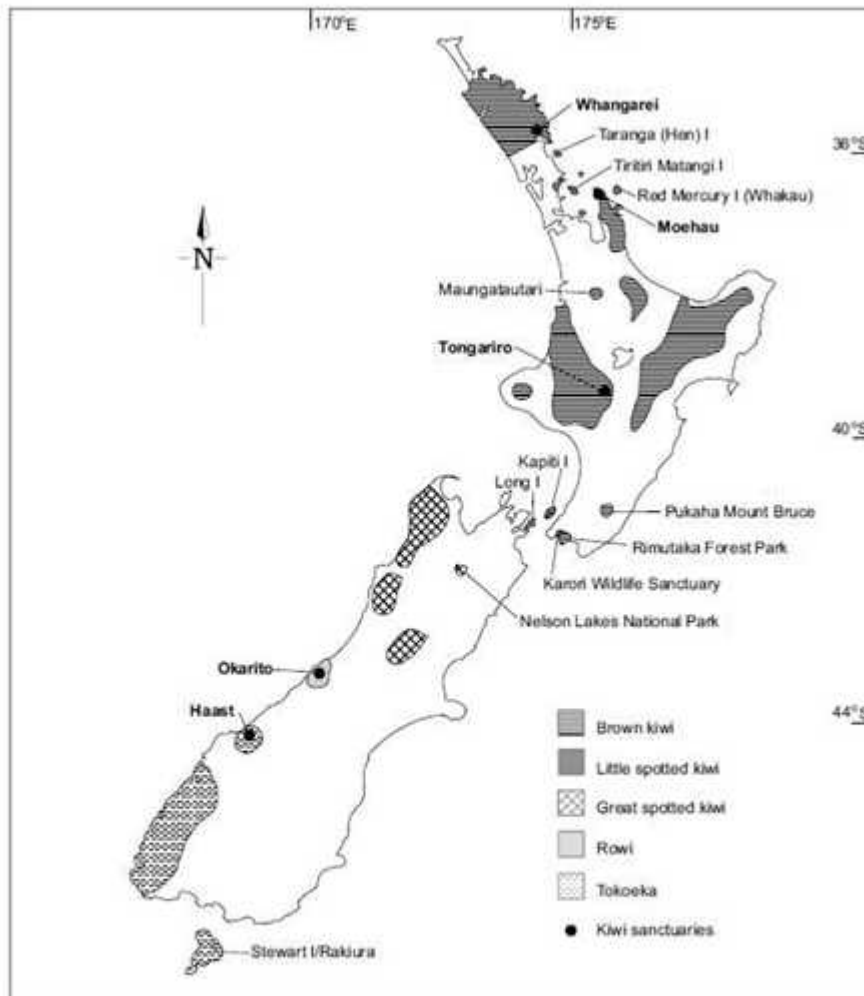


Figure 1. Present distribution of kiwi (*Apteryx* spp.) in New Zealand and location of five kiwi sanctuaries (note: symbol does not reflect the extent of these sanctuaries).

Cobb Mitigation Fund

We have secured funding from the Tasman District Council's Cobb Mitigation Fund, which will now allow us to extend our Mt Hodder line down into Ghost Creek, and to add a new line which will be a loop line off our Tableland's 'D' line, on the western edge of Deep Creek.

Thanks to the Cobb Mitigation Funding team for allowing us to do this.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!**Can you help?**

The Friends of Flora committee are looking for a volunteer to be our fundraiser. This would involve the filling out of grant/funding applications.

If you would like to help with this, or you would like further details, please contact FoF secretary, Maryann at:
fof@fof.org.nz

Backpacks & Snowshoes!

With the expansion of FoF we are requiring more equipment. Rather than buy these, we thought we'd ask if there are any FoF supporters out there who have any gear lying around in their sheds, not being used.

We need 5 or 6 sturdy, 35 to 40 litre packs for line leaders, and regular volunteers for carrying their gear when monitoring the lines.

With the very heavy snowfalls we have for periods of time on the mountain over winter, we have decided snowshoes would be ideal for the kiwi monitors – especially the team who is monitoring from the open ridge top above the Mt Arthur hut. Two pair would do it...

Once again, if you can help, please contact Maryann at fof@fof.org.nz

What's that plant? – Roving reporter Marie Firth

Olearia lacunosa X Olearia capillaries



The genus Olearia are tree daisies with just over 100 species mainly confined to Australasia. *O. lacunosa* is a long-leaved species (7 to 18 cm) and can grow into a small 5m tree. The leaves are long, dark, narrow (8 to 25 mm wide), tough and leathery and the edges curve under. The leaf and stalk are covered in a thick, brown 'wool'. The flowers are about 1 cm across and occur in clusters, and appear from November to February.

The O capillaries which O lacunosa has hybridised with, is very localised and found mostly in the lower North Island, NW Nelson and the West Coast, in wet mountain areas. To complicate matters, Audrey Eagles (2008) says O capillaries has had a name change to O quinquevulnera. It is a divaricating shrub which has small leaves. The hybrid leaves look very like O

lacunosa, only small.

We have two very good examples of the hybridisation, in the Flora. One is on the western side of the stream running over the track just past the Flora Hut, and the other is just the other side of the Flora Stream, heading up to Lodestone from the hut. There are other examples found in Cundy Creek on the Tablelands.

July's Trap Checking

Our main 'I' line through the Flora Valley is the only line required to be checked during the winter months of June and July. There was a lot of snow through the Flora throughout July, but the 'G line girls' decided to give the Lodestone line a check also. For those of you who know the Mt Lodestone line, this certainly shows great enthusiasm for the job! No pests were found in their traps, but I understand they had a good day!

'I' line caught 6 rats and 1 mouse.

Depending on snow levels, the monitoring will be back to monthly checks from this month.

Until next time...

Maryann

On behalf of the Friends of Flora Team

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Winter trap checking

July's trap monitoring was restricted to our central 'I' Flora Valley line. There is still plenty of snow around the area, but snow permitting, the monitoring should be back to monthly checks from this month.