



Issue 2. July 2017.

## NOTEBOOK

What we have been reading:

\*Kahurangi Calling by Gerard Hindmarsh. A tour of the history and background of Kaurangi National Park.

\*The Complete Book of Indian Cooking by Shehzad Husain & Rafi Fernandez. A really practical book with heaps of great, easy recipes.

### New Tools

\*From the Logger's shop in Brightwater we were recommended an "Air Blade for the weedeater. What a great tool. It cuts and throws the grass out and has made a big difference in time and effort.

\*Kent and Stowe digging spade from Mitre 10. Has a lovely long handle and has been ideal for planting

### Contractor

We recently used Pete Hughes from Endurance Spraying Ltd for a big spraying job. He did a fantastic job at a very reasonable rate.  
Phone: 0211942654



## WELCOME TO OUR WINTER NEWSLETTER

Haven't we had some perfect late autumn, early winter days. It has been ideal for all the planting jobs we have been doing over the last month or so. It is always so satisfying seeing a great expanse of plants all planted, staked, in some cases guarded and the big piles of empty root trainers or pots. Such a visual reminder of what we have achieved and a nice change from sitting at a computer especially on a glorious autumn day. To date this season, we have been involved in planting over 10,000 plants from Marlborough, Nelson through to Murchison. We have tried to also include threatened species into many of the plantings. The key is to then ensure these planted areas have ongoing maintenance as planting is really only the beginning of the process. We tend to have two major growth flushes in the top of the south, spring and autumn. It is essential that a good maintenance regime happens at these two critical times. Pasture grass is a real killer of native plants as it not only overwhelms them but it appears that it creates some chemical or micro-organism issue that inhibits growth.

We have found that good preparation of the planting site also has a major influence on the success of the planting and the ongoing maintenance. Plant guards are worth considering. They can seem expensive at the outset, but can save maintenance costs in the long term.



## ECO GUARD PROJECT.

Our daughter Emma is involved in the Young Enterprise Programme at school where a group of students work together to develop a business idea and product. While Emma was helping with a planting project last year she came up with the idea that it would be much more environmentally friendly if we could use some form of bio-degradable plant guard, especially in areas where there is the potential for the guards to end up in waterways. The group has explored a range of suitable materials and is currently trialing a potential option. This is looking promising. A guard needs to last about 1 year and protect the plant from spray damage to be effective. The cost saving is in not having to go back and remove the

guards. As they degrade they can also help in forming habitat for organisms. The key will be using them in areas where guards have the potential to end up in waterways due to flooding or inundation.

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*“Animals and plants are part of a country’s heritage; they are the result of millions of years of evolution in a particular place; they are at least as valuable as language or culture”. (Edward O Wilson)*

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## WAR ON WEEDS

While working in a QE2 covenanted block, we were horrified to see the impact of holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), the “lovely christmas bush” with its bright red berries. It was invading an area of remnant forest. The invasion had come from an original two trees planted in a paddock probably at least 50 years ago. Those two trees had gone but they had left their mark. The problem with holly is that it is spread by birds eating the seeds, it suckers where a branch touches the ground and it also copices when it has been cut off, sending out a myriad of new branches. It grows in low light areas so established forest is not immune to it. The best control is physical removal. Pull out any seedlings where possible. If cutting off established plants, paste the cut with a glysohate gel. Follow any branches that have laid down and cut and paste along the branch. Spraying is not an ideal solution because the glossy leaves tend to repel spray. The seeds stay viable in the soil for up to 5 years so ongoing visits to an infested area are important. Any stacks of cut brancehes sadly become a home to old mans beard or blackberry so if it is possible to remove the branches that will also help. However, old man’s beard will respond to spray. We have had some good success in spraying serious invasions of old man’s beard in a large wetland in Marlborough. The key is to continue being vigilant on that site and dealing promptly with any reinvasion.

## THREATENED SPECIES:

### SOME OF THE SPECIES WE HAVE BEEN WORKING TO INTRODUCE INTO PLANTINGS.

***Teucrium parvifolium***: Native germander. This plant used to occur naturally in the Nelson region. Its habitat was riparian alluvial forest margin and limestone areas. Nationally it is in gradual decline and sadly it is locally extremely threatened. It is a compact, small leaved shrub with round, dull green leaves and orange branchlets. It has masses of small white, fuschia like flowers in summer, is semi deciduous and tolerates fairly poor soils. It grows to approx 2m. We have been working with Titoki nursery in Brightwater, who have propagated the plant, and the Nelson City Council to try and bring the plant back into the Maitai Area.



***Nestegis cunninghamii*** : Black Maire. A tall canopy tree with a rounded crown up to 20m in height. It has dark green, wavy leaves that are pale green underneath with a network of visible veins and a red fruit.

***Nestigis lanceolate***: White Maire. A tall canopy tree growing to approx. 15m with long, glossy, leathery leaves. Racemes of green flowers followed by 1cm long red fruit. The wood was prized by Maori for tools and weapons as it is one of the hardest native timbers. Both species are from lowland forest areas and although are not nationally threatened they are rare in the upper South Island so again we have been introducing them into plantings in both Nelson and Marlborough.

***Melicytus flexuosus***: No common name. Forms a greyish widely branched, tangled shrub up to 5m tall with speckled twigs and sparse dark green leaves 10-20mm long and 1mm wide. The flowers are small, bell shaped and sweetly perfumed and the fruit is small and purple. It was widespread in the South Island and prefers fertile alluvial terraces and flood plains and will colonise areas prone to heavy frosts in winter and summer droughts. It is in the at risk category and declining, so we have worked with DOC to reintroduce it into an area of the Matakaitaki valley.

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

We have had an abundance of persimmons this year so I developed the following recipe for using them up. Delicious hot or cold.

### Persimmon Tart.

5-6 soft persimmons  
juice of 1 lemon.  
½ cup castor sugar  
1 Tbsp flour  
1 tsp cinnamon  
½ tsp ginger  
½ tsp nutmeg  
pinch salt.  
½ cup milk  
4 eggs  
sweet short pastry.  
20cm pie dish.



Heat the oven to 200 degrees C. Peel and chop persimmons into a pot with the lemon juice and castor sugar. Bring to the boil and stir until fruit is soft. Mash with a potato masher.

Add the dry ingredients and stir together. Lightly beat the eggs. Add the milk to the mixture. Stir together and then add the eggs and stir. Pour into the prepared pastry shell.

Bake at 200 for the first 10 mins then turn down to 160 degrees and bake for a further 35-40 mins. until firm.

Serve with yoghurt, ice cream or cream

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It looks like our first lambs are arriving so spring maintenance work will be underway soon. Jan is starting a teaching stint at NMIT and Robert is busy with preparing plans for a range of different properties across the top of the south.

If you have any projects in mind, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Keep up the good work you are all doing to preserve and maintain NZ's fantastic biodiversity

Kind regards

Jan and Robert Fryer.