



## SUMMARY REPORT 2011/12

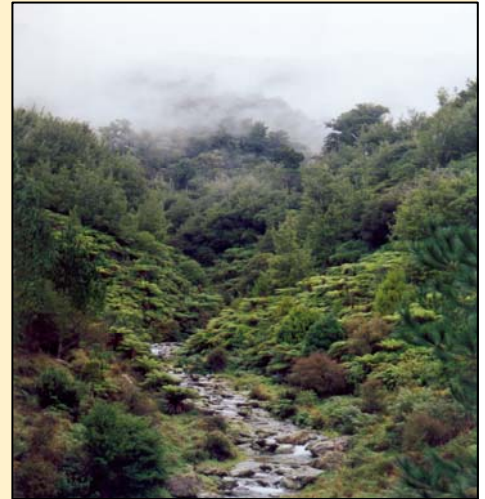
The Summary Report of the Significant Natural Areas Project 2011/12 has been completed and was presented to the Council's Environment Committee in September. The full report is available on Council's website.

The project has four main components – ecological surveys (mostly completed), protection projects (ongoing), monitoring (ongoing) and the Tui to Town habitat restoration project.

The protection projects are the key to the SNA Project as they maintain and improve on Marlborough's biodiversity. Some key points from the report follow:-

- A total of 705 sites have been identified covering about 45,000 hectares of land

- There have been 74 protection projects covering 1865 hectares of land in total so far since 2003 – about 10% of the sites identified and 4% of the area identified
- There have been 50 projects in South Marlborough and 24 in North Marlborough
- 32 of the 74 projects have been covenanted through the QEII National Trust
- Twenty of the protection projects involved wetlands
- Fencing was carried out on 45 projects, weed control on 26 sites and extensive animal pest control on four projects and restoration planting on about 20 sites
- There were 6 new projects carried out over the last year



- The total budget for all these projects since 2003 is 1.6 million dollars. Council's share is about \$450,000, landowners about \$400,000, QEII about \$75,000 and the Central Government Biodiversity Fund \$750,000.

## PERNOD RICARD'S RENWICK WETLAND 3 YEARS ON



**Bridget Kenny in the wetland. The filtered light under the poisoned willows encourages vigorous natural regeneration in the moist fertile soils.**

Bridget Kenny is Landscape Gardener for Pernod Ricard's Marlborough vineyards. Several years ago she began enhancing a large wetland area on one of the company's properties near Renwick. This area had been identified as significant by a Department of Conservation ecological survey in the early 1990s so when Bridget approached the Council for help to step up the restoration efforts we were happy to help. A three year programme of weed control and restoration planting was planned and extra funding applied for through the central government's Biodiversity Fund.

The wetland was infested with willows and these have been systematically killed by contractors using the stem poisoning method. Planting has been carried out around the edges of the wetland area to improve the aesthetics but also in places within the wetland under the dead willows to add new botanical elements like kahikatea and totara. A lot of natural regeneration is also taking place as the willows die out and light and water become more abundant. Although there is still ongoing weed control to be done, this 5 hectare wetland area is well on the way to recovery.

# COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PROJECTS ...

There are lots of conservation projects going on out in the community, here are some of them:

## Tuamarina Blind Creek Riparian

**Area** – established in 2007 to restore a 2 hectare area of riparian land alongside Blind Creek – the project is largely completed now with 2500 plants well established.

## Rarangi Landcare Group -

established in 2000 to work at restoring parts of the beachfront area through weed control and planting of coastal species - contact Christine Baker 5705834 [Baker.Rarangi@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Baker.Rarangi@xtra.co.nz) or Shelley Sidley at DOC 5729100 [shellysidley@doc.govt.nz](mailto:shellysidley@doc.govt.nz)

## Grovetown Lagoon Restoration

**Project** - a collaborative restoration effort – contact person Jenny Keene 5727288 [jennymkeene@gmail.com](mailto:jennymkeene@gmail.com)

**Pelorus Bridge Reserve project** – a community pest control programme initiated and run by Forest and Bird to help protect the habitat and roosting areas of the long tailed bat which is one of the most endangered animals in New Zealand. Contact Jenny Easton 03 5471613 [jennym.easton@gmail.com](mailto:jennym.easton@gmail.com)

**Kaipupu Point Mainland Island Project** – a community group operating in conjunction with the Department of Conservation and Port Marlborough to restore a forested peninsula near Picton. A predator proof fence has been established and a comprehensive pest control programme is imminent - contact person – Jenny Keene 5727288 [jennymkeene@gmail.com](mailto:jennymkeene@gmail.com)

## Tui Nature Reserve Wildlife Trust

– formed in 2011 with the philosophy ‘working together to save New Zealand wildlife’ contacts - Brian and Ellen Plaisier 027 4483447

[info@tuinaturereserve.co.nz](mailto:info@tuinaturereserve.co.nz)

## Marlborough Sounds

**RestorationTrust** – established in 2007 with the aim to “facilitate the restoration of native ecosystems in the Marlborough Sounds, and protect the area’s landscape values” The main focus of the Trust’s work so far has been the strategic control of wilding pine trees throughout the Sounds. 03 5489706

[info@soundsrestoration.org.nz](mailto:info@soundsrestoration.org.nz)

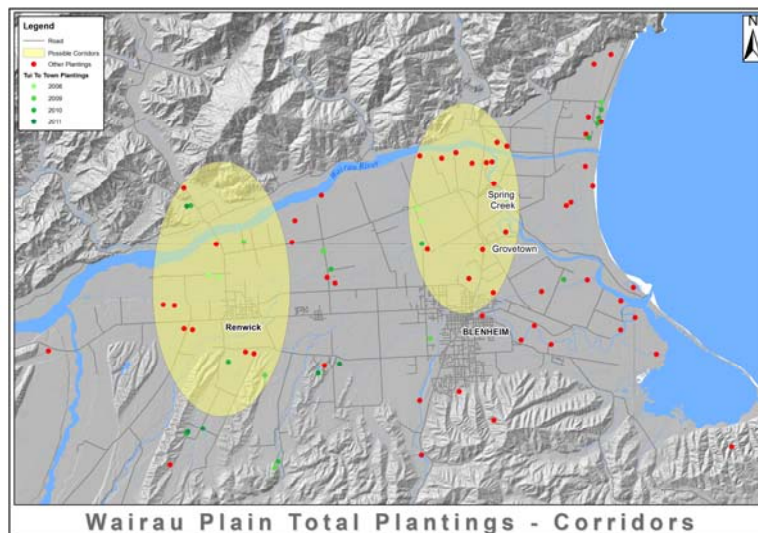


## TUI TO TOWN PROJECT

The Tui to Town project was launched by the Council in 2008 to help promote native habitat restoration on the Wairau Plain, a part of Marlborough with very little native vegetation or habitat left.

Sightings are reported during the “season” from about May to December as Tui travel out of the northbank native forest areas to feed around the Wairau Plains, including Blenheim and Renwick.

About three hectares of new habitat has been created through landowners who have taken up Council’s offer of funding assistance of up to \$1000 to plant new areas of native vegetation of at



least 1000 square metres to create stepping stones of habitat. These areas complement other larger restoration projects being undertaken by private landowners, the Council and Landcare groups at Tuamarina and Rarangi.

The project has helped to raise public awareness about native species and habitats on the Wairau Plain. Street banners in Blenheim, association with the

2010 Rugby World Cup activities and the 2012 Garden Marlborough tours, all reflect the project’s integration into the fabric of the local community.

**Sightings** - online <http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Environment/Land/Ecology-Projects/Tui-to-Town/> ([www.marlborough.govt.nz](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz)), by email to [tui@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:tui@marlborough.govt.nz) or phone the Council on 5207400.

**Planting enquiries** - contact Nicky Eade email [nicky.eade@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:nicky.eade@marlborough.govt.nz) phone 520 7400

# STIRLING BROOK FENCING PROJECT

Joan Dodson and Mike Watson featured in a newspaper article earlier in the year promoting the significant natural areas project. Joan and Mike have recently fenced off and QEII covenanted 30 hectares of one of the main gullies on their Stirling Brook property on Waterfalls Road near Seddon. The area has high overall biodiversity values including several species in



Joan Dodson and Mike Watson sitting above their QEII covenanted gully at Stirling Brook.

the gully riparian forest that are rare in the locality and falcon nesting habitat deep in the rocky gully. Along with the fencing work some wilding pines have been removed

from the site and a fairly comprehensive programme of old mans beard control has been carried out in some places, using contract labour. Goats will be an ongoing but

manageable issue in the fenced block.

Joan and Mike say that the fencing has been a win-win for conservation and stock management on the farm, allowing them to split a 120 hectare block into two. By doing some of the work themselves (scrub clearing to prepare the fence line, felling pines and assisting with old mans beard control work) they managed to keep their share of the

costs down which along with contributions from the Council and central government biodiversity funds and the QEII National Trust, made the project affordable.

## QEII NATIONAL TRUST COVENANTS UPDATE

Hi,

I am your QEII Marlborough regional representative and I am keen to talk to anyone interested in finding out more about covenanting. My workload has recently tripled as I have taken on the Nelson and Tasman areas as well. It is great to see the variety of covenants protected over the top of the south. Several large new covenants have been approved in Marlborough over the last few months.

- Fencing was completed on two important covenants: Mirza Downs (55ha) and Spray Point (1200ha). These covenants are now awaiting survey.
- An 800ha covenant was approved on Stronvar Station and is awaiting the completion of the fences. This

covenant adjoins Spray Point Covenant which means a very significant piece of the upper Waihopai Valley is now protected.

- Two covenants that have been awaiting final sign off for several years in the Wairau Valley and Ward areas have now been completed.
- QEII applied for funding for weed control projects on four existing covenants from the Biodiversity Condition Fund with some extra support from MDC. A successful result means work will start on these projects in November.

Finally Marlborough is to be the focus of QEII's next "Open Space" magazine with several very different covenants in the spotlight.

The QEII National Trust helps landowners to protect significant natural and cultural features on their land through permanent legal covenants. The trust is an independent non governmental organisation. Covenants are registered on the property title in perpetuity, meaning that future landowners must abide by them. Private property rights are not jeopardised – the landowner retains ownership and management of the land.

To find out more about covenanting, contact:

Tom Stein  
QEII National Trust  
Marlborough Regional  
Representative  
Ph 03 5742978 or  
0274 453890  
tstein@openspace.org.nz  
www.openspace.org.nz



# INDIGENOUS VEGETATION CLEARANCE RULES

Areas that have been identified as Significant Natural Areas have no particular rules or regulations attached to them. The advantage of having areas identified as (SNAs) means that funding help may be available if a landowner wants to protect or manage the biodiversity in the area in some way.

However, all areas of indigenous vegetation in Marlborough are subject to clearance limits and a resource consent application would be required if a landowner or manager is planning to clear more than these limits.

**NOTE: This is not a full interpretation of the rules and landowners are responsible for checking the rules in detail if any indigenous vegetation clearance is planned.**

## In South Marlborough:

- indigenous vegetation that is regenerating on previously cleared land and is less than 20 years old can be cleared, otherwise
- where the average canopy height is less than 3 metres, up to 1 hectare (10,000 square metres), can be cleared
- where the average canopy height of indigenous vegetation is more than 3 metres, up to 0.2 of a hectare (2000 square metres), can be cleared and where its more than 6 metres, up to 0.1 of a hectare (1000 square metres), can be cleared
- on particular sites including coastal, ultramafic or limestone geologies, alluvial, and bluffs and rock outcrops, 0.05 of a hectare (500 square metres), can be cleared

## In North Marlborough:

- in the case of coastal broadleaved scrub and shrublands, indigenous vegetation on ultramafic substrate and indigenous forest (canopy of more than 6 metres in height and 80% canopy closure), up to 0.2 of a hectare (2000 square metres), can be cleared in any 12 month period per certificate of title
- no indigenous vegetation clearance can occur within a 10 or 20 metre riparian management zone along certain identified rivers and streams as set out in Appendix 1 of the plan
- no indigenous vegetation clearance can be carried out in wetlands or dunelands without a resource consent.

## WETLANDS IN MARLBOROUGH

Council is doing a check of all wetland areas to clarify if they are or are not considered a wetland for planning purposes. No new rules are proposed for wetlands (there are some already which don't allow wetlands to be drained or modified without a resource consent). The check is intended to provide clarity to landowners about the wetlands on their properties. You may have been recently telephoned about this project.



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION MDC LANDOWNER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Financial assistance of between 50% and 80% of the cost of protecting significant natural areas is available to landowners through the Council's Biodiversity Landowner Assistance Programme.

- Generally if a project is worth less than \$10,000.00 the Council and landowner share the costs equally although because the landowner share can be for labour (for instance for fencing), their cash contribution can be very minimal.
- For larger projects worth more than \$10,000.00 the Council generally applies to the central government Biodiversity Fund for a 33% contribution and then splits the other 66% with the landowner. If the landowner decides to covenant the site through the QEII National Trust, QEII will sometimes also contribute some cash to the project. The landowner generally contributes between 33% to 22% of the total cost.

This is a good deal given that most of the fencing or restoration planting work involved adds considerable value to the property and often improves the adjoining grazing management options as well. Having a good quality natural area on the property, be it a vineyard, farm or forest, can add shade, diversity and interest.

Since 2003 about 74 protection projects have been completed and another 6 or so are in progress.

Check out the website for details (<http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Environment/Land/Significant-Natural-Areas/Landowner-Assistance-Programme.aspx>) or contact Nicky Eade at the Council if you would like more information on what assistance might be available [nicky.eade@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:nicky.eade@marlborough.govt.nz) phone 520 7400.



Seymour Street  
PO Box 443  
Blenheim 7240  
NEW ZEALAND

Ph: +64 3 520 7400  
Fax: +64 3 520 7496  
Email: [mdc@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:mdc@marlborough.govt.nz)  
[www.marlborough.govt.nz](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz)

