

birds including the Matuku or Bittern. The Matuku are so rare they have the highest New Zealand conservation threat ranking -Nationally critical- which is higher than Blue duck/Whio (Nationally vulnerable) and North Island Brown Kiwi (Nationally Vulnerable). Nationally critical is the same conservation threat status allocated to Kakapo. Matuku is the rarest heron in the world and it is estimated that the population in New Zealand today is only 750-800 birds.

The report gives suggestions

on how to enhance our habitats to attract some of these rare birds. Pest control is obviously a

MUST if we want to bring back

and sustain a Matuku population in the catchment. Some of the suggestions have already been implemented.

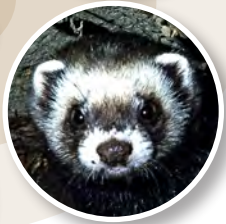
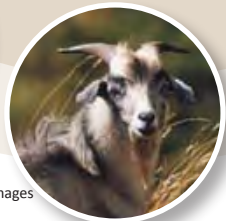


Pest control :

Our pest control effort has been rewarded in 2016 by 113 hedgehogs, 10 possums, 77 rats, 11 weasels, 13 stoats, 1 ferret and 13 cats. The scheme continues with more traps being laid out recently. 5000 goats have been culled since 2014...an amazing tally! Thank you to all the landowners who dedicate their time to this important activity.



**ANIMAL
PESTS**



Images courtesy of Nga Manu Images



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Image courtesy of Nga Manu Images

Summer programme :



This summer has been busy for Oha Manuel (Community Engagement Officer) and the Whangawehi team who have delivered 6 guided walks and several well supported community events including a Mountain bike ride and displays at the Mahia market and A&P Show.

The feedback received has been extremely encouraging and we have noticed that the public want to be more engaged. A big thank you to Adventure Wairoa who have helped organise the Mountain Bike Ride and in particular, the kid's challenge.

Whangawehi Whare :

On the 26th of January, the Whangawehi Committee gathered along the river to attend its first meeting in the newly built whare. This shelter, built along the proposed walkway, will allow the community to reconnect with the river and its native forest. This building was made possible thanks to the support of Carters Wairoa, land owners Pat and Sue O'Brien and DOC.



Visit to the Cape Sanctuary



In November, The Whangawehi Catchment Management Group had the privilege to visit the Cape Sanctuary (Hawkes Bay) to learn more from a famous conservation initiative. Campbell Leckie and his team guided us through and gave us an insight into the work that has been done. The visit was inspirational and gave us all an idea of what could be achieved at Whangawehi.

Water monitoring :

Water and fish monitoring is an ongoing activity for Arthur Bowen. Overall, the water quality has improved since the stream was fenced off up to Pat and Sue O'Brien's property. The mahingakai is returning in force at Whangawehi with White bait observed in numbers for the first time in the forest, the Okepuha stream is being recolonised by large numbers of young eels (elvers). Water cress is also growing in abundance on the water edges.



School programme:

The school programme is starting again with a new exciting curriculum developed by the community and new school Principal Aan Hock. A big thank you to the school team and all our volunteers who offer their time and expertise for the betterment of our tamariki/whanau and taio. If you want to keep up with their hands on activities check out whangawehi.com.

Up coming events:

- Farming with technology expo (A&P Show Grounds) Sand 6 of April 2017
- Community planting week end:

Our next community planting day is scheduled for the 27th of May 2017, postponement date will be the 3d of June 2017. Venue and details will be provided closer to the time on the blog. We always enjoy your company.

Summer programme 2018 :

- Guided walks : 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th of January 2018
- Mahia Market : 7th and 14th of January 2018
- Wairoa A&P Show : 20th of January 2018

Wetland enhancement survey:

In November 2016, John Cheyne and Hans Rook (Environmental Consultants) carried out a survey of the Whangawehi Catchment footprint with the idea of enhancing and better connecting the different ecosystems restored. Over the past two-three years, the group has retired 42 ha of riparian margins, 5 ha of bush block and established 135 000 native trees. Pat and Sue O'Brien also retired a network of wetlands (40 ha) 10 years ago which brings the total area to 82 ha. This significant land area should attract and sustain large numbers of rare wetland

