

Leaves from the Brook



Returning Nature to the Nelson Region

Winter 2016

The first visitors to cross the newly opened Beech Glade pedestrian bridge were Abby Kuyk with her children Maggie and Tom.

- 2 **Light Nelson**
Be involved in our installation
- 3 **Air NZ's**
Green Team
- 4 **MOU's** signed

LIGHT NELSON

The Brook Sanctuary has teamed up with local independent art teachers, Lori Davis and Larisse Hall, to engage the wider community in a massive art installation for this year's Light Nelson Festival.

Entitled Nocturne, the installation will be an anchor of the festival located in the heart of the NMIT campus, 8-12 July.

Several local schools have signed up to participate, with kids creating models of New Zealand's unique native bird and reptile species, as well as some of the pest mammal species that cause the natives so much trouble. The models will be coloured with vibrant chalk and paints, which will glow under black light, creating an eye-popping, surreal display. The installation will make use of existing fencing and native plantings at the campus site for a setting that mimics the sanctuary's pest-proof fence that will protect native species from pest mammals.

Thanks to generous support from Light Nelson, Resene Paints, and Office Max, packs of art supplies are being made available to the community to participate in creating the installation. Families, clubs, school groups, and individuals are encouraged to pick up a pack and make your own animal to contribute to the display.

For a donation of just \$5 you'll get everything you need to make a cool critter for the Nocturne installation (a \$15 value). And all proceeds go to support the Brook Sanctuary—what a great deal.

Call into Office Max to get your pack today, and get started making a groovy glow-in-the-dark piece of artwork. Office Max is located at the corner of Rutherford and Selwyn in Nelson Central.



General Manager Update

Hudson Dodd



Besides the fact that the pest-proof fence is nearly complete, the big news is that the Trust has been granted resource consent by Nelson City Council for an aerial application of brodifacoum toxin to eradicate rodents, stoats, feral cats, and possums in the sanctuary—a crucial step to achieve our vision of fully restoring the ecosystem and bringing back vanished endangered species. The consent comes with 47 conditions designed to ensure the operation is safe and successful, and the Trust supports these conditions.

This is an important time for the sanctuary's development, and we need our supporters to be strong advocates for the project in the community. Unfortunately, there's a lot of misinformation flying around social media about whether an aerial brodifacoum operation is necessary and safe. It is both. This is well established to be the only method available to fully eradicate pest mammals from a fence sanctuary, which is needed to be able to bring back some of our rarest and most sensitive native species. And it was done at the other fenced sanctuaries that are now thriving habitats for rare birds and reptiles, including: Zealandia in Wellington, Maungatautari in Waikato, Orokonui in Otago, Tawhauranui and Shakespear in Auckland, and Rotokare in Taranaki.

New Zealand's globally unique native birds are being killed by introduced pest mammals every night across the country. It's carnage on a scale almost unfathomable. By DOC's reckoning ~25 million native birds are killed by introduced pests each year. Native species continue to decline and go extinct. Just one example is the last remnant population of mohua (yellowheads) in the Top of the South, which winked out of existence at Mt Stokes in the Marlborough Sounds in the year 2000. To stem this tide of loss the Brook Sanctuary will create a safe haven for native species to thrive behind the pest-proof fence. Successful breeding will lead to waves of native birds spreading out from the sanctuary across the landscape—back into our communities and into our daily lives.

As we've pointed out, brodifacoum is standard rodent poison available at shops all over New Zealand, permitted for use without regulation. It's only the aerial application that requires a resource consent. Central government is now considering streamlining the regulatory regime for pest control. Essentially this change would eliminate the need for a resource consent for the type of aerial brodifacoum operation to remove pest species from an area such as the Brook Sanctuary.

Thanks to all our supporters who share our vision for a pest-free ecosystem on Nelson's doorstep, which will provide a safe-haven for wildlife and an enriching and inspiring experience for locals and visitors. Nelson needs a new visitor attraction to capture some of the tourists and their dollars as they pass through Nelson on their way to Tasman's beautiful and renowned national parks. We aim to give those visitors a reason to stay in Nelson an extra day—with all the economic multipliers that come with tourism, from accommodation to dining to retail. Please help us spread the word about the significant opportunities for Nelson the Brook Sanctuary has to offer.

Fence Project Funders

In each issue of *Leaves from the Brook* we shine the light of appreciation on a different group of our financial supporters. In this issue we're focusing on funders, that is grant-makers, for the Get Behind the Fence Campaign. The Get Behind the Fence Campaign is the public fund-raising campaign we launched in May 2013 to raise the \$4.7M needed to construct the pest-proof fence and eradicate the pest mammals from within the sanctuary. That campaign was successful

thanks to generous support from many individuals, families, businesses, and organisations, including a range of philanthropic organisations that made significant grants toward the campaign's goal.

As we near completion of the pest-proof fence, we'd like to again thank the following funders for their grants in support of the fence and eradication campaign:

Air New Zealand Environment Trust
Cawthron Institute Trust Board
HC Cock Trust
Jasmine Charitable Trust
Lottery Grants Board's Significant Projects Fund

Lottery Grants Board's Environment, Heritage & WWI Commemoration Fund
Mainland Foundation
Ministry for the Environment's Community Environment Fund

Nelson City Council
Pub Charity
Rātā Foundation (formerly Canterbury Community Trust)
Stout Trust
Tasman District Council



Introducing

Bev Hamilton – Financial Controller

Bev Hamilton's mother, Marie Melvin, has been an active supporter of the Brook Sanctuary for many years so it was only a matter of time before Bev became involved too. Bev has been the Trust's volunteer financial controller since early 2016 working with Naina Mahto, the finance administrator, to review accounts, approve them prior to presentation to the board and to help address any questions that arise. Bev is a qualified accountant and she and her husband Darryl own Master Valet Drycleaners. Charlotte, their 6 year old daughter, loves going to the visitor centre and for short walks in the sanctuary. In fact, Bev observes, "it's time we went again."



Phil Suhm - Information Technology

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Phillip Suhm of Office Connect Limited. Phillip is working closely with our team for a few months to manage and customise our CRM database (the Raiser's Edge product), and assist the Trust with other important information technology work. Originally from western Wisconsin, USA, Phillip brings with him a diverse set of interests spanning his career in information technology to his lifelong interest in geography and ecology. Phillip regards Nelson's native flora and fauna as our region's greatest treasure, and is excited to join our team.

Welcome, and thank you, Bev and Phillip!

Recently the **Air New Zealand Green Team** held a working bee at the sanctuary to provide hands on support as well. The Green Team consists of 3,500 Air New Zealand employees who are interested in being more environmentally aware at work, at home and in the community. In April 40 Green Team members and their families rolled up their sleeves and got to work. Some weeded invasive plants and cleared brush. Others strapped on pack frames of trapping/monitoring tunnels and hiked them deep into the sanctuary. At the end of the day everybody enjoyed a BBQ at the visitor centre, relaxing after a good day's work and enjoying the bird song. Thank you Air New Zealand Green Team!



Air New Zealand Green Team

Sanctuary Autumn Events and Activities



Master Trapper Extraordinaire Don Sullivan

We extend a huge thank you to Don – a genuine good sort and conservation hero!

Don Sullivan has wonderful memories of tramping and hunting adventures as a boy with his father. One thing that stood out was the abundant birdlife. Over the years he began to notice fewer birds and a much reduced bird song. Nine years ago it was so significant Don decided he had to do something. "People don't realise what they've lost," he points out. So he began building rat trap tunnels, and to date Don has made 6,500 trap tunnels, donating most of the material himself.

He distributes the traps locally as well as to Golden Bay, Blenheim, the West Coast and Auckland, including many to private land owners. Don prefers to use quality materials so the traps are durable. "Some come back for repairs; others have been out there for 7 years. I like to listen to people to hear how the traps are going so I can make improvements."

Don also checks traps himself, having personally monitored multiple trap lines in the Nelson area for years. In 2009, as the leader of the Marsden Valley Volunteer Pest Trapping Group, he travelled to Wellington to receive Forest and Bird Pestbuster Award for the most successful trapping programme in New Zealand. Don has now added nest boxes to his personal product range, featuring different models for kaka and rifleman.



Signing of MOU's

This month sees separate memoranda of understanding being signed between the Brook Waimarama Sanctuary Trust and two other Nelson/Tasman conservation organisations. Directors of Project Janszoon and Natureland Wildlife Trust are excited by the potential of collaborating with The Brook Waimarama Sanctuary on conservation projects in the Nelson/Tasman region.

Devon McLean, Project Director of Project Janszoon says "We look forward to working together towards reintroducing native species to the Abel Tasman National Park and Brook Sanctuary. This could include developing native wildlife captive breeding facilities and sharing the learnings from the NEXT Foundation's other environmental projects like the Taranaki / Mouna Project and Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) Ltd". He adds "There is also the opportunity to develop knowledge within both our volunteer groups, and to share resources and expertise in a variety of areas".

Meg Rutledge, Director of Natureland Wildlife Trust, is thrilled about working with The Brook Sanctuary. "We are two organisations focused on conservation, committed to improving biodiversity and with high community engagement".

In fact it is something the Trust had in mind when they first took over the zoo in November 2013. Animal welfare was the highest priority for the first year, and a recent external audit resulted in accreditation of the zoo in recognition of their achievement of positive animal welfare for all of its residents.

The second big project is breed for release conservation. "We are currently working with Project Janszoon. We have already had our first successful release of yellow crowned kakariki, and reared two clutches of South Island Kaka onsite". The facilities will be open to the public for viewing from 21 June 2016.



South Island Kaka



Yellow Crowned Kakariki

Education

Rick Field

With term two starting with such wonderful weather we have had a good number of School visits to the Sanctuary. On some of the visits we have heard not just bellbird and tui but confused cicada starting to emerge and sing due to the warm temperatures!



Despite some wet weather six Henley School classes visited the Sanctuary over three days.



Working with Nelson College Prep we have removed a huge amount of the very invasive weed Tradescantia from their local stream ready for some restoration as a Sanctuary for wildlife.

Volunteers Get Stuck In for Fund Raising



A Big thank you to the dedicated folks who volunteered for stock-taking at the Warehouse for two consecutive all-nighters. The Warehouse will contribute \$1,142 to the Brook Sanctuary due to their efforts. The funds have been tagged towards the development of the sanctuary's visitor experiences.

Tracks are open

The sanctuary's track system is open for public enjoyment, currently the only public track not open is the upper section of Jacob's Ladder, upslope from the Koru Track on the valley's eastern side. This track was obliterated by construction of the bench platform for the fence.

The Brook Stream Valley Floor track has been enhanced by the addition of the Beech Glade pedestrian bridge, which spans the Brook Stream adjacent to the the Beech Glade Outdoor Classroom. This now provides a half-hour loop walk from the visitor centre, in addition to the 45-minute loop walk provided by the old concrete bridge just a bit further upstream.

New Volunteer Fence Team

The sanctuary has always been a labour of love by dedicated volunteers working in various teams. Now a new volunteer team is being formed for the next phase of the project. "We're looking for reasonably fit people with a keen eye," says Derek Walker, Brook Sanctuary Field Operations Coordinator. The Fence Maintenance Team will consist of two sub-groups. One will conduct weekly biosecurity inspections of the entire fence perimeter and carry out minor repairs; the other will come into action whenever there's a potential breach incident on the fence line, to action repair work to maintain the fence's integrity. We'll also need some administrative assistance to roster the volunteers and provide data entry of inspection reports and photos.

A select group of staff and volunteers have been trained by fencing contractor Xcluder on the ins and outs of fence construction. Notes taken during their training will form the basis for a repair manual. These individuals will then run further training. The other aspect is setting up a list of task descriptions for the various volunteer roles, so team members know what is expected, and how the roles relate to other volunteer and staff roles. When the fence is completed the regular inspections will start and a stand-by roster will be set up for the repair crew. We've already obtained specific tools for fence maintenance and a Kubota hill climber vehicle for transportation.

If you're keen to assist, contact Derek Walker at derek.walker@brooksanctuary.org or 539 4920.

Pest monitoring

is underway at the sanctuary, with volunteers conducting monthly checks of ten monitoring lines, to provide baseline data in the lead up to the aerial brodifacoum operation planned for this coming late winter. After the aerial operation, monitoring will ramp up in a big way. The entire sanctuary will be dotted with monitoring tunnels and traps of various descriptions. “We have to know what’s out there. It’s essential if we are to reintroduce rare birds and animals such as kiwi, tuatara and yellowhead” says Jim Livingstone, Brook Sanctuary Operations Manager. “Before the Department of Conservation gives approval for most rare species to be reintroduced, it must be shown that the Sanctuary has been pest free for two years”.

It only takes one female and one male rat one year of good conditions to result in 160,000 offspring! So we must be sure there are none within the fence.

Tracking tunnels will be distributed in a grid pattern along the 110 km of operational tracks (cut by the volunteer track cutting team – thanks guys!); rat tunnels at a 100m x 100m distance and stoat tunnels at a wider separation of 200m x 200m. There will also be some cat tracking tunnels. Traps for various animals including possum will also be set out to dispatch any lingering individuals. The initial monitoring will be weekly for eight weeks and then monthly after that. We’re looking for more volunteers for this team, to start work this coming spring. **To join the team contact Jim Livingstone jim.livingstone@brooksanctuary.org or 539 4920.**

The Visitor Centre - A Retrospective

The Visitor Centre at 651 Brook Street forms the gateway to the 715 hectares of The Brook Waimarama Sanctuary. Construction of the Visitor Centre building was a team effort from the community with generous donations of cash, materials and peoples' time to complete the award winning building. Designed by John Palmer of Palmer & Palmer Architects, it opened in early 2007 and soon won an award for its landscape-friendly design.

The Visitors Centre has been staffed over the years by a dedicated team of volunteers, some since opening day. Jan Hewton, Visitor Centre Coordinator for the last three years says that currently “There are approximately 20 people who are regularly rostered, and I can draw on close to 30.” Sandra Pearson stood in for Jan for six months last year while Jan was overseas.

Earl Norris, Visitor Centre Coordinator for the centre’s first six years remembers, “We got quite a few visitors in the early days but it wasn’t until

Hudson was appointed and we made a real push to raise funds and finish the fence that things started getting busier.” This led Earl to develop a training manual and regular training updates for centre volunteers.

“Visitor numbers have certainly increased” says Jan. “Lots come to enjoy the many walking tracks in the sanctuary. Children who’ve enjoyed a school visit bring their parents along. And as people become acquainted with other New Zealand fenced sanctuaries they come to check out ours. Others, who use to frequent the Brook Valley as children, come back to see it as adults and are quite amazed at what’s happening. We are constantly having locals visit for the first time!”

The visitor centre has changes in store for it as the sanctuary’s development unfolds, but one thing will remain constant—the Trust will always rely on volunteers to staff the centre and greet visitors.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who have kept the centre alive and humming over the years, and special thanks to Earl, Sandra, and Jan for serving in the vital role of coordinator.

Quiz Nights

**What a great contribution to the project!
Quiz Nights for the Sanctuary in August**

Every Wednesday evening the Sprig & Fern pub on Hardy Street hosts a fun quiz game, and each month proceeds raised by the game goes to a different charity.

**In August the Brook Sanctuary will be the featured charity, the quizz at starts 8pm
and you’re invited.**

Plan to join in the fun on one or more Wednesdays in August! Form a team, or just rock up and plan to join one of the sanctuary’s teams on the night. Plan to get there early to claim a seat, as they go fast.

Common Bully - *Gobiomorphus cotidianus*

Attractive, tough and full of character, Bullies are a hardy and widespread New Zealand native fish. The name bully is short for Cock-a-bully, a name given to these fish by the early European settlers; it is thought the name is a mispronunciation of 'Kokapuru' the Maori word for small fish. In the Brook Sanctuary we seem to have a lack of Bully species present however further down the catchment and into the Maitai they live up to their name and are indeed 'common'.



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Brook Waimarama
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NELSON NEW ZEALAND

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Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

