

## Kiwicare

THE FAR North branch has responded to the Kiwi Recovery Programme and the surveys showing alarming kiwi decline (see *Conservation Update*, last issue) by assisting DoC with funds and labour to erect signs in the Kerikeri Inlet area.

Numerous northern brown kiwi live in the area, in regenerating shrublands close to settlements.

The signs will alert people to the presence of the kiwi population, and the need to control dogs which are their major threat.

There has been a good public response to the signs, although birds are still being killed.

The branch is also circulating an information display about kiwi to schools and communities throughout the district.



DAVID TAYLOR/THE CHRONICLE

Far North branch members Alan Baldwin and John Dawn with DoC's Terry Toft.

## Rat control in the capital

TAPU TE RANGI, a small island just off Island Bay, on Wellington's south coast is the site of a rat control programme by the Wellington branch. Native birds including the reef heron, variable oyster catcher and little blue penguin nest there and it is home to three rare plant species. The island is listed as a "site of ecological significance" in the branch's *Natural Wellington* strategy.

Administered by the Wellington City Council, the island is also of major cultural and historical importance.

The branch is using two permanent and (nearly) vandal-

proof bait stations designed by Rowley Taylor and Bruce Thomas of Breaksea Island fame. DoC's Rawyn Epsom is providing invaluable technical assistance and oversight.

The programme has proved to be a cheap and effective way of controlling a major pest on small inshore islands.

Other branches interested in running similar projects should in the first instance contact the threatened species officer of their DoC conservancy. Permission will also be needed from the organisation responsible for administering the island.



COLIN RYDER

Members Lyn and Gerald Griggs replenish the bait stations on Tapu te rangi every two or three weeks. Once the rats have been eradicated, permanent baits will be left to catch those which swim to the island.

## Negotiation – the art of winning

COMMITTEE MEMBERS from the Auckland branches have been honing their negotiation and mediation skills.

Nine members attended a one-day workshop in October run by Auckland-based mediators Tracy Brown and Lee Chisholm. Forest and Bird branches regularly find themselves in conflict situations with district and regional councils

and local companies, and the course was useful in helping members develop the skills to thrash out suitable solutions around the table rather than resort to costly litigation.

Similar courses are available in other centres. Branches interested in setting up a course in their area should contact Claire Stevens of the North Shore branch.



LEE CHISHOLM

Members from the Auckland branches improving their mediation skills. Top from left: Jan Butcher, Jay Clarke, Ann Fenn, Tracy Brown, Joe Crandle. Bottom: Claire Stevens, Dee Pigneguy, Val Hollard.

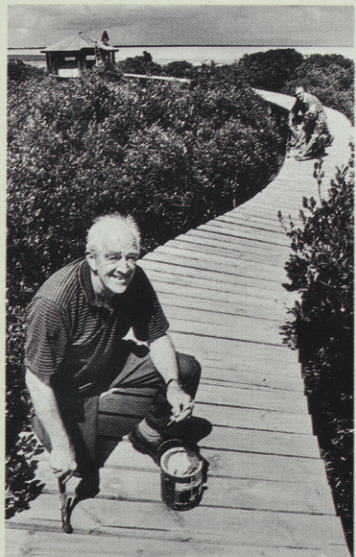
## Bird hide opened at last

THE Thames/Hauraki (formerly Coromandel) branch's bird hide in the Thames estuary, opposed by miners and the district council (see *Branching Out* May 1992), has finally been finished. Forest and Bird field officer Ann Graeme formally opened the hide and the connecting 70-metre boardwalk across the mangrove swamp in November.

The hide, almost alongside the Thames Pak'n Save, will provide access to view and study the 30 or so bird species which frequent the estuary.

However, a recent threat to the wetland has arisen. Against the advice of his department, the Minister of Conservation has given the go-ahead to a prospecting licence over 800 hectares of the estuary including the area of the hide. Local conservationists, the Maori

trust board and the Thames District Council have filed for a judicial review of the Minister's decision.



NEW ZEALAND HERALD

The end of one battle but a new one beginning? Committee member Keith Purnell and fellow workers finish off work on the boardwalk.