



The Loder Cup and its proud recipient for 1991, Mr Reg Janes of Tauranga. Photo: Elaine Fisher

REG JANES, an ardent conservationist and distinguished life member of Forest and Bird is the recipient of the Loder Cup for 1991.

For the last four decades Reg has been educating people of all ages about the protection of the environment. A man of action as well as words, he has brought the message to the public at large through his role as the Bay of Plenty district representative for Conservation Week for the last 17 years. In awarding Mr Janes the country's top conservation award, the Minister of Conservation, Denis Marshall, paid tribute to his significant contribution to the Conservation Week programme.

In nominating him for the cup, the Bay of Plenty District Council of the New Zealand Nurserymen's Association highlighted the diverse nature of his involvement in conservation.

The 79 year old's love of native flora and the desire to work for its preservation was fostered by Mr Charles Cameron (winner of the Loder Cup in 1959) and Mr Peter Furse, who ran a junior Forest and Bird Group in Tauranga in 1947.

"They were really my inspiration," he recalls.

Born in Wellington in 1911, Reg began work in 1928 as a builder of church pipe organs. He spent three years in the Airforce during the war and in 1946 decided to become a school teacher. The following year he moved to Tauranga as a woodwork and technical drawing teacher, a role he continued until retirement in 1972.

Through his woodworking classes, Mr Janes gained a vast knowledge of native timbers, but the wastage of clear felling and the unselective use of timbers, together with failure to replace the resource, distressed him.

He became actively involved with the junior Forest and Bird Group and was a foundation member of the Tauranga section of the Forest and Bird Protection Society when it was formed in May of 1955.

Mr 'Kaimai' – Reg Janes

"In most places the junior group grows out of the senior group, but in Tauranga it was just the reverse. We got off to a flying start with an enthusiastic group of parents who had been involved in what their children had been doing. The branch has continued to be one of the strongest in the country."

In 1964, Mr Janes became Tauranga branch president, a position he held for ten years. For five years, from 1981 to 1986, he was on the national executive of Forest and Bird.

"A lot of changes were made during those five years. The executive worked very hard, sometimes we met once a month, which meant travelling to Wellington." Mr Janes was also appointed branch councillor and for the last 15 years has been branch secretary.

In 1980 he was honoured as a Distinguished Life Member of Forest and Bird. Tauranga City recognised his significant contribution to its environment and community by awarding him a commemorative Golden Key to mark the city's 21st birthday in 1984.

Today, Reg is still actively involved in conservation. He gives regular talks to schools and youth groups and oversees much of the organisation of the Tauranga Forest and Bird activities including monthly meetings, field trips, walks and annual camps.

In its nomination for the Loder Cup, the Nurserymen's Association said, "Reg's abilities in written and verbal submissions both to local bodies and Government on conservation issues has brought many successes for the benefit of future New Zealanders. Reg played a prominent role in the "Save our Kaimai National Park" campaign, which resulted in the halting of milling and planting of exotics in the state forest of the Kaimai Range and to the formation of the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park.

His continuing efforts are aimed at conservation of privately owned areas of native bush, particularly in water catchment areas. He was recently involved with a court action which won protection for wetlands in Tauranga Harbour.

When not lobbying for conservation, Reg grows trees. He has a thriving nursery for thousands of young native trees and shrubs, many of them grown from seed, in his backyard.

Pohutukawa, as thick as weeds, are in propagating boxes awaiting transfer to larger trays, while others seedlings flourish in polythene bags, ready for next season when they will be planted out. Most local schools, many local reserves and a few private gardens boast trees from the Janes nursery.

Right now his biggest project is the re-forestation of 9 hectares of farmland

Te Puna, called the Keith I'Anson Reserve.

"Keith wanted to donate the land but nothing was happening, so I approached the Queen Elizabeth II Trust to see what could be done."

Thanks largely to his efforts, the conservation area was adopted and today is administered by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council and the Trust. However, even before the paper work was finalised, Reg began planting trees, involving local children from the Te Puna School.

Five years later, half the area is planted out, a small lake with an island has been created and the public is enjoying a new reserve in the making. Reg has encouraged young people to become involved in the reserve and Omokoroa School children and the Kiwi Conservation Club have helped with planting.

Mr Janes was delighted to be awarded the Loder Cup, which was donated to New Zealanders in 1926 by Lord Wakehurst, who wished to encourage the protection and cultivation of native plants in New Zealand.

"A number of my friends have won it over the years and it is a real honour to have my name on the cup alongside theirs."



The first planting – Reg Janes with a group of children and teachers from Te Puna School planting trees at the Keith I'Anson Reserve in 1987.

Very reserved about his achievements, Reg does believe attitudes have changed dramatically since he first became involved in conservation.

"Twenty years ago people didn't care about conservation. In the pioneer days settlers had no choice but to clear land to establish their farms, but it didn't stop there."

Today he continues to see children as the important focus of the conservation education effort. He relates well with youngsters – perhaps that's his years of experience as a teacher and scout leader coming through – and what he enjoys most is being out in the country planting trees with children.

Plant a tree and save the world, the slogan says. If so, Reg Janes has done his bit for world preservation many thousand times over. 🦜

Elaine Fisher