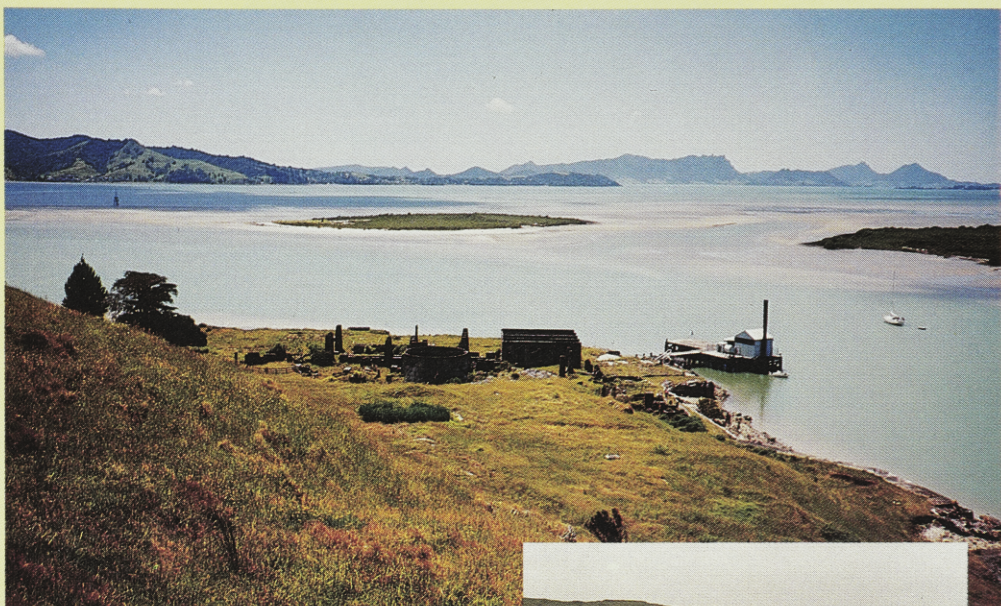




Matakohe Island Reserve



Matakohe Island and the remains of the old lime works.

AFTER FOUR YEARS of lobbying, Forest and Bird's Northern branch has succeeded in its aim of seeing Matakohe (Limestone Island) in the middle of Whangarei Harbour created a reserve. The Northland Harbour Board recently gifted the island to the people of Whangarei and the branch's management plan has been adopted.

Once the island has been cleared of possums, Forest and Bird members and other community groups plan to plant pohutukawa and other coastal species on it. Kereru and tui are just two of the species which should be encouraged to return to the 37-ha island.

Matakohe Island is an important wildlife refuge for wading birds including the threatened New Zealand dotterel. An historic Maori midden and pa site is also sited there.

Once an island quarried for its lime, hopes are high that it will in time become an important open sanctuary.



Matakohe's revegetation project is launched.

Forest & Bird Festival

GLENFIELD MALL SHOPPERS in Auckland were treated to a week-long Forest and Bird festival in September.

Organised by the North Shore branch, the festival involved colouring-in competitions, nature games and other activities.

Auckland celebrities were on hand – a 2m high Monsta and Robert Frogg (the Auckland Regional Council's endearing water conservation mascot) attracting attention.

Videos and displays highlighted environmental issues such as noxious weeds and pests, and recycling. The Timm's possum traps advertised by Forest and Bird sold well, indicating that some North Shore residents are prepared to fight the possum takeover and help protect the small native forest reserves on the Shore.

1990 Trees for 1990

A NUMBER of Forest and Bird branches have been busy planting trees this year. One of the most successful restoration projects has been initiated by the Coromandel branch, which approached the 1990 Commission to fund a "Trees for 1990" scheme.

The branch and its sub-groups – at Mercury Bay and Upper Coromandel – have been actively planting in areas such as the new Coromandel wetland reserve, which is being developed jointly by the community and the Upper Coromandel group. So far the Upper Coromandel group alone has planted more than 1000 trees.

Fencing for Kokako

MAKINO FOREST in north eastern Taranaki is home to the southernmost population of the threatened North Island kokako. However stock wandering into the forest have progressively destroyed the birds' habitat.

In order to assist the kokako's survival, Taranaki branch member Philip Smith has recently started an "environment action" account which has funded the fencing of the forest's ridgeline boundary.

The funds were raised through a recycling venture (mainly cans and scrap metal), and by shooting goats in the forest and selling the meat. Fence posts were obtained by taking thinnings from a plantation (with permission!). A farmer donated more than \$600 worth of fencing materials.

As part of enhancing the kokako's habitat, the forest has also been poisoned with 1080 against possums.

Manawatu nature trail

ANOTHER 1990 PROJECT has been the reconstruction of the Esplanade Bush nature trail in Palmerston North by the Manawatu branch.

First opened in 1971, the trail has been upgraded with 17 stops along an all weather track that winds through the largest stand of original native forest left in the vicinity of Palmerston North. A descriptive leaflet written and illustrated by Forest and Bird committee members assists tourists and school parties to identify trees and ferns.

Not content with one project, the branch is now creating a nature trail at Totara Reserve in the Pohangina Valley, north of Palmerston North. The reserve is one of the few places in Manawatu where once commonplace totara can still be seen.

The branch has been involved with clearing old man's beard and ivy from bush, controlling spartina at the mouth of the Manawatu and propagating pingao to stabilise sand dunes.



Rosemary van Essen cuts the ribbon to officially open the Esplanade Bush nature trail. Rosemary's father is treasurer of the Manawatu branch. Photo: The Guardian

Compiled by Melanie Hutton