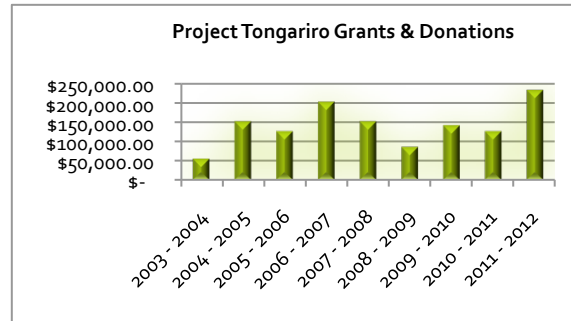


## MAJOR SPONSORS AND FUNDERS

Department of Conservation  
Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust  
Pharazyn Charitable Trust  
Huckleberry's Sports & Charitable Society  
Craters of the Moon Charitable Trust  
Sir John Logan Campbell Trust  
Waikato Regional Council  
Ruapehu Alpine Lift Ltd  
Wairakei Golf & Sanctuary



## FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2012

Accounts for Project Tongariro were received from the accountants last week and are attached for your information. This year has been a year of consolidation after the changes we noted at the AGM last year:

- Our new structure with Nina Manning as 50% Project Coordinator was in effect for a year and has worked well, although it gets very busy at certain times of the year. Nina took maternity leave from October 2011 and was replaced very capably by Kiri Te Wano. After a six month break, Nina took on the role of chief fundraiser in March 2012 and this has proved to be very worthwhile with 2011/12 grants and donations being the highest for many years.
- Projects such as Waimarino Wetland – Te Mataupuna; Lake Rotopounamu benefited. Fantastic volunteer work on the nursery, trap monitoring, plantings also continued.
- Grants, donations and fundraising were way ahead of our prior year and Nina Manning, Karen Williams, Kim Manunui and executive committee should be congratulated for this.
- Change to new financial accounting system Xero which has allowed better flexibility for us to run reports, while Kiri manages day to day operations.

This year a surplus of \$37,041 was made compared with \$24,025 last year.

Financial Performance	2012	2011	Comment
Income	287,446	213,052	Includes Stock (Books and Cost of Sales)
Expenditure	250,405	189,027	Expenses schedule attached
Net Surplus	\$37,041	\$24,025	
Balance Sheet	2012	2011	Comment
Current Assets	154,685	99,771	Accounts Receivable at year end of \$69K
Current Liabilities	21,028	3,138	Accounts Payable at year end
Net Current Assets	133,657	96,633	
Non Current Assets	8,553	9,147	Change for depreciation only
Investments	133,821	128,212	
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$276,031</b>	<b>\$233,992</b>	
Trust Capital			
Reserves	83,187	77,414	Memorial Fund
Retained Earnings	192,844	156,577	
<b>Total Trust Capital</b>	<b>\$276,031</b>	<b>\$233,992</b>	

Project Tongariro is undertaking a number of new activities to generate extra funding and will continue to seek sponsorship for major projects.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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# ANNUAL REPORT

July 2011 – June 2012  
Tongariro Natural History Society



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 28<sup>TH</sup> AGM

Project Tongariro has enjoyed yet another busy year and has been active across the board in our four key target areas of education, biodiversity, history and recreation. The launch and success of the society's Tongariro Alpine Crossing 'Pocket Ranger' Smartphone App has been much talked about and downloaded this year. Local businesses have come on board and supported us as well as local area partners. Funds raised go directly back into improving the product (we've just launched an iPad version) and to visitor information services at the Whakapapa Visitor Centre (an upgrade of the old 3-D topo map is planned).

Marketing manager, Kim Manunui headed the App project team and continues to drive a wide range of projects including the 'adopt a hectare' campaign at Rotopounamu. With Kim's contacts and ingenuity our profile continues to grow with big articles in Wilderness Magazine and the NZ Herald and, hot off the press, our TAC App is a finalist for the New Zealand Innovators Award 2012 in the category of 'Innovation in Marketing and Communications'. Great publicity for us! The society's website and e-newsletters are very popular and the numbers on our supporters database continue to grow. Thanks to Kim, we're now on Facebook too.

Our new coordinator Nina Manning had a very successful first year in the job, assisting to bring in more than \$200,000 of funding in the 2011-12 financial year – and this despite the background of the Global Financial Crisis. Nina took maternity leave last October and Kiri Te Wano was appointed in her place. Kiri had a busy summer working with two interns in their second year of study at Waikato University. Jenny Hayward and Kelly Carswell worked alongside DOC staff in the field. It was the second time Taupo's Craters of the Moon Trust has assisted with \$10,000 of funding – a win/win for the park and for the kiwi students who get valuable hands-on experience working in the real world of conservation. Kiri also employed and supervised contractors to carry out a visitor survey of the Tongariro Crossing. iPads were used by interview subjects during the survey process.

With our DOC partners, Kiri was also very involved with management of the ongoing work at both Rotopounamu and Te Mataupuna Wetland – the society's key biodiversity projects. We appreciate the ongoing support of regular funders the Pharazyn Trust and Huckleberry's for work at Rotopounamu and were very grateful for \$20,000 of new funding from the Sir John Logan Campbell Trust.

At Te Mataupuna Wetland, the Waikato Regional Council and Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust (WCEET) funded \$80,000 of work. This is a multi-year arrangement aimed at willow removal with the goal of improving water quality and biodiversity. Funding from WCEET also enabled the society to deploy traps for predator control from Waimarino to Motuoa. With the injection of hands-on work on the ground from many local volunteers led by former DOC ecologist Nick Singers, enthusiasm for this project is growing as is its public profile.

March 2012 saw the launch of a new historical restoration project in conjunction with DOC and RAL. The plan is to restore an old stone motor shed for the original No 2 ski lift associated with the pioneering years of Ruapehu Alpine Lifts in the mid 1950s. Called the Stone Sanctuary project, we have set a \$100,000 fundraising target to assist with the internal refit of the building and interpretation on site. The project is beginning to attract donations from interested individuals via the RAL website.

Major funding resulted from an opportunity that came our way via DOC. Project Tongariro was the lucky beneficiary of a PGA Charity Golf Tournament at Wairakei Golf + Sanctuary held at Taupo in March. This is a real bonus for the society with \$25,000 earmarked for projects in the 12/13 year at Rotopounamu and another \$25,000 to go into an initiative called "Greening Taupo" aimed at bringing birdlife and increasing biodiversity in the Taupo area.

All this, set against a backdrop of major changes in DOC, the reconfiguring of DOC Turangi with the creation of a head office for the new Taranaki/Whanganui/Tongariro conservancy in Taupo, has made for an exciting year. Project Tongariro is likely to move into the old Fisheries offices at DOC in Turangi shortly. As well, when new DOC offices are built in Taupo in 2013 there will be space allocated for us along with other community groups in a shared Associates' room.

Looking forward to another successful year.

Karen Williams  
President



## POCKET RANGER



Over 4000 users of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing downloaded the Pocket Ranger last year. The app has been the subject of much media attention thus enhancing Project Tongariro profile. The app has also proven to be a successful fundraising tool with over \$10,000 being generated by advertisers on the app. Being announced a finalist in the NZ Innovators Awards has been a major accolade and a proud achievement. The GPS and iPad versions are now released and Project Tongariro is looking forward the upcoming walking season and utilising the app as a way to engage local businesses and the community with conservation in Tongariro National Park.

## MEMORIAL AWARDS

Since 1991, the Society has awarded annual grants to young scientists undertaking research in Tongariro National Park.

Kirsty Myron received a grant for her research entitled *Pittosporum kirkii*: autecology and conservation of an endemic epiphytic shrub. Yvonne Taura received a grant for her research on the effects of willow and willow control on the wetland aquatic invertebrates.

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

During the period from 1 July 2011 to 31 July 2012, members and volunteers contributed approximately 3264 hours, that's over 400 volunteer days through various activities. Volunteer days are valued at \$150 per day to cover time, materials, petrol and other resources. On this basis, Project Tongariro volunteers contributed the equivalent of \$260,000 during 2011/12. Thank you so much. We can't do it without you.

Rotopounamu Restoration	137
Te Matapuna Restoration	27
Plant nursery	8
Planting	19
Oruatua Pest Control	10
Taionua Viaduct	20
Bird counts	5
Kiwi Egg Transport	18
Events	82
DOC Summer Programme	10
Recreation	16

## ADOPT A HECTARE – RESTORINGROTOPOUNAMU

The "Adopt a Hectare" initiative is steadily building in momentum with 60 hectares adopted by the community so far. The Rotopounamu walk is a great attraction to travelers and the local community with more than 11,000 visitors per annum and is a fantastic flagship project for Project Tongariro. Hectare by hectare, the birdsong is returning to this amazing piece of NZ biodiversity.

## MEMBERSHIP

	11/12	10/11
<b>Members</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>287</b>
<b>Supporters</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>514</b>

## WEBSITE STATS

	11/12	10/11
<b>Unique Visitors</b> (average per month)	<b>1200</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>Newsletter Send</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>670</b>
<b>Newsletter Readership</b> (average per newsletter)	<b>35%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Facebook Fans</b>	<b>160</b>	-

## MEMBERS' FIELD TRIPS



Another fantastic range of field trips was offered to the membership this year and all had a good time.

Whakapapa Ski Day (Sept 2011), Kaimanawa Wild Horse Country (Oct 2011), Tukino Tops (Feb 2012), Bridge to Nowhere Mountain Bike Ride (March 2012), Sunset Red Crater Trip (April 2012) and Ark in the Park (May 2012).

## BIODIVERSITY INTERNS

The objective of the Project Tongariro Intern programme is to provide the opportunity for undergraduate environmental management students to learn hands-on skills and gain practical experiences in an environment such as Tongariro National Park, alongside Project Tongariro volunteers and staff from the Department of Conservation. This intern programme really wouldn't be possible without the help from Craters of the Moon Trust and we are delighted to have their commitment to the Intern Programme for the next two summers.

Kelly Carswell and Jenny Hayward joined the team at Project Tongariro and DOC and both Kelly and Jenny proved to be excellent representatives of Waikato University. They spent time scheduled in and around Mt Ruapehu gaining valuable experience in ecosystem management.

Kelly's placement report was on the 'assessment of the baiting of rats and the resulting trend of bird population at Rotopounamu' while Jenny's placement report was on the 'assessment as to whether intensive pest control allows beech mistletoes to recruit'. Both reports are available in full to download on the Project Tongariro website.



## KEY PLAYERS

Sir Tumu te Heuheu DCNZM Patron

Karen Williams  
Dave Bamford

President  
Past President

Frank Katavich  
Roy Dench  
Mark Davies  
Maureen Smith

Shirley Potter  
Peter McNaughton  
Paul Green

### Staff

Kiri Te Wano – Project Coordinator  
Nina Manning – Funding Coordinator  
Kim Manunui - Marketing Coordinator

## MAJOR RESTORATION PROJECTS

### Mt Pihanga – Rotopounamu

Diphacinone, 0.05g/kg, Pest Off cereal pellets was the chosen bait again this year for the rodent control operation having proven very successful in the 2010/11 season. The bait has once again controlled rats to target levels through most of the bird-breeding season this year. The rodent control programme had some challenges with a number of trees coming down and pigs deciding the bait in the bait stations were a good source of food. Five-minute bird counts were undertaken again by DOC staff and Project Tongariro Interns, with a total of 248 counts completed. Significant increases in rifleman, silvereye and whitehead numbers were seen, showing that they have experienced another good breeding season. The kakariki population continues to steadily increase and Rotopounamu is proving to be a stronghold for this species. Wax tags were used to measure possum abundance within the 53oha management block, and the equivalent of less than 2% RTCI was recorded. Therefore no possum management was undertaken this year. Project Tongariro volunteers continued to check the 50 traps set around the walking track, killing 19 stoats and 79 rats. Due to a reduction in staff numbers for the year, no threatened species monitoring was undertaken, although these surveys were identified as ideal Project Tongariro intern projects. Similarly, no weed control was undertaken along the lake margins, although heather was targeted on the Pihanga summit. Project Tongariro members and interns put a lot of effort in to the Rotopounamu project volunteering a lot of time running tracking tunnels, checking and clearing traps and anything else that was asked of them. Their skill base is expanding every year and their friendly faces are great advocates for Project Tongariro and conservation in general while carrying out the work.



Overall the 2011/12 season was a great success and the future looks positive for the Rotopounamu Project. The 2012/13 season will see another great year of Project Tongariro working with the Department of Conservation to restore the ecosystem of the Mt Pihanga – Rotopounamu area.

### Te Matapuna Wetland Restoration

In 2005, Project Tongariro alongside the Department of Conservation initiated the Te Matapuna Wetland Restoration Project. The project is now managed according to the Te Matapuna Wetland Strategy (2010-2015) and associated Operational Plan (2010-2015). These guiding documents identified a key overall vision for the wetland project as well as a set of biodiversity and community/ education goals and objectives for the project. Although the vision is to restore the whole of Te Matapuna wetland, in partnership with Tangata Whenua, initially weed management and restoration work is focusing on Public Conservation Land from Oruatua to the Waiotaka River.



Four contractors worked on the Te Matapuna Wetland project this year on weed management and restoration works. Approximately 45.8 ha of priority weeds were controlled by drill/ poison and spraying from a boat / vehicle / knapsack. Weeds controlled included Grey Willow (*Salix cinerea*) Crack Willow (*Salix fragilis*) and Pseudo Acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). Of the 45.8 ha area controlled 64% (29.1 ha) of the work was re-working blocks previously controlled and 36% (16.7ha) was new work. Work continued on the control of Taiwan Cherry (*Prunus campanulata*) at Oruatua Conservation Area. Maintenance of the riparian restoration areas at the Waimarino and Waiotaka Rivers continued this year (5.2 ha) including releasing of native plants and the control of general weeds. PT volunteers, DOC staff and contractors also planted another 1500 native wetland species at the two riparian restoration sites this year.

This year PT members found and controlled a climbing spindleberry (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) which is on the weeds surveillance list, in the operational plan. Climbing spindleberry is an aggressive invader that threatens native bush, forestry and open areas. It climbs over vegetation, smothering and killing underlying plants. PT volunteers were also involved in a number of community wetland tasks and activities including a community planting day. PT members also initiated and started implementing the Te Matapuna wetland (Waimarino) Predator Control project, with the placement of DOC 200 traps from the Waimarino River to Motuoapa on public conservation land. The aim of the project is to protect wetland fauna and showcase and learn more about wetland predator control.

## CONSERVATOR'S COLUMN

Firstly, I must congratulate Project Tongariro for an amazing year of significant achievements. The list is great, however, I must mention a few that I am as proud of as you are and which also demonstrate our partnership. The Pocket Ranger Phone App, the launch of the Wairakei Corridor/Greening Taupo Project including the fund-raising event at the Wairakei Golf Sanctuary, the ongoing support gained from the broader national business community for the Rotopounamu Restoration programme, the Stone Sanctuary Restoration Project and the ongoing restoration work with landowners and the community at Te Matapuna Wetland being key projects. These are the flagships of our partnership and I just want to affirm our commitment to working closely with Project Tongariro and the community on these.

The Department and Project Tongariro have come along way over the last 28 years. We have an exciting future working together. This is my first year as Conservator for the new Tongariro Whanganui Taranaki Conservancy and it has been a challenging one for me and my staff with the new enlarged scale and integration of the business of the two previous conservancies. We have also been going through internal changes to our structure and have more to come. We have designed the new conservancy structure and team based in Taupo around a greater externally focused team working more with others. Our work with Project Tongariro has clearly demonstrated to me that working more with community groups around our special places is the right model for more conservation across New Zealand.

I just want to applaud Project Tongariro for the drive and enthusiasm that your team and executive bring to our partnership and which at times is quite challenging from where I am sitting. You push us at times and that is a good thing. I look forward to working more with you all in the coming year.

Damian Coutts – Conservator - Tongariro Whanganui Taranaki Conservancy