



# Newsletter

Issue: 69

September 2011

**W**elcome to our latest issue of FoF news. Spring is in the air, and (hopefully) the birds in the Flora are beginning to nest. Fingers crossed for kiwi breeding, and the continuation of blue duck breeding!

## Operations report - Bill Rooke - for the Ops Team

**S**eptember saw another late snow fall, but at long last, most lines have been checked. The only lines not able to be monitored were the outer lines of P&D, still with many trap boxes under snow. Though results so far, are showing very few predators overall. This is good news, but is sure to change as the weather warms up.

All lines are going through a maintenance check over the next few months. There are boxes to replace, lines to clear of debris, faulty traps to replace and other minor jobs to keep us on our toes.

The Operations team are planning the surveying of two new lines. The first is an extension running off F line to join it with I line in the Ghost Creek area. We hope to have this ready for trap placement in November.

The other line is on the Tablelands, starting near Balloon Hut - we will have more on this in the next newsletter.

## Kiwi Update — Sandy and Robin Toy

**W**ell, just as we thought spring had arrived we got another snow dump. And just as we hoped the kiwi were settling down ready to breed, three of the pairs went walkabout! Rakopi and Aorere hopped over the ridge into Ghost Creek; Rameka and Waihareke ambled back to their posse in the valley above Flora hut. But Anaweka, our troublesome kiwi decided to explore the country to the south of the Pearce. She covered more than 6 km in ten days and has abandoned poor Anatori. So it's interesting times!

Many thanks to Paul for organising tracking while we're chasing hihi on Hauturu.

### Apology and thank you...

**I**n last months issue I thanked the Tasman District Council (TDC) for funding we received from the Cobb Mitigation Fund. It is in fact, the Tasman Environmental Trust (TET) who administers the Cobb Mitigation Fund; the TDC supports the Trust by making a staff member available as the Trust Administrator. So thank you to TET.

My apologies for this oversight.

**B**ut I would like to thank the Tasman District Council for funding FoF to the tune of \$2,500 from the 'Grants from Rates' scheme. This allows us to purchase some kiwi listening devices. This will allow us to leave these devices out, to pick up kiwi calls throughout the night for as many days/weeks we want, in rugged areas we would otherwise have people returning too over and over again.

# 'Thank you!'

(The following are letters received from two of our supporters who have given permission for me to print them)

Hi Maryann

Just so thrilled to get your latest newsletter. Though so far away, the Flora and the work you guys are doing, warms my heart. I am so in awe of those who are doing the hard yards to "preserve and protect" our endangered species and because the Flora area is sort of Salisbury territory, you guys are right up there! I wish I could take you all out to dinner to show my appreciation and I am thrilled your birthday went so well.

It's obviously beyond me to help in any practical way, so I can but say a big "Thank you!"

Neville Salisbury  
Auckland

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Dear Clare, Lesley and Maryann

It was a privilege to be at FoF's 10 year birthday party. Maryann's presentation of the vision for bringing the birdsong back to the Flora was excellent. I am amazed at the growth of the work of FoF, the adventures, or rather much, much work done over the last 10 years!

I enjoyed meeting many of your hard working volunteers, and I mean it is not just a 'walk in the park' volunteering in the Flora, I know that many of you go up there in freezing cold and snow, when most of us would stay home by the fire!

I have walked a few times into the Flora and just love this part of the wonderful, majestic Kahurangi National Park. My very good wishes for many more successful years of FoF. Thank you for sharing your love of the great New Zealand outdoors with us, your work is brilliant.

Inge Anderson  
Auckland

## Reminder

Just a reminder from our last issue. If anyone has a sturdy 35 to 40 litre backpack - we are looking for 5 or 6 for our line leaders.

Also, we are seeking a volunteer to look after our grants/funding applications. If you are interested and would like more details, please contact FoF Secretary, Maryann on [fof@fof.org.nz](mailto:fof@fof.org.nz)

## Augusts Trap Catching

Mice - 1

Stoats - 2

Rats - 9

Possums - 1

Weasels - 1

## What's that plant? - Marie Firth

### Kaikawaka - Mountain Cedar (*Libocedrus bidwillii*)



There are two types of cedars in New Zealand, but the one that grows in the Flora is the Kaikawaka or *Libocedrus bidwillii*. This species is a small to medium sized tree growing in montane and sub-alpine forests from latitude 36°

50' southwards, and in the South Island, may grow lower down in western areas. It seldom grows higher than 20m. At high altitudes it is often contorted by the wind to be short, stunted or gnarled, and may grow to be 1000 years old. The other species is the Kawaka (*L plumosa*) which can be bigger (up to 25m).

This species grows in lowland forest in the

North Island, and between Collingwood and Westhaven in the SI. Both species have small, distinctively conical crowns and papery bark that separates in long, narrow strips and hangs from the trunk. The *Libocedrus* are unique among NZ conifers in having small seed cones made up of a few thin woody scales. Male and female cones occur at the tips of twigs on the same tree.

One of these beautiful trees can be seen at the Flora car park, but can be seen in fairly good numbers on R, X and Y lines, and also on the more easily accessible A line, in which many juveniles can be seen.

The NZ cedars are not true cedars at all but actually belong to the cypress family and closely resemble cypresses in the northern hemisphere. They were first noticed to be declining in the 1950's in Westland and the NI. Possums particularly like the young shoots and pollen-laden cones.

## Newsletter Editor standing down

This is the last newsletter from me as editor.

Due to my work load, I feel I can't put the time and effort into the newsletter as I would otherwise like too. I am handing it over, into the capable hands of our new Roving Reporter - Marie Firth.

Sandra Bishop holds our Master list, so she will continue emailing this out to everyone, and as always, we enjoy receiving feedback - [fof@fof.org.nz](mailto:fof@fof.org.nz)

I hope you have enjoyed this issue of news from the Flora.

On behalf of the FoF Team, this is Maryann - signing off!

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