



TONGARIRO NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

July 2012 - June 2013

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 29TH AGM

This has been a transformational year in many ways for our organisation.

The change in membership focus has raised our profile so that we are being recognised externally as a significant conservation group in the Central North Island. Many people now receive our newsletters or follow our web or facebook site. At the same time, the launch of Greening Taupō has occurred in a remarkably short time span and our cornerstone projects of ecological restoration at Rotopounamu-Pihanga and Te Matapuna Wetlands have expanded considerably. They are now significant projects requiring daily input by our staff and regular feedback or direction by our Executive.

We are fortunate to have a talented and committed team of part time staff or contractors. They are able to drive the projects but there is still need to have a good governance structure in place to provide support and direction. This is exasperated by our organisation not having a Manager or Chief Executive. As President I have found it necessary to attend many meetings and to be in daily contact with our team. I have received good support from the Executive and I also want to acknowledge the great ecological advice role played by Nick Singers who has given us 4 hours free advice each week but who has regularly provided considerably more time than this! Kiri, Nick and I have been able to provide a good mix of skills in managing projects like Pihanga-Rotopounamu and Te Matapuna with DOC. Similarly Nick and I have worked to support Nina with the management of Greening Taupō. I also want to acknowledge the accident to Kiri and all those who helped so much in her recovery and in filling gaps in our work. Special thanks to Nicky Hughes (Shorty) who completed a complex Accident Investigation Report and to Shirley Potter for leading our implementation of the Recommendations.



Because the key projects have all increased in scale and are all very operational, I have been concerned at our ability to communicate with the Executive in an appropriate and timely way. Many decisions need to be made outside our two monthly meeting schedule so I appreciate the trust and support of the Executive in allowing this to happen. Often, I can only email information or to seek their views and I realise this is not ideal. Similarly, the only way the organisation can communicate with members is electronically other than at an AGM or informally. This does not mean members should not ask questions and I am always happy to receive an email or take a call.

It has been a most challenging year for our DOC colleagues as they have had to handle a great deal of uncertainty associated with their restructuring. The key positive is that I think we have a great relationship in place with many operational staff [this has improved markedly in recent months] and we can now focus on new relationships with DOC partnership staff, many of whom are just being appointed and will often be new to the Department.

I want to make a special mention of the Summer Programme which is being rebranded Mahi Aroha and will have activities spread throughout the year in addition to the focus on the holiday period. It would be great to have another 3-4 Project Tongariro members to help with the programme. The level of involvement would be 2-5 days per year on an ongoing basis and you would need to be relatively fit and have a good general knowledge of the Park and our projects or willing to learn. Interpretation, trip leader and first aid training will be available. If anyone is interested please see me.

I believe the main challenge for Project Tongariro is to strengthen its local membership and support base and to continue to find creative and sustainable funding mechanisms. The strength we currently have is our staff and committed helpers on a vast range of projects. My special thanks to these people.

Regards
Paul

CONSERVATOR'S COLUMN

I congratulate the Project Tongariro team on their achievements over the last year. The progress they have made and the increased effort and growth in conservation that has been achieved in the corner stone projects of Mt Pihanga / Rotopounamu, Te Matapuna Wetland Restoration is impressive. Well done. If I was a stoat, rat or willow inside these project areas I would be worried about my future viability. The work that has been carried out on building stronger relationships around these projects with iwi, hapu, adjoining landowners and the broader community is significant. Over time, this will bring greater support and strength to these projects, and as they continue to be successful the benefits will be shared.

The other project that I would like to acknowledge is Greening Taupō. This new initiative is in its early days, but what I have observed is a totally new approach to how Project Tongariro are both planning and managing the stakeholder and community engagement in the projects governance and management. This is very exciting. I am pleased the department is part of this. I pledge our ongoing support and commitment to this work into the future and thank you for taking the lead, as you are the right people to do that and your approach will open more doors than we could.

As you know, the last year has been a difficult time for the department and our staff. I acknowledge that at times we have been missing in action over this time. I need to thank your team for not letting our distraction with our internal reorganisation get in the way of your great work and progress on the ground. We are now on the other side of that process. What we have designed and built with our new organisational model and structure is an organisation designed to work better with partners like Project Tongariro. We have dedicated partnership managers and teams in Tongariro and Taupō, and these teams will be able to work more effectively with you as we go forward together. Our new District Partnership Manager in Tongariro Jono Maxwell and Taupō (current vacant) will be the key contacts and relationship managers going forward. These new teams are being built now and they are open for business with Project Tongariro.

The future looks bright and exciting. Another project that has had some reshaping and a new format this year is the Summer Programme. This is a long term partnership and as with the other cornerstone projects I applaud the greater involvement of iwi, hapu and the community in the design and delivery of this over the coming summer.

It is with regret that this will be my last Conservators comment. With the reorganisation I have moved roles and am now based in the lower North Island as the Director Conservation Services.

I have enjoyed being part of the partnership with Project Tongariro and have used the story of our relationship inside the organisation to help build our new structure so I thank you for showing us how this can be done.

Best wishes for the future as I look on with a large smile, seeing conservation growing with Project Tongariro at the lead.

Kindest regards
Damian Coutts

FIELD TRIPS

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

Saddle Cone Trip (Nov 12), 30th Anniversary Memorial Walk (Dec 12), Boundary Stream Mainland Island and Poutiri Ao O Tane Restoration Project (Feb 13), Bridge to Nowhere MTB Ride at Blue Duck Station (March 13)

WEBSITE STATS

	12/13	11/12	10/11
Unique Visitors (average per month)	1300	1200	500
Newsletter Send	850	780	670
Newsletter Readership (average per newsletter)	38%	35%	31%
Facebook Fans	267	160	N/A

MEMBERSHIP

	12/13	11/12	10/11
Members	266	260	287
Supporters	719	614	514

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Bob & Margaret Stothart	John & Pat Newton
Edna Williams	Paul Green
Evelyn Cooper	Roy & Annette Dench
Graeme Bryant	Shirley Geering
Ian White	

MEMORIAL AWARDS

Since 1991 the Tongariro National History Society has been awarding education grants to students to support their research and work in Tongariro National Park. This year the following received grants:

James Cowlyn

The significance of the Volcanic Phenomena; Pyroclastic Flows

Shaun Eves

The Timing of Past Glaciation in Tongariro National Park

Jessie Prebble

The Taxonomy of the rare tag-named entity, *Myosotis* aff. *pygmaea* "Volcanic Plateau"

Erin Hill

Psychological and Health Benefits for Users of Tongariro National Park

KEY PLAYERS

Sir Tumu te Heuheu DCNZM Patron

Paul Green	President
Karen Williams	Past President
Frank Katavich	Shirley Potter
Roy Dench	Peter McNaughton
Maureen Smith	Dave Bamford

Staff

Kiri Te Wano - Project Coordinator
Nina Manning - Funding Coordinator/ Greening Taupō Coordinator
Kim Manunui - Marketing Coordinator

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

During the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 members and volunteers contributed approximately 4,623 hours, that's over 578 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 \$87,000 during 2012/13. Thank you so much. It can't be done without you.

Rotopounamu	69	Kiwi Egg Transport	18
Te Matapuna Restoration	40	Events	88
Plant Nursery	4	DOC Summer Programme	18
Greening Taupō	101	Recreation	8
Oruatua Pest Control	35	Executive Board	145
Taionua Viaduct	19	Nick Singers	21
Bird Counts	12		



BIODIVERSITY INTERNS

The Biodiversity Internship Programme is 3 1/2 - 4 month programme that runs over the summer holiday break. Project Tongariro has a agreement with Waikato University where they provide two 'Interns' that as part of their degree they have to complete 'work placements'.

To fund this programme Project Tongariro gratefully receives a grant from Craters of the Moon Trust who have funded this for the past 5 years, and this coming year is the final year.

The Biodiversity programme provides the students a practical 'hands on' conservation experience. They get to work alongside DOC staff actually doing the work in the field, and they actively contribute both to Project Tongariro, DOC and other conservation community projects.

Project Tongariro is very lucky to be able to rent Kaye Rabart's holiday house in Turangi to house these students, and some of the grant funding provides the students with a living allowance.

At the end of November 2012 Anthony Coventry and Nathan Frost became Project Tongariro interns. These two guys were brilliant as they were motivated, energetic, interested and willing to go the extra mile. As part of their time they had to produce a research project. Anthony completed his research based project on our Te Matapuna Wetlands project, looking at the presence/ absence of wetland bird species using experimental automatic bird recorders. Nathan completed his project based on our 'sister' conservation group the Pukawa Wildlife Trust's patch of bush. He also looked at the presence/ absence of birds in the Pukawa and Whareroa forests, using the experimental automatic bird recorders. Both Nathan and Anthony have done previous work placements and both have expressed that Project Tongariro has been their best experience so far! They have both achieved great results in for their projects and are spreading the word about what a great organisation Project Tongariro is to work for!



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MAJOR RESTORATION PROJECTS

Te Matapuna Wetland Restoration

In 2005, Project Tongariro alongside DOC initiated the Te Mapauna 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. At this stage, along with our partners – DOC & Tangata Whenua, we are concentrating our efforts on Public Conservation Land from Oruatua to the Waiotaka River, and increasingly, we are starting to work on private Maori owned land adjacent to the Public Conservation Land.

Maintenance of the riparian restoration areas at the Waimarino and Wiotaka Rivers continued this year (6.7ha) including releasing (weeding) of native plants and control of general weeds. This was completed by a mixture of Project Tongariro Volunteers, DOC staff and contractors. Over 1900 native wetland plants were planted at the two riparian restoration sites this year by Project Tongariro volunteers and DOC staff on three separate planting days.



An exciting project is also underway which saw discussions start between Project Tongariro, DOC and the Department of Corrections resulting in a Memorandum of Understanding for the development of a nursery on prison land. The nursery will see 10,000 plants per annum grown to be planted in restoration areas within the Oruatua to Waiotaka area. This has exciting implications for relations with local Hapu and in the way of education, employment and for local Hapu to exercise kaitiakitanga over their respective lands.

Nick Singers continued his amazing volunteer support in the form of the continuation of organising the seed collection and growing on of plants in our nursery, which supplied plants for the three planting days. He also completed the preparation of the planting areas by spraying and laying out the plants for planting. Lyn & Noel Thomas continued with their valuable volunteer time organising a team to maintain and check the traps that were put in late 2011 around the edge of the Waimarino Wetland. This has been a successful operation with a wait-list of want-to-be trap checkers and an impressive list of kills. The aim of the trapping project is to protect wetland fauna, advocacy and to learn more about wetland predator control.

The Te Matapuna Wetland project was kindly funded by Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust (WCEET) and DOC core funding. This coming year (2013/2014) is the final year of WCEET's 5 year funding, so plans are underway to apply for the next 5 years of funding from this Trust.

Greening Taupō

Greening Taupō was launched on the 22nd June 2013 in conjunction with Contact Energy. Over 300 people attended the community planting day and 3000 plants were put in the ground. What a way to kick Greening Taupō off!

The concept for Greening Taupō arose as a result of the vision of and discussions between Project Tongariro, the Department of Conservation and Wairakei Golf & Sanctuary who believed that a collaborative organisation could take conservation to the next level in the Taupo community. The goal is to replicate the intensive conservation work occurring within the Wairakei Golf & Sanctuary into the surrounding community. Project Tongariro decided to utilise the funding from the charity golf tournament towards a feasibility study for 'Greening Taupō' and to appoint a coordinator for 12 hours per week for two years.



**GREENING
TAUPŌ**

*Kia tangi ai te tini parirau
to hear the sound of many wings*



Nina Manning was appointed in May 2013 as the Greening Taupō Coordinator and with help from Kim and Sarah from The Business Studio, Greening Taupō's website, Facebook, marketing strategy, branding and key media partnerships were completed and went live for the launch.

Greening Taupō is an opportunity for residents and business to participate in a community conservation initiative where the goal is in the next 5 years to plant 250,000 trees. Key partners from the likes of Taupo Native Plant Nursery, Department of Conservation, Forest and Bird, Bike Taupo, Huka Honey Hive & The Radio Network have been secured.

A special thanks to Nick Singers for his vision and hard work getting this project to where it is now. Nick continues to be hugely supportive and has been fundamental in moving this project forward.

Mt Pihanga / Rotopounamu Restoration

The Mt Pihanga / Rotopounamu project was established in 2003 and is community focused with integrated pest management and advocacy at its core. The project is managed according to the Rotopounamu Management Plan (2008) which identifies 9 biodiversity objectives. The Strategic Management Plan (2009) sets out how to deliver and achieve these biodiversity outcomes.

The 2012/2013 year saw Project Tongariro (in collaboration with DOC) make a decisive decision to take advantage of the planned Animal Health Board's Pest Animal Control. Monitoring at the end of the 2011/2012 season proved that the pest management achieved to that point contributed to a significant abundance of bird life in the Rotopounamu forest, so it was decided that Project Tongariro could forgo undertaking pest control for the 2012/2013 summer (without losing the gains made) and target financial resources at the 2013/2014 year. It was decided that these resources would be used to achieve Objectives 2 and 3 of the of the Management plan by extending mustelid control over 1200 hectares and rat control over 500 hectares. The Animal Health Board undertook the 1080 poison drop in June 2013.

The work completed this year included;

- A small amount of weed control – Heather was removed from around the Rotopounamu Lake edge.
- Tracking tunnels were completed to monitor pests before and after the 1080 operation
- New Interpretative signs were finally installed. These were done in collaboration with Project Tongariro and DOC and look fabulous.
- Windfalls were cleared off the public walking track
- The annual bird monitoring took place in early February with the help of the Biodiversity Interns
- The Biodiversity Interns also undertook bait station maintenance throughout Rotopounamu
- Heather Morrison was welcomed into the lead DOC role of Ranger in charge of the Rotopounamu area, and she continues to contribute greatly in an enthusiastic, positive and friendly way.
- Work started on the scoping study of an Educational Smart Phone App for Lake Rotopounamu.
- A funding strategy was established to identify funding sources and identify which objectives are and are not being achieving – and how to remedy this.
- Planning for the extension of the existing stoat and mustelid trapping network.
- The purchasing of an extra 200 DOC200 traps for the extension project.

Nick Singers continues to contribute greatly to this restoration project, and has helped drive the change in the direction towards achieving the biodiversity objectives set out in the Management Plan. His technical knowledge and volunteer support has allowed for changes in the in the approach that are giving large economies to our resources. Paul Green, President has also contributed greatly in the way of strengthening the relationship with DOC and his strategic planning and overview skills, experience and knowledge are invaluable. The work completed this year was kindly sponsored by Pacific Development Trust – for the purchase of the DOC200 traps, and core DOC funding.



Adopt a Hectare

Restoring Rotopounamu
Hectare by Hectare



Oruatua Restoration

Late last year Project Tongariro was successful in gaining a Taupo Rotary community funding grant. \$500 was received for the purchase of DOC 200 traps to extend the trapping network in the Oruatua Conservation area.

As the area encompasses some permanent wetland, traps were purchased at a competitive rate through Pete Devlin and the Waterfowl Enhancement Trust.

This project started in 2007 with two enthusiastic Society members looking to reduce pests around their home. Shirley Potter and Karen Ardin (Ardy) are running the trap network, with some help from Collette Taylor. The trap lines were initially a collection of homemade boxes and self-funded rat traps. In 2010 funding was received from Environment Waikato which enabled the purchase of 50 DOC 200s and a more formal trap network to be set up.

Anecdotal evidence from locals tells of increased native bird numbers. The experience from spending time in the bush has shown regrowth of natives, such as five finger, pate and mahoe which was devoured by possums previously. Kereru have been seen in greater numbers (still not large however), also fantails and whiteheads. Whiteheads and kereru are regular visitors to the garden in Tuki St, something that had never been seen before this trapping began. As time allows, they are killing as many pest plants as they can, namely hawthorn, berberis, himalayan honeysuckle, cotoneaster, willows, pines etc.

Collette Taylor, a local resident and teacher at Hilltop School, has 4 DOC 200s in the reserve backing on to Heuheu Parade which complement the trapping. In 2010, Collette's William Pike Challenge students, known as "The Pikelettes" raised money to buy these traps and they also worked on removing a patch of tradescantia from the reserve.

Currently there is a group of 80 weedbusters from Hilltop School carrying out some study work, including a large pest plant removal project. It's very exciting to have such a big group helping in "our patch" making a huge difference. It was saddening as on their first visit that many of the children had no idea what a native plant was and what a pest plant was. That ignorance is a thing of the past now and they are educating their parents and others! These wonderful weedbusters have worked incredibly hard clearing a large area of broom and cotoneaster off Oruatua Ave and another patch of tradescantia behind Heuheu Parade. They have already sourced native trees for replanting this season. Take a walk along the DOC track off Oruatua Ave and check out their amazing work.

Happy to report that locals are allowing treatment of invasive pest plants on their property such as flowering cherry, cotoneaster, artillery plant, tradescantia etc.



Year	Cat	Hare	Hedgehog	Possum	Rabbit	Rat	Stoat	Weasel	Total
2007	1	0	0	199	0	23	2	2	227
2008	3	1	6	407	67	30	0	0	514
2009	2	1	13	386	52	35	1	0	490
2010	3	0	8	389	23	63	2	8	496
2011	5	2	3	337	8	160	22	3	540
2012	0	3	6	139	5	140	21	22	339
2013	2	0	8	76	0	70	5	2	16
Total	16	7	44	1933	155	521	53	37	2770

Results for all trapping carried out by Shirley and Ardy from 2007 to July 2013.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2013

The financial statements for Project Tongariro were prepared by DPA associates in Taupo.

Highlights/Challenges

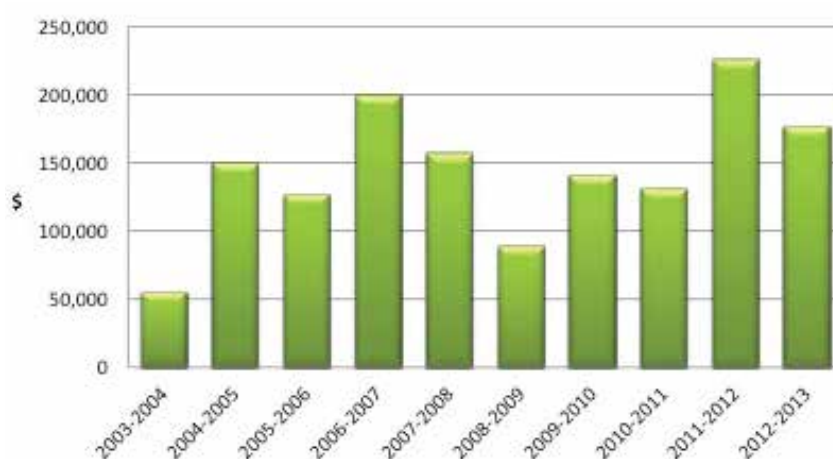
1. Kiri Te Wano has been the Project Tongariro coordinator since our last AGM. Nina Manning our previous coordinator is now working for the Greening Taupō project.
2. Xero financial accounting package has now been in place for the full financial year and we have noticed the improvement in reporting capability and flexibility for both Kiri and the executive committee.
3. Projects such as Waimarino Wetland – Te Mataapuna and Rotopounamu continued to be a main focus. The adopt a hectare donations are contributing to the Rotopounamu pest control tasks. This work would not be possible without the volunteers who have done trap monitoring, planting, nursery work, sign installation and many more tasks.
4. Grants, donations and fundraising were slightly down on the prior year, but it should be noted that;
 - a. Due to the Animal Health Board's planned animal pest control this year, normal level of funding/ grants for the Mt Pihanga / Rotopounamu Restoration Project were not fought. The one grant received from the Pacific and Development Trust went into the planning and implementation to the extension of our trapping network.
 - b. Our facilitation of the Greening Taupō project generated significant sponsorship which might not have been achieved had Project Tongariro not continued their involvement from the Wairakei Course + Sanctuary in the prior year.

This year a surplus of \$57,964 was achieved.

Financial Performance		2013	2012	Comment
Income		\$216,986	\$287,446	Includes Stock (Books and Cost of Sales)
Expenditure		\$159,022	\$250,405	Expenses schedule attached
Net Surplus		\$57,964	\$37,041	
Balance Sheet		2013	2012	Comment
Current Assets		110,381	154,685	Accounts Receivable of \$58k
Current Liabilities		13,046	21,028	Accounts Payable at year end
Net Current Assets		97,335	133,657	
Non Current Assets		16,801	8,553	
Investments		219,860	133,821	
Net Assets		\$333,996	\$276,031	
Trust Capital				
Reserves		83,770	83,187	Memorial Fund
Retained Earnings		250,226	192,844	
Total Trust Capital		\$333,996	\$276,031	

MAJOR SPONSORS AND FUNDERS

Grants and Donations



New Grants

Month	Who	Project	Amount
July 2012	Nigel Taylor Alpine Foundation - Carry over 2011/12	Stone Sanctuary	\$30,000.00
July 2012	Department of Conservation - Conservation awareness	Project Tongariro - overheads	\$25,000.00
September 2012	Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust - 45 DOC 200 Traps - Te Matapuna Wetland Trapping Programme	Te Matapuna Wetlands	\$1,995.00
November 2012	Craters of the Moon Charitable Trust - Waikato University BSc Tech Research Project	Biodiversity Internship Programme	\$10,000.00
December 2012	Taupo Espresso Rotary Club	Oruatua Restoration	\$483.00
January 2013	Pacific and Conservation Development Trust - Funding for Rotopounamu Restoration Project 2012 /2013 financial year.	Rotopounamu	\$20,000.00
April 2013	Department of Conservation - Part Costs towards Website & Coordinator for Greening Taupō Project.	Greening Taupō	\$10,000.00
May 2013	Wairakei Golf + Sanctuary - Proceeds from NZPGA	Greening Taupō	\$30,000.00
May 2013	DOC Conservation Support Network - Oruatua trapping network	Oruatua Restoration	\$434.78
June 2013	Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust	Project Tongariro - Project Management	\$6,956.52
June 2013	Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust - Associated Costs	Te Matapuna Wetlands	\$27,415.66
Total			\$162,284.96
Other Income:		Project	
	Adopt a Hectare	Adopt a Hectare	\$9,565.41
	Partnership Programme	App Project	\$5,750
	Fundraising - Huka Falls Jet Locals day	Greening Taupō	\$6,957
	Events - donations, marshalling etc	Events	\$11,311.34
Total			\$33,583.32

Key Dates

12-13 October 2013
AGM at Forest & Bird Lodge,
Mt Ruapehu

23-24 November 2013
Pureroa Dawn Chorus Field Trip

7 December 2013
The Goat Event

27 December 2013 - 12 January 2014
Mahi Aroha
(Summer Nature Program)

1 January 2014
Kite Day

25 January 2014
Tussock Traverse Event

Mid February 2014
Taumarunui to Whangamomona
by cart on the Rail Track
Field Trip

**Late 14 March
& Late April 2014**
Boundary Stream Hawkes Bay
Field Trip

28 February 2014
Volunteer Appreciation BBQ

14-15 March 2014
Great Lake Trail Mountain Bike
Field Trip

19 - 20 April
Turangi Colours Festival
Rotopounamu Open Day

3 May 2014
T42 Event

4 October 2014
Te Matapuna/ Waiotaka
Restoration Planting Day

18 October 2014
30th AGM



Other Activities

- Dactylanthus Monitoring & Caging in Tongariro Forest
- Bird Monitoring & Pest Control at Rotopounamu
- Pest Control at Te Matapuna
- Pest Control at Oruatua
- Tussock Planting at Tukino Mountain Rd
- Operation Nest Egg

More Information

For more details on each event and activity
www.tongariro.org.nz/event-calendar



Volunteers Wanted

Project Tongariro is involved in a wide range of activities from one-day events to ongoing projects. We'd love to have your assistance.

We need volunteer help with many different conservation tasks:

- Bird counts
- Habitat restoration
- Tree planting
- Tussock re-vegetation
- Pest control and monitoring
- Surveys of historic sites
- Education

Being a volunteer is fun. You get to work as part of a team, share your skills, learn some new ones, and experience conservation in action.

Calendar 2013-2014



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



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