

## Island restoration in the north



MICHAEL WINCH

*Far North members at work revegetating Motupapa Island.*

THE FAR NORTH branch has begun the task of revegetating Motupapa or Cocked Hat Island with local native species. The five-hectare island is near the mouth of the Kerikeri Inlet in the Bay of Islands, and was purchased by the Department of Conservation a few years ago.

The island had been totally cleared, and at one stage had goats on it. Today only remnants of native vegetation remain, scattered around the island foreshores.

The first plantings of pohutukawa, flax, coprosma and other shrubs have survived the dry northern summer, and will be extended this year. Branch members have also installed water collection containers.

The project will recreate both plant and animal habitat. Once initial plantings are established, a number of coastal species of limited distribution or threatened status such as coastal maire, tawapou and bindweed will be introduced.

## Torlesse Range

FOREST AND BIRD'S proposal for a Torlesse Range conservation park was given a boost recently by a group of enthusiastic members from the North Canterbury Branch.

Thirty people led by field officer Mike Harding spent a weekend exploring the tussock grasslands and scree slopes of the proposed park, finding several species of rare scree plants and spotting native falcon and a flock of kea.

Threats posed to parts of the area from introduced broom and self-sown pine trees were

very apparent and members enthusiastically removed wilding pines originating from plantings several kilometres away.

The field trip has inspired members to once again lobby local politicians and councillors for the full protection of the Torlesse Range and to encourage DoC to pursue the proposal with greater haste. Despite a comprehensive report by Forest and Bird and persistent pressure, little progress has been made on the proposal.



MIKE HARDING

*Members amid the tussock grasses and scree slopes of the Torlesse Range.*

## What on earth?

IN CHRISTCHURCH, Forest and Bird has taken to the airwaves. Since September last year it has worked with Epicentre, the Department of Conservation, and a loose network of Canterbury environmental organisations to produce a weekly television programme called "What on Earth".

The idea for a regular programme to cover "green" issues and places often over-looked by the mainstream media came from Janet Holm, a long-time clean air campaigner, Forest and Bird member, and one of the founders of Christchurch's environment centre. Canterbury TV agreed and staff have been generous with encouragement, support and practical help with film editing and occasional filming.

Topics featured to date include art in the environment, the benefits of marine reserves, the birdlife of the Avon-Heathcote estuary, urban and rural recycling schemes, a Maori perspective on Riccarton Bush, and the use and misuse of rainforest timber.

The venture into "access style television" and coming to grips with turning a bright idea into a watchable ten-minute programme has meant a steep learning curve for all the volunteers involved. Interviewing, script writing, on-air presentation and general media skills have been greatly sharpened as a result, especially among those who had never before handled a video camera.

The range of groups involved in producing programmes, from the Historic Places Trust and the North Canterbury Conservation

Board to Marine Watch, has also helped build useful personal contacts and links between individuals and

organisations.

The ten-minute programme screens each Tuesday on Canterbury TV.



*Members outside West Auckland's Tai Haruru Lodge after a recent successful working bee. They tidied the grounds, constructed steps and replaced furniture. The lodge, close to Piha Beach, is very popular (see Directory for details) and surplus income from its operation is used for branch conservation work.*