



## Piroa Brynderwyns Landcare Group October Newsletter

### Recent Highlights

All going to plan the birds are on the nests caring for the young. It is also the time when mustelids are out in force, so our amazing volunteers have been scaling up their trap visit frequency to help better protect the nesting birds. A large number of weeders have been out tackling some of the problem areas now that the warmer weather has arrived the plants are growing fast. Then following summarizes our latest news and work undertaken by a large group of people. A wholehearted thanks to everyone involved!

### Three Reserves Toxin Operation

Pest control operations were carried out in the following reserves in 2021 and 2022.

- Brynderwyn Hills Scenic Reserve - 236ha
- Bream Tail Scenic Reserve - 72ha
- Robert Hastie Memorial Scenic Reserve - 28ha

**Total - 336ha**



The three reserves are surrounded by private conservation blocks. The most significant is Marunui (430ha) which has been under intensive pest control for more than twenty years. Kiwi were translocated to this property in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Other nearby conservation blocks include Waorahi (194ha), Langs Beach Estate (200ha), Bream Tail Farm (450ha) and the Sanctuary (100ha protected forest).

It was evident that public conservation land was becoming a breeding ground for rats and possums among a cluster of relatively pest-free properties. PBL volunteers decided that something needed to be done. With support from DOC an intensive pest control operation was initiated in 2021.

Possum control was carried out by contractors in August 2021. The local community donated \$15,000 to cover this operation.

The major task of installing permanent bait stations began in December 2021. A network of approximately two bait stations per hectare was required - 650 in total. This task was mainly carried out by a small team of volunteers. An Air Force team along with DOC Rangers and NRC Biodiversity Officers boosted progress during a team building exercise in May.

In August volunteers, DOC Rangers and NRC Biodiversity Officers delivered 500gm of pre-feed to each of the bait stations.

Two weeks later any remaining pre-feed was replaced with 500gm of toxin. It was noted that pre-feed had been completely cleared out in more than half of the bait stations.





This observation confirmed that possums and rats were present in very high numbers.

In 2021 Waorahi carried out an identical operation using Sodium Fluoroacetate (1080). Tracking tunnel index for rats before the Waorahi operation was between 50% and 80% (very high). After the operation this index fell to zero. Rats and possums killed by 1080 are toxic to mustelids and feral cats. This is the most significant advantage associated with this toxin.

Two weeks after toxin had been placed the bait stations were emptied. Remaining toxin was carried out and weighed. It was found that 82kg of 1080 had been consumed which works out to 250gm per hectare. DOC rangers advise that this high take up will have removed hundreds of possums and thousands of rats. More importantly trap shy mustelids and feral cats will also have been heavily impacted.

The Three Reserves Toxin Operation has linked three existing conservation projects to form an inland island of more than 1,500ha. This is a very significant development which is expected to significantly boost native bird populations in our district.

### Waorahi

Click the image or the link below to watch the short video and learn more about why the Copland's purchased Waorahi, their vision for the community, and the work that's been supported by RNZAF, NRC, DOC and a group of dedicated volunteers.



Video proudly provided by NRC!

Click to view <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeyKGWcf3P0>



### Bird of the Year

It's that time of year again when we can all vote for Bird of the Year. The Fairy Tern (Tara Iti) is one of our local treasures which gets focused protection and support from many of our local volunteers

The Fairy Tern teams across NZ are going hard out to get votes so if you haven't decided maybe give them your vote here.

<https://www.birdoftheyear.org.nz/>

Pic by Aaron Skelton taken at Waipu.

### Breve Street track repairs & planting

We have made great progress at the Breve Street Reserve in Mangawhai. We cannot thank the Mangawhai Trackies enough for their awesome work getting the walking track back in working order.

The work involved safety work such as benching (excavating sides to form one or more horizontal steps) and significant shoring up of the sandy embankment both above and below the track before the new surface was compacted and metaled, Gordon says.

"The entry from Breve Street was re-established to a safer position and fences constructed to give safe access and the original steps in the upper part of the track were replaced and widened and a handrail installed along much of its length," he says.





“At a prominent viewpoint beneath a very large pohutukawa a bench seat was installed. The result is the transformation of a washed-out gully track into a delightful walk in its own right as well as assured access once again to our harbour.”

We have also progressed some planting work around the track and will add more plants next season. Thanks for the fantastic volunteers including Alan McIntyre who has been supporting the track with weed control for the past several yrs. Please pop down and take a look at the fantastic improvements and great work done.

#### Pultenaea Targeted by Weed Action Volunteers

Last month, on 10 September, a group of keen volunteers put their combined energies into the removal of Pultenaea in an area of bush at Marunui Conservation. Also known as Australian bush pea, this weed has been identified by Northland Regional Council as requiring containment and reduction over time.

Pultenaea (*Pultenaea daphnoides*) is a medium-sized shrub that can grow to three metres tall. Its pea-like flowers are yellow with red-pink markings in the centre, and are followed by flat pods. It's fast-growing and resistant to drought and frost. One bush can generate hundreds of seedlings and it has the potential to invade gumland, shrubland, open road banks, cliffs and other lower fertility sites. It is capable of causing adverse environmental effects on our native forest.

Organised by Weed Action Piroa-Brynderwyns in conjunction with Marunui Conservation a group of eight, armed with hand forks, secateurs and pruning saws, set off at 9am up the steep slopes of Pa Hill to tackle this invasive pest.

Ronny Haynes Weed Action Coordinator and John Hawley of Marunui Conservation led the way.



At Marunui Pultenaea is present in a defined area of manuka shrubland and along the edges of tracks. The volunteers worked as individuals or in pairs, some tackling the larger bushes while others





concentrated on smaller plants and seedlings. Rain prior to the weekend had softened the ground sufficiently to enable smaller plants to be pulled out.

Over four hours later the group packed up their tools and made their way back to enjoy a delicious lunch of savouries, cheeses and a large pot of soup provided by Weed Action. John Hawley said, "The lunch was well deserved, we covered a sizeable area and working on some steep slopes was not for the faint hearted. Those helping definitely earned the title of 'weed warriors'"

The following day a smaller group went out and over the weekend a total of 44 hours were contributed. John said, "We've now been doing this work for four years and there will be other opportunities next year."

The Northland Regional Council has funded contractors to work in the most difficult areas while we manage the remainder. Marunui is extremely grateful to Weed Action and those who put their hands up to help."

### Getting ready for Summer....

Work has finally started on the Coastal Walkway between Lang's Beach and Waipu Cove to improve the walkability and safety of the track. This project jointly funded by the Whangarei District Council and the Wairahi Tracks Trust will be completed by Xmas to the extent that funds allow.

The Trackies have put in a three-week intensive effort of delivering onto site all of the precut timber and metal required by the contractor to build the 29 sets of steps designed for the improvement of the track. We're talking here of many lengths of timber, and the bagging and placement of many bags of metal. And all of this without easy access and over rather difficult terrain.



It was a team effort! Many, many thanks to all who volunteered their time and energy - whether lugging the bags of metal and the wood, pointing the pegs, letting the Trackies use their facilities and, in particular the owners of neighboring properties who provided access. Not to mention Northpine , ITM, Mountfield for their generous contributions.

So now it's in the hands of the building contractors, Northland Park Care Ltd, and bring on summer. We still need funds to complete the track and really appreciate any donation - a givealittle page has been set up for donations and signs placed at either end of the track

### School Programmes

We are very proud of the work being done with the Mangawhai Beach School Conservation Group -This term the focus of their work has been on Kiwi. A definite highlight for this group was a night walk in the bush at Marunui.

The session was led by Jackie Fanning and Matu Booth. The group met at the Tanekaha Track and were taken on a walk into Marunui.





Jackie had put a tracker on 'Buddy', a life-sized kiwi toy wearing a tracking device. She used all the technology that would be used to find a kiwi in the bush. It worked. Using their ears, the students were able to track Buddy to his hiding spot.



Of course, any kiwi that could be tracked like this this kiwi would have to be one that had been caught, banded, and had a transmitter fitted.

Earlier in the term the students had been able to examine leg bands closely as there were plenty to pass around in the Kiwi Resource box provided by DOC.

The students later got a chance to watch an incredible story recorded by a camera located near a burrow he thought might be a kiwi burrow.

What he learned was something no one had discovered before. The kiwi was competing for burrow space with a rabbit. The awe and ahh sounds the students gave as each part of the contest for space unfolded showed how engrossed they were during this session.

They then got a chance to sit in the dark and listen for kiwi calls.

Read more about our schools programmes here <https://www.pbl.org.nz/page8.html>



### Term 4 conservation in schools' programme

We are proud to be offering support for a number of activities that could be included in your school programme as part of the Social Sciences curriculum.

We are providing a few project based learning activities and resources school teachers can use to implement a *Protecting Our Shorebirds* programme

One of the key items is 'The Flock' which is a creative and fun project to spread the word about our amazing migratory shorebirds and what we can do to look after them. The activity has been developed as part of the Education Resources Pukorokoro Miranda Shorebird Centre. With the amazing support of the Waipu MenzShed we will be providing the schools with the wood bird cut outs ready for painting.





Migratory shorebirds connect inland New Zealand with the coast.

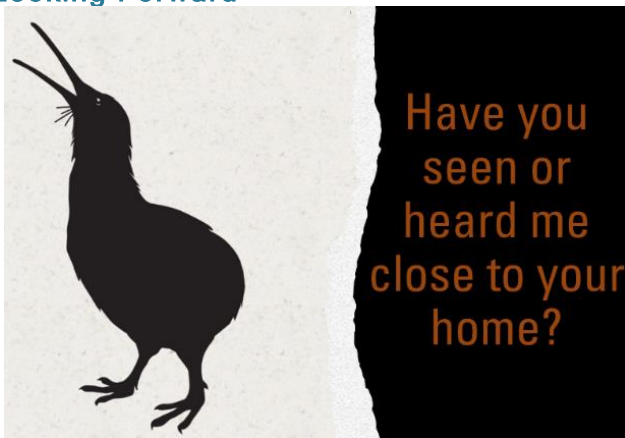
They connect New Zealand to the rest of the world as they travel through Australia, the Pacific, Asia and the Arctic every year. They are capable of amazing feats of endurance:

- The Kuaka/Bar-tailed Godwit flies 11,000 kilometres, from Alaska to New Zealand, without stopping!
- The Huahou/Red Knot, a tiny bird weighing just over 120 grams, can travel 10,100 kilometres non-stop NZ to China on their way to their Siberian breeding grounds each year.
- The tiny Ngutuparore/Wrybill and much larger Tōrea/South Island Pied Oystercatcher migrate annually between New Zealand main islands, breeding in South Island riverbeds and farm land, and wintering on the North Island's coasts.

### The New Trust: registered & up & running!

The Piroa Conservation Trust is officially registered on the Charities Commission Register. The appointed trustees have met for the first time officially and have commenced the activity to review the Strategic Direction of our organisation in conjunction with key stakeholders and members of the PBL. It will be a reflective process which the five trustees hope will set the vision for the next 10 years. The five trustees and the elected officers are Gill Webb (Chair), Peter Hunt (Treasurer), Simon Couper (Secretary) and trustees David Mather and Jonathan Pringle. The Trust is also overseeing some funding applications which if successful will support our Healthy Water goals. If you would like to be in touch with the Trustees then please email Gill at [webb.gill@mail.com](mailto:webb.gill@mail.com).

### Looking Forward



### Bird Survey

Have you seen or are you hearing kiwi at night near your home? Please get in touch!

We are doing a survey to see where kiwi have dispersed to in the Piroa-Brynderwyn ranges. We know that 43 birds were re-introduced to the bush at Marunui, up King Rd, from 2013 to 2016.

6 more rescued birds arrived in 2020. Lots is being done in the area to protect these amazing birds, but little is known about how they are doing.

Where are they now? Are they breeding successfully? What is the population now? Are we doing everything we can to keep them safe?

The first step in answering these questions is to find where they have established territories, and we can do that by listening for their distinctive calls.

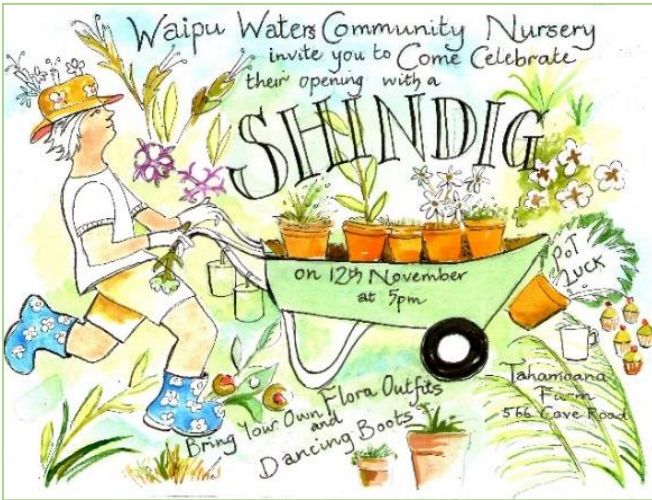
Not sure what a North Island Brown Kiwi sounds like?

Head to: <https://www.savethekiwi.nz/about-kiwi/kiwi-facts/kiwi-calls/>

If you think you are hearing kiwi at night, we would love to hear from you.

Please email [PiroaBrynderwynsLandcare@outlook.com](mailto:PiroaBrynderwynsLandcare@outlook.com) or text Tace on 021 048 0011





### Nursery shindig opening

Come along to the opening party for the community nursery.

Put on your dancing boots, and flora outfit and be at:

Tahamoana Farm, 566 Cove Rd

12 November

5pm onwards



### Know Your Dog Workshops

Get inside the mind the mind of your canine companion & understand what is behind some of their quirky traits and antics.

Cost: free

Time: 10am until noon

Waipu: Sunday 27th November

Mangawhai: Sunday 26th February

Register [HERE](#).

Learn more: <https://kiwicoast.org.nz/understanding-the-awesome-animal-at-the-end-of-a-lead/>

### Priority Weed of the season

Climbing asparagus is a nightmare

Its a scrambling & climbing plant. Long green, thin, wiry stems (2-4 m long) that are much branched at the top. Fine, fern-like foliage, small, delicate leaves. Tuberous roots.

Tiny white flowers (Sept-Dec), followed in Oct- February by round green berries that ripen to red-orange (berries 8mm in diameter). Can also grow in trees as an epiphyte.



It is a very shade-tolerant, smothering vine. This means it can invade even healthy forest with an intact canopy.

Once established it can expand rapidly, smothering the forest floor and understorey up to 4m high, and preventing the growth of established species and preventing all regeneration of native seedlings. It can also ring bark and kill soft-barked shrubs and trees.

It has long-lived tubers that resprout easily, requiring follow up control, and well dispersed seeds.

For more info and other high priority weeds for spring jump on the website. [WeedAction \(pbl.org.nz\)](http://WeedAction (pbl.org.nz))





### Christmas Gift Ideas

It coming to that time of year again where we are thinking of a special gift for special people. We love to promote this that represent our native flora and fauna so here are a few ideas.

#### Give the gift of a kiwi



Looking for a gift that's a bit more meaningful than a box of chocolates or a pair of socks? Make a donation to Save the Kiwi on a special someone's behalf.

After you make a donation, you'll receive an email with a link to download and print out a gift card which you can present to your special someone in lieu of a physical gift. The card outlines Save the Kiwi's work and what their donation will go towards.

<https://give-the-gift-of-a-kiwi.raisely.com/>

#### Metal Birds



Metalbird grew from a New Zealand Street Art Project I started back in 2009 when the first bird was designed and installed metal bird silhouettes around a neighborhood, just for fun.

Amazingly, people felt an instant connection to them, and subsequently there was a flood of requests from friends and strangers alike.

<https://www.metalbird.co.nz/>

#### Beeswax Wrap



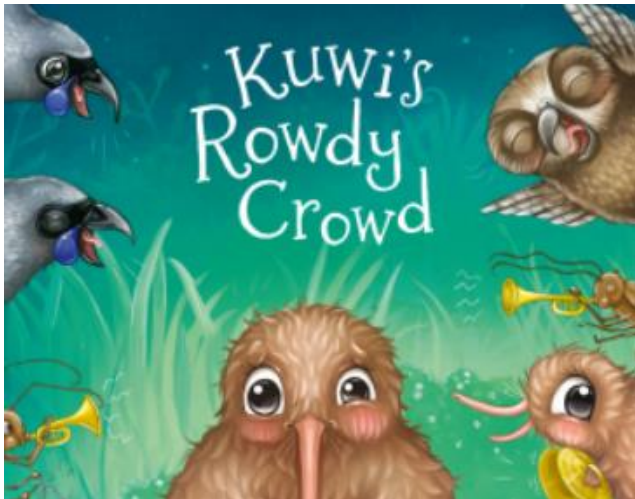
As a local New Zealand business, Honeywrap believes strongly in supporting conservation so have teamed up with Crombie Lockwood and **Save the Kiwi** to bring you the very cute Kiwi designed Limited Edition reusable, sustainable, natural beeswax wrap.

<https://www.honeywrap.co.nz/products/crombie-lockwood-kiwis-for-kiwi>





## Kuwi the Kiwi books



If you're after a unique birthday or Christmas gift idea that supports kiwi conservation at the same time (10% of sales are donated to Save the Kiwi), Kuwi the Kiwi is a firm favourite with kids and adults alike.

<https://savethekiwi.konstruk.com/categories/kuwi-the-kiwi>

## Sponsors

A huge shout out to the sponsors who have made our work possible: NRC, ITM Waipu, Northpine, Menzshed Waipu, Hammer Hardware Waipu, Wyatts Mangawhai. If you'd like to contribute as a sponsor of our conservation work, please contact Graeme on 021 118 4816.

## Join us to grow our impact

We're always on the lookout for new people to help us deliver our work. Newcomers are especially welcome; it's a great way to make new friends and contacts in the community - we'd love to find a role for you.

There's plenty of variety in the work- some work is outdoors in the hills doing trapping and bait lines, some is chipping away at pest plants in local reserves or using your keyboard skills and experience for the quintessential comms.

We are especially looking for teachers for our programmes in schools, writers, social media, creative marketing and grant funding talents, event organisers and project delivery coordinators. If you would like to volunteer, please fill in a simple form indicating what you would like to be involved in and the right team member will be in contact with you.

Become a volunteer:

<https://forms.office.com/r/Ms8h312KhB>

Email us:

[PiroaBrynderwynsLandcare@outlook.com](mailto:PiroaBrynderwynsLandcare@outlook.com)

Find a working Group:

<https://www.pbl.org.nz/page31.html>

Read our Ecological Plan:

<https://www.pbl.org.nz/page7.html>

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/PBLGroup>

Read our past newsletters:

<https://www.pbl.org.nz/page21.html>

Read our Annual Report: <https://1drv.ms/b/s!Aq7-pujYCP3gTeW1c-FmfSUqjoU?e=aJEqDi>

