

Spring — 2003

Protect

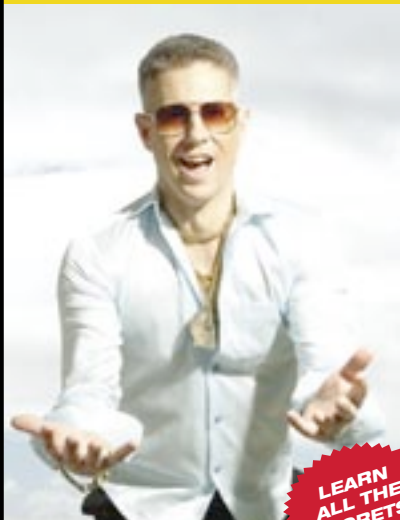


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Biosecurity Institute

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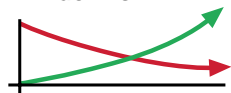
“Before I used Tordon Gold I had lots of ragwort and no friends. Now I'm the most popular farmer in the whole district.”

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Protect

Spring 2003

Magazine of the New Zealand Biosecurity Institute

Contents

Editor's Note	.....	4
News from the Executive	.....	5
AGM News	.....	7
News from the Branches:	.....	9
Member Profile: Richard Gribble	....	10
Report on NETS 2003	....	12
President's Report	....	14
Sustaining our biotic systems in an invaded land		
A summary of Dr Morgan Williams' address to NETS2003	....	19
Weedbusters Update	....	21
Weeds education website launched		
And what a site! Review by Wendy Baker	....	22
Biosecurity Amendment Bill 2003		
Andrew Wilke	....	23
Appendix 1 Protect Questionnaire	.....	i
Appendix 2 NZBI Skills Register	.....	i
Appendix 3 Letter to Government on Improving Internal Biosecurity	.....	i

Editor's Note

This issue of *Protect* ushers in a streamlined production process with Carolyn Lewis taking over the role of information compiler, production manager and proof reader.

With NETS 2003 just disappearing out of view behind, much of this edition is taken up with the happenings that took place at that event, outlined in the Report on NETS 2003 and Carolyn Lewis' summary of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Dr Morgan Williams' address, or with business transacted there as part of the NZBI's annual round-up — the AGM, and the President's report are both detailed in the issue.

As result of the focus on NETS, the branch news is minimal in this issue.

The Institute's newly elected Vice President, Richard Gribble, is the subject of the Member Profile, and in keeping with recent issues, there is an update on the Weedbusters campaign which is being officially launched as we publish.

The dissemination of information about pest plants is sure to be improved with the recent launch of Landcare Research's weed education website which is outlined as well as being briefly reviewed by Wendy Baker.

Changes brought about by the passing of the Biosecurity Amendment Act 2003 in July are summarised by Andrew Wilke of Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

And finally there are two appendices that involve feedback from members. Please take the time to fill them in and return them to the respective address if you have not done so already.

One is a reissue of the NZBI Skill Register that aids the sharing of skills that members have.

The other calls for comment on this magazine, *Protect*, and ways to improve it or change it.

So take a moment or two and fill them in and send them back to the address given so we can make this information delivery system better.

All the best.

Col Pearson
Editor

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News from the Executive

NETS2003

Well, "Biosecurity at the Centre of New Zealand" was a huge success. We had a great turnout with 192 registrations in total, which is by far the most we have ever had at one of our conferences, and the whole thing was a great credit to the organising committee. We are grateful to Mike Taylor, Tim Dodgshun, Eykolina de Zwart, Rod Asher, Ben Minehan, Robin van Zoelen, Lindsay Grueber, Graham Strickett, Melanie Newfield, and Peter Williams for all their hard work.

Our conference organiser, Ali Howard, was also an absolute star and went the extra mile to ensure things ran smoothly. Congratulations



Amber Bill with the Robb MacGuinness stick.

to Amber Bill who won the Robb MacGuinness stick for the best paper given by a NZBI member.

I think Andrew Wilke hit the nail on the head when he said it was probably the first conference he had ever been to that truly represented biosecurity in the fullest sense of the word. It was really great to have the Vertebrate Pest Management Institute join us too and this seems likely to become a regular arrangement.

A full report on NETS is provided later in this issue and a selection of photos will go up on the website in due course. Also look out for a write up in MAF's *Biosecurity* magazine.

NETS2004

Well one is no sooner over than it's time to get cracking on the next! NETS2004 will be held at The Grand Tiara in Rotorua, July 21-23, and it is likely that additional field trips will be organised for

the weekend immediately afterwards. An overarching theme will be the relationship between biosecurity and biodiversity. If you would like to offer to give a paper, or suggest a topic that you would like covered or a speaker you would like to hear from, then now is the time to come forward. Please contact someone on the organising committee (Richard Mallinson (richardm@envbop.govt.nz), John Mather (johnm@envbop.govt.nz), Carolyn Lewis (stevebluett@wave.co.nz), or Toni Withers (toni.withers@forestresearch.co.nz)).



Conference organiser Ali Howard on duty at NETS 2003.

Peter Ingram Memorial Award

The Book of Knowledge Award will be given out for the first time at next year's conference in Rotorua. In keeping with Peter Ingram's passion and enthusiasm for higher learning, his colleagues at Environment Bay of Plenty have commissioned a special carving that will be awarded annually to a NZBI member in recognition of their efforts to further their education or help others to learn. Branches will be asked to nominate people for the award nearer to the time.

Weedbusters

Carolyn Lewis was the NZBI's representative on the Weedbuster Establishment Group which met in late July (see report on this meeting later in this issue) and is now our representative on the Weedbuster Management Committee which will meet for the first time after the national Weedbuster launch on October 14. Please contact Carolyn if you have any thoughts, queries or suggestions regarding the NZBI's contribution to, or potential role in, the Weedbuster campaign (email Carolyn at stevebluett@wave.co.nz).

Internal Biosecurity Borders

One aspect of biosecurity in New Zealand that could be improved is the more effective use of internal borders to prevent the spread of pests. While the responsibility for such an initiative is largely in the hands of central government, the Otago/Southland branch has suggested that the NZBI could lobby for internal borders. The executive has agreed that this is a good idea, and Randall Milne and Paul Champion are writing a letter to send to the appropriate agencies on our behalf. In the meantime Local Government NZ is making noises of their own about this issue (see Branch News)

New Zealand Biosecurity Summit

By the time this edition of *Protect* comes out, the long-awaited national Biosecurity Strategy will have been released (www.maf.govt.nz). A report on the special summit at Te Papa, Wellington, on October 3-4 to launch this strategy, will be included in the next issue of *Protect*. It is hoped that this summit will become an annual event.

Members may be interested to know that the

New Members

We would like to warmly welcome the following new members:

Elizabeth Sherwood – DOC, Whangarei
Tim Senior – Environment Bay of Plenty
Mike Karl, Mike Reynolds – ECOFX Pest Solutions
Seona Casonato – Landcare Research
Danielle Shanahan – Otago University
Sharon Leathem – Possum Master Industries Ltd

News from the Executive Continued

Brightstars Biosecurity Conference did not go ahead.

Posters

After much agonising over design, we hope to have copies of our new poster ready to go to print fairly soon. The poster is designed to raise awareness about the NZBI and biosecurity threats to New Zealand. We plan

to produce one AO size copy for each branch and at least 500 A3 size copies so that all our members can put them up far and wide. If funds permit, we may also print a second design later on. Thanks to Carolyn Lewis, Melanie Newfield, Rod Smart, and especially to Peter Berben for bringing this idea through to fruition.

AGM News

The new line-up

Thank you to all members who made an effort to attend our AGM. We now have some new faces as well as some familiar ones on the executive, and I'm sure they will prove to be a great team. To recap, the new line up is:

National officer holders

Lynley Hayes – President
 Alison Gianotti – Secretary
 Richard Gribble – Vice President
 Ken Massey – Treasurer 2003
 Helen Braithwaite – Treasurer 2004

Branch representatives

Greg Hoskins
 Paul Champion
 Mike Urlich
 Mike Taylor
 Jenny Williams
 Randall Milne

Seconded members

We have seconded three people on to the executive this year to help us to achieve our aims and goals. They are:

Carolyn Lewis – *Protect/Weedbuster* Representative
Christine Reed – MAF Representative
John Gardner – MoH Representative

Branch officials

While we are on such matters here is a summary of who's holding positions at the branch level after the recent round of branch AGMs. Note that the Auckland/Northland Branch is still on the lookout for a secretary!

Branch	Auckland/Northland	Central North Island	Southern North Island
Chair	Brett Miller	Carolyn Lewis	Michael Urlich
Secretary	Vacant	Ester van den Bosch	Mark McAlpine
Executive Member	Greg Hoskins	Paul Champion	Michael Urlich
Branch	Top of the South	Canterbury	Otago/Southland
Chair	Mike Taylor	Laurence Smith	Randall Milne
Secretary	Mike Taylor	Jan Crooks	Vacant
Executive Member	Mike Taylor	Jenny Williams	Randall Milne

Trial members

We have potentially 74 trial members to welcome from our Nelson conference. These people either paid the higher registration rate for non-members or were speakers or organisers and will be offered a trial membership until the end of 2004:

Graeme Bourdôt – Agresearch
Grant Crossett – AgriQuality
Colin Carter – Animal Control Products Ltd
Bill Simmons – Animal Control Products Ltd
Rod Asher, Eykolina de Zwart – Cawthron Institute
Sonya Bissmire, Jonathan Boow, Dave Butler, Robin Cox, Bill Fleury, Craig Gillies, Mike Hawes, Geoff Hicks, Daniel Mahon, Barney Thomas, Anna Paltridge, Joanne Perry, Gill Robinson – Department Of Conservation
Bruno Danner – EcoFx Pest Solutions
Rob Pooley – Elaine Bay Aquaculture Ltd
Neil Deans – Fish And Game
Mark Forward, Forest Owners Association
Ben Doherty – Forest Research
Campbell Leckie – Hawke's Bay Regional Council

Craig Davey, Ruth Fleeson, Elaine Iddon – horizons.mw
Kim Broad, Ray Clarey, Glen Falconer, Murray Hudson, Jim Lambie, Ken Wright, Robert Quan – Greater Wellington
Steve Pilkington – International Pacific College
Mick Park – Iwi Resource Management
Martin Carson – Kiwicare Corporation Ltd
Pauline Harmer, Bunny Turipa, Lisa Waiwai, Robert Waiwai – Lake Waikaremoana Hapu Restoration Trust
Jacqueline Beggs, Graham Nugent, John Parkes, Quentin Paynter, Julia Wilson-Davey – Landcare Research
Simon O'Connor, Christine Reed – Ministry Of Agriculture And Forestry

AGM News Continued

Paul Bolger, Ian Gear – MAF Biosecurity Authority
Alan Flynn, Barney Stephenson – MAF Plants and Biosecurity
Dave Grueber, Alf Norton – Marlborough District Council
Malika Virah Sawmy – Mauritius Wildlife Foundation
John Gardner – Ministry Of Health
Rebecca Clarkson – Mussel Industry Council
Matt Molloy – Nelson-Marlborough District Health Board
John Mangos – NZ Army: Property Management
Rachel Cane, Shaun Maclaren – New Zealand Biosecure

Kevin Nalder – NZ Fresh Produce Importers Association
Philip Manson – New Zealand Winegrowers
Matthew Hall – Northland Regional Council
Lincoln Coe – Port Nelson
David Miller – Southern Institute Of Technology
Ron Walker – Southern Pest Management
Paul Ash – Target Pest Enterprises
Lindsay Vaughan – Tasman District Council
Stewart Hawthorn – The New Zealand King Salmon Company
Pauline Greenwood – Unitech, Auckland
Gary Wilson – Windsor Engineering Group Ltd

Subscriptions

The AGM agreed to continue with the scheme we adopted this year where subs will continue to be \$40 with a \$10 rebate if paid by March 31.

Protect

It was reiterated that *Protect* was the main communication vehicle for the NZBI and that people need to read it if they want to keep up to date with what is happening. It's also a big expenditure item and members were reminded that we pay for Col's time by the hour and that we can keep the costs down if members provide good copy for each issue. There seems to be a fairly high level of satisfaction with the frequency and content of *Protect*, but issues could perhaps be a little shorter. All members will be asked to provide feedback on *Protect* through a questionnaire.

Website

Again there appears to be a high level of satisfaction with how the website is operating. It was agreed that it was time for the members-only section password to be changed. This will happen once the new secretary

has email groups up and running and is able to notify people of the change.

Skills Register

A number of members have still not filled in a skills register form to tell us what skills and talents they have. We will be making another push to gather a critical mass of information so we can start to collate it and make it available to all members.

Travel and Study Awards

Members were reminded that the next round of these awards closes on the September 31 and that details are available on the website.

GM Policy

Peter Russell gave a brief summation of the GM debate and suggested that the NZBI look at developing a policy on genetic engineering and modification. The meeting agreed that this would be a useful thing to do. A sub-committee of Peter Russell, Helen Braithwaite, Nick Waipara, Lisa Maria, David Stephens, Doug Foster and Catherine Law will work on this task and report back to the next AGM.

News from the Branches

Central North Island

Central North Island Branch has a meeting and field trip planned for October in the Rotorua area, where the branch will be updated on progress in planning for NETS 2004.

Lower North Island

After 33 years service in the pest plant industry, Kevin Worsley, Senior Plants Officer with Greater Wellington Regional Council, hung up his knapsack on September 26 to retire. Kevin is a past president and a Life Member of the Institute, and we will run a full profile of him in the next issue of *Protect*.

Pest plant people from Greater Wellington Regional Council, Department of Conservation, local authorities and the QEII Trust are continuing to network after the release of a cross-agency effort that produced a pamphlet targeting the dumping of garden weeds into reserves. This "weed liaison group" has now broadened

its brief to include general weed issues. This included a recent meeting with Amber Bill, National Weedbusters Co-ordinator, so watch out for Woody Weed at some Wellington events in the near future.

Auckland/Northland

Northland-Auckland Branch has released a notice of a meeting on Tuesday, October 14, 2003, at the Puketi Forest DOC HQ. Subjects to be covered will include the Scoliid wasp, the Puketi forest weed and pest programme, and the day will be rounded off with a field trip to Ngawha Springs to have a look at the use of geothermal power and the site of the new prison.

Top of the South

Top of the South Branch is generally enjoying a well-earned rest after its outstanding efforts organising NETS 2003 in Nelson — well done, everyone!

Otago/Southland

What can be done once a pest gets in?

Internal biosecurity measures proposed for New Zealand

There's more to biosecurity in this country than following the highs and lows of a certain TV show. Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) recognized this at its recent get together in Queenstown. The call for central government to investigate internal biosecurity measures was put to LGNZ at the request of some "bio-aware" councillors from Environment Southland.

At its AGM, LGNZ passed a remit urging central government to prevent unwanted organisms that are established in one part of New Zealand from establishing and causing adverse effects in other parts of the country. This could be achieved by

promoting and supporting appropriate internal biosecurity policies and functions, as well as utilising suitable geographic barriers. Cook Strait is one such barrier that should be investigated as a means to prevent the further spread of unwanted organisms.

The New Zealand Biosecurity Institute is putting together a complementary remit to the one approved by LGNZ. Who knows what may happen if the same message comes from a variety of sources. There might just be some action on this one!!

Randall Milne
Environment Southland

Member Profile: New Vice President Richard Gribble

Hello fellow members. I was born in Auckland and raised and educated in Papatoetoe. A “Jaffa” for VP I hear you say. Maybe, but I left Auckland at 18 for the rural community so now feel I have had suitable time with my feet on the ground to get confused if I am given any more choices than a “flat white or black”.

So at a tender age I enrolled at Massey University to study agriculture. Being brought up in the city, why do the “aggie” bit? An extended family connection with farming and several mates doing similar encouraged me along the path of outside pursuits rather than the straight sciences.

At Massey I learnt to drink on Day 1. I also learnt the art of long-term thinking and persistence. At the first orientation session, I remember the vice-chancellor saying to us, “look at the person on either side of you. Only one of the three of you will graduate”, and I remember thinking that I wanted it to be me.

So four years later I was the holder of a brand new Agricultural Science degree ready to launch into the world with quite a bit of theory but not much practical knowledge. My first stint was six months training as a Farm Adviser with the then MAF Advisory Services division in Warkworth, where I would get confused with such basics as “what do I spray my thistles with?”. But gradually I learned the art of putting theory into practice under the tutelage of down-to-earth farmers and my colleagues.

After initial training I was posted to Kaikohe in the South Hokianga district. Now there’s an adventurous place to live and work. Here I was introduced to hectares of Australian sedge and woolly nightshade. This was in the days of Land Development Encouragement Loans and Livestock Incentive Schemes so there was a real push for bringing non-productive land into pasture. The South Hokianga is a rugged place and was a great environment to learn the art of building rapport with the rural community.

A brief stint of six months leave without pay saw me working on a bull-beef unit in the Waikato and a trip around the eastern half of Australia. And then I was transferred to MAF at Pukekohe. My main work there was with dairy farmers, both seasonal and town supply. So the weed involvement was generally with those

found in higher fertility paddocks. The critical role of pasture and stock management for both weed control and milk production was continually emphasised. I was involved with many discussion groups there, both dairy and dry stock. This was in the days of the real extension push from research to the farm gate. So I had a good grounding with presentation skills and trying to make sometimes complicated messages simple. I spent a lot of time on the Awhitu peninsula of the Manukau Harbour. Kikuyu is the dominant grass on many farms here so I learnt how to manage it. This was also one of my early introductions to biosecurity issues. Some farms at the very top of the peninsula — right under the flight path to Auckland International Airport — reported infestations of a little ground-drilling caterpillar which was identified as Tasmanian grass grub. The theory was that it was introduced to the region by aircraft from Australia when the landing gear opened over the peninsula. Never proven as such to my knowledge, but a possibility.

1985 saw me with itchy feet and I was off to Papua New Guinea for a two-year stint with Catholic Overseas Volunteer Service. Initially my job was to manage the mission cattle herd. The idea was to graze the grass under the coconut palms so that it was easier to find the coconuts. The main source of income was copra. Also there was a small herd of dairy cows milked by hand and producing the princely amount of about three litres per day on average. I also managed the local slaughter house and butchery. Hygiene standards were different to say the least. The area had been devastated during the war, and the place was littered with the wrecks of planes and equipment. The main source of water was bomb holes that filled up during the wet season.

After some time I moved to a station in the highlands where I was jack of all trades: hydro power station manager, trade store supervisor, plumber, builder, ambulance and hearse driver, air strip controller, weather reporter, travel agent and film projectionist. Life was full. I got the chance to climb Mt Wilhelm, at 4260m the highest in the country. The area was very remote with the only viable transport being walking or air, though a road of sorts opened while I was there.



Richard Gribble

Member Profile: Richard Gribble continued

On a good day I could manage a top speed of 21km in 1½ hours, on a bad day it could take 13 hours or not at all. The chance to live among a different culture for two years was fascinating, frustrating and adventurous. It made me appreciate New Zealand and the abundance of opportunities here.

In 1987, I returned to New Zealand and faced a massive dose of culture shock. Life here was so fast and materially focused that I escaped to the Waikato and milked cows for a season to readjust. Also did a stint with Anchormart (the retail side of the then NZCDC). This was really good product knowledge for the dairy industry, but by this time I felt I needed to return to my career.

I took a job with Agriculture NZ as a farm consultant and shifted back to Warkworth. The focus of my job was to provide farm management consultancy in all its aspects, to improve the profit line for clients. Farm business planning and monitoring was critical. I did umpteen budgets for farmers and also was responsible for the MAF Farm Monitoring (Dairy) report for Northland. Another side of the job was tutoring for TOPS programmes that we ran for people that had been unsuccessful at school but wanted to start a career in farming. The hardest part of this was to cope with the

low self-esteem that a lot of the trainees brought with them. The life lesson: attitude is so important.

In 1997 I started with the biosecurity team at Auckland Regional Council. Initially the job was exclusively pest plant based but now I would spend half my time on animal queries as well. There is also a few large community pest programme that I have a hand in. My area runs from Dairy Flat in the south to the Dome Valley in the north of Rodney District. It's a variable area, with lots of lifestyle blocks, some larger dry stock units, dairy farms, forestry and the urban areas of the Whangaparaoa Peninsula plus the islands of Tiritiri Matangi (a fantastic pest-free place well worth a visit when you're here) and Kawau (famous for its wallabies). Nearby, fencing of the Mainland Island project at Tawharanui Regional Park has begun. I share an office with Dave Galloway at Wenderholm Regional Park, which is truly a beautiful spot

So that's a bit about me. I'm married to Linda and have three children, aged 13,11 and 9. Thank you for electing me as your new VP. I think the Biosecurity Institute has an important future and I am honoured to be part of it. Be sure to drop into Wenderholm (just north of Orewa) if you're passing.

Richard Gribble

Institute Vice President

Report on NETS 2003

Nelson, home of the Wearable Arts Awards, gateway to the golden beaches of the Abel Tasman National Park — and venue for NETS 2003. A record-breaking 192 delegates from a huge variety of organisations registered for this event.

The theme of NETS 2003 was “Biosecurity at the Centre of New Zealand” — but it was apparent from the very first speaker that it could equally have been called “Biosecurity — we’re all in this together”, as the overriding message that the audience received was that biosecurity impacts on absolutely everyone in New Zealand.

New biosecurity challenges ahead

The keynote speaker was Dr Morgan Williams, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (see later article), who set the tone for the next three days of seminars and field trips with a reality check about what is in store for us with regard to conflicts between public and regulatory organisations as old pest control technologies fall out of favour, new ones are developed, and social values change. His speech raised some interesting issues that we all need to consider, and also emphasised that the community must be engaged if future biosecurity measures are to be successful.

Comments from members who attended NETS 2003 indicated that they appreciated the inclusion of a significant number of speakers from industry in this year’s programme. Commercial operators such as Rob Pooley (Elaine Bay Aquiculture) and Richard Kempthorne (orchardist and councillor), and those representatives from organisations such as NZ Winegrowers Association, the Mussel Industry Council, the NZ Forest Owners Association, the NZ King Salmon Company, and Port of Nelson on the second day, provided a much needed perspective from those whose industries biosecurity is meant to protect. Rob Pooley and Richard Kempthorne also put across a clear message that the measures to prevent these incursions, or to deal with problems that have made it into New Zealand, can also have a major impact on industry. The best course for all concerned is a concerted government-industry effort to tackle any problems, with clarity around responsibilities, quick decision-making and partnerships between agencies.

Stewart Hawthorn added an interesting issue to the mix by pointing out that we need to develop contingency plans and agreed approaches before any incursions occur because once a crisis begins, individuals and organisations no longer make rational or timely decisions.

Biosecurity conflicts a major issue

Dr Margaret Stanley spoke about resolving conflicts in weed control, giving examples of weeds that have

actually become the main habitat and food sources for endangered bird and animal species. Dr Stanley also introduced a new area of the Landcare Research website aimed at schools (see later review of this) which will be a useful resource for teachers and students alike.

The concurrent NZBI and vertebrate pest sessions were well attended, and we look forward to future conferences with the Vertebrate Pest Management Institute again taking part. The AGM was well attended (see Lynley’s report) and then it was the quick or the dead at Happy Hour before groups split up to sample various dinner spots around Nelson.

National biosecurity strategy on its way

Day Two started with a talk by Dr John Hellstrom entitled “So we have a Biosecurity Strategy — Now What?” Unfortunately, an embargo on the contents of



NETS 2003 field trip: David Butler of DOC explains the vision behind the proposed Brook Sanctuary.

the national strategy, which at that time was still in front of Cabinet, meant John was unable to give us any juicy tidbits about what the strategy contained. However, it was good to get a first-hand update from the man who has been in the thick of it since the start of the process. (Stop Press — The Biosecurity Strategy has been released. Copies can be ordered and a summary viewed at www.maf.govt.nz).

Thursday afternoon was taken up with a field trip to both the Port of Nelson and Brook Sanctuary. Lincoln Coe and Phil Francois took the buses around the port operation and described some of the conflicts between local residents and the fumigation process that is needed for some containers. They also filled us in on the recent Argentine ant incursion at the port, and the co-operative response from both local authorities, MAF and port management, which allowed immediate and effective action to be taken. This was an interesting follow-up to Jacqueline Beggs of Landcare Research, who pointed out in an earlier talk that 6% of containers (about 15,600 of them) have live organisms in them but MAF are only able to detect about 4% of these incursions. To date, 223 species from 16 orders have been found.

News from NETS 2003 Continued

David Butler and Melanie Newfield from DOC made us walk off some of the conference meals with a march through the site of the proposed Brook Sanctuary. This area shows the potential to be a jewel in the crown for Nelson as a sanctuary surrounded with predator-proof fencing where native birds can establish and the public can have access.

The official NZBI dinner function was ably entertained by Christchurch journalist and raconteur Joe Bennett with a talk on — well, everything really, and he had the audience in stitches. A good night was had by all, despite the efforts of the hotel staff to discourage both the dancing and the socialising in the bar area after the dinner venue closed down.

Worldwide challenge

Friday morning early birds were treated to a slide show from Chris Buddenhagen, who is working at the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos Islands, and who was awarded an NZBI Travel Award to come to NETS 2003 and update us on his work on weed control in this amazing part of the world. With their isolation, high level of endemism, and few native mammals, the Galapagos Islands have many similarities with New Zealand. The islands have only recently been occupied by people, since the 1950s and 60s, and have a total population of around 18,000 inhabitants. Ninety-five percent of the land area is a national park, but contains 550 introduced plant species, 95% of which were deliberately introduced. Only two have been eradicated so far, and amazingly there is no legislation currently in place to prevent further introductions. Chris is working on a plan for dealing with the problem, including impacts, invasion processes, ascertaining if eradication of some invasive plant species is feasible, control options, and so on.



DOC and NIWA at the "formal" dinner: Keith Briden, Paul Champion, Jon Sawyer, Clayson Howell and Daniel Mahon.

Getting communities on board

The rest of the day saw sessions lined up under the theme "Selling the message". These sessions provided good background to basic questions as to how biosecurity needs to be presented to iwi, the general public, visitors and other groups, and how good-news stories, such as the ground-breaking work being done as part of the Rotoiti Nature Recovery Project, can provide the inspiration for further work and also encourage us to "think outside the square". Amber Bill, with the able assistance of Woody Weed, won the Robb MacGuinness Stick award for her Weedbusters presentation. Adrienne Tollemache outlined the work being done by Protect NZ to take the biosecurity message to potential visitors from Pacific Island nations before they reach our shores.

The afternoon was dedicated to various workshops. First of all, people could update themselves on happenings in biological control of weeds with the Landcare Research team, or brush up on their aquatic weed identification skills with Paul Champion. Then there was a choice of attending either a public Weedbusters session organised by Amber Bill, or an explanation of the operation of MAF's National Plant Pest Reference Laboratory by Barney Stephenson. Since home gardens are the source of many environmental weed problems, members of local gardeners clubs were invited to come along to the public session. There was a display of plants of concern in the Nelson area so that people could familiarise themselves with them, and a panel of experts to consult about how to control these and other weeds. Some people also brought in plants to be identified, and a question-and-answer session was followed by another visit from Woody Weed. Members of the public who participated were chuffed to be given Weedbuster T-shirts to take home. It was very satisfying to conclude the conference by providing some much-needed outreach to the community.

A big "thank you" must go to the organising committee for Nelson NETS 2003 which did such a fantastic job in keeping us entertained, informed, well fed and happy over the three days. Planning for NETS 2004 in Rotorua is already well under way and a call for papers has already been made — so see you all there!



Margaret Stanley and Nick Waipara on the town in Nelson.

President's Report

The past year has again been one of growth and achievement for the New Zealand Biosecurity Institute (NZBI). We comfortably managed to achieve our annual plans for 2002 and are well on track so far with our plans for 2003. Let's run through both of these.

2002 Annual Plans

1. **Seek to increase our membership by signing up at least 20 new members, especially from groups that are poorly represented at present (e.g. MAF, health, people involved with vertebrate and invertebrate pests, industry representatives etc).**

We will invite prospective members to attend branch activities and NETS (non-members attending NETS will pay a higher registration fee that will automatically sign them up for a year). We will ensure that all members have a copy of the application form that they can give out to any prospective members they come across. We also hope to attract more members by raising our profile (see 2, 3 & 8 below). We would hope to continue to grow and diversify in subsequent years in a sustainable way.

Achieved. Our growth in membership was extremely pleasing in 2002 as we welcomed 50 new members. We also signed up 26 trial members at NETS and hopefully many of them will come on board as full members in 2004. Note that a membership application form is available on our website.

2. **Seek to raise awareness of the NZBI and biosecurity issues.**

We will set up a subcommittee to look at the best way of doing this (e.g. displays, press releases, Weedbuster Week?) and make some recommendations before January 30, 2002.

Achieved. The subcommittee came up with a number of recommendations, including developing some posters (which are under way), and putting out press releases (starting with ones about NETS). We also wrote to the Department of Conservation pledging our support for Weedbuster Week.

3. **Seek to ensure that the NZBI becomes more involved in matters of policy, strategy and advocacy.**

We will set up a subcommittee that will ensure we have input into the New Zealand Biosecurity Strategy, and that we comment on any Regional Pest Management Strategies or other

documents if it is appropriate for us to do so. The Executive will also write to ERMA about improvements they could make to their systems before January 30, 2002.

Achieved. We wrote to ERMA and made a submission in response to the Biosecurity Strategy issues document.

4. **Seek to make it easier for our members to access the knowledge and information they require to do their jobs effectively.**

We will send out a questionnaire to all members before Christmas 2001, asking them about any special interests, knowledge, skills, or talents they have, and then we will produce an updated membership information list that incorporates this additional information. We will undertake to keep this list current in future years. We will also investigate ways that we could more effectively interact and network with other like-minded organisations both here and overseas.

Mostly achieved. Responses to the questionnaire have been slower to come in than expected, and this information has not yet been added to the website. We approached the New Zealand Vertebrate Pest Management Institute about working more closely together and this had led to them joining forces with us at NETS2003. The idea of running a joint conference with the Australian Weeds Society was considered and discarded owing to a lukewarm response from their organising committee and the likely cost (AWS registration is 2-3 times what we pay for NETS).

5. **Seek to improve biosecurity in New Zealand by offering a scholarship to allow one member to travel to learn new skills and another scholarship to assist a student to undertake some relevant research.**

We will set up a subcommittee that will develop guidelines for awarding the scholarships (before January 30, 2002), arrange for the scholarships to be advertised appropriately, and decide which applicants (if any) should receive the awards. In future years we will monitor the success and viability of these scholarships and make adjustments if necessary.

Achieved. We gave a travel award to Wendy Baker ahead of the deadline after receiving an outstanding application from her, and we all appreciated her subsequent presentation

President's Report Continued

at Invercargill. A travel award has been given to Chris Buddenhagen to help him to attend this conference and I'm sure his talk on the Galapagos will be very interesting. We have given a study award to Canterbury University Masters student Tim McKenzie and we hope to hear from him at a future NETS. Although the awards were decided in 2002 the money was not paid out until 2003.

6. Seek to improve biosecurity in New Zealand by holding a National Education and Training Seminar (NETS) in July.

The organising committee and Executive will consult widely about the topics and activities to be covered at NETS and prepare a questionnaire that will go in the registration packs to allow participants to provide feedback about NETS and any other matters relating to the NZBI. We will use this feedback to help us to continue run at least one highly successful NETS per year.

Achieved. Despite some resistance from some of our North Island members to travelling so far south in the middle of winter, a highly successful NETS was staged last year at Invercargill. Some said it was the best one they had ever been to. Feedback from the questionnaires at the end was positive and useful. In particular the inclusion of a public session and a field trip on the middle day were well supported. It was wonderful to also have members of the Biosecurity Managers Group join us in Invercargill and we hope this will become a regular feature. We also appreciate DOC organising their Weed Techs meeting immediately beforehand to allow maximum participation by their staff. I'm sure that those who stayed on for the field trip afterwards are unlikely to forget the magical time spent on Ulva Island.

7. Seek to improve biosecurity in New Zealand by producing quarterly issues of *Protect*.

We will make every effort to cover a broad spectrum of topics, as well as information about members, branch and nationwide activities. We will make *Protect* more accessible by including it on our website (as soon as it is up and running — see 8). Selected stories will also be made available to non-members. The size, style, and frequency of *Protect* will also be reassessed once we are able to include it on our website.

*Achieved. I would like to thank Col Pearson for all the hard work that he has put in to producing another four substantial issues of *Protect* this year and finding ways to overcome problematic issues with overly large file sizes. I would also like to thank everyone who contributed in some way, especially people like Ian Popay and Carolyn Lewis who provided stories without even being asked. Finally I would like to thank Monsanto for its support with the two issues produced this year before that company folded, and Dow Agrosiences for stepping into the breach.*

8. Seek to improve biosecurity in New Zealand by developing and maintaining a website.

We will endeavour to have a presence in cyberspace before Christmas 2001. Initially the site will cover information about the NZBI and how to contact us, upcoming events, selected stories from *Protect*, and hot links to relevant sites. A "members only" section will have full issues of *Protect*, members' contact details, and the constitution. A forum will be held at NETS to discuss how well the website is working and possible improvements given available resources.

Achieved. Thanks to Mike Harré we got our website up and running shortly after Christmas 2001. Thanks also to the Cawthron Institute for providing us with our wonderful domain name. We have also managed to be extremely frugal because, although we agreed at the AGM in 2001 to spend up to \$6K on developing a website, we have managed to do it for considerably less (\$2250). A number of improvements suggested at the forum at NETS2002 have been instigated e.g. adding a counter to record number of people visiting the site.

9. Seek to ensure that the NZBI continues to be an active organisation that gets things done and makes a difference.

The Executive will meet on at least a quarterly basis and annual and strategic planning will be undertaken every year. Reports on progress and achievement will be provided in *Protect* and at the AGM.

Achieved. The whole Executive worked hard to keep the wheels turning and it was a great team effort.

President's Report Continued

2003 Annual Plans

The annual plans set for 2003 are similar to the plans for 2002. So far we are on track to achieve them.

1. **Seek to increase our membership by signing up at least 20 new members, especially from groups that are poorly represented at present (e.g. MAF, health, people involved with vertebrate and invertebrate pests, industry representatives etc).**

We will encourage all branches to invite prospective members to attend branch activities and NETS (non-members attending NETS will pay a higher registration fee that will automatically sign them up for the following 18 months). We intend to attract more members by raising our profile (see 2, 3 & 8 below). We intend to continue to grow and diversify in subsequent years in a sustainable way.

So far this year we have signed up 21 new members and will have another bunch of about 60 trial members arising from this conference. I think our membership is now at an all time high (at least for the past decade and probably for all time). Most of our new members are, however, still not coming from the target groups so more work needs to be done on attracting these people. I would like to encourage all branches to be more proactive in inviting prospective members to join in any activities they are organising. I would also like to continue to encourage branches to extend invitations to any activities they are organising to all our members and not just the locals. There are some real advantages in attracting participants from other parts of the country and you are unlikely to be swamped.

2. **Seek to raise awareness of the NZBI and biosecurity issues.**

We will print some promotional posters and make at least two press releases. We will investigate ways of enhancing media coverage of NETS. We will write to DOC's National Weeds Public Awareness Co-ordinator with an offer of technical assistance and support for Weedbuster Week in 2003.

The posters should hopefully be available for distribution fairly soon. Thanks especially to Peter Berben, and also to Rod Smart, Carolyn Lewis, and Melanie Newfield, for making this possible. Thanks to Ben Minehan for agreeing to look after the media aspects of NETS2003 so we can achieve maximum coverage. A

press release has again gone out to raise awareness about NETS and the NZBI. A letter has been sent to Amber Bill, and Carolyn Lewis has accepted a position on the Weedbuster Establishment Group on behalf of the NZBI.

3. **Seek to ensure that the NZBI becomes more involved in matters of policy, strategy and advocacy.**

We will comment on any matters or documents where it is appropriate for us to do so.

So far this year we have made a submission on the Draft Biosecurity Strategy, a submission in support of the use of Rotenone as a piscicide, and we have written a letter to The Listener in response to some unsupportive articles they had published. Thanks to Ian Popay, Paul Champion, Andrew Wilke, Mike White, and Carolyn Lewis for helping to prepare these. Please continue to bring to our attention any matters that we should be commenting on.

4. **Seek to make it easier for our members to access the knowledge and information they require to do their jobs effectively.**

We will seek to improve the amount of information available on our skills register. We will endeavour to more effectively interact and network with other like-minded organisations both here and overseas.

I'm hoping that by joining forces at NETS this year a closer relationship will be forged between the NZBI and the Vertebrate Pest Management Institute of New Zealand. We still need to work towards developing better linkages with the New Zealand Plant Protection Society. We need to be upfront about what we have as an organisation to offer and be proactive at all times. I would also like us to seek closer ties with the Global Invasive Species Programme and the Executive is considering how we might do this. We also need to think about how we can strengthen ties with Australia and our Pacific Island neighbours.

5. **Seek to improve biosecurity in New Zealand by offering a scholarship to allow one member to travel to learn new skills and another scholarship to assist a student to undertake some relevant research.**

We will assess the success and viability of these awards and decide what should be offered in 2003/04.

President's Report Continued

We have decided to offer these awards again in 2003 with the money to be awarded early in 2004. Get those applications rolling in before the end of September deadline!

6. Seek to improve biosecurity in New Zealand by holding a National Education and Training Seminar (NETS) in July.

The organising committee and Executive will consult widely about the topics and activities to be covered at NETS and prepare a questionnaire that will go in the registration packs to allow participants to provide feedback about NETS and any other matters relating to the NZBI. We will use this feedback to help us to continue run at least one highly successful NETS per year. We will explore the possibility of running joint conferences with other like-minded organisations.

This year we are holding our biggest NETS ever and the organising committee have worked hard to pull together a stimulating programme and memorable event. It's really great to have the Vertebrate Pest Management Institute of New Zealand on board this time and the continued support of DOC and the BMG. It is becoming more difficult for organising committees to stage NETS as our membership continues to diversify and people's needs and expectations become greater. We are fortunate that people are still willing to put up their hand to offer. In order to make life easier for future organising committees it would be helpful if members could be more forthcoming about the topics and activities they would like covered and offer to give papers at an early stage. The typical response at present is either a deafening silence or feedback at a time when it is not easy to make changes. Please also assist future organisers by filling in the questionnaire on the last day about how you have found this experience, in particular any new innovations.

7. Seek to improve biosecurity in New Zealand by producing quarterly issues of *Protect*.

We will make every effort to cover a broad spectrum of topics, as well as information about members, branch and nationwide activities. We will assess the size, style and frequency of *Protect* now that it is being posted on our website.

*The Executive will be reviewing *Protect* and we would also like feedback from our members.*

*We always welcome any contributions or ideas for stories. Thanks to Col Pearson for his continued dedication to this worthy cause, and to Dow Agrosiences for their assistance with the production of hard copies and contribution towards production expenses. Thanks also to Carolyn Lewis for agreeing to oversee *Protect* as of the next issue.*

8. Seek to improve biosecurity in New Zealand by developing and maintaining a website.

We will continue to maintain and improve our website. We will again hold a forum at NETS to discuss our website. We will seek to be included as a hot link on more other relevant websites.

Thanks to Mike Harré for keeping our website running and up to date. Thanks also to the Cawthron Institute for continuing to provide us with our domain name free of charge. Maintaining our website and keeping it in cyberspace is not cheap (about \$1250 a year) so we need to try and get as much value out of it as possible. We have some features available such as the chat room which are not being used at all. We also need more assistance from members and particularly branches to make the best use of the upcoming events section. Some members appear to have been unaware that membership details are available on our website, and we also need your help in keeping this as up to date as possible. We are not holding a forum about our website as part of NETS this year but will instead talk about it under general business.

9. Seek to ensure that the NZBI continues to be an active organisation that gets things done and makes a difference.

The Executive will meet on at least a quarterly basis and annual and strategic planning will be undertaken every year. Reports on progress and achievement will be provided in *Protect* and at the AGM.

I would like to thank the all the members of the Executive who have all contributed a lot over the past year.

Special thanks must go to our long suffering Secretary, Dave Galloway, who is now stepping down after six years in the position. Thanks for helping to keep the show on the road for such a long time, particularly during the period when the Institute was facing some significant challenges. Our Treasurer, Ken Massey,

President's Report Continued

will also be stepping down at the end of this financial year after three terms in the job and I would like to thank him for keeping our finances in order.

We are also, after three years, losing our Vice President, Paul Champion, whose energies and talents are needed elsewhere. I appreciate the able support Paul has given me during my time as President.

Finally, Keith Crothers has recently stood down from the Executive after 18 years of continuous service, which must surely be an unrivalled record. Thank you, Keith, for the multitude of things you have done in that time.

I'm sure that the new Executive will prove to be just as able. We will again be looking to second some people on to the Executive to ensure that new members have a voice, to help us grow into new areas and for the purposes of succession planning. Please feel free to put your hand up if you are interested in joining the Executive in this capacity or suggest suitable people that we should approach.

Finally I'd like to thank all the organisations which have generously let their staff use work time and resources on NZBI matters.

Some Food for Thought

It's not so long ago that the NZBI came close to folding. We have come a long way in the past few years but if we are to continue to be a strong and vibrant organisation we need to continue to evolve, grow, and serve a useful purpose. One of the issues that we need to grapple with in the near future is how we continue to fund our increased level of activity. We have made a decision to eat into our accumulated savings at the present time but this will not be able to continue indefinitely. We may seriously need to think about fundraising opportunities and sponsorship. We are all volunteers and our "day" jobs must come first. If we are to maintain our current level of activity, let alone increase it (and there is so much more we could be doing!) then we really need more people to come forward and offer to assist with tasks. Obviously if we can continue to increase and diversify our membership we will have more funds available, more resources to call upon and more hands to make light work. Just think, if each of us could sign up one new member over the next year that would double the resources available to us. Let's see if we can do it!

Lynley Hayes 

Sustaining our biotic systems in an invaded land



The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Dr Morgan Williams, gave the keynote address at NETS 2003. Carolyn Lewis provided the following summary of the presentation.

First off, it would be helpful to clarify the role the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) plays in New Zealand. The PCE is an officer of Parliament who is independent of the Government. They have the power to obtain information and investigate a very wide range of environmental management matters, with the freedom to publish findings, but only as recommendations.

To get an idea of the issues that the PCE gets involved in, you only need to check out the website www.pce.govt.nz. Reports from this office range from urban development to the effects of aircraft noise on sensitive environments, tourism effects on natural areas, to the power industry. One that will be familiar to many NZBI members is *New Zealand Under Siege — A Review of the Management of Biosecurity Risks to the Environment*, the discussion document that set the ball rolling for the development of the new national Biosecurity Strategy.

A main focus in the work of the PCE is sustainability, a concept that can be considered a key ingredient in the biosecurity “cakemix”. New Zealand, a tiny global trader great distances from most of the potential customers, is in the business, says Dr Williams, of “pampering the palates and passions of the world’s more prosperous citizens”. New Zealand’s prosperity is delivered by our biotic economy, which is dependant on our unique ecology — edible products make up 64% of our total exports. Sustainability is the key to keeping this environment-based economy healthy.

The kind of thinking that got us into this situation is not the kind of thinking that will get us out of it.

– Albert Einstein

To achieve sustainability, we have to get beyond environmentalism per se. Environmentalism can be described as ‘activism to protect nature from the ravages of human activity’. Sustainable development, on the other hand, is the redesigning of the processes that deliver human needs and wants to ensure that the environment is not damaged. While environmentalism is a movement against pollution, environmental

degradation and so on, sustainability is the process of moving towards new actions and behaviours.

In the long term, we must sustain not only the environment — the core natural resources, such as freshwater, seas, clean air, biodiversity, soils; landscape and cultural heritage (place and space); and liveability (human habitat quality) — but also the capacity to create wealth.

“The economy is a wholly owned subsidiary of the natural ecosystem”

**– Paul Hawken,
*Ecology of Commerce 1993***

There is, however, a major impediment that faces governments which wish to move further along the path of sustainability. Our taxes, regulatory systems, subsidies and the policies that influence individuals and companies often encourage unsustainable behaviour. Recently New Zealanders have been producing more waste and using more energy than you would expect from the small amount of population growth. We need to change our taxation systems (e.g. to things such as a carbon tax) but there will need to be acceptance of this and the transition will be tough.

Biosecurity is the Achilles’ heel of New Zealand’s biotic future, and needs to be accorded the priority and resources of national security. Perhaps we need to stop spending money on our airforce and instead concentrate on more serious airborne invaders such as mosquitoes. We need to recognise that there are many influences on policies and practice. New Zealand is a highly urban nation (one of the most urbanised countries in the OECD), and urban values now shape national views on many things, including how pests are managed, and this at a time when people are becoming less connected with the biology of New Zealand. The views of our two million visitors, who contribute considerably to our economy, also shape our biosecurity responses — one example of this is the expectation, mostly disappointed, that the whole of New Zealand will be alive with the sound of birdsong.

While it is recognised that some forms of civic engagement, such as voting in local and national

Sustaining our biotic systems Continued

elections, are declining, “activism” against forms of pest management that is perceived to be a risk to health or recreation may not be among them! For this reason, community understanding and engagement is an essential biosecurity ingredient if biosecurity measures are to be successful.

One major issue that is staring us in the face is new technology, and how this fits into our biosecurity efforts. What is the future of toxins? They may have a limited future as tolerance of their usage is falling. Are there new fields of technology we should be exploring, and where does GM fit into New Zealand’s biosecurity future? Dr Williams believes that GM will have a place in biosecurity efforts in this country in future.

A good example of this debate is possums and possible biocontrols using GM. The argument is about safety and specificity, unpredictability and the unknowns. Dr Williams puts it this way: we are comfortable in the area of what we know, and we are aware there are things that we don’t know — but what about the things that we don’t know that we don’t know? This is the area of concern that is likely to trip us up in future when we look at new technology for biosecurity.

While health-related uses of GM, such as gene therapy and insulin, are perceived as more acceptable and as having less risk, other less vital things such as GE synthesised foods, and ornamental flowers and plants are less acceptable and are perceived as higher risk. The question must be asked of where possums fit in this spectrum, and this depends on public perceptions of the risk posed by possums compared to the risk of possible technologies to control them.

PCE research into the history of science and technology shows that there is a distinct “maturation curve” with regards to developments. At the top end are the “mature” technologies, about which there are fewer unknowns, for example, aircraft design and engineering. At the bottom end is the “immature” phase, where there are more unknowns and more application failures, into which could fit, for example, pesticides and the chemistry of drugs in the 1950s.

Where does genetic sciences and technology fit within this curve? More towards the immature end — the end with more unknowns and lesser public acceptance at the current time.

“It’s not the answer that enlightens, but the question”

– Eugene Ionesco

Ultimately, if biosecurity is to be successful, politicians, research and development scientists, pest control and policy people, and biotech companies must focus on the questions, particularly those that society wants addressed

In conclusion, it is fair to say that New Zealand’s isolation, experience from the past, innovative capacity, and so on, make us leaders in the business of biosecurity and some forms of pest control. There is a widespread support in conservation and primary production circles for good biosecurity measures — but there will also always be debate about how to do it and the costs involved. There is a major opportunity to mobilise the New Zealand urban public in biosecurity efforts, spotting those invaders that beat us at the border. And there are new technologies that are likely to be of help in controlling pests already here.

But the challenges are daunting. Societal values are limiting options and increasing risks, for example, in the weed arena. Our quest to globalise is increasing risks at the border, and biosecurity is still not a big spot on political radar screens, although it is increasing. The free trade mindset is a stumbling block when the sort of mindset we need to have for effective biosecurity is a precautionary one. Marine biosecurity may be the biggest challenge of all.

Climate change, however, will be the ultimate wildcard. New species from new places will be the norm this century — the question is, how well are we gearing up for these future biosecurity challenges that we will, without a doubt, face?



Weedbusters update

“Weedbusters — working together to protect New Zealand”

Amber Bill

National Weedbusters Co-ordinator

&

By Carolyn Lewis

NZBI Rep, Weedbusters Steering Group

Despite the challenges presented by foggy airports and delayed flights, the 12 members of the Weedbusters Establishment Team met for a two-day workshop in Christchurch at the end of July. The aim of the workshop was to lay down a national framework within which Weedbusters could work, and to look at what the aims and objectives of such a programme could be.

It is always an interesting exercise to get interagency agreement on any issue, and this workshop proved no exception. With representatives from Protect NZ (MAF), Nursery and Garden Industry Association (NGIA), regional council Biosecurity Managers Group (BMG), NZ Biosecurity Institute (NZBI), Department of Conservation (DOC), NZ Ecological Resource Network (NZERN), Landcare Research, and Landcare Trust, the first issue was finding common ground on which the Weedbusters initiative could be built.

Potential conflicts were identified and possible synergies explored, with some enthusiastic debate over particular issues and surprisingly painless agreement on others. Balances had to be struck between economic and environmental interests, and strategic versus marketing concerns, while consideration had to be given to ensure that Weedbusters would be seen as a separate entity to DOC, with a vision that would promote partnerships with regional council management and staff and community groups working on the ground.

Much of the first day was spent doing this — setting the groundwork — so that the second day could move along at a cracking rate looking at the nuts and bolts of how Weedbusters could operate.

Overall, the two days proved both exhausting and exciting as the realisation dawned that we really could make Weedbusters work as a truly co-operative venture.

What were the outcomes?

A national and regional structure has been proposed that has great potential to generate a synergy of current initiatives and forums. This structure will ultimately see regional “Weedbusters” forums, following regional council and unitary authority boundaries, set up to get the initiative off the ground, with the support of a national management committee. Consideration was also given to possible funding options to enable the position of national co-ordinator to become independent of DOC when the seed money for the position ends in November 2004.

A structure for the national management committee was agreed on. Working with the National Weedbusters Co-ordinator (Amber Bill), there is a place for one representative from each of the following groups: MAF,



Weedbusters Establishment Team:

Back, from left: Carolyn Lewis (NZBI), Don Ross (Landcare Trust), Jack Crow (BMG), Lynley Hayes (Landcare Research), Adrienne Tollemache (Protect NZ), Susan Timmins (DOC), Gill Robinson (DOC).

Front from left: Mike Peters (NZERN), Keith Briden (DOC), Jeremy Kennerley (NGIA), Amber Bill (National Weedbusters Co-ordinator), Ian Popay (DOC).

DOC, NZBI (Carolyn Lewis), NGIA, Federated Farmers, Landcare Trust, and the Biosecurity Managers Group.

This management committee will have the ability to co-opt people as their expertise is needed, for example, iwi liaison, social scientists, and technical assistance in such specialised areas as marketing and merchandising.

A vision developed for Weedbusters was that “All of New Zealand is aware of and taking action to reduce the impact of weeds on the environment.” The four proposed goals were to:

1. Achieve a ten-fold increase in the number of people participating in weed issues.
2. Ensure that the New Zealand population is aware of the threat of weeds.
3. Reduce the number of plant species becoming established as weeds throughout New Zealand.
4. Help all agencies involved in weeds work to share resources and provide clear and consistent messages.

Some preliminary objectives for these goals were proposed, and these will be confirmed by the Management Committee at its first meeting on October 15.

Where to from here?

The official Weedbusters launch is in Wellington on October 14, although Woody Weed may be lurking around before that date so keep an eye out. Then it is all hands on deck at the regional level to get everyone working together to make Weedbusters a success — watch this space!

Weeds education website launched...

www.landcareresearch.co.nz/education/

A new website developed by Landcare Research promotes education about weeds and weed problems in New Zealand, a subject that has not received its fair share of attention to date. Making scientific research more readily available to the community is an important part of Landcare Research's mission as an environmental research organisation, and schools are a key target.

The weeds website shows how weeds can be used as a learning context in the science curriculum. The website is "student-friendly" and is a resource that students can use themselves with some teacher supervision. Equally, the website is a tool for teachers, providing "weedy" curriculum links, unit plans, resources, learning experiences and assessment activities. The education website and the broader weeds website are also aimed at the wider community and weed control workers to heighten community awareness of the impacts of weeds and ways that the spread of weeds can be halted.



Weeds Education Web Pages:

Weeds in New Zealand!

					
Home	Information	Resources	Activities	Teacher Resources	Glossary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facts • impacts • ecology • control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • books • posters • videos • websites • people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wordfind • crossword • match quotes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum links • unit plans • learning experiences • assessment • worksheets 	

We expect that this website will evolve and grow over time with feedback as teachers and students trial it and as new material becomes available. Finally, we hope that this website will act as a stimulus to encourage students and the community to tackle weed invasions in their own backyards or local reserves.

Margaret Stanley

stanleym@landcareresearch.co.nz

And what a site!

WOW..... what a wonderful website on weed education that Landcare Research has developed.

Weeds have never been so "exciting"! When you visit this vibrant site, you will notice how well laid out it is, giving you easy access to all the different weed information.

Children and adults will be attracted to click on the fun icons on the home page which then take you on an informative tour to learn all about "What a weed is".

There are "weedy examples" (photos) of economic and environmental weeds, and "weedy facts" (graphs) which make you visually, and intellectually, realise the hard-hitting news about how many introduced plants have gone "wild" and where overseas they came from. Importantly, the information on this website, relates to the "role" weeds play in unbalancing biodiversity.

There are also excellent references to other relevant

websites, including those of regional councils, and weed-related books, videos, and posters. There is also a comprehensive glossary.

This website has an informative "Teachers Resource" section which states the strands within the school curriculum that are relevant to weed education.

And for the kids, big and small, there are the fun "weed activities", which include "Weedy Wordfind", "Weedy Crossword" and "Weedy Feelings".

This website is well worth the visit, and it makes you proud to be part of a new and exciting weed awareness activity.

Reviewed by **Wendy Baker**

Pest Plant Officer,
Environment Bay of Plenty



Biosecurity Amendment Bill 2003

The Biosecurity Amendment Bill that was introduced to Parliament in August 2001 was passed in July this year.

The amendments are generally minor and clarify a number of issues, particularly in relation to operational activities under the Animal Health Board National Pest Management Strategy and incursion response activities

undertaken by MAF.

The amendments will not have a major impact at a regional and territorial level on either the preparation of biosecurity policy or day-to-day operational activities.

The most important changes for Institute members are discussed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Biosecurity Amendment Bill 2003

Amendment	Comment
Regional Pest Management Strategies	<p>Contents of a pest management strategy (ss. 69A and 80A): The Act now requires PMS to include a general description of the principal measures to be taken to implement the strategy. The majority of RPMS already include such a description.</p> <p>Levy (s.92): Levies can now be used to collect funds from exacerbators to fund RPMSs.</p>
Unwanted Organisms	<p>Relationship with the Wildlife Act (s.7): The BSA now takes precedence over the Wildlife Act in relation to unwanted organisms. Previously the Wildlife Act gave automatic protection to all wildlife unless they were listed as being 'not protected' in the Wildlife Act. This resulted in the situation whereby caged rainbow lorikeets released into the wild became protected by default. This meant that although rainbow lorikeets were declared as unwanted organisms under the BSA, they remained protected by the Wildlife Act as the Wildlife Act had precedence over the BSA. The amendment means that this situation will no longer occur and incursion response activities can take place under the BSA once an organism has been declared unwanted.</p>
Powers	<p>Power of inspection (s.109): Authorised persons can enter land to determine whether or not an occupier is complying with a RPMS. Regional council staff have always operated under the assumption that this power had been granted by s.109, but is now much more explicit. This power includes checking compliance with notices of direction issued under s.122 of the Act.</p>

For those who suffer from insomnia, the full amendment can be found at www.brookers.co.nz

Andrew Wilke

Biosecurity Manager
Hawke's Bay Regional Council

Protect Questionnaire

Protect has undergone plenty of changes in the last few years, and we think we have just about got it right now — but we'd like some feedback to make sure we are on the right track. Please take the time to complete this questionnaire, and then either email it to Carolyn Lewis at stevebluett@wave.co.nz, or post it to Carolyn at 14 Brooklyn Road, Hamilton.

1. How long have you been a member of the NZ Biosecurity Institute?
2. How many issues of *Protect* would you read in a year?
 - a. 1 or <1
 - b. 2 issues a year
 - c. 3 issues a year
 - d. 4
3. How many issues of *Protect* do you think there should be every year?
 - a. Two
 - b. Four (as now)
 - c. Six
4. Do you print out a hard copy of *Protect* to keep?
5. Do you think *Protect* is:
 - a. Too short
 - b. Too long
 - c. Just right
6. If the answer to (5) was too long or too short, what length would you like *Protect* to be?
 - a. 15-20 pages
 - b. 20-30 pages
 - c. 30-40 pages
7. What sort of biosecurity-related articles would you like to see in future issues of *Protect*?
 - a. Member profiles
 - b. Reviews of websites/books/courses relevant to biosecurity
 - c. Overseas case studies
 - d. New Zealand case studies
 - e. Biocontrol updates
 - f. Practical control tips
 - g. Other.....
8. Do you think the graphics currently used to illustrate *Protect* are adequate?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No. If no, why not?

Thank you for your time ☺

NZBI Skills Register

We appreciate you taking a few moments to fill in this brief questionnaire. The information we gather will be used to compile a register of the various skills, knowledge, talents and interests that our members have. The register will help NZBI members to know “the best person to ask” and will be updated from time to time. If you have not already done so, please fill in the form and return it.

Name:

Brief description of current job:

Areas of special interest:

Areas of special knowledge, skills or experience:

Areas of special knowledge, skills or experience outside work:

Please advise of current contact details (email, phone, address, fax):

Thank you. Please email completed form to:

Alison Gianotti
NZBI National Secretary
gianottia@landcareresearch.co.nz

8 October 2003

Name
Organisation
Address
Address

Dear

Remit to the Government of New Zealand on Improving Internal Biosecurity

The New Zealand Biosecurity Institute wishes to request that the government **“investigates establishing appropriate internal biosecurity policies and actions to prevent the future spread of unwanted organisms within New Zealand.”**

New Zealand is constantly under threat as more and more unwanted organisms attempt to establish here. The painted apple moth, southern saltmarsh mosquito, Argentine ant, gypsy moth, red crazy ant, black widow spider, snakes, and scorpions, to name a few, have all made it past our border defences. Some of these have been effectively dealt with before they can establish. Other pests have established but eradication is still an option. However, sadly some unwanted organisms are now here for good. Despite New Zealand being a leader in the field of border protection, we cannot prevent all undesirable organisms from entering and establishing in New Zealand.

We have the opportunity to improve our biosecurity in New Zealand by making better use of internal borders. There are major benefits in preventing pests that have established in one part of New Zealand from spreading into new areas. For example, the net benefit of keeping the varroa mite out of the South Island for 10 years is estimated to be \$114 million. The economics of preventing or slowing the spread of other established pests is likely to be just as favourable (e.g. clover root weevil, cattle ticks). Some pests, especially many pest plants, are more or less reliant on human activities to further distribute them within New Zealand. More active management of their movement across internal borders could easily reduce the threats they pose.

The opportunities our natural geographic features provide as effective internal biosecurity barriers must be taken advantage of. For instance, the Varroa Planning Group suggests a National Pest Management Strategy involving an internal biosecurity barrier at Cook Strait is the most cost-effective way of minimizing future impacts of the varroa mite. If we are to make the most of such opportunities, we believe a supportive legislative and policy framework needs to be put in place.

Internal biosecurity can be done. Controls operate across internal borders between states in Australia and in other countries. New Zealand's natural features lend themselves to an effective internal biosecurity system. The New Zealand Biosecurity Institute urges the Government to make the most of this unique advantage.

The Biosecurity Strategy for New Zealand recognizes the importance of internal biosecurity measures and the necessary legislative tools to integrate and improve New Zealand's biosecurity system. We believe existing measures for internal biosecurity need to be strengthened and expanded for the effective management of pests that have established in New Zealand.

The benefits of a strong and effective internal biosecurity framework would accrue to all regions of New Zealand and would apply across many sectors. Therefore, we believe the Government should fund such a framework in the interests of public good.

Yours sincerely

Lynley Hayes (National President)
Randall Milne and Paul Champion (Executive Members)
New Zealand Biosecurity Institute