

Conservation on the world-wide web

Over the last 10 years conservationists across the globe have spent less and less time in the field observing and enjoying nature and more time at desks using their computers to defend nature. With the development of the worldwide web, this trend has escalated and some say has become an unhealthy computer obsession.

Computers certainly aren't the most environmentally friendly invention, with their built-in obsolescence and massively increasing collective electricity consumption. They are, however, an amazing tool for finding and sharing information, and for communicating with conservationists and scientists across the globe. Now, at the 'click of the mouse', you can rapidly research an environmental issue, monitor media stories on the environment, check progress on conservation campaigns almost anywhere in the world, then lobby your local MP by email.

The Internet is a boon for activism as it encourages interaction and opens up communication channels between people and organizations not previously possible. In New Zealand, many submissions on the Government's West Coast forest logging proposals were made by email. People could

readily check out the proposals then click over to the Forest and Bird web site and access the Society's views and submissions on the subject. Forest and Bird provided an email submission form on our web site making submission writing far less of a chore. Children, too, can benefit, with fact sheets on endangered species readily available from Forest and Bird or the Department of Conservation (www.doc.govt.nz). Here are some interesting sites to visit on the web:

- For native bird calls visit www.bigjude.com/BIRDSONG/Goodmorning.html. At the click of a button you can hear the dawn chorus on Little Barrier or the calls of kakapo, tui, kiwi, morepork, saddleback and others.

- If South Island high country conservation interests you, try www.publicaccessnewzealand.org. It's an interesting site with information on the high-country pastoral-lease tenure review process — also useful maps of the high country leases and detailed information on issues such as the Queen's chain and public roads.

- Fired up and want to send off an email to the Minister of

Lands encouraging him to create high-country conservation parks? Then get his email address from the main government site

www.executive.govt.nz. From here you can click on to the Prime Minister's statement on goals and priorities for 1999-2002. You will be surprised and pleased to learn that one of the key goals is to 'safeguard indigenous biodiversity by protecting habitats and controlling introduced pests'.

- Want to see how other countries cope with alien weeds and pests? Key in 'alien pests' into your search engine and discover sites such as

www.botany.hawaii.edu/botany/news/silent.htm. Read horrific tales of Hawaii's battles to prevent the arrival of even more pests which 'threaten our environment, lifestyle and livelihood'.

- For a seriously challenging (and depressing) view of the future, try www.dieoff.com.

Hosted by cyberworld's most well known eco-activist, Jay Hanson, this site contains absorbing material on subjects such as the end of cheap oil, the sustainability of human society, and global warming. For the latest on global warming, Britain's Hadley Climate

Centre has an important recent report (www.meto.gov.uk/sec5/sec5pg1.html) and the NBC's page provides a comprehensive overview (www.msnbc.com/news/GLOBALWARMING_Front.asp).

- Looking now for an influential quote for your next letter to the Prime Minister? Try www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speeches where Prince Charles's speeches on the environment can be found. In one of them he gets inspiration from 'a short walk in the old growth forests of New Zealand's West Coast'.

- For some hopeful images of nature, to reassure yourself that beauty and wonder survive still, go to www.africam.com for updated images of a water hole in a South African nature reserve. If you are lucky you may see 'live elephants, monkeys, buffalo, giraffes or antelopes'. Try the highlights if you don't strike it lucky.

- End your web browsing with a visit to Forest and Bird's site at www.forest-bird.org.nz and click through to www.kiwirecovery.org.nz for a great kiwi screen saver and a kiwi recovery email postcard. — Kevin Smith, conservation director, Forest and Bird.

STEINER's Rocky S gives you the eyes of an eagle

Rocky S 10x42 and 8x42

Close-up focus

- ◆ Revolutionary focus distance
Rocky S 8x42: 1,70m
Rocky S 10x42: 1,80m



Lightweight

- ◆ Latest materials technology for lightest weight
Rocky S 8x42: 695g
Rocky S 10x42: 715g

Penetrator® High Contrast Optics

- ◆ Penetrator High Contrast Optics bring out maximum resolution

STEINER
GERMANY
Right up close

Contact: Ian R Little Ltd
Phone 03-3667-622, Fax 03-3793-962
email: irl@irl.co.nz