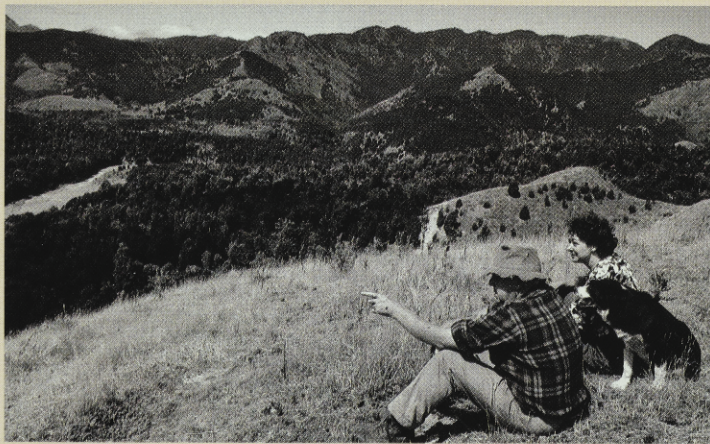


Protecting the bush

Case 1

A MAJOR PURCHASE by the Forest Heritage Fund has been the preservation of 92 hectares of matai and beech forest at Ngaroma beside North Canterbury's Conway River. Sheep farmer Neville Hyde has milled a number of native trees in his time but confesses to being "a bit of a greenie". He and his wife Ronelle Marie agreed to sell 47 hectares of kahikatea and matai forest, uncommon in Canterbury, then generously gifted an adjoining 45 hectares of podocarp and beech forest.

Neville Hyde says the price paid for the first block "wasn't within a bull's roar" of what he could have expected to make from taking an estimated 300 cubic metres of matai and kahikatea timber off the block. But he is pleased that the forest will continue to provide a home for tui, kereru, South Island robin and other birdlife, and that his efforts over the last 42 years to control possums and wild pigs have not been in vain.



EUGENIE SAGE

Neville Hyde and fund chairperson Di Lucas survey the 92-hectare Ngaroma block purchased by the fund. Where land such as this is bought with the fund's help it usually becomes part of the conservation estate and is managed by the Department of Conservation unless another organisation exists with suitable management expertise and some assurance of continuity.

Case 2

FOREST AND BIRD and the Maruia Society began campaigning to protect silver beech forest in the Waipori Gorge near Dunedin in 1988. It is the most significant remaining area of silver beech forest in the eastern South Island north of the Catlins and links two existing scenic reserves. Pledges for \$50,000 were received to help with the purchase and offers of compensation were made to the landowner. The campaign was unsuccessful and logging continued but in May this year Denis Marshall was able to announce that 265 hectares of the forest had been purchased using the Forest Heritage Fund.

Case 3

IN 1991 the Forest Heritage Fund brought Hugh Wilson's and the Maurice White Conservation Trust's dream of a "summit to the sea" reserve on Banks Peninsula within reach. A grant of more than \$100,000 helped the Trust to purchase some 900 hectares of Otanerito Station which adjoins its existing 109 hectare Hinewai reserve. The purchase is important because many of Banks Peninsula's "pocket handkerchief" reserves are too small to protect the whole range of biota and landscapes in the Banks ecological region. The Otanerito valley has a wealth of climatic variations and vegetation types, from the sub-alpine and montane vegetation of Stony Bay Peak to filmy ferns and nikau palms closer to sea level.

Case 4

THE FOREST Heritage Fund has provided welcome assistance to community and environmental organisations working on conservation projects in their localities. Their limited budgets can make protection through land acquisition a heart-breaking task because the sums involved are so huge.

The fund's purchase of Awakiki Bush, near Balclutha, was assisted by a \$7,000 donation from Forest and Bird's South Otago Branch. The forest had been part of the Dent family farm since the early 1900s and John and Elaine Dent had declined several approaches to mill it. With more than 330 totara and 100 matai trees, the 31-hectare block is the largest and most intact remnant of totara-dominated podocarp forest in the region. It is also a valuable landscape feature in an area where fertile rolling downlands have been largely developed for farming.



NEVILLE PEAT/DOC

Department of Conservation staff Carl Chaplin (left) and Chris Bennett put in a fence round the Awakiki Bush Scenic Reserve. Behind them is the dense totara forest now under protection.