



Rotokare Bush Telegraph

Greetings friends of Rotokare

On the ground...

PLEASE: WE NEED LOTS OF HELPERS! There are 10,000 manuka and karamu seedlings to be planted in the areas donated to the Trust by the surrounding landowners. Don't



worry the plants will already be up the hill. Beck Helicopters are transporting the plants to the site so all you need to do is bring your trusty spade, some lunch and drink. The trustees will give you a ride over the lake in their boats and then you can enjoy a leisurely warm up - a walk up the "old road" - to the revegetation areas. Afterwards you are invited to a BBQ provided by the grateful Trustees. School and corporate groups, individuals, sporting teams, fitness gurus are all invited. You don't need to be a "Friend". Everyone is welcome. Form a group and make a difference.

Outstanding scenery, fantastic company and exceptional food all provided. So for your experience of the year put these dates on your calendar.

Sunday 26th July and Sunday 2nd August. Meet 9.15am at the lake.

Wet or fine.

Simon's blurb:

With winter setting in, work at Rotokare has required warmer clothes, woollen hats and often rain coats, and planning to work around the worst of the weather. This doesn't seem to have put anyone off though, in fact work on site has continued more or less as normal – a real credit to all concerned.

We now have well over 200 traps set within the boundaries of the fence, as part of the overall sanctuary monitoring, which gives huge confidence in early detection of any pests. Other monitoring devices have been deployed over the last while including wax tags around the fence and chew cards in between tracking tunnels (effectively creating a 50m X 25m monitoring grid). Traps have also been added to the outside of the fence as time allows.

Trap catches outside the fence for the 1st half of the year:

Mice	4	Ferrets	6	Hedgehogs	10	Cats	3
Rats	19	Stoats	7	Rabbits	12		

Well who would have thought it would snow in Taranaki! And what are the chances of having a call out to the fence after dark? And then how likely is it that both events would happen on the same day? Well they did. That night I had the privilege of walking the fence in the middle of the night in the snow. It was actually quite lovely. As it turned out the lack of recent sunshine and extra cold temperatures conspired to cause the charge of one surveillance battery to drop below the level necessary to monitor the fence, resulting in a breach alert. We'll put this one down as a good training exercise!

A big thanks to all those that have donated tools and gear to the Reserve. Thanks also to Beck Helicopters for airlifting the plants to the reveg areas; NP Prison nursery for donating extra plants; Kelvin Sinclair for driving the "plant" truck for no charge; and to New World Stratford for discounted food.



Tai makes friends with one of the residents of Rotokare

Working bee: Simon, Litchie and Tai tidy up a boardwalk on the track

Joe, Mike and Litchie: 7 picnic tables were put in on one Saturday afternoon

Alex and Terry: It was fast pace stuff keeping the supply of concrete up for the picnic tables

Jim: busy with his hangi food at the recent mid-winter dinner to celebrate progress

Helpers unloading plants

Picnic Tables

Thanks to Bill and Sandra Hodge and grand daughter, Amy, for their donation for one of the picnic tables.



Seven tables have been placed on the lakefront, grass edge and for safety are separated from vehicles by bollards. As you can see by the photo these certainly complement the car park landscaping. There is still plenty of parking for cars, boats and trailers.

Volunteer Profile

Nancy and Erin Maessen

Nancy and Erin first became involved with Rotokare as volunteers because they love being in the bush and this gave them a good opportunity to do something worthwhile.

“While Erin was growing up I’ve kept looking for a good cause to get involved in, and we’ve found one here. We’re both learning a lot, it’s great to be exposed to some of the science involved, which helps explain the reasons why some of the work is being done.

It’s also been great being involved with people that really appreciate the environment, like a tough farmer guy that stops and comments on a beautiful tree or the lovely birds. There’s a good bunch of people here, and it’s a good influence on Erin”.

Erin is a prime example of the ‘next generation’ being involved with this project, and is a highly valued member of the volunteer team.

Nancy and Erin travel out from New Plymouth sometimes twice a week to volunteer their time at Rotokare. This is very much appreciated by us all; thank you both for being part of the team!



Lori Albert

Another one of our younger volunteers, Lori Albert, has been accepted into the DOC ranger course in Nelson. We’ll be sorry to see him go but wish him all the best for his future endeavours. If his attitude and work ethics while volunteering at Rotokare are anything to go by, he’ll do very well indeed. Only 20 young people are accepted for this course each year, so being accepted is a big achievement in itself.



Good luck Lori and thanks for all your hard work!

Educator position: Anyone interested?

The Trust seeks a part time, innovative environmental educator for this exciting project. The educator will play a lead research and implementation role in developing a quality education programme at Rotokare Scenic Reserve, based around the Sanctuary concept.

Ecological management interest and skills desirable; a teaching qualification, or equivalent experience, is essential.

Email contact@rotokare.org.nz for a job description.

Applications close

Friday 24th July.

PO Box 33,
Eltham

www.rotokare.org.nz

Thanks to the Taranaki Electricity Trust, who have funded this position.

Barry's Bird Bit

North Island Tomtit

Seemingly rare in Rotokare during regular visits by bird surveyors from 1999 to 2001 these delightful little bush residents are now seen quite frequently around the lake fringes and in the deeper bush. They are likely to be a species which will multiply now that they are not threatened by predators and they regularly have more than one clutch of eggs when nesting season comes around. Like many of our native species the females are particularly vulnerable when on the nest and while males may survive the population dwindles.



Males are readily recognized by their distinctive black and white (pied) plumage but females can be mistaken for Grey Warblers in their drab brown uniforms.

Unlike Robins they spend very little time on the ground when looking for food but will be seen searching methodically through the foliage of trees and shrubs for invertebrates. A female I saw a couple of weeks ago looked very please with a 10mm caterpillar.



They nest during spring and early summer so hopefully we may see a further increase in numbers from then.

The South Island Tomtit looks very similar except the male has a yellow wash on the breast but females look like their North Island cousins. There are also sub species on the Chatham Islands (where they are similar to the South Island pairs), the Auckland Islands (where male and female both look like South Island males, and the Snares Islands where both are black!

Friends of the Lake

Thanks for the wonderful support for the "Friends" membership and to all those that have given donations. But please if you can't afford the subscription we still welcome your support and we will continue sending newsletters.

While we do have a lot of supporters we would love more, so if you have any friends or workmates that could be interested in joining please pass details on to them re the website - www.rotokare.org.nz or membership forms that are available from me or any committee member.

While I enjoy helping out with the newsletter I would love to have more input from members. Even just their thoughts or impressions on what is happening at the Reserve. It can be suggestions on how you would like things changed or ideas/feedback on improving current ideas. If the committee don't hear from you, the supporters, they will continue with their current direction. Sometimes a view from outside is beneficial to us all.

Great to see one of our supporters, Frank Morine, featuring in the Daily News last week.

"I've been in all sorts of planes, been in a few Moths at the New Plymouth airport in days gone by, but never a glider," Mr Morine, 96, only needed a slight lift into the cockpit and loved every minute of his ride. "It was lovely. You sort of lose your breath, don't you?"



Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust

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