

Wairarapa KNE – 2010/11 Overview

Fensham Reserve

Fensham Reserve, west of Carterton, comprises 50 ha and is a fine example of remnant lowland forest and wetlands. Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society members continued to replace damaged bait stations, report interference of resources to GW and replenish stations with fresh bait on a regular basis.

Forest and Bird members have further enhanced this area with plantings of carex along the water course including hundreds of manuka, kahikatea, coprosma and many other native species. This site is a classic example of the benefits of working with community groups and organisations. Fensham will continue to be a valuable asset to the Wellington Region.

Lake Nganoke

The total operational area is 6 ha containing 16 control sites around Lake Nganoke and the adjacent Turanganui wetland.

Lake Pounui

The operational area is approximately 480 ha, with 66 control sites in place to protect the lakeshore margins and Battery Stream.

Most of the feral cats trapped in 2010/11 were caught on the bush/pasture margins. The presence of feral pigs is still an ongoing issue but the introduction of competent pig hunters by a local farmer has been welcomed.

Linkwood Bush

Linkwood Bush is situated alongside the White Rock Road approximately 2km north of the Tukurumuri Settlement. What is now regenerating bush originally had been logged and cleared land.

Possum and rodent control was carried out by the YMCA Conservation Corporation as part of a life and work skills programme. The predator control work using Timms and Fenn traps was carried out by GW Biosecurity staff.

Linkwood Bush's future is assured as it has a QE II Covenant in place.

Morisons Bush

Morisons Bush extends down the Ruamahunga River from Ahikouka Road, north of Greytown to the Martinborough bridge. The total area for this KNE is 2,700 ha. The land uses are varied, with sheep, beef and dairy along with a large orchard in the Papawai area. A wide range of crops are also grown by the landowners.

Page 2 of 4

Ongoing predator control has increased the water fowl population and high numbers of quail were sighted along the river boundaries and in some native remnants.

Flooding by the Ruamahanga River can result in gear loss and damage through bait stations being torn off trees and predator control sites being covered in metal and silt.

Mt Bruce (Pukaha)

The Mt Bruce buffer is an area of land which forms a complete protection zone around the Mt Bruce Reserve (Pukaha) of approximately 1,500ha. The south east portion of the Mt Bruce buffer falls in the Greater Wellington (GW) region and the remainder is in the Horizons Regional Council region. This buffer aims to reduce the reinfestation of predators into the Mt Bruce Reserve (Pukaha), allowing the released endangered bird species of kaka, kokako and kiwi to live and breed with a much reduced threat of predators.

The future objective for Mt Bruce buffer is to implement four weekly servicing intervals by BioWorks under a prescriptive input contract.

Pikes Lagoon

The Pikes Lagoon operational area is located east of Carterton, and is approximately 152 ha and includes all of the wetlands and flat fertile land from the terrace to the margins of the Ruamahanga River. There are a total of 21 control sites within this KNE.

As in previous years the servicing of some bait stations and traps above the wetlands continued to be carried out by the owners. All other predator control work in this area was undertaken by GW staff to further improve the biodiversity values of Pikes Lagoon and its surrounding habitat.

Rewanui Bush Park

Rewanui is a 334 ha property owned by the Montford Trimble Foundation and is located on the Masterton-Castlepoint Road, 23km east of Masterton. It has areas of native bush, open grasslands and sites suitable for growing both native and exotic species.

Work at Rewanui involved the servicing of control sites through an external service provider, and bird count, rat and invertebrate monitoring.

Solway Park Bush

Solway Park Bush is a 2.5 ha remnant of lowland native bush situated within the Solway Show grounds in Masterton. The bush has been covenanted with QE 11 and has been fully fenced to exclude all grazing animals.

There are a total of 15 control sites set up within this KNE and the overall condition of this bush is excellent. Unfortunately recurring vandalism of equipment is experienced.

Sulphur Wells

Sulphur Wells farm is located north-east of Masterton in the Bideford district. The total control area is approximately 1,167 ha, with 60 control sites serviced by an external contractor.

As in previous years, no bovine Tb maintenance work was carried out. Trap sites will need to continue to be maintained on a regular basis to retain biodiversity gains and restrict future reinvasion.

Tauherenikau Bush

The Tauherenikau Bush KNE is approximately 1,350ha consisting of open pasture and river terraces. Native remnants are scattered throughout the area along with many shelterbelt plantings. There are seven KNE sites in total within the Tauherenikau operation.

Native bird species sighted while carrying out predator control work included wood pigeon, tui, morepork, fantail and New Zealand falcon. Quail were also in good numbers, often being sighted along the river boundaries.

This financial year GW staff assisted several school groups with planting of native trees between the grandstand complex and stables of the Tauherenikau Race Course. More planting will be carried out as the sycamores are removed and the Tradescantia is bought under control.

Taumata Oxbow

Taumata Oxbow, located between Carterton and Greytown, consists of 33 ha encompassing part of three properties that are in the ownership of Neil Hayes of Gretel Lagoons, and Mike Warren and Jim Lynch of Nutty Farm. Taumata Oxbow is recognised for its high value indigenous biodiversity and forms part of the migration corridor for native birds travelling the Ruamahanga River.

Neil Hayes has assisted GW with some predator control work and has been most active in enhancement projects such as decreasing the amount of crack willow present at the wetland and establishing native vegetation in previously grazed areas. As a result there is now much more open water for water fowl to utilise. The pest willow species has been replaced with weeping willow and non invasive poplars.

Tora Coast Bush

Tora Coast Bush is a steep coastal escarpment of approximately 15 ha rising from the sand dunes adjacent to the Tora Road, south Wairarapa. This site consists of mainly mature karaka, ngaio, mahoe, five finger and kawakawa varieties.

There are 30 bait stations around the perimeter of this area which are serviced approximately six times per year by the YMCA Conservation Corporation. On-site training is given through demonstrations in the safe handling of toxins, disposal of old bait and the correct placement of bait stations. Written information is also supplied and students are informed of the benefits of GW KNE programmes.

Waihora

The total operational area for Waihora is 1,030 ha. Waihora is located in the Tuhitarata area and is situated at the north-western side of the Haurangi State Forest Park. There are 197 predator control sites within this operation.

An external service provider was used to control sites, with the continuation of bird count, rat and invertebrate monitoring. Bovine Tb control continues to occur in this area when deemed necessary by the AHB.

Waingawa Swamp

The total control area of the Waingawa Swamp and wetland is approximately 18 ha, consisting of a large lowland flax swamp, with pockets of manuka and open grassland. The swamp is one of the few remaining in the Wairarapa. Today the site is occupied by a saw milling and timber processing plant.

The Waingawa Swamp is included within the “Waingawa Industrial Structure Plan”. This plan proposes to utilise the wetland as a special feature to be enhanced for its biodiversity values and allow public access which it does not currently have. The “Wetlands and Timber Processing Plan” had possum control carried out during 2010/11 under the AHB programme.

Gorse and blackberry are now encroaching further into the wetland and pest plant control should be considered for the future.

Table 1 – Summary of Predators Caught

Key Native Ecosystems	Cat	Rat	Hedgehog	Ferret	Weasel	Stoat	Rabbit	Possum	Magpie
Fensham Reserve	6	14	17	11	1	1	1	0	0
Lake Nganoke	3	9	41	2	0	0	0	0	0
Lake Pounui	8	176	42	4	1	19	4	0	6
Linkwood Bush	6	0	17	4	1	1	1	0	4
Morisons Bush	61	92	174	11	0	4	0	0	0
Mt Bruce (Pukaha)	63	240	267	26	0	0	0	0	0
Pikes Lagoon	4	18	20	0	0	0	1	0	0
Rewanui Park Bush	12	59	44	8	2	3	2	0	9
Solway Park Bush									
Sulphur Wells	18	74	95	9	2	0	3	1	32
Tauherenikau Bush	9	29	71	6	0	2	2	0	0
Taumata Oxbow	10	21	22	0	0	1	0	0	0
Tora Coast Bush									
Waihora	26	198	167	14	3	2	14	1	83
Waingawa Swamp	6	5	13	1	0	0	0	0	0