

## Natural habitat restoration for lowland South Marlborough

### Tūi to Town - Natural habitat restoration for South Marlborough

The Tūi to Town programme has been extended so that planting projects over a greater area of Marlborough may now qualify. Planting proposals from the Upper Wairau Valley all the way to the Rarangi Coast and south to the Waima River, south of Ward, will be considered (see the map).

The programme encourages habitat restoration by helping to fund native plants which will attract and support native birds. It also provides a place to record native bird sightings, as a way of measuring success over time. All of this is focussed where there has been the greatest loss of our native birdlife; lowland South Marlborough.

The Tūi to Town programme was set up in 2008 to promote habitat restoration in the Wairau Plains. It arose from the Council's Significant Natural Areas project which, since 2004, has been supporting private landowners to protect existing areas of native habitat on their land. It identified that some areas, particularly in lowland South Marlborough, have very little native cover remaining to protect, and set about to reverse that.

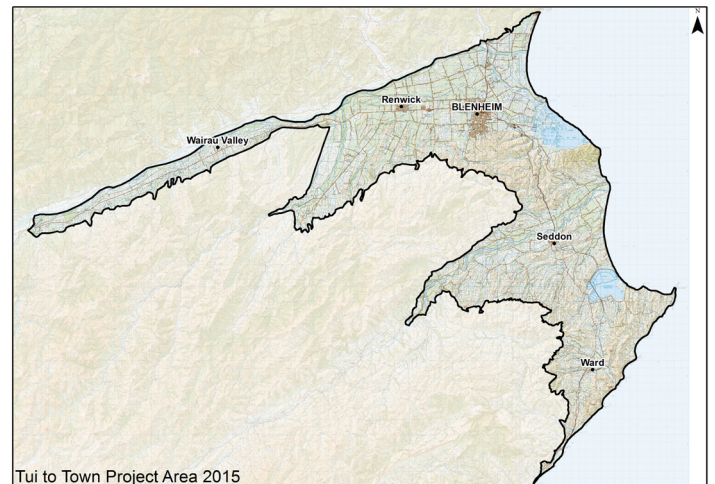
Since 2008 up to 50 sites have received funding and more than 50,000 trees have been planted through Tūi to Town. These areas have also been identified as Threatened Land Environments by the Ministry for the Environment. They are a national priority for protection as they contain less than 10% of their original native cover.

There is still a lot of work to do!

### Habitat for native birds and insects – creating stepping stones

Diverse native forest habitats support a variety of birds and insects. Some native birds such as tūi, kereru (wood pigeons) and kaka, have specific food and habitat requirements and generally need a sizable area of native forest and habitat area to live and breed in a locality. However, these species can travel long distances (up to 20 km) to feed, and can be seen some distance away from native forests at certain times of the year (mostly winter and spring before they start breeding).

Diverse native forest habitats support a diversity of birds and other wildlife. Some native birds, such as tūi, kereru (wood pigeon) and kaka, have specific food and habitat requirements and generally need a sizeable area of mature native forest to live and breed in all year round. However they can still fly large distances at certain times of the year for specific food supplies (mostly in winter and spring before the breeding season).



Others, such as fantail, grey warbler and silvereye, are less specialist and can live and breed in areas with less native forest, including urban gardens and parks.

Creating stepping stones and corridors of native habitat will help support native bird species in lowland South Marlborough including the Wairau Valley. Reporting native bird sightings (not just tūi), will help to build a picture of what native bird species are present in lowland south Marlborough and what habitats and plants they are relying on.

### What you can do

Report sightings of native birds to the Council so that we can build a better picture of where and when various species are seen and what they are feeding on. Click on <https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/environment/tui-to-town/native-bird-reporting-form> to report sightings, or email: [tui@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:tui@marlborough.govt.nz) Ph 5207400

Protect existing remnants of natural habitat like wetland areas or pockets of native vegetation on your property (Council may be able to help with this).

Create more natural habitat by planting suitable native plants (see list over page), on your property, at your school or in your garden. Funding assistance is available for plantings of more than 1000 square metres on private property (\$1 per plant up to a maximum of \$1000).



Create community groups to tackle larger restoration projects on public land.



## Suitable Tū to Town Native Plant Species

The native plant species listed have been selected because when planted together they:

- Provide food for native birds for most of the year (nectar and fruit).
- Are local species which naturally occur in lowland south Marlborough and are attractive, hardy and easy to grow.
- Are available from local nurseries. Ask for the locally sourced plants - plants grown in root trainers are the best value.

Other non native plant species can also be attractive to native birds and may complement plantings however these species are not funded through this programme.

Examples include Eucalyptus species (leucoxyton, globoidea, sideroxyton, mellidora), Callistemon species (Bottlebrush), Banksia species, Camellia species and fruit trees.

Plant establishment and maintenance tips - plant in early spring after the worst frosts. Eliminate all weeds by either mulching or spraying. Mark plants with bamboo stakes. Mulch around plants (straw, weed-mat, bark etc). Weed control around new plants will be needed for several years until they become established.

As soon as you have committed to your planting project and decided on the species you want to plant, contact your chosen plant supplier and order your trees. This will hopefully help avoid disappointment through missing out. We recommend Morgans Road Nursery for good value locally sourced native plants.

Smaller trees and shrubs (1-5 m)		Trees (Tall 5-20 m)	
Flax species	<i>Phormium tenax</i> and <i>P. cookianum</i>	Broadleaf	<i>Griselinia littoralis</i>
Coprosma species	<i>Coprosma propinqua</i> , <i>C. robusta</i> , <i>C. lucida</i>	Cabbage tree	<i>Cordyline australis</i>
Koromiko	<i>Hebe salicifolia</i>	Kānuka	<i>Kunzea ericoides</i>
Korokio	<i>Corokia cotoneasta</i>	Kahikatea	<i>Dacrycarpus dacrydioides</i>
Kōwhai species	<i>Sophora prostrata</i> and <i>S. micropyhlla</i>	Lowland ribbonwood	<i>Plagianthus regius</i>
Coastal shrub daisy	<i>Olearia solandri</i>	Ngaio	<i>Myoporum laetum</i>
Lancewood species	<i>Pseudopanax crassifolius</i> and <i>P. ferox</i>	Narrow-leaved lacebark	<i>Hoheria angustifolia</i>
Shrubby tororaro	<i>Muehlenbeckia astonii</i>	Five finger	<i>Pseudopanax aboreus</i>
Pittosporum	<i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i> and <i>P. eugenioides</i>	Tōtara	<i>Podocarpus totara</i>

## Information and help available from the Marlborough District Council

- See the simple planting suggestions above.
- More detailed planting information is available in “Native Vegetation for South Marlborough - A Planting Guide”.
- Financial assistance may be available for larger protection or restoration projects of more than 1000 square metres in area.