New Zealand Biosecurity Institute

the magazine of the NZBI Autumn 2023

Protect

PROTECT AUTUMN 2023

inside

New Zealand Biosecurity Institute

Working together to ensure New Zealand is protected from the adverse impacts of invasive species

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The New Zealand Biosecurity Institute can be found on the web at www.biosecurity.org.nz

SAFER, SMARTER RABBIT CONTROL

Rabbits have reached plague proportions in some areas and cost the country millions of dollars through lost production on farmland as well as through attempts to control them. Rabbits have a significant effect on the ecosystem and cause large areas of land to become eroded and native vegetation to change. When rabbits are seen active during the day this indicates a high population.

Pindone is a first-generation, slow-acting anticoagulant poison in a cereal-based pellet, designed for the control of rabbits in rural and urban areas. It needs to be consumed over several days to be effective, around twenty-one pellets need to be consumed by a 1.5kg rabbit before death occurs. It is important to keep the bait stations filled as death occurs 4–11 days after bait consumption. Very few rabbit carcasses will be found as rabbits return to their burrows to die.

Pindone Rabbit Bait must be used in bait stations. In cases where there is concern about bait being accessible during the daytime, the NoPests Multifeeder bait station can be closed off to stop nontarget species accessing the bait. If large areas need to be treated then consider using aerial or ground applications using a registered applicator, this will allow baits to be spread on the ground.

SMARTER THAN 1080

	PINDONE	1080
No Pre-Feed Required	✓	×
Stock Re-Entry Time	28 Days	90 Days
Dog Antidote Available	✓	×
Ground Application (CSL Required)	✓	✓
Aerial Application (CSL Required)	✓	✓
Bait Station Application Available to Public	✓	×
Pellet & Liquid Formulations Available	✓	✓
Rate per Hectare	Up to 18kg	Up to 15kg
No Clean Up Required. All Bait Consumed.	✓	×
Type of Vertebrate Toxic Agent	Multiple Feed	Single Feed

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From the Editor

A tale of two islands

Welcome to the Autumn issue. It has been a summer of extremes - extremely warm temperatures in the South, and extremely cruel weather in the North. It has very much been a tale of two islands. In this issue we hear a bit about how some of our members have adapted their work programmes as a result of Cyclone Gabrielle. We learn about a great new way of getting the "Save our Kauri" message across using the best of 'Hollywood' skills. We learn a bit more about how to care for our curious alpine parrot. There is a reminder from Protect's past of how far we have come in the way we conduct ourselves on the public stage. There is also a message from a past president on how things have changed, and on how the Institute has expanded to embrace membership from all sectors of biosecurity.

Read on, and stay safe.

Chris Macann
Editor

From the President

Our important networking organisation

It's pleasing to see some Branches have been busy organising networking events and/or impending Branch Annual General Meetings. Keep in mind the re-booted NZBI Postal Shoot competition when considering branch activities. The Executive Committee is keen to see the competition reinvigorated. It is a key link to the past and an important part of the legacy of NZBI and its predecessor organisations.

A fun fact - NZBI as an organization was first incorporated on 12 April 1954, at the time as the North Island Association of Inspectors of Noxious Weeds. A few name changes later, and a broadening out to all things biosecurity, here we are as the current NZBI. Not bad as a nearly 70-year-old!

The Northland/Auckland Branch is busy organising NETS 2023 being held at the Copthorne Waitangi, Paihia from 26-28 July. If you haven't seen the promo video for it, head to the NZBI or dedicated NETS website to check it out. The theme for NETS2023 is: 'Toitū Te Whenua, Toitū Te Moana, Toitū Te Tangata - If the land is well, and the sea is well, the people will thrive'. This recognises the critical role that biosecurity plays in protecting te Taiao including all those who live, play and work in it and link their wellbeing to it.

Lastly, the Executive Committee continues to work on ideas for encouraging membership, sharing information amongst members and generally promoting the benefit of our small but important networking organisation. I encourage you all to keep in touch with your committee representatives with suggestions on how NZBI, as an organisation, can best help you or your Branches with networking opportunities.

Jono Underwood
President, NZ Biosecurity Institute

Plenty to see and do on the Plateau: Central and Lower North Island combined training seminar.

The Central and Lower North Island branches pooled resources in early Spring last year, when they got together for a combined training seminar at the Tongariro Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre.

Waikato Pest Plant Officer Heidi Pene prepared this report:

Attendees from as far afield as Wellington and Bay of Plenty made their way to the venue to prepare for two very informative and great days of networking and information sharing.

The venue did not disappoint. We woke to a magnificent morning with the snowy mountains making a glorious backdrop to the lush and beautiful surrounding forest. We sipped coffees on the deck amidst bird sound and prepared for a day full of talks.

Attendees broke-off into two rooms that focussed mainly around plants and animals. The morning began with council updates on a broad range of topics followed by a wonderful lunch. Members took the opportunity at lunch time to explore the grounds or throw a basketball around before heading into the special topics talks in the afternoon. The bar opened at 5.30pm before dinner to warm the crowd up for the Biosecurity Quiz.

Nicki Hughes, Shane Hona, Steph Bathgate, Heidi Pene.

The venue - Tongariro Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre.

The quiz was made up of five rounds including multichoice, tongue twisters, picture clues, 'do you know your shit', and two music rounds. The night was full of laughs but also very competitive. It was hard going to beat Paul Champion with his encyclopaedic knowledge of plants, music and the Institute, but it was Shane Hona who took the first prize, doing exceptionally well in the music rounds.

Day two was spent in the great outdoors. The field trips split into two groups, each being treated to informative talks, walks and spectacular scenery. **The work being done by Project Tongariro to preserve the very special uniquely New Zealand environment is inspiring**. Brenda Lawson and Shirley Potter took us Rotopounamu Reserve then to their restoration project at Tuki St, Turangi. They are very passionate about the work that they are doing and **it was an absolute joy to walk through native plantings that had placards to show the years they were planted so that we could see how quickly the plants grow to form dense bush.** They have put in a lot of hard mahi to clear hectares of weeds and scrub and plant thousands of native trees.

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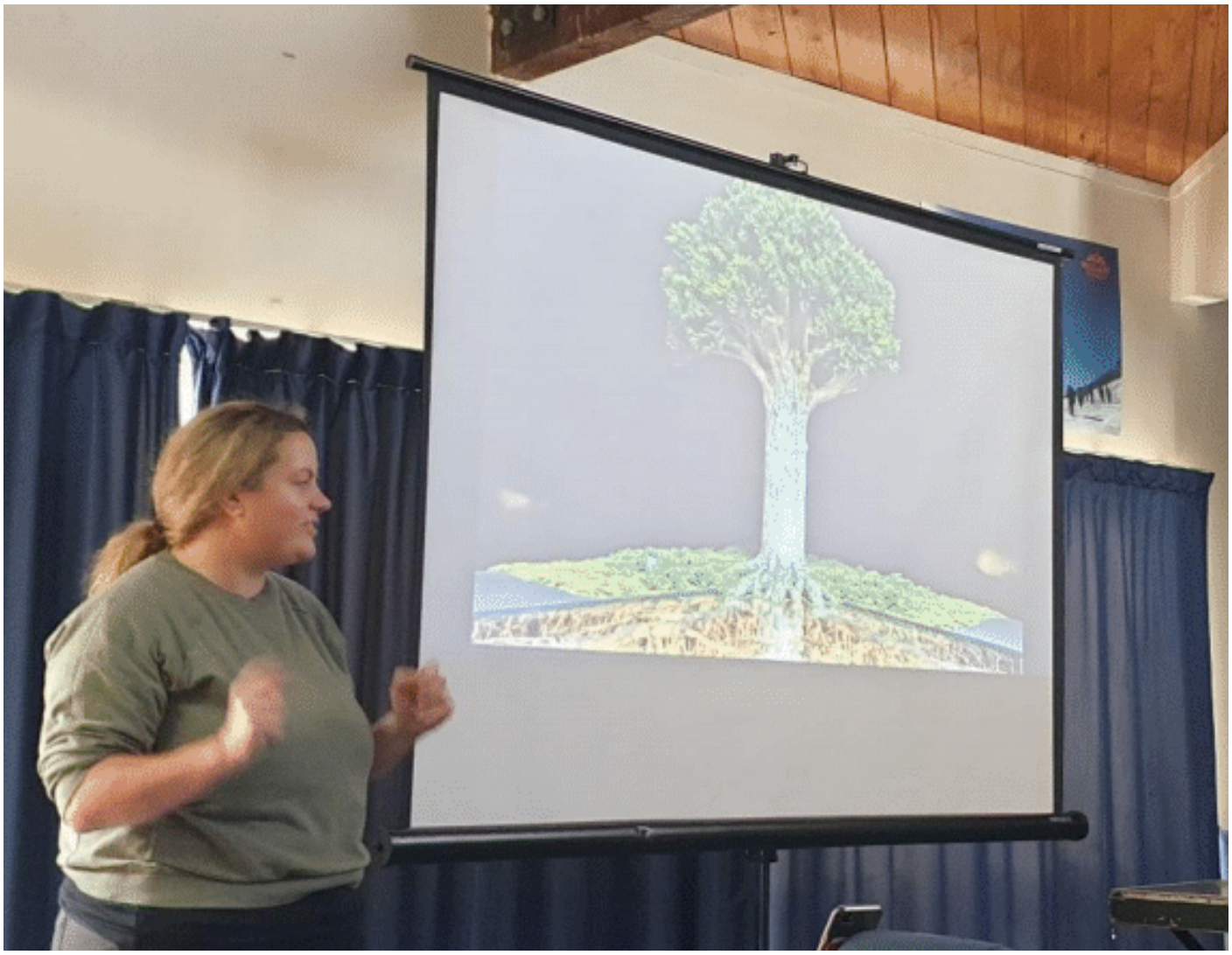


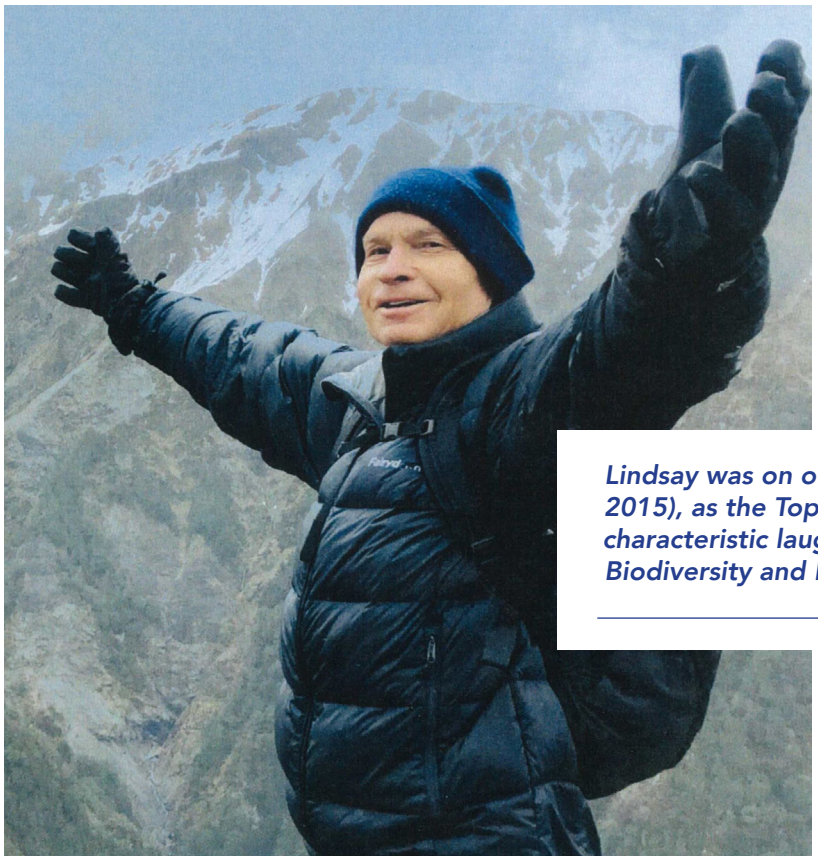
Kim Parker updates all gathered on kauri dieback and efforts to prevent it's spread

The other stream began with a talk by Paul Peterson on the heather biocontrol. **The effect of the heather beetle on the infestations has been a real biocontrol success story.** The attendees enjoyed the spectacular scenery of the alpine environment before moving to the trout hatchery in Turangi to hear the great work Didymo Dave is doing, followed by a tour around the hatchery.

Mini NETS as it was fondly coined was a great opportunity to finally meet in person after two years of meeting on a screen in one of the most unique and special landscapes in the North Island. **I feel blessed to belong to an Institute that does such important and critical work to preserve these natural wonders.**

Many thanks and well done to our organising committee consisting of myself, Frances McKinnon, Shane Hona and Nicki Hughes from Central Branch, and Jen McGowan, Jack Keast and Paul Horton from the Lower North Island Branch. There were 85 attendees, so it was no small feat and your time and effort was greatly appreciated.

Jack Keast checks out the animal control weaponry.



An enthusiastic advocate for Biodiversity and Biosecurity

Remembering Lindsay Vaughan: 28 May 1946 – 5 April 2023

It is with sadness that our former Tasman District Council Biosecurity/ Biodiversity Coordinator Lindsay Vaughan, passed away on April 5th. We were fortunate that a few of us met with him a fortnight before his death and in his usual cheerful self, explained that he had a recurrence of blood cancer and he decided that he would not go through chemotherapy again. He looked well and we did not expect things to progress so rapidly.

You may remember Lindsay was on our NZBI Executive for many years (2009-2015), as the Top of the South Branch Chairman. He had a characteristic laugh and was an enthusiastic advocate for Biodiversity and Biosecurity. He actively participated in NETS, including on the dance floor.

Lindsay was born in Ashburton and grew up in the Hutt Valley. His father was a teacher, and he was the eldest of three boys and grew up in the baby boom era.

Following school, he joined the New Zealand Forest Service as a Forester Trainee. He was initially based in Wellington head office where he met his future wife Cathy, who also worked there. Following a science degree at Victoria University, he travelled to Wales to attend Bangor University to obtain a Forestry Degree. At that time, he was 21 and his fiancé Cathy was 18, when she travelled over to Wales, and they were married in Bangor.

When they returned to New Zealand Lindsay was based at Golden Downs Forest as a Forester. He then had a position as Forestry extension Officer in Marlborough including the Sounds. Following this, he took up a position at the Forest Research Institute in Rotorua, where he was attached to the logging Industry Research Association. Here **he was involved in a very topical area for current times, of preparing environmental standards for forest harvesting.**

Following reorganizing in the Government Forest Industry, Lindsay took up an appointment at Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology Richmond Campus, setting up a Forest Industry Training Course, like Rotorua's Forestry Training facility.

Lindsay was on our NZBI Executive for many years (2009-2015), as the Top of the South Branch Chairman. He had a characteristic laugh and was an enthusiastic advocate for Biodiversity and Biosecurity. He actively participated in NETS.

He then took up a position at Tasman District Council as a policy planer. In this roll **he prepared the Tasman Nelson Biosecurity Strategy 2007-2012.** He was later appointed as the Biosecurity Coordinator where he had responsibility for three Biosecurity Officers. He was also in charge of the burgeoning Biodiversity area. Here he had oversight of two contractors surveying Protected Natural Areas throughout our region. He was also involved in The Cobb Mitigation fund and the Tasman Environmental Trust, which fostered and provided funding support for biodiversity work. **Project Devine, which was first encouraged by Lindsay in 2007, has now grown to 32 full time staff, operating in Biosecurity plant pests, all over the Tasman Region,** under the aegis of the independent charity "Project De-Vine Environmental Trust". **He was also great at organising Biodiversity Forum meetings with interesting speakers pertaining to Biodiversity and Biosecurity, for all our many biodiversity volunteer groups.**

All his life from childhood he has been a great adventurer in the outdoors, with a great love for, rivers, mountains, and camping. He actively involved his two brothers, his three children and now his four grandchildren, in those adventures. He graduated from tramping, into mountain running and mountain biking. His family and friends spoke highly of his kind nature and his encouragement and acknowledgement of their individual successes. I can testify that he treated his work colleagues similarly, **a thoroughly good joker. Go well Lindsay.**

Ken Wright

Pest control is for the birds

Protecting braided river birds pays off in North Canterbury

A North Canterbury community got a first-hand look at how black-fronted terns and black-billed gulls are being protected in their waterway.

Around 40 people attended the braided river birds field day in Culverden in late November last year, which was organized by the Hurunui Biodiversity Trust and supported by Environment Canterbury.

Lincoln University Professor Ken Hughey and Senior Biodiversity Officer, Zipporah Ploeg, made presentations before the group headed to the Waiau Uwha River to look at Sharkstooth Island.

Sharkstooth Island was enhanced in a bid to better protect the birds and keep predators away from nesting sites of black-fronted terns and black-billed gulls.

Enhancements included raising the island, as well as weed and pest control with trapping lines installed on the land adjacent to the island – aiming to stop pests from swimming over to the island.

Cameras were also installed to provide a clear picture of the biggest threats to the bird colonies and to help with monitoring.

Zipporah, who has led the project over the past few years, said the community day proved valuable.

"Everyone was super interested in the project and excited for its potential in the future," she said.

"While we don't know exactly what that will look like at the moment, with its funding nearing completion, we are really proud of the mahi we've been able to achieve over the past six years," she added.

Two black-fronted tern eggs after being preyed on.

Similar work has been carried out on NIWA Island in the Hurunui River. Monitoring shows that efforts at both NIWA and Sharkstooth Islands have helped boost the braided river bird population, however, major weather events impacted results at times. Data from trap.nz shows more than 300 hedgehogs, mustelids, rats, possums and other pests have been caught at NIWA Island and close to 40 at Sharkstooth, since the projects began.

Increase in wallaby sighting reports

Reported wallaby sightings have been increasing following the launch of the first national awareness campaign over the 2022 – 2023 summer period.

The Tipu Mātoro Wallaby-Free Aotearoa campaign focused on making the public aware of the presence of wallabies in New Zealand, and the extensive damage they do to the environment, and asked New Zealanders to report wallaby sightings.

The Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme works in partnership with regional councils, local iwi, farmers and landowners to manage and reduce known wallaby populations in Bay of Plenty/Waikato and South Canterbury/ North Otago areas. Public reports of wallaby sightings are vital to understanding where wallabies are and where they are spreading.

Biosecurity NZ said campaign reports are yet to be received, however preliminary results indicate an increase in New Zealanders doing their bit to help by reporting to: www.reportwallabies.nz.

Environment Canterbury said it received 276 reports between 1 December 2022 and 28 February 2023, compared with 103 in the previous 12 months.

Bennett's wallaby, found only in the South Island. Photo Jason Hawker, Environment Canterbury.

Dama wallaby, found only in the North Island. Photo Steve Pilkington.

A roadside wallaby sign in South Canterbury.

Aquatic plant identification course at the top of the South

By Rob Simons - Marlborough District Council

As Cyclone Gabrielle lashes the country, I sit here at my desk thinking all this water can't be good for anyone, or anything unless you're an aquatic plant! I cast my mind back to the much drier month of November 2022 and the aquatic plant identification course co-hosted by Tasman District and Nelson City Councils, and run by no one other than the man himself, Paul Champion.

Due to the closure of State Highway 6 between Blenheim and Nelson from the weather events in August, attendees from Marlborough were forced to take the long route via SH 63 and the Tophouse Road, but this wasn't going to steal our last golden opportunity to attend one of Paul's popular courses before his retirement at the end of 2022.

The four-day course followed a slightly different format to Paul's courses in the past, and was split into two parts; part one focusing on aquatic pest plants, and part two on native wetland plants, with each part supported by field site visits. This format was well received by the course participants, because to be an effective protector of your regional waterways you need to know what is growing in them, and be able to tell the good from the bad and the ugly.

Day two took us to various field sites to look at water celery *(Apium nodiflorum)* and Vietnamese parsley *(Oenanthe javanica)*, two species that obstruct both flowing and still water bodies, and have become well established in Nelsons waterways.

A visit to Nelsons Miyazu Japanese Gardens saw us looking at one of only a few isolated infestations of *Lagarosiphon major* in Nelson, an aquatic plant that, as its name suggests, has become a major pain in the proverbial in other regions around the country. If you are in Nelson, a visit to the Miyazu gardens is highly recommended, chances are that the Lagarosiphon infestation has all but disappeared. Or maybe not?

Traveling from one field site to another did not come without risk, as there is always that slim chance of inadvertently moving an unwanted organism from one site to another. Just as well Elaine Asquith, Regional Coordinator for the Tasman Environmental Trust was there to remind us to Check, Clean, and Dry before we left a site, because let's face it, we all get a bit complacent from time from time.

Not all aspects of the course were a walk in the park! On day three, Paul took us through the minefield of trying to key-out the many different species of sedges (Carex spp.) and rushes (Juncus spp.), some native, some not. By the end of that day the smell of cooked grey matter lingered in the conference room of the Greenmeadows Community Centre. Sometimes

Elaine Asquith checks cleans, and dries Paul Champion

it's just easier to know a plant when you see it right? Sure, but you'll get caught out eventually. I now constantly find myself tearing apart Juncus rushes to determine - solid pith, interrupted pith, or no pith. Thanks Paul, you really take the pith.

The course was packed, and attended by around forty delegates each day, which included representatives from councils, DOC, contractors, and others. Everyone enjoyed the course, and above all, I'm sure that everyone took something from the course to share with their colleagues. Let's hope that someone can twist Pauls arm into doing another one someday. Thanks again to Paul and Frizz for pulling this one together, something we really needed post all the Covid restrictions.

Undaria survey encouraging results

At the beginning of February, Environment Southland reported that a dive survey on the southern coast of Stewart Island found no sign of the invasive seaweed Undaria in Broad Bay, where a previous incursion was identified in 2020.

Divers surveyed Broad Bay, Easy Harbour and a number of key anchorages on the southern coast.

A check on Easy Harbour found some regrowth of Undaria, but at a much lower density than when it was discovered in 2022.

Environment Southland Biosecurity Operations Manager Ali Meade said all Undaria was removed and no further expansion of the population was identified.

"Follow-up removal efforts will be required to ensure elimination from the site."

Divers also completed a follow-up inspection of an incursion discovered in Broad Bay in 2020. At the time, Undaria was removed from craypots.

The final aspect of the dive trip was to survey key anchorages around the southern coast of Rakiura and within Port Pegasus for Undaria, carpet sea squirt and other marine pests.

> "Further surveillance will be required to confirm complete elimination over the next few years but it looks promising."

"No Undaria was found at the sites inspected around the southern coast or in Port Pegasus. Some sea squirts were found in very low numbers but were not positively identified as the invasive species, carpet sea squirt."

"They are most likely native," Ali Meade said.

Undaria on a mooring rope. Photo DOC.

Diver picking Undaria - Easy Harbour.

Undaria pinnatifida. Photo Kate Neill NIWA.

Waikato's kauri model spreads protection message

Waikato Regional Council Kauri Protection Team has created a kauri tree model to promote their message about kauri dieback.

Special effects and prop company Wētā Workshop created the model of a mature kauri tree for the council.

The model, which is a 1:82 representation of kauri that were present in the Coromandel Peninsula around 1850, is based on a tree known as Father of the Kauri which stood at Mill Creek, Mercury Bay. Father of the Kauri had a known trunk diameter of about 7.5 metres, which is more than 2 metres bigger than the 5.2 metre trunk diameter of Tane Mahuta, God of the Forest, in Waipoua Forest, Northland.

The Council's Kauri Protection Lead Kim Parker said the model, along with a virtual reality experience which is still being developed, will be part of a mobile educational programme by the council to educate people about the importance of protecting kauri.

> "We're thinking outside the box. Use of new tech and innovative approaches will aid in the impact we're trying to create."

"We'll be rolling the model out to community trapping groups, landowners, and schools, to have information on ways they can help protect kauri as individuals, and to inspire a bright future for kauri in the Waikato," said Kim.

The model has recently been on display at the Northland Fieldays in Dargaville (with Northland Regional Council's Kauri Protection Team), and also featured at the National Fieldays at Mystery Creek in December last year.

Kauri exposed. It's all about the roots.

A custom-made trailer is being built so it can easily be taken to kura and community events.

"Our model shows the overall proportions of a mature, healthy kauri, including its massive, spreading root system which is a very important part of the kauri protection message," Kim said.

"The best way to protect kauri is by stopping the movement of dirt around kauri roots. We wanted to show the root system to illustrate the size of the area that is at risk. Humans are one of the main ways of moving the disease as we can easily move the pathogen from site to site, by spreading dirt on our footwear, tyre treads and equipment."

The Council has been helping community groups introduce kauri protective behaviours, such as installing hygiene stations, supporting farmers to fence off kauri areas to prevent stock incursion, and supporting Thames-Coromandel District Council to deliver a track ambassador programme in the Coromandel Peninsula over summer.

Stopping the movement of dirt around kauri is the best way to protect kauri.

The key messages associated with the display are simple: construct fences to keep out stock, stop the movement of dirt around kauri, including by cleaning footwear and ensuring all your gear is dirt-free before and after entering a forest and stay on the track when walking in kauri forests.

OSPRI: Supporting farmers following Cyclone Gabrielle

OSPRI is taking a pragmatic approach to TB testing in the Hawkes Bay Movement Control Areas (MCA).

"We know either due to the ongoing impact to feed levels, damage to on-farm infrastructure or general traditional animal movements like calf sales, animals need to move," said OSPRI's Disease Management General Manager, Danny Templeman.

"Over the next few months, if the usual pre-movement testing cannot be completed, farmers in the Hawkes Bay MCA have the option of requesting an exemption to pre-movement testing.

"To be clear we are talking about herds that do not have cases of TB but are in a Movement Control Area. We are not talking about our case managed animals or infected herds. They continue to be managed on a case-by-case basis by our veterinarians and we work directly with those farmers."

OSPRI is also instigating temporary policy changes to the routine TB testing regime in cyclone affected areas of the Hawkes Bay, Gisborne, Northland and the Coromandel that are not in the Movement Control Area (MCA). For farmers who are able and wanting to complete their routine testing, they can complete the testing if it's safe for animals and people, and the property is accessible.

> "Given the significant damage to properties and infrastructure OSPRI will not be requesting or enforcing any routine TB testing which is currently outstanding or becomes due within the next few months," said Mr Templeman.

Possum control operations

"Possum control operations have been impacted by ecosystem damage, restricted access to remote areas where we carry out control and forestry blocks focused on other priority work. To assess the long-term impact of the flooding from Cyclone Gabrielle on our pest control programme we will be gathering local intel and aerial footage on our areas of pest control. We will also be looking at research into possum population changes to ensure we make evidence-based decisions on any changes to our control plans," OSPRI reported.

Fall army worm unlikely serious problem

The Foundation for Arable Research reported at the end of February that the number of farms where a tropical agriculture pest (the fall army worm) that destroys maize and sweetcorn crops has more than doubled since January. The Foundation said it has spread to 119 farms, up from 45 in January.

Biosecurity New Zealand said eggs from the pest were found in Tauranga for the first time in March last year. In December the larvae were found on 18 farms in the North Island, and by January it had spread to the South Island.

The update did not include Hawkes Bay and Gisborne because the of the Cyclone Gabrielle recovery efforts.

The fall army worm has not yet spread to Canterbury.

It is unlikely that fall army worm can be eradicated because it was windblown from Australia, and are likely to arrive again.

Fall army worm is unlikely to become the very serious problem it is in other parts of the world. It thrives in tropical climates. Because of New Zealand's more temperate climate, it is not likely to have the high number of breeding cycles in a season to boost the population to really problematic numbers. The moth was probably windblown from Australia, Biosecurity NZ said.

Fall army worm larvae on beans.

Fall army worm caterpillars on corn.

Protecting kea and others from inappropriate kill traps

Intelligent and curious, kea are sometimes unfortunate victims of the predator control devices intended to protect them. Biosecurity Consultant Brent Barrett has contributed to a guidance document which outlines safe ground-based trapping practices in kea-occupied habitats.

Curious kea. Photo Daniel Pietzsch.

Boffa Miskell Biosecurity Consultant Brent Barrett.

Here are some of his thoughts:

Most New Zealanders would agree that we live in an impressive landscape filled with unique flora and fauna. As such, we can be forgiven for our determination to protect these species from the impact of accidental and purposeful introductions of predatory and browsing animals. With such sound intentions, it is often important to take stock and ensure these actions lead to the desired outcomes for all indigenous species concerned.

Historians may look back and count the bodies of the fallen and praise the victors, hailing the ecological gains and the return of our native avian fauna. **However, they may just as easily lament the loss of countless native birds caught not in the jaws of an introduced mammal, but in the deadly embrace of a cold steel trap.** They may feel dismay or anger to see that some large iconic species have been driven to near-extinction through unfortunate outcomes of actions conducted with an intention to do good predator control work.

Funding has been supporting innovation within the biosecurity industry to drive better predator control practices through improvements in landscape-scale approaches, and in the design of trap and monitoring devices. A key focus is conducting predator control operations while also avoiding conflicts due to the intrinsic vulnerability of some of our ground-based endemic birds like the kiwi, kea, kaka and weka.

Kea, in particular, are genuinely inquisitive birds, actively seeking out novel and unusual objects in their environment. This curiosity poses a real (and often lethal) problem when using some types of ground or tree-set traps. Being keen of mind and sharp of beak, kea frequently set about destroying such items, often resulting in their own demise. **When food resources are plentiful, kea have even more time to pursue these destructive activities.** In addition to these accidental deaths from inappropriate kill traps, poisoning from lead and human food, vehicle strikes, electrocution or drowning around townships, and consumption of aerial toxin during predator control operations contribute to a significant portion of documented kea mortalities.

While aerial toxin distribution within kea-occupied habitat is conducted under tight regulations with guidelines set by the Department of Conservation (DOC), **ground-based trapping in kea habitats remains largely unregulated.** Even on DOC managed conservation land, it is possible to apply for a leghold trapping permit, which poses a real risk to the naturally inquisitive kea.

The Kea Conservation Trust (KCT), DOC and biosecurity experts have developed a safe-practice guidance document, which outlines safe ground-based trapping practices in kea-occupied habitats. The guidance document requires all approved traps to be assessed and graded according to their suitability for excluding non-target interaction by kea. Novel technologies, often funded by DOC or PF2050 through their commercialisation programmes, have been included in the guidance document, with a particular focus on developers taking on the responsibility of controlled testing around non-target species ahead of commercialisation. It is hoped that all trap manufacturers will be encouraged to carry out testing to identify risks to non-targets (such as kea), and to make adjustments and improvements to trap designs to mitigate or avoid these risks.

The solution to this issue is not only the responsibility of trap manufacturers – it's also in the hands of the end users. Community groups, contractors, trusts and agencies, and the general public must become familiar with the identified risks of each style, type, or model of trap in order to make sound judgments about where and when it is appropriate to set them within their trap network.

The Safe Practice Guidance document outlines risks and guides the user towards appropriate alternatives to high-risk devices. It is a living document, and the risk level assigned to devices can be adjusted if new safety features are developed, or further kea deaths come to light. New traps can also be added to the document as they come to the market.

The guidance document is available on the Kea Conservation Trust website.

Embrace biosecurity and keep an open mind

Rob Simons, Senior Biosecurity Officer
at Marlborough District Council

How long have you been in your job?

I have worked in the biosecurity sector for 27 years, starting work at MAF's Quarantine service (now MPI) in 1996 at Auckland airport, and have worked for the Marlborough District Council as a Senior Biosecurity Officer since 2009.

What motivates you to be involved in biosecurity?

I have always gravitated to nature thanks to my late father who provided me with a window into the past, when nature was still able to flourish during the earlier days of industrialisation of the Netherlands (and greater Europe in general). However, in later years, and during my lifetime the pace and extent of human activity changed that.

That background gave me a greater appreciation of how green NZ was when my family immigrated here in the early eighties, at a time when my wife's family still knew of brown kiwi living in the pine forests near Waimana in the Bay of Plenty. Unfortunately, those kiwi too are long gone, having met a similar fate to wildlife in other parts around the globe.

Fortunately, **we have biosecurity as one of the few tools that gives some hope** to changing this, which motivates my involvement.

What has been your career path to your current position?

My experience in the horticultural industry led to my employment with the MAF Quarantine Service. After 13 years working in border biosecurity, I shifted to Marlborough where I now oversee the operational planning, implementation and reporting of the Marlborough District Council's Regional Pest Management Plan.

What makes up a normal day for you?

Biosecurity is all about engaging with people. Not a day goes by without spending some time interacting with landowners to plan out the finer details of site visits. From time-to-time this also involves aspects of contract management, and occasionally throws in a bit of excitement when the call comes to investigate a new pest site or possible incursion.

What do you enjoy the most about your job?

The job offers a good balance between office and field work which takes me into places other people wouldn't normally go.

> "Given my time in the role, I have had the benefit of overseeing the implementation of new pest programmes and witnessing the progress that we have made over the years."

What advice would you give to newcomers to biosecurity?

Embrace it and keep an open mind. Because biosecurity is a relatively young concept, the way we do things is constantly changing and improving. This brings with it opportunities and career diversification.

How times have changed

It was a pleasure to receive this feedback on the Summer 22-23 issue from life member David Brown:

"Having just read the latest issue of Protect I was very interested in the article about Paul Champion.

I remember him as he joined the Institute about two years after I resigned my position as President due to a shift into a management role with the Marlborough District Council.

It was interesting what he said about the Institute in those days, especially having to be a full-time officer. In my case I was only part-time as an officer of the then Blenheim Borough Council as an Urban Inspector. At the time I was appointed the Secretary of the INPO, it caused a lot of controversy, being an Urban Inspector, as in those days **Executive Officers only came from County Councils but nevertheless, I got the job,** and remained there until the last two years I was with the Institute, and was elected President.

It is interesting that your current President, Jono Underwood, also from Blenheim (MDC) is only the second person from Blenheim to be elected onto the Executive.

How times have changed.

Cheers,

David J. Brown
Life Member

Manners

All members want to see the Opening Session of a Conference run with the decorum it deserves. Such decorum is brought about by member's standard of dress and general demeanour. All of us will agree that visitors are deserving of our courtesy, not only during the Opening Session, but at the following morning tea also. Having speakers address a meeting where the front half of the hall is empty and the back half looks like a respectable watersiders convention does nothing for the image of our Institute. This is the only occasion at Conference when some formality is desirable. Let's make sure it has it.

A lot has changed.

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The ghosts of NETS past

New Zealand Biosecurity Institute

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