



Issue 3. October 2017.

NOTEBOOK

What we have been reading:

***New Zealand: Paradise Squandered?**
By John Hawkes.

What urgent issues do NZer's face today.

An interesting, thought provoking view of NZ from the perspective of a 4th generation NZer who worked as a consultant rheumatologist both here and overseas and has looked at an outside in and inside out evaluation of the country today.

New Tools

*We tried out a mulching blade for the weedeater last week. It has 2 blades with a 90-degree angle at each end. Did an amazing job on blackberry and bracken. Available through Stihl.

Contractor

We recently used Dale Cooley from Boulder Bank Electrical to fix some lights, etc. Great service and we would thoroughly recommend him. 0220961557.



WELCOME TO OUR SPRING NEWSLETTER

What an incredibly variable spring. Trying to get spraying done has been quite a mission but it has meant we have been able to continue planting quite late into the season. With the South-westerlies starting in earnest now though, planting is well finished and we are moving into the maintenance phase of work for the next few months. Timely maintenance of new plantings is absolutely crucial to their survival. We are getting good growth at present but of course it means the weeds are on the rampage. Old man's beard will respond well to being cut off at the base – be careful to follow every runner as it roots down wherever it touches, and coat the cut stem with a glyphosate gel. We have also had good success with spraying the emerging leaves with a glyphosate/organosilicon mix at 1.5%

We have started on an exciting project for Nelson City Council as part of their focus on the Wakapuaka River Catchment. Early work on the project has begun with establishing the scope of the project, looking at a project slogan, in conjunction with the key stakeholders and so far, it is leaning towards - Wakapuaka – Bursting into Life, which takes its inspiration from the meaning of the word, Wakapuaka. The project is aiming to inspire the whole community to refocus on the river and its health and follows on from work done back in 2007. We have some copies of the booklet, "The Wakapuaka River –the story of the river running through our lives" published in March 2007, if anyone would like a copy. We also have some streamside planting guide brochures developed by Shannel Courtney from DOC and Mike Ward from Nelson that were prepared a few years ago but are still very relevant particularly for the Nelson Area. They can guide plantings for other areas also as they some good sound ideas on what to plant where.

We have had the privilege of working in some wonderful remnant forest in the region, mainly doing weed control. The issue with these remnants is that they often have very long boundaries and it is in these boundaries that the weeds get a foothold. We saw the impact clearly the other day in a beautiful remnant forest of large matai, rimu, totara and beech, which bordered a small river. The river margin had been fenced by the adjacent landowner, but there was no weed control and the riparian margin was covered in barberry, broom, gorse, hawthorne, old man's beard and sycamore, all of which were having a field day moving into the remnant forest. We spent a very satisfying day attacking these weeds but it was certainly disheartening seeing the state of the riparian margin which the forest owner had no control over.

Picture: Hooded orchid found on the Wakapuaka River Margin.

ECO GUARD PROJECT.

The Eco Guard project has taken a great leap forward over the past month or so. We have been working hard on trying to find a suitable product that will be both durable enough to last a season while at the same time being biodegradable. We have committed ourselves to an initial run of guards of the new product we have found. It is essentially a cardboard, which has the right structure to withstand the elements, will not collapse, is coated to protect it from the elements, but it will eventually decompose.

If anyone wishes to be part of the phase two trials of this product we will have guards available to purchase at cost price in the next month or so. 50 guards for \$57.50 plus GST. Please get in touch via email if you wish to trial these new guards. They will act in a very similar way to the present plastic guards in that they protect the plant from spray damage, grazing by rabbits, hares and goats, and provide a micro-climate to encourage early growth. They are ideally suited for riparian margins or where the guards have the chance of inadvertently entering waterways as they will break down over time.

We are very excited to be able to move forward on this very desirable product for riparian areas.

“In organizing your labour, site preparation, planting and important ongoing maintenance, don’t bite off more than you can chew”. (Streamside Planting Guide)

WAR ON WEEDS



The war continues on. We have been working on a large scale weed project in the Wakapuakea catchment. The principle weed we are tackling in the first instance is old mans beard. To be successful, you must be methodical. Now is a great time to see the plants as the new leaves are a bright green which stand out easily against much of the foliage of the plants they are climbing up and strangling.

Picture: Dying old man’s beard.
Wakapuakea River.

The other main climbing weed we have been dealing with is Japanese Honeysuckle, *Lonicera japonica*. Weedbusters have some good information on this very invasive weed <http://www.weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/lonicera-japonica/59/>

With both these weeds, we have found that the initial sweep through requires identifying where the main stem or stems are coming from. Cut these off at the base if possible and coat with a glyphosate gel. We have been using Cut”N”Paste, developed by Andy Spence and marketed by Landman Ltd. Make sure you follow any stems and try to get them all. If it is not possible to track the stems to their base, cut off at around waist height and then follow through with a glyphosate/organosilicone spray on all visible leaf surfaces.

It pays to allow two hits per growing season, one in spring when the soft growth is easily visible and the second in late summer/early autumn to catch any regrowth from the summer.

Barberry, *Berberis glaucocarpa*. <http://www.weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/berberis-glaucocarpa/59/>

We have visited a couple of properties where this weed is a major issue and is particularly nasty because of its prickly nature. It really likes the conditions in the Marlborough area and quickly invades large areas as it will grow in both dry and damp conditions. It was sad to see it invading a remnant forest in the Moutere area also where the seeds are spread readily by birds. Luckily it will eventually be dominated by native species but it will always be a problem in the margins if there are seeding plants in the vicinity. Cut stumps will resprout quickly so make sure you brush the cut stump with chemical. Drilling and spraying can also be effective. Weedbusters information sheet gives types and quantities of chemical to use.

INTERESTING SPECIES:

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

Pukatea. *Laurelia novae-zelandiae*. An impressive tree of up to 35m in height. It is more typically found in wet soils at low elevations and is often associated with other trees from wet soils like Kahikatea and Swamp Maire. Its southern limit is just south of Nelson. The bark is pale grey, almost white with a spongy appearance and at the base of the trunk it often forms thin, triangular buttresses which extend along major horizontal roots, giving the tree more stability in wet soils. Young trees have an attractive conical form, maturing into a rounded crown. The leaves are shiny, yellowish green, with prominent marginal teeth. It forms both male and female flowers which are a pale yellowy green and the fruits from these flowers split open to release fruitlets containing a single seed that has parachutes of hairs for wind dispersal around June. (Dawson & Lucas, 2011. New Zealand’s Native Trees)



Titoki. *Alectryon excelsus*. An attractive small tree of up to about 10m tall with a broad crown that was once common in the upper South Island but has been severely reduced in numbers. It is generally found in coastal and lowland forest and prefers fertile alluvial river flats or sandy plains. It has often been associated with Tawa and Kohekohe. It is drought tolerant once established but at the seedling stage it needs shade and moist conditions. The trunk may get to 50cm or more and it has smooth dark brown to almost black bark. It may also form buttresses at the base of the trunk.

The young twigs, leaves, flowers and seed capsules are densely furry with rusty brown hairs which tend to persist on the underside of leaves. Leaves are dark olive-green, with 3-7 leaflets which are alternate on pinnately compound leaves, each leaflet is narrow and pointed at the tip and is between 5-10cm long x2.5cm wide. Flowers are dark red/purple appearing in spring to early summer on a branching floret. Male and female flowers are on different trees. The flowers form brown, furry capsules which take up to a year to mature. These split open to reveal a dark red arils or fruit which is almost raspberry like, containing shiny black seeds. Tuis in particular, enjoy these fruits and thus spread the seeds. Early Maori ate the fruits and also crushed the seeds to collect the oil which was used to anoint their bodies and hair and for various medicinal purposes.

The timber is flexible and strong but unfortunately not durable in the open. (Dawson & Lucas, 2011. New Zealand’s Native Trees)

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

As mentioned above, we have been working on our local stream the Wakapuaka for the last couple of months as part of the Council led project Wakapuaka- Bursting in to Life.

We have noticed while we have been working away clearing Old Man's Beard and Japanese Honeysuckle that there is significant local interest in the stream. Many locals will stop for a chat and note their pleasure at seeing some positive change to the riparian margins. Some even drop what they are doing to help and put in a few hours of cutting and clearing.



It is all too easy to get a bit despondent with the state of our rivers both local and nationally but it is becoming clear that there is now strong desire to somehow improve their current state.

We recognise that our river means different things to different people. For some there is a desire to see a clean stream, as unmodified as possible, supporting much indigenous biodiversity. For others, their interest is a safe and secure water supply or a clean river to swim in summer. Yet others have an interest in collecting food from the stream or recreationally fishing. We all have different motivators, but all share the same desire for clean water.

A successful community project recognises this and so as a result we have been exploring about the UK experience of establishing river trusts. These are setup to consider the multiple interests in a waterbody, and so include people who can represent all those interests.

We like the idea that a river can have a group of people representing all interests in the catchment that can advocate and speak for the river. This of course happens in many places already. There is a Waikato River Trust and no doubt others, but how good would it be to have an umbrella organisation to help set up the necessary frameworks and assist with resources. This would help in recognising and representing the diverse range of interests in our rivers. At present, each catchment is possibly reinventing the wheel when it comes to developing plans and projects.

Where there's water, there's life. Some food for thought, have a look at the attached link:

<http://www.therivertrust.org/>

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK OR CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE. WWW.FUTURECOLOGY.CO.NZ



Life certainly gets busy at this time of year. We have one daughter finishing her Bachelor of Architecture at Victoria this year and the other daughter finishing school in a few weeks so there will be a few changes in the wind. Exciting times.

Meanwhile we are also thoroughly enjoying our own garden, with lots of spring colour and some exciting new additions like Chatham Island forget me nots starting to become established.

If you have any projects in mind, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are able to prepare plans to support consents, develop concept plans for planting or weed control and provide advice or encouragement.

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

Kind regards

Jan and Robert Fryer.