

Rimutaka Forest Park Charitable Trust Inc.



President's Annual Report 2012

Presented on behalf of the Executive Committee

This Annual Report is presented to members on behalf of the Executive Committee to the 24th Annual General Meeting of the Rimutaka Forest Park Charitable Trust Inc. to be held in Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt on 4th September 2012.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met on five occasions through the year and considered governance issues, funding raising, pest control trapping, the Kiwi Translocation Programme, the Catchpool Restoration Project, the Dawn Chorus Project and public relations.

The 2011/12 Committee comprises:

President	Ian Armitage
Vice President	Rosemary Thompson
Secretary	Tiffany Krall (replaced mid-year by Grant Watt)
Treasurer	John Cranefield.
Committee members	Kelly Anso, Nikki McArthur, Melody McLaughlin, Mike White and Kirby McLeod. Brendan Bulliff of the Department of Conservation also serves on the committee.

Membership

Membership stands at 98 (92 ordinary members, 6 organisations), markedly higher than reported last year. Work is now underway to improve the management of the membership database. We are pleased to welcome several new members who have joined during the year and we thank you all for your support to the ongoing work of the Society. In response to suggestions from members and in line with common practice nowadays in the wider community membership payments can be made by Direct Credit arrangements (internet banking) as well as by cheque.

Governance

I reported last year that the Executive Committee had formed the view that the Rules of the Trust were in need of thorough revision. A revised set of Rules were adopted at the AGM last year and in early 2012 were accepted by Government authorities (Ministry of Economic Development and the Charities Commission). As advised last year the Trust continues to be governed as a Charitable Incorporated Society. This is the first AGM being conducted under the new Rules.

Encore Award

In an omission last year I overlooked reporting on our success in being awarded the *Encore Award* by the Minister of Conservation at Parliament in November 2010. I'm now pleased to record this

Community Partnerships Award, a pleasing tribute to the Society for all of your efforts in making the Rimutaka Forest Park a better place for the whole community well into the future.

Programme Coordinator

Melody McLaughlin continues to coordinate the implementation of the various Trust projects, in particular the busy Kiwi Translocation Project. Melody's coordinator role was once again supported for a part of the year with funding provided by the Bank of New Zealand. On behalf of the membership I would like to thank Melody for the considerable assistance she has provided in this important role.

Finances

John Cranefield has set out our financial position in the Financial Statements for the year ended 30th June 2012. Our financial position continues to be sound and our funds have been used effectively to implement the various Trust activities. Donations, 'Sponsor a Trap' and 'Sponsor an Egg' schemes continue to provide valuable financial support for kiwi translocation efforts.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of grant sponsorship during the year, namely, from the BNZ Save the Kiwi Fund, Department of Conservation, Pub Charity, Hutt Mana Trust, Wellington Community Trust and Hutt City Council together with generous private donations. We are also grateful for and wish to thank numerous companies, Trusts and other agencies for a range of services they have provided. All have helped to advance the goals of achieving improved conservation of ecosystems and public enjoyment of the forest park.

We wish to thank our Honorary Auditor, Phil Rundle, for his continuing help in auditing of Trust accounts.

Pest Control Trapping

Pest control trapping is a never ending task that focuses on the control of small animals, primarily stoats and rats, and is enthusiastically carried out by more than 60 volunteer trappers. Planning, coordination and operational arrangements continue to be made by trapping coordinator, Kirby McLeod. Within the initial-trapped area best practice activities for operating a stoat-trapping network continue to be met, or are exceeded. Trap repair and testing continues to be led by Mike White who ensures that trap operations are maintained to a very high standard. Ferrett traps have now been deployed in the Catchpool Valley.

On your behalf I would like to thank Kirby and Mike for the dedication and effort they provide to the trapping programme that is critically important for achieving long-term protection of a large area of native forest in the southern Rimutaka Range. As I reported last year without a consistent volunteer-supported pest trapping effort there would be no brown kiwi translocation programme at all.

Dawn Chorus Project

Closely related to the pest control trapping is the Dawn Chorus Project that continues to control all animal pests that are threatening forest ecosystems, including forest birds, in the vicinity of the Catchpool Valley. It has been reinvigorated over the past two years by Janet Lawson and her efforts build on the pest control efforts of others over many years. Thank you Janet for your support.

Kiwi Translocation Project

The Kiwi Translocation Project that is introducing a North Island brown kiwi population into the Rimutaka Forest Park continues to be a prominent feature our activities. Volunteer work has continued and it is our judgement now that more than 80 brown kiwi are established in the Park and on adjoining land. The practice of leaving some eggs in nests and allowing chicks to hatch naturally has continued and is step towards the establishment a kiwi population that can live with minimal intervention, other than pest control and monitoring.

The brown kiwi programme is a credit to the dedication of the small team of volunteers led by Melody McLaughlin. They can all take pride in its achievement and on behalf of all members we thank you for your time and commitment.

Catchpool Restoration Project

The Catchpool Restoration Project has continued with grant funding from the Community Conservation Fund to support revegetation of parts of the gorse/bracken covered slopes of the lower Catchpool Valley. Support from the this Fund has now concluded but we are pleased to record that it has been a great help in our long term efforts to improve the amenity value of the lower slopes near the car park and camping ground and to make these sites more visually appealing to visitors and to widen plant biodiversity and provide more shelter for birds. Good progress has been achieved using the cheerful and generous assistance from the staff of several companies and schools who have now planted several thousand native trees and other plants. The benefits of this work are already becoming evident to visitors to the Catchpool Valley carpark.

On behalf of the membership I would like to thank Peter Cooper for the very considerable effort he has put into planning and coordination of this important programme; it is a credit to him and to the many volunteers for the success achieved so far.

Public Relations and Fund Raising

Publicity about the Trust to the wider community has, once again, been promoted during the year. Our website, www.rimutakatrust.org.nz is popular with visitors and is the major point of access for information about the Trust. Again, can I thank Peter Cooper for his significant technical skill and enthusiasm in maintaining and developing the website.

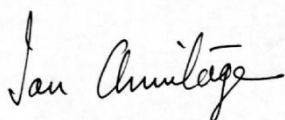
Press releases were issued during the year on various topics, but mostly concerning the Kiwi Project. Talks to school and corporate volunteer groups by Trust members further advanced our public relations and an issue of our distinctive informative newsletter, 'The Rag', was printed and distributed. The Fund Raising sub-committee met several times and have considered a range of innovative proposals for raising funds for the society. We express our sincere thanks to Lianne Beckett for the design and content of 'The Rag' and for the efforts of the Fund Raising Committee for their energy and enthusiasm.

Appreciation

On behalf of the Committee I wish to thank all who have helped the Trust to operate successfully as a voluntary community organisation during 2011/2012. The trappers, the kiwi project team, the Catchpool restoration team and others who have contributed to public relations, fund raising and the numerous small issues that always come up, a big thank you to you all.

I would also like to acknowledge the generous and friendly support of the staff of the Department of Conservation for helping with the implementation of Trust activities; we are most grateful for your support. May I also acknowledge the friendly cooperation offered during the year by the staff of the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Executive Committee for their significant contribution to the effective running of the Trust during the year.



Ian Armitage
President

4 September 2012