

THE FRIENDS OF MANGARAKAU SWAMP INC. SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2017

Once again the end of our Financial year approaches.

We are having a change of tradition this year by holding our Annual General Meeting on May 5th at 11am at Wholemeal Cafe in Takaka township.

ALL WELCOME.

We have been working away as usual on pest and weed control. Gorse eradication has been stepped up and produced more areas for planting.

The big field plantings are getting established and we plan to do some more filling in this autumn.

The Wattle Point Track is looking good and a pleasure to walk.



Stoats catches have been lower than average, about half the usual numbers but there was a peak in December. Rats catches, apart from January and February, have been high for the year at 508, the highest we've ever had and about 2.5 times the average. Most probably due to the heavy fruiting of the Kahikatea and Coprosma.

More improvements have been made at the Lodge. We now have hygienic PVC covers on the mattresses and have finally fixed the broken window pane. We have also had to replace a rotten window in the Visitors Centre as it had beautiful orange fungi growing out of it.

Both Nelson and Wellington Botanical Society's have stayed at Mangarakau Swamp this year, the Wellington ones at the Outpost across the road. They surveyed the area for rare plants. They found new plants for our plant lists, and even found a leech in their botanical samples so that is added to the lists as well. These lists will be available on our new website which you can find at <http://mangarakauswamp.com>
(You may need to hold Ctrl while you click on the link)

Sandra Niederlechner was our German Intern this year and she wrote this nice article for the Golden Bay Weekly.....

Bittern Survey at Mangarakau Swamp

Last week was the week of the Bittern Survey at the Mangarakau Swamp. A group of 12 enthusiastic people went out in pairs, three times in the early morning from 5:15am – 6:15am and three times in the evening at 7:40pm – 8:40pm to monitor the Bitterns booming. We observed the Bitterns each time for one hour and estimated the number of individuals, number of calls, distance, time and compass bearing. Back at the Field Center, which is a beautiful place to stay, every group compared and reported their data and by the end of the week we were able to locate at least 8 booming male Australasian Bitterns at Mangarakau wetland.



You can listen to some Bittern booms here <http://tinyurl.com/mangarakau1>, however you need to have good speakers or headphones on your computer to be able to hear the low frequency. This 46sec. recording has three sets of five booms.

We had the use of the sound recorders for two months after finishing the Bittern Survey, so put them out around the swamp to record overnight. The Bitterns kept booming all night right up until Xmas. Also many Spotless Crake calls were recognised and much to our delight, a Marsh Crake call.

We again watched two pair of Robin nest. It is difficult to be sure of just what they get up to but we have seen some young ones.

We are now processing the Lodge booking through the mangarakauswamp@gmail.com address.

Please be aware that the arrangement for staying and the key pickup have changed. Jo-Anne has been doing all of this work since 2003, and now she is graciously letting us take it over.

We are still looking for help with the pest trapping. Murray has been doing most of this (and much else as well) for the past 13 years and it would be wonderful to relieve him of some of it.

Thank you very much to those of you who gave a donation on top of Koha for your stay at the Lodge or with your subscription payment.

Subs are due now and it would be helpful if you could send full details of your Full name, street address, email address and phone number to mangarakauswamp@gmail.com

See form below for internet banking details or post the form back with your cheque.

**Best wishes from the team here at Mangarakau Swamp -
Murray, David, Robyn, John, Bron, Jo-Anne, Margaret, Greg, Ian and Helen**

**FRIENDS OF MANGARAKAU SWAMP INC. SOCIETY
SUBSCRIPTION FORM FOR ONE YEAR**

I enclose my subscription of \$10.00 for one year. Date:.....

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Bank account number: 38 9003 0018047 00.

Please enter 'Subs' and your Name in the Reference boxes.

Or post to Robyn Jones, 39 Gibbs Rd, Collingwood. 7073

ph: 03 524 8266 Email: mangarakauswamp@gmail.com

Website: <http://mangarakauswamp.com>