Ecological Society Newsletter

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FROM THE EDITOR

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Welcome to the first newsletter for 2008. Firstly a big thanks to Ruth Guthrie and Hannah Buckley for holding the editorial reigns for the last couple of years. The newsletter evolved into the electronic format, and featured some thought provoking content under their supervision. Jeremy Rolfe also deserves a mention as he continues to do a superb job of the lay-out and newsletter production, and certainly makes the job of editor much easier.

As I get settled into the editor's chair, I encourage you to contribute to the newsletter with your letters, debates, information, ideas or articles. The newsletter continues to be an effective and dynamic way of communicating with other members, so make good use of it.

Last year chalked up another successful and profitable NZES conference, with Feathers to Fur. In this issue, Dave Kelly and Steve Pawson give lively accounts of the conference and the symposium for those not lucky enough to be there.

Feathers to Fur was a retrospective of the last twenty years, and some naval gazing of how far have we come since the 1986 conference. Or indeed, have we gone full circle? Twenty years on and we continue to have the same or similar debates—is our flora influenced by birds or climate? What of the concept of 'original' and the role of the introduced biodiversity? We continue to grapple with temporal and spatial scales, and this influences our understanding of past and therefore the present, and will continue to drive research questions into the future. Additionally there still is the myriad of dilemmas associated with the human constructs of conservation and restoration.

The recently released State of the Environment Report 'Environment New Zealand 2007', also contained a strong element of *déjà vu*. The State of New Zealand's Environment (1997) concluded that "biodiversity decline is New Zealand's most pervasive environmental issue". Ten years on, and Environment New Zealand 2007 concludes that biodiversity continues to face the same pressures, and thus remains a pervasive environmental issue. The report notes that the amount of public conservation land, and protection of private land, increased over the last ten years, and this is considered a positive trend in terms of biodiversity protection. However, perhaps a truer indicator of biodiversity protection would be whether these areas of land receive sustained management alongside legal protection. While maybe not revealing many surprises for many of us, the release of Environment New Zealand 2007 is perhaps another reminder of the continuing challenges for the ecological and wider community.

In this issue we congratulate the recipients of the NZES awards for 2007. Ecologists who have taken on those challenges, and whom inform, influence and achieve through research and action.

If you have any questions or comments about the newsletter, we encourage you to put it in the form of a letter to the editors.

INSIDE:

MEET YOUR 2008 COUNCIL

A new Council was elected during the AGM in Christchurch, this newsletter we meet the newcomers and get reacquainted with the returning members.

Shona Myers – President

Tena Koutou. I have been on the NZ Ecological Society Council since 2003. I was secretary for four years and took over the president role in early 2007. I am Manager of the Heritage Department at the Auckland Regional Council. I manage a team of ecologists, archaeologists and heritage specialists. My team manages and advocates for the protection of natural and cultural heritage and biodiversity conservation in the Auckland region through resource management and non statutory processes. The ARC also manages over 40,000 ha of regional parkland with mainland island, habitat restoration, species protection and historic heritage projects across the parks network. We work closely with volunteer groups, landowners and communities. I have a background in plant ecology with a particular interest in lowland forest and wetland ecology. I find myself tied to a desk and in lots of council meetings but make sure I get out and stay in touch with ecological issues on the ground for my sanity. We have an exciting year ahead for the NZ Ecological Society with our annual conference in October, and fresh faces on our Council. Take care.

Bruce Burns – Vice President

I am back yet again for another stint in the role of Vice President. I'm a plant ecologist with Landcare Research based in Hamilton. My background includes a masters thesis on the ecology of mangroves at Auckland University, a PhD at the University of Colorado working on the regeneration dynamics of monkey puzzle trees in Argentina, and a stint with the New Zealand Forest Service working on their protected natural areas. These experiences have left me with a broad background in ecology. Most recently I've been working on managing biodiversity in rural and urban areas, and the restoration ecology of pest-free biodiversity sanctuaries. I have recently been appointed to the board of the New Zealand World Wildlife Fund. I'm looking forward to helping the NZES promote and support ecological science in New Zealand.

Ruth Guthrie – Secretary

Hi. After several years as joint editor of the New Zealand Ecological Society newsletter I have hung up my editorial hat to take on the role of Secretary for NZES council. I realise that I have rather large boots to fill (no offence to Shona, whose feet are actually quite dainty!) but am looking forward to continuing to work with such a dynamic and enthusiastic group. I am currently living in beautiful Golden Bay and am in the final stages of writing my PhD thesis on the community ecology of cabbage tree invertebrates.

Clayson Howell – Treasurer

I have worked as a scientist for the Department of Conservation for 5 years. Current work is predominantly focused on environmental weeds, with particular interests in conifers and new naturalisations.

Mel Galbraith

I am a Senior Lecturer in the Bachelor of Applied Science (Biodiversity Management) programme in the School of Natural Sciences, Unitec New Zealand, with a focus on ecology, biodiversity management and biosecurity. My interest in natural history, especially ornithology, was formalised through post-graduate study at the University of Auckland. This interest has lead to involvement in many ecological restoration projects, initially on islands, but increasingly within urban Auckland. My application of ecology has been focused through four projects in particular—Tiritiri Matangi Island, the Miranda RAMSAR site, Chatham Island taiko expedition, and the Waitemata Coastal Sanctuary Project (North Shore City).

I am active in the Ornithological Society (Regional Representative, Auckland), Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi (Biodiversity subcommittee) and the Uruamo Ecological Society (Chairperson). I am also a member of the New Zealand Biosecurity Institute, and a past member of the Auckland Conservation Board and the editorial board of the *Journal of Landscape and Urban Planning*.

Jacqueline Beggs

I have been a member of the New Zealand Ecological Society since 1984, when I first worked on the ecology of our endemic forest parrot, the kaka. Since then I have spent many years studying the ecology and control of invasive wasps, racking up a fair number of wasp stings along the way. Landcare Research, Nelson was my base until 2003 when I joined the University of Auckland—lecturing in ecology and entomology. Now I get to work on a whole range of projects, from assessing the effect of revegetation on the invertebrate community on Motuora Island, to studying the ecology of honeydew influenced communities.

As well as my research and teaching I have an advisory role for several organisations: the Invasive Species Specialist Group (IUCN), the Kakapo Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (DOC), and the Auckland Conservation Board. I have also just joined the *NZ Journal of Ecology* editorial board, and am vice-president of the NZ Entomology Society. But don't expect me to ID any insects…

John Sawyer

I am a plant ecologist with the Department of Conservation where I have worked for the past 15 years. My main focus is the protection of the threatened elements of the flora and the control and management of naturalised plants. I have co-authored a range of books and reports about the plant life of Wellington and the Chatham Islands including Plant me Instead, Wild orchids of the lower North Island and Threatened plants of the Chathams. I am Secretary of the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network and Webmaster for the Network website, and am also Editor of the *Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin*. I enjoy Gourmet Tramping which involves hiking into the New Zealand wilderness and eating delicious food and drinking great wines.

Chris Bycroft

I am a Senior Ecologist with Wildland Consultants, based in Rotorua; a role I have undertaken since 2000 and have professional experience from most parts of mainland New Zealand. I have strong interests in the ecology and management of indigenous vegetation; particularly geothermal, tussock grassland, forest, shrub, alpine, wetland, lake shorelines, and sand dune habitats. In my spare time I am a very keen tramper and photographer. Much of the work I have been involved with at Wildlands includes environmental impact assessments, vegetation monitoring, botanical assessments, and bird survey and monitoring. Examples of longer-term projects include detailed assessments of most geothermal sites in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions; shoreline vegetation monitoring in relation to management of lake levels for hydroelectricity generation, and ongoing repeat bird surveys associated with major wetland restoration projects. My University studies were at the University of Otago and my PhD was on the ecology and management of copper (or red) tussock grassland in the Southland and Otago regions, particularly

studying the effects of fire and grazing on this species. I have been a regular attendee of NZES conferences since 1994 and I am very pleased to be able to help the society by being on the NZES council.

NZES AWARDS FOR 2007

Congratulations to the recipients of the NZES awards for 2007 who are profiled below. The awards were presented at the NZES "Feathers to Fur" conference in Christchurch (18–23 November 2007).

Te tohu taiao – Award for ecological excellence

Professor Mick Clout

Mick is Professor of Conservation Ecology at the School of Biological Sciences and the School of Geography, Geology & Environmental Science at the University of Auckland. This joint appointment reflects Mick's interdisciplinary research interests. A summary of Mick's career will be featured in the next newsletter.

NZES Ecology in action award

Dr Frances Schmechel

R.E. Menzies, (Chairman of the management committee) nominated Frances for the 2007 NZES Ecology in Action Award, on behalf of Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust.

In the four years that Frances held the position of coordinator for our trust she instigated and facilitated many ecological projects at grass roots level on Banks Peninsula. She constantly promoted the ideas of conservation of the special biodiversity of the area, and encouraged landowners to practice sustainable management techniques on their land. Amongst other things she was involved in coordinating the following:

- The Banks Peninsula Tui Restoration project with Ngai Tahu.
- Regular meetings of the Banks Peninsula Conservation Forum involving government and local government agencies and local groups.
- Three very successful Biodiversity Days for the community and community groups to exchange ideas.
- A number of workshops and field days covering subjects such as mustelid control, rare and threatened Banks Peninsula plants, and endemic lizards.
- The production of a Banks Peninsula Pest Strategy.
- A very successful feral goat eradication programme with the Department of Conservation, Environment Canterbury and the Christchurch City Council.
- The holding of "bay biodiversity" meetings.
- The production of sustainable management guidelines for landowners.
- The production and distribution of two to three newsletters per year for the whole of the community.
- The revision of a Banks Peninsula Natural History booklet.

NZES award for best publication by a new researcher

The New Zealand Ecological Society awards an annual prize of NZ $500 for the best published paper of an ecological nature, by a new researcher. This award is targeted at people at the start of their research career.

Robert Ewers

For a paper that presented the results of his PhD research (University of Canterbury):

Ewers, R.M. Thorpe S. Didham R.K. 2007: Synergistic interactions between edge and area effects in a heavily fragmented landscape. *Ecology: 88*: 96-106.

Abstract: Both area and edge effects have a strong influence on ecological processes in fragmented landscapes, but there is little understanding of how these two factors might interact to exacerbate local species declines. To test for synergistic interactions between area and edge effects, we sampled a diverse beetle community in a heavily fragmented landscape in New Zealand. More than 35,000 beetles of 900 species were sampled over large gradients in habitat area (10^{-2}–10^{6} ha) and distance from patch edge (2^{0}–2^{10} m from the forest edge into both the forest and adjacent matrix). Using a new approach to parti-

tion variance following an ordination analysis, we found that a synergistic interaction between habitat area and distance to edge was a more important determinant of patterns in beetle community composition than direct edge or area effects alone. The strength of edge effects in beetle-species composition increased nonlinearly with increasing fragment area. One important consequence of the synergy is that the slopes of species–area (SA) curves constructed from habitat islands depend sensitively on the distance from edge at which sampling is conducted. Surprisingly, we found negative SA curves for communities sampled at intermediate distances from habitat edges, caused by differential edge responses of matrix- vs. forest-specialist species in fragments of increasing area. Our data indicate that distance to habitat edge has a consistently greater impact on beetle community composition than habitat area and that variation in the strength of edge effects may underlie many patterns that are superficially related to habitat area.

The judges for this award recommended that an honourable mention should be given to **Hamish Greig** (University of Canterbury) for his paper:

Greig H.S. McIntosh A.R. 2006: Indirect effects of predatory trout on organic matter processing in detritus-based stream foodwebs. *Oikos 112*:31-41.

Abstract: Indirect effects of predators on basal resources in allochthonous-based food webs are poorly understood. We investigated indirect effects of predatory brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) on detritus dynamics in southern beech (*Nothofagus* spp.) forest streams in New Zealand through predation on the obligate detritivore, *Zelandopsyche ingens* (Trichoptera, Oeconesidae). Trout presence/absence and *Z. ingens* density were manipulated in flow-through tanks to investigate the lethal and sub-lethal effects of trout on litter processing by *Z. ingens*. An experiment that allowed trout access to *Z. ingens* showed trout predation reduced densities of *Z. ingens* resulting in slower breakdown of coarse particulate organic matter (CPOM) and reduced production of fine particulate organic matter (FPOM). A second experiment that prevented trout access to *Z. ingens*, but allowed the transmission of trout cues, resulted in no change in litter processing rates in the presence of trout. Litter processing rates were higher in high *Z. ingens* density treatments compared to low density treatments. Thus, trout effects on litter processing were due to reduced *Z. ingens* densities, not trout-induced modifications to *Z. ingens* feeding behaviour. Field assays of litter processing rates using artificial leaf packs in natural streams showed significant reductions in CPOM loss in trout streams compared to fishless streams. *Z. ingens* dominated biomass in fishless stream leaf packs, but a facultative shredder, *Olinga feredayi*, dominated trout stream leaf packs. Thus, the absence of *Z. ingens* drove differences in processing rates between trout and fishless streams and the indirect effects of trout on litter processing observed in mesocosms were evident in complex, natural food webs. Overall our study provides evidence that predators can influence resource dynamics in donor-controlled food webs through their effects on consumers.

Best student NZES conference paper – oral

Susan Cunningham, Massey University.

The kiwi bill-tip organ – a new prey-detection system for kiwi?

SUSAN CUNNINGHAM[1], ISABEL CASTRO[1], AND MAURICE ALLEY[2]
[1] *Ecology Group, Institute of Natural Resources, Massey University*
[2] *Institute of Veterinary and Animal Biosciences, Massey University*

Abstract: Kiwi are traditionally assumed to detect their soil-dwelling invertebrate prey using their sense of smell. However, studies of prey-detection by kiwi using smell alone have produced mixed results. Shorebird species that forage by probing find their prey using specialised vibration/pressure-sensitive nerve endings located in pits in the bill-tip. This specialised system allows them to detect prey without physically touching it with the bill (known as "remote touch"). We studied kiwi foraging patterns using probe-holes as an indicator of foraging activity, because direct observation of these secretive nocturnal birds is very difficult. Results showed that aspects of the foraging patterns of North Island brown kiwi (*Apteryx mantelli*) are like those of some shorebirds, suggesting that kiwi may use a similar prey-detection mechanism. We examined the bone structure of the bills of all five kiwi species and examined the tissues of the bill of North Island brown kiwi. We found that kiwi possess an arrangement of sensitive nerve-endings within pits in the bill, similar to those found in shorebirds. They may therefore be able to localise prey using a similar "remote touch" sense, which may function in conjunction with, or be dominant over, olfaction. Because kiwi and shorebirds come from widely separated lineages, this may be an example of convergent or parallel evolution.

Runner up

Amy Whitehead*, University of Canterbury*

Predicting the potential range of threatened species: the use of long-term data to assess suitable habitat for whio throughout New Zealand.

AMY WHITEHEAD[1], ANGUS MCINTOSH[1], AND JOHN LEATHWICK[2]
[1] *University of Canterbury*
[2] *NIWA*

Abstract: The conservation of threatened species can be hampered by a poor understanding of habitat requirements, potentially jeopardising the success of management programmes. Traditional assumptions that contemporary population ranges are correlated with habitat quality may be inappropriate for threatened species, which are often restricted to small, fragmented areas. However, the potential range of a species can be assessed by using long-term distributional data to correlate individual sighting records with local environmental variables. These relationships can be used to predict the suitability of habitat in areas outside the current range, providing valuable information to managers. Whio (*Hymenolaimus malacorhynchos*) are a unique riverine waterfowl species endemic to New Zealand. Once widespread, they are now restricted to small, isolated populations due to large-scale habitat loss and predation by introduced mammals. Twenty-five years of whio presence data was used to assess the relationship between the distribution of whio and environmental predictors that characterise their riverine habitat. Modelling was performed using multivariate adaptive regression splines (MARS) and a Geographic Information System to produce a spatially explicit prediction of the relative suitability of habitat for whio across the entire New Zealand river network. The number of high rainfall days described twice as much variation than all other variables, while predictors describing air temperature and river flow were also important. Whio currently occupy a small subset of their potential range but information about habitat suitability will allow managers to identify and prioritise areas where conservation efforts should be targeted for whio.

Best student nzes conference paper – poster

Haylie Newbold, University of Waikato

Can Predators Detect IR Monitoring?

HAYLIE NEWBOLD[1] AND CAROLYN KING[1]
[1]*University of Waikato*

Abstract: Ferrets are Unwanted Organisms under New Zealand's Biosecurity Act (1993), due to their predation on native protected species and their status as potential vectors of Bovine Tuberculosis. There have been suspicions that ferrets could detect the infrared light-emitting equipment used to monitor predator and prey behaviour. This behavioural study describes how ferrets were taught to respond to lights of varying frequencies and intensities for food rewards. When the light stimulus was changed to infrared (870 nanometres), two of the five ferrets showed strong evidence (average response accuracies of 77% ± 4 and 72% ± 2) and one ferret showed relatively weaker evidence (66% ± 3) that they could see this wavelength of light, even when it was very dim. Extraneous cues such as ultrasound or a predictable schedule of stimulus presentation were eliminated as potential response cues; hence the ferrets were reacting to the infrared light. It is possible that a proportion of ferrel ferrets can detect the light emitted from infrared monitoring equipment that produces light wavelengths at or below 870 nm. This light may potentially attract the predator towards threatened native species, with significant implications for conservation.

Thanks to the award sponsorships and judges

The "Best Student NZES Conference Poster" award was sponsored by the University of Canterbury School of Biological Sciences. The Runner-up award for the "Best Student NZES Conference Paper" was sponsored by Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research.

Thanks also to the three judges of the "Best Publication by a new Researcher Award".

Thanks to Jeremy Rolfe for revamping the award certificates in time for the 2007 conference. They look considerably more professional now.

Chris Bycroft

NOMINATIONS FOR THE NZES AWARDS FOR 2008

Te Tohu Taiao – Award for Ecological Excellence

Nominations are invited for the Te Tohu Taiao award (formerly NZES award). This award is presented annually to recognise individuals who have made outstanding contribution to the study and application of ecological science. The award is made to the person(s) who have published the best original research in ecology of New Zealand, and its dependencies (including the Ross Dependency) or person(s) who have made the most outstanding contribution to applied ecology, particularly conservation and management. NB. This award used to be presented to members only but a council decision in 2006 supported the recommendation to make non-members eligible.

Please e-mail nominations for this award to Chris Bycroft (chris@wildlands.co.nz) by 30 June 2008. Nomination should also include a statement of support.

Honorary Life Membership

Honorary life memberships are conferred from time to time to recognise excellence and longstanding service in the study or application of ecological science in New Zealand. Nominations should be presented to council, seconded and must include statements of support. The selection committee will consider candidates' eminence in the scientific field and contribution to original research or the application of such research in New Zealand and the extent of their association with the Society. This award is often presented at the AGM during the conference.

Please e-mail nominations for this award to Chris Bycroft (chris@wildlands.co.nz) by 30 June 2008. Nomination should also include a statement of support.

NZES Award for Best Publication by a new researcher

The NZES awards an annual prize of NZ$500 for the best published paper of an ecological nature, by a new researcher. This award is targeted at people at the start of their research career. The award will be announced at the Ecological Society's annual conference, and reported in the NZES newsletter as well as being posted on the NZES website. Authors wishing to be considered must meet the following criteria:

- Be the senior author or sole author of the paper
- Be a current member of the NZ ecological society
- Either currently be a student or have graduated within the last three years (for this years award the applicant must have graduated after 30 June 2005), and be at the start of their research career.

The paper should be published in an ecological journal (not restricted to *NZ Journal of Ecology*).

Only one paper per eligible author.

Authors wishing to be considered for this award should send 4 copies of their publication by 30 June 2008 to Chris Bycroft (c/- Wildland Consultants, PO Box 7137, Te Ngae, Rotorua). All applicants should supply a contact e-mail and postal address and a summary to confirm they meet all the criteria for this award. All publications will be reviewed by a committee nominated by the NZES council. At the discretion of the nominated committee an award may not be made in any given year.

NZES Ecology in Action Award

As announced at the joint NZ Ecological Society and NZ Freshwater Society Conference in 2005, the NZ Ecological Society Council has recently established the "Ecology in Action" award. This award was established to recognise individuals who are achieving excellence and best practice in the promotion of ecology, including communication, education and transfer of ecological science at the grass roots. The Society would like to recognise work of individuals achieved in promoting ecology and education at a local government level, with landowners, community groups, politicians and councils. This award is for individuals, whose role is primarily the transfer of ecology and research, but who are not necessarily involved in pure ecological research. This award reflects one of the primary aims of the society that includes promotion of the study of ecology and the application of ecological knowledge in all its aspects. The society also recognises that the transfer of ecological knowledge at a community and local government level is important in changing behaviours and achieving practical protection and restoration of biodiversity, particularly of our threatened lowland ecosystems.

The Society offers recipients with:

1. $500 contribution towards attending the next NZ Ecological Society Conference;

Please e-mail any nominations for this award to Chris Bycroft (chris@wildlands.co.nz) by 30 June 2008. Nomination should also include a statement of support.

2. $500 contribution to a local restoration project of your choice.

Recipients of the award are invited to present a paper at the next annual NZ Ecological Society Conference. The work can also be given profile via a media item, or highlighted in the NZ Ecological Society newsletter. Nominations for this award should be e-mailed directly to Chris Bycroft by 30 June 2007.

REFLECTING ON FEATHERS TO FUR

Dave Kelly
Chair, organising committee

Conference wrap up

I'd like to thank all those involved in the 2007 NZES conference (including registrants) for making it such a success. The conference ran 18-22 November, and in total 264 people registered to hear the 83 talks and 20 posters.

The major symposium on the first day of talks, Feathers to Fur, all ran to plan and gained good feedback. Nearly all the PPT talks from the whole conference, and podcasts of the audio from Feathers to Fur, went onto the NZES website for 3 months right after the conference so you might catch these if you are quick. As far as I know these were NZES's first podcasts, and thanks to Jon Sullivan for sorting out the technical glitches. There were also four other symposia, with those on Toxins and Land Environments NZ both attracting a lot of comment. News media interest was nearly all centred around the toxins issue. The prizes for the best talk etc will be described elsewhere.

Sustainability was an issue this year, and we made progress on two fronts. Firstly there was no conference bag given out; people were asked to use one they already had, and we had a few recycled ones to give away, which all seemed to go without any complaints. The saving in money terms is surprisingly small (typically a printed conference bag would be under $10) but there are also fair-trade and carbon footprint issues to consider. Secondly we took voluntary contributions from registrants to buy carbon credits to offset each person's travel to the conference, and were able to buy a total of $375 of certified credits from CarboNZero, which benefits mainly forest restoration projects in NZ.

We were also able to support the Ngai Tahu Rock Art Trust who kindly let us use a rock art image from Te Manunui in South Canterbury as the conference logo. A total of $180 from t-shirt sales went to the Trust. There are a few t-shirts left if you missed out, (see the noticeboard). There have been delays in posting out the second run of t-shirts ordered at the conference but these should be with you now; apologies for the delay.

The student day on the 18th was popular with the 35 who attended. The field trips were on the next day (Monday 19th) and we had 26 go on Akaroa Harbour, 21 to Quail Island and 19 visit the bowels of the Canterbury Museum. Thanks to Frances Schmechel, Colin Burrows and Richard Holdaway for leading these trips.

The conference made a healthy profit. We gained sponsorship from DOC and Landcare to cover the cost of an extra issue of NZ Journal of Ecology ($13,000) and the conference itself also made a profit of $22,754,92 plus GST. This goes to the main NZES accounts to keep the society running - most years the other activities of the NZES about break even, and the conference profit (if any) is what gives us a net surplus to keep the society in the black.

I would like to thank all those who made this possible. We had a great organising committee who all contributed in important ways. In particular, special thanks to Philip Grove for work on sponsorhip and the LENZ symposium, Shaun Ogilvie for coordinating the toxins symposium, Jon Sullivan for chairing the scientific programme group and organising the web pages, and Jenny Ladley

for maintaining a masterly overview of the whole enterprise. Claire McConchie at the UC conference organisers did a great job. And finally, it would not have been possible without firstly generous support from the sponsors (Landcare Research, Department of Conservation, Environment Canterbury, Connovation, University of Canterbury, and Lincoln University) and secondly without the enthusiastic attendance of NZES members.

Feathers to Fur – a reflection

Steve Pawson

A version of this article has been published in the New Zealand Geographic.

The Feathers to Fur symposium opened with a discussion of insects, not quite what you would expect given the vertebrate focus of its title. However, the transformation from an avian dominated ecosystem to a mammalian empire has had profound impacts on all our biota, even the smallest animals. Bird predators relied on visual cues and movement, whereas mammalian predators hunt using odours and are equally adept during the day and at night when most birds are sleeping. As such the defence mechanisms and ecological traits that have evolved in the New Zealand insect fauna to survive bird predation, such as cryptic colouration, freeze responses and a nocturnal lifestyle, are useless against this new unknown foe. Examples of localised extinctions, such as the giant weta from mainland rat infested New Zealand were given as a case in point. The change in predation regime was a core theme given to account for the demise in our insects, birds, which were aptly described as a wreckage of an avifauna (58 species, 24% of the total bird fauna now extinct), changes in plant species composition, pollination and seed dispersal and the abundance of native fish.

The change in plant composition was discussed against a back ground of three periods in the history of New Zealand herbivory. Firstly, pre-human a time when herbivory was dominated by birds, such as the moa, whose coprolites show evidence of feeding on at least 64 plants species. Secondly, there was a period between the demise of the large herbivorous birds, and the third period defined by the role of introduced mammalian browsers. As an aside a brilliant summary of available data that included the dating of early archaeological remains, sub-fossil kiore bones, rat gnawed seeds, pollen records and charcoal deposits provided the most comprehensive and conclusive evidence yet of a late arrival of Polynesians to Aotearoa, dated at approximately 1280AD. As such, this second period defined by an absence of large herbivores existed in New Zealand for at least 400 years.

Plant herbivore systems were debated during the symposium on two fronts, firstly are the unusual plant adaptations in New Zealand the result of an avian dominated plant-herbivore system or an adaptation to oceanic climates, and secondly are deer the equivalent of moa? The key plant adaptation promoted as a means to resist bird browsing is their filiramulate form (defined as slender, wiry twigs, which may be divaricate, zigzagging, or flexuous) particularly in their juvenile stages. Cafeteria style studies where emu (close relatives to moa) were presented a variety of food plants showed that the filiramulate form inhibited the birds ability to forage for food compared to larger broadleaved plant species. However, birds are not the only influence on our vegetation as climate can play a significant role. New Zealand's largely oceanic climate makes it highly suitable to coniferous species such as rimu, kahikatea, miro and matai. The regeneration patterns of many conifers are linked with extreme disturbance events such as floods, volcanic eruptions, windstorms and earthquakes. In fact regeneration patterns observed by aging trees throughout Westland clearly show the impact of significant alpine fault movements dated at 1450, 1620 and most recently in 1717.

Deer were rejected as a perfect surrogate for moa browsing. Deer operate at the same trophic level and inhabit the same range as the now extinct moa. However, deer during the 1950's were at least 100 times more abundant than moa ever were and now they are about 10 to 20 times as numerous, the drop due to extensive aerial hunting. Mammalian herbivore pressure is therefore much

higher, which in combination with the different selection of palatable species has significantly altered the grazing regime. A second and historically over looked factor was the trampling effect of deer. The foot print of a deer is twice as heavy on the forest floor as that of a moa, due largely to the size of its feet. The increased point pressure in combination with the greater abundance of deer was provided as a potential explanation for the reduced soil invertebrate fauna where deer are present in high numbers.

Lastly I would like to highlight something described at the symposium as an ecological scandal. It has nothing to do with feathers or fur, but everything to do with fish scales and the introduction of salmonid fish, better known as trout. Reports of historical white bait catches of up to 300 kg from the Hokitika River were discussed, something one can only dream of today. The decline of these migratory fish populations is thought to be the result of barriers (such as dams) to the dispersal of diadromous fish (those with an oceanic phase to their life-cycle) and degradation of habitat in breeding grounds by extensive land clearance. However, for our non-migratory native fish, the principal limiting factor appears to be the presence of trout. Even relatively small trout of 15 cm in length are capable of eating the entire suite of non-migratory native fish, and in many cases there is little co-habitation of native species and trout. A challenge was issued, perhaps the time has come where we need to look seriously at removing trout from some streams, particularly where native fish values out weigh the cultural values of a sport fishing industry.

Community groups attend conference

Last year NZES initiated the encouragement of community groups to attend conferences, by sponsoring members from two local community groups. Members of the Banks Penisula Landcare Trust and Summit Road Society, both active volunteer conservation groups, accepted the NZES's invitation to attend the Feathers to Fur Conference.

This is a great way to enhance the communication of ecological science to the wider community, and such initiatives are inline with recommendations outlined in the Communication Strategy (see the noticeboard).

FORMATION OF AN EIANZ SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION FOR ECOLOGY

Ian Spellerberg

A small group of consultants in Melbourne have met twice, with the purpose of discussing the establishment of an Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand (EIANZ) Special Interest Section (SIS) for Ecology. Some 400 Institute members list ecology related topics as their area of interest, but ecologists are relatively poorly represented in the Institute's activities at present. There are many more potentially interested practitioners beyond the Institute.

Discussions are still at an early stage but there was general agreement on the following:

1. A group focused on ecology, under the EIANZ banner, would be useful.
2. The group would be primarily for practising professional ecologists and students, with an emphasis on applied science and ecological outcomes.
3. Efforts would be needed to ensure the group was compatible with other existing groups i.e. find its niche and become complimentary to their needs. The Ecological Society of Australia was identified as one of the most important. The Ecological Consultants Association of New South Wales was another, as was the Australian Systematic Botany society.
4. A 'network' may be the best model, where Institute's infrastructure can help develop forums to assist regional groups and link them to other groups. The group would seek to be collaborative, not competitive, with other organisations.

5. A national focus is essential, to maximise cohesion between states with different expertise and experience. Communicating the outcomes of state forums to professional ecologists throughout Australia would be the greatest benefit—currently, ecologists are largely unaware of progress being made beyond their own state.
6. A regular bulletin would be a way to involve various groups and keep members up to date with Australia-wide practice.

At the second meeting discussions were had about how to proceed. It was decided that funding for a networking body would come mostly from annual forums and a bulletin. The first forum will be on the subject of due diligence for practising professional ecologists.

The forum will involve national environmental law groups as well as ecologists and is proposed for some time in mid to late February 2008. We plan to invite a key note speaker followed by a panel-based question and answer session and have results available via podcast, video stream and written material on the web. For convenience, this would be in Melbourne though if successful the second forum would be run interstate. This subject is likely to attract considerable interest and help identify common themes for ecological practice, providing a platform for further shaping the Ecology SIS.

In marketing the forum the Group would seek expressions of interest in being involved in the SIS. Outside of any Committee structure (which would be essential) the group would seek to list interested practitioners in a database at one of two levels:

1. Corresponding members, who receive notification to all events and the SIS Bulletin, if and when produced (twice yearly seems a suitable initial target)
2. SIS members, who must be Institute members, who also receive access to any products and professional tools produced by the Group, and can be Committee members.

What next?

The structure of the SIS will properly evolve once a reasonable number of people are involved for consensus. This will depend on initial forums and promotional efforts. As a priority, there is also the need to develop a business plan under the EIANZ By-law 15. The next meeting is to discuss this and production logistics for the first bulletin, which would draw on the theme of the first forum.

AN UPDATE ON NEW ZEALAND BIODIVERSITY RECORDING NETWORK (NZBRN)

A Web-based Facility for Managing Natural History Observations

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The NZ Biodiversity Recording Network (NZBRN) is an online system (www.nzbrn.org.nz) for viewing, recording and processing contemporary or historical natural history observations from around the country. It has been largely funded by TFBIS (administered by DOC) and is hosted by Landcare Research.

Jon Sullivan wrote an article for the June, 2007 *NZ Ecological Society Newsletter* (Number 121), outlining some of the key features of NZBRN. You can refer back to this at the link: www.newzealandecology.org/newsletter/no121.html . Some of you may recall the live demonstration at the last Ecological Society conference.

The purpose of NZBRN is firstly to provide a secure repository for storage and retrieval of natural history data (from both past and present sources) that falls outside institutional plot- or voucher-based records, and secondly to engage the public in observing and recording nature in a systematic and interactive way through maps, lists, graphs or spreadsheets. It also provides a mechanism for tracking movement of migratory or pest species across the country once a network of observers is established. It does have the power to provide statistically robust biological results.

NZBRN continues to roll out, having been operational for the past year. The results you see are as good as the information that has been entered, but with nearly 20 000 of both plant and bird records, distribution maps of relatively common lowland species are beginning to take a realistic shape at least at a broad scale. We soon expect to upload a further 9 000 records from the 2007 Garden Bird Survey and 200 000 plant records generously provided by Graeme Jane.

There are now six active portals: for *birds*, *plants* (including *bryophytes* and *lichens*), *fungi*, *mammals*, *lizards/frogs*, and *invertebrates*. The last of these will incorporate an accumulating selection of species and groups beginning with butterflies - which can be entered now. The animal portals use standard common names, paired with their scientific names, but the plant and fungal portals use only Latin names at this stage (so have a flora handy or you can consult the NZ Plant Names Database http://nzflora.landcareresearch.co.nz or NZ Plant Conservation Network www.nzpcn.org.nz). However, you don't have to know the correct spelling (as the names are in drop down lists) or grid references (as these are automated).

You can view existing records ('show records') without logging in, but to 'create records' you must 'sign up', to get a user name and password, and then 'log in'. Then you must select an existing named site or set up a new site to which you can attach your records. In a sense, you can create your own personal diary of your life's journey and you can process the information in a variety of ways.

If you are concerned about data quality you can always be selective in the records you extract (through a variety of protocols and filters), but studies show that, for common species, errors don't affect the integrity of data. For rare species the individual sources can be tracked down and you can discuss the observations with the recorder.

The basis for viewing or recording data is zoomable maps that take you right down to street level. If you are in a remote part of the country, the standard NZMS map contours, waterways, and place names help you to orientate yourself. But, it is often desirable to have a NZMS or road map with you to assist with locating your place where roads or names are sparse and you have to rely on river shapes. All grid references are now converted to the new TransMercator Map system.

So, set up a site in your back yard - to note the birds visiting the garden during the BBQ, at your picnic site, or in the school yard. A school monitoring site will be a valuable learning experience for children.

The figure below is a screen shot of the home page (showing the six portal choices).

The NZBRN hompage showing the six entry portals.

Although the development of NZBRN is being carried out at Landcare Research, the management and direction comes from an independent advisory committee representing stakeholder interests. If you have any problems or wish to provide some feedback or be involved in developing this exciting tool, please contact one of us. For example, there are other possible applications for the system—a portal for beach combers (shellfish, seaweeds, bryozoans, sponges, fish etc that are found washed up on beaches), a means of documenting and monitoring pollutants (plastic, cans, wreckage, oil), recording the frequency of lawn mowing (Matt McGlone's idea for a productivity surrogate), and mapping the locations of restoration sites (with associated information on scale, date of initiation, habitat type, soils, climate etc). Let us know what you think.

The NZ Biodiversity Recording Network Advisory Team
nzbrn@landcareresearch.co.nz

Obituary

KENNETH ERNEST LEE 7 MAY 1927 – 14 JANUARY 2007

Gregor Yeates

Ken Lee was foundation treasurer-secretary of the New Zealand Ecological Society, served on its council (1951–1962), was the President (1962–1964) and made an honorary life member in 1965. Although he moved to Australia in 1965 Ken maintained links with New Zealand and his world-wide impacts on ecology, particularly earthworm ecology, developed from his strong New Zealand roots.

Ken Lee was born in Wanganui and had his schooling in Masterton. After earning a degree at Victoria University College, in 1948 he joined Soil Bureau, DSIR and was among the first to be based at Taita Experimental Station, Lower Hutt. Over the next 10 years he completed a monographic study of the earthworms of New Zealand, and was awarded a D.Sc. for his account of the 178 native and 14 introduced species. About a sixth of the monograph concerns distributions within New Zealand, relationships of the New Zealand fauna, and relationships between earthworms, soils and soil properties. While global knowledge of earthworm taxa and distribution has developed since 1959 the theses advanced in *DSIR Bulletin 130* still form the basis of our understanding of the relations between earthworms and soils. Since 1959 just one native earthworm species has been added to the New Zealand fauna!

Ken in 1965, the year he was made an honorary life member of the NZES [SB8106]

In addition to his contributions to the NZ Ecological Society, Ken was a foundation member of the NZ Society of Soil Science. He was also active in other societies in the Wellington area and was awarded the New Zealand Association of Scientists Research Medal in 1959. His early publications included 'popular' accounts of earthworms and soil biology for schools.

Having developed a mobile laboratory with multiple Tullgren funnels (made from tennis ball tins), in 1960, Ken made an epic trip sampling 45 reference soils throughout New Zealand. Sampling proceeded from south to north, following the changing season. Sampling and analysis were as good as conditions allowed, eight 2.5-inch diameter cores being collected from each soil and extracted *en route*. This suite of samples was the basis of his remarkable 'preliminary survey' of New Zealand soil invertebrates reported in *Soils of New Zealand* – another thorough analysis.

A Nuffield Foundation Dominion Travelling Fellowship in Natural Science allowed Ken, and his family, to visit Europe in 1961–62. He worked at the British Museum (Natural History), at the University of Nottingham School of Agriculture, and at the Molslaboratoriet (Denmark), and visited other labs examining earthworms, mites and enchytraeids, and getting insights into emerging methods for studying the ecology of soil animals. His links with International Soil Science Society began when he attended the colloquium on relationships between soil animals and soil micro-organisms at Oosterbeek (The Netherlands) in 1962.

In mid-1965 Ken accepted an invitation to move to CSIRO Division of Soils, Adelaide, where he established a soil zoology group. Tom Wood also moved from DSIR to CSIRO, and together they carried out extensive work on termites in the arid continent, setting benchmarks of research quality by quantifying relations between termites and soil processes. Their book *Termites and soils* continues to be widely quoted.

Ken's membership of the Royal Society Solomon Islands Expedition in 1965 not only extended the range of ecosystems with which he was familiar but also led to his leading the 1971 Royal Society – Percy Sladen Expedition to the New Hebrides. This expedition was highly successful: samples for selected biological analyses made their way to New Zealand; the New Hebrides issued a commemorative set of postage stamps; and the results were brought together in a symposium held by the Royal Society in London. One of Ken's recommendations was the establishment of a reserve for the Kauri tree (*Agathis macrophylla*), which was fast disappearing from the Pacific Islands. Ultimately the, by then, independent country of Vanuata established that reserve in the late 1980s.

The Division of Soils provided an excellent base for soil zoology and their faith in Ken was rewarded. While support for soil zoology fluctuated somewhat, Ken maintained a steady, indeed a strong, hand with his support for good soil science. Work moved more towards his first love, earthworms. His seminal book on earthworms, while highly relevant to his work and of great intellectual standing, was written at home – an illustration of how his family supported his science.

Ken was a truly international scientist. His expeditions to the Solomon Islands and Vanuata have been mentioned. He also led a Division of Soils delegation to China in 1982, long before everyone started going there. He was also prepared to put in the hard yards for his profession, his colleagues and younger scientists. He served in various positions in the International Soil Science Society from 1962, including several as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary over the period from 1964 until 1990 and was also a keynote speaker at two World Soils Congresses. In the 1970s, with grass grub, black beetle and porina major pasture pests in New Zealand and related insects afflicting various Australian states, the Australasian conferences on grassland invertebrate ecology began. Ken, one of those responsible for broadening their scope from 'pasture insects' to 'grassland invertebrates', was a regular contributor to meetings on both sides of the Tasman.

After early recognition in New Zealand, Ken received many other honours for his work, including Fellowship of the Explorer Club of New York (1979), the Vercoe Medal of the Royal Society of South Australia (1985), and the Prescott Medal of the Australian Society of Soil Science (1986). The latter two are those societies' premier awards.

Ken's publication list contains well over 50 papers. Such a measure, however, does not recognise his vast contribution to zoology, soil science and scholarship through his influence on many scientists in many countries around the world. For local ecologists perhaps five publications illustrate the breadth of his influence:

- Lee, K.E. 1959: The earthworm fauna of New Zealand. *NZ DSIR Bulletin 130*. 485 p.
- Lee, K.E. 1968: A preliminary study of soil animals and their relationships to some New Zealand soils. *New Zealand Soil Bureau Bulletin 26*(2): 168–183. (Soils of New Zealand)
- Lee, K.E.; Wood, T.G. 1971: *Termites and soils*. Academic Press, London. 251 p.
- Lee, K.E. 1983: Soil animals and pedological processes. In: *Soils: an Australian viewpoint*, pp. 629–644. CSIRO, Melbourne.
- Lee, K.E. 1985: *Earthworms: their ecology and relationships with soils and land use*. Academic Press, Sydney. 411 p.

Charles Darwin's *The formation of vegetable mould through the action of worms* (1881) first documented the importance of earthworms and launched soil biology.

However, it was Ken Lee who developed knowledge about earthworms, their ecology and relationship with soils and land use, making masterful contributions to soil zoology and to the understanding of the importance of biological contributions to soil processes on the global twentieth-century scene. To quote from the *Avant-propos* written by Marcel Bouche for Ken's 1985 book, "The work of K. E. Lee, which for the first time places earthworms on a world-wide scale in the economy of nature and humanity, takes up again a century later, in modern terms, the message of the great naturalist. By its critical analysis, its synthetic approach and its opening up of all relevant subjects that are accessible to rigorous understanding, this volume of K. E. Lee takes its place as the direct descendant of that of Charles Darwin".

Ken was a natural leader and held the positions of Deputy Chief of CSIRO Soils Division and Officer-in-Charge of its Adelaide Laboratory in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Most unusually for one in such a position in this period, he was both respected and liked by the staff because of the consideration and fairness he showed to all staff members.

With his New Zealand pedigree, Ken was always happy to 'muck in'. His mobile 1960 laboratory has been mentioned and his earlier comprehensive survey of earthworms was carried out without the benefit of topographic maps let alone GPS. When the Taita catchments were being developed he was responsible for building the weirs in the experimental catchments. Ken's practical abilities were paramount to the success of expeditions to the Solomon Islands and the New Hebrides.

Ken Lee devoted his life and intellect to science. He had great physical and scientific stature, and his contributions to the study of earthworms and their ecology, and to soil science, are recognised and valued around the world.

JS WATSON TRUST

Mary McEwen

The JS Watson Trust is adminstered by the Royal Forest and Bird Society. Each year a total of approximately $20 000 is available to be distributed amongst individuals or conservation groups who met the following criteria:

- the conservation of plants and animals and natural features of New Zealand,
- the advancement of knowledge in these matters by way of research, literary contribution, essay or articles, or other effort, or
- general education of the public to give them an understanding and love of the world in which they live.

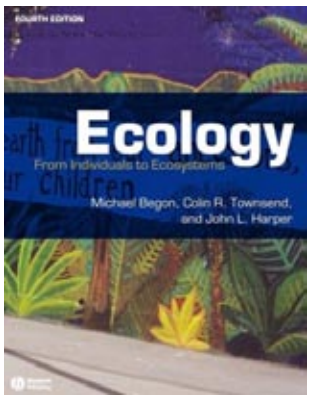
This year's successful recipients and research projects are listed below.

Marleen Baling	Function of variability of colour in shore skink (*Oligosoma smithi*) from Tawharanui Regional Park
Diane Batchelor	An ecological survey of fungi at Mt Holdsworth.
James Bell	Marine reserve connectivity in New Zealand
Christopher Hepburn	Are exotic species irreversibly changing native marine habitats on our watch?
Gary James	Restoring the Cloak of Tane, growing a variety of common and rare native plants at low cost to supply the budding community native forest restoration projects around Wellington City.
Todd Landers	Tracking long-range movements of threatened Westland petrels (*Procellaria westlandica*)
Victor Meyer	Biodiversity and phylogeny of the Philosciidae and Armadillidae of terrestrial isopods (Crustacea, Isopoda, Oniscidea) from New Zealand.
Dai Morgan	The collection of diet, density, movement and home range data of all pest mammals (cat, ship rat, mouse) on an island in the Hauraki Gulf. The data will indicate how important rodents are as prey items for cats and the threshold rodent density that causes cats to start hunting birds.

Luis Ortiz Catedral	To document habitat use, social interactions and breeding success of newly translocated orange fronted parakeets on Maud Island.
Kate Richardson	Survival, dispersal and body condition of endangered forest bird, the hihi or stitchbird, translocated to a mainland site in the Waitakere Ranges, Auckland.
Lisa Tracy	The genetic consquences of habitat fragmentation and population bottlenecks in the highly threatened mohua (*Mohoua ochrocephala*)
Gaylynne Carter	Investigating the effects of stoat control on ship rat populations with respect to New Zealand's endemic forest ecology.

THE BOOKSHELF

Anatomy of an Ecology Textbook



Colin Townsend

The following account is written on behalf of my textbook co-authors Mike Begon and John Harper. Parts of the article have appeared in the Bulletin of the British Ecological Society – these are reproduced here with permission.

The first edition of what we have come to call our 'big book', under the title "*Ecology: individuals, populations and communities*", was published in 1986, but the team of authors came together in early 1983. The book was the brainchild of Bob Campbell, then biology editor at Blackwell Scientific Publishers (later Managing Director). He thought a general ecology text by British authors would be timely. The authors did not know each other. All they had in common was the proven ability to write books (proven to Bob, anyway), but it was the differences that mattered most - Mike Begon, a terrestrial animal population ecologist, John Harper, the father of terrestrial plant population ecology, and Colin Townsend, a community ecologist working in aquatic environments.

The organisational plan was pretty clear from the outset, structured around the hierarchical organisation of ecology—individuals, populations and communities—with, between the population and community sections, two overviews concerning life-history variation and abundance. An even more fundamental decision, was to make absolutely clear to our readers the problems of doing ecology, and that the answers to many basic ecological questions were uncertain. We were not going to 'dumb down' the subject matter to render it more palatable to undergraduates, a tendency we detected in some other texts. Nor were we going to pretend that we 'experts' knew more than we actually did. Indeed, we saw benefits in owning up to our collective ignorance: we were providing challenges to our readers, the ecologists of the future. We also resolved to exemplify major points by more than one example, choosing them from different habitats and thoroughly mixing plant and animal exemplars.

We produced a synopsis and divided the 22 chapters among the authors. Each took on chapters in his own research domain, but many topics were of specialist interest to none of us and much was therefore written from a generalist perspective. This first version was passed to a second author for the next draft to be produced. Finally, every chapter was third-drafted by the remaining author. Sometimes the second and third drafts were produced with rather little change, with perhaps the odd better example or insight finding its way in, but occasionally a wholesale redrafting was undertaken. It is certainly true that every chapter bore the imprint of all three authors, and we were gratified when some reviewers remarked that they could not tell who had written what. There was often rigorous, but never rancorous debate. The greatest controversy, perhaps, involved the chapter on abundance. The two population biologists, Begon and Harper, had contrasting views, particularly about the relative importance of

providing a thorough history of the subject area. I was given the authority to decide the matter!

It is amazing to reflect on the communication innovations that have occurred during the lifespan of our book – no doubt beyond the comprehension of many younger readers. We began with pens and sheets of closely-guarded A4 that were passed to secretaries for typing up – followed by extensive use of a white-out product (first edition), proceeding to word processing for the second edition, but still with the need to send drafts to each other by snail mail, and then using e-mail for the third and fourth editions. The response time for comments on drafts dropped from weeks or months (especially in dealings between the British based authors and myself when I moved to New Zealand) sometimes to an overnight turnaround.

How do the four editions compare? In many respects the second was just a moderately updated version of the first, though two structural changes were significant. One was to increase the coverage of ecosystem processes, dealing with the flux of energy and matter in two chapters rather than just one. The second change was to add a chapter that brought together information on the practical manipulation of abundance – harvest management, pest control and species conservation. Many ecologists in the mid-1980s, ourselves amongst them if we're honest, aspired more than anything to be pure scientists, seeking to understand their subject for its own sake and even tending to look down on colleagues concerned more with applied ecology. The increasing prominence of the environmental consequences of human actions, however, and, without doubt, a raising of ecologists' social consciences, have seen a flourishing interest in ecological applications in all the major academic centres. Our extra chapter in the second edition reflected the beginning of this trend.

The third edition was a major effort that took several years of work. Much of the original structure was retained but the bibliography was dramatically different. This may be of interest beyond the finer details of the book itself. It suggests, perhaps, a period of consolidation in ecology generally, rather than major re-thinks or revolutions that would have demanded structural change from us. (Of course, it may simply reflect our own resistance to change!) There were, though, two notable departures: first, there was a further emphasizing of applied issues with the addition of a chapter about conservation and biodiversity and second, another new chapter was included, recognising the increasing interest in food webs.

The fourth and current edition, under the title "*Ecology: from individuals to ecosystems*", is very different again, in part because John sensibly decided he had better things to do with his time. But his contribution is indelible and his imprint remains strong. The applied aspects of ecology are now given even greater emphasis, with a chapter devoted to ecological applications at the end of each major section, which have themselves changed: organisms, species interactions, and communities and ecosystems. Further changes were to increase the focus on landscapes and metapopulations and to downplay island theory, which lost its chapter status, but there were also subtle but nonetheless profound changes in most of the chapters, with whole sections (that is to say, topics) disappearing or being shifted to other chapters, and being replaced by new ones.

The tone of the book has perhaps been reflected in our choice of cover designs. We were excited at the idea of a rock painting depicting hunting humans for the first edition: ecology as the oldest science, and therefore, we doubtless told ourselves, the most senior science too. The original mock-up for this is still on my office notice board at Otago University. (The same notice board has a photo of Prince Charles receiving a copy of the first edition (did he ever read it?), and a 'before and after' photo of a living room in a home-improvement magazine with the second edition there for all to see—but only before the room was renovated!) The second edition used the same image, just a different colour. But the third

edition was graced by artwork produced by John Harper's daughter, Claire—a 'modern' rock painting, with a dodo and a whale, amongst other images. (It was amusing, if somewhat disconcerting, to come across students who believed the painting was authentically prehistoric!) The progression was completed in the fourth edition with today's version of rock art—graffiti, depicting the modern concern with environmental issues. The first three editions had authors in alphabetical order, while for the fourth John slipped into third place, as sleeping partner.

We have been delighted with the comments of reviewers of the various editions of the book: the first edition—'All ecology teachers and students would do well to sample this nouvelle cuisine'; the second—'Remarkably free of dogma, Begon *et al* offer the incompleteness of ecology in an explicit and inviting way'; the third—'This monumental book is obligatory reading for all ecologists'; the fourth—'…recognized as the leading text in the field: this new version guarantees it will remain in pole position for many years to come'. The many translations, into Czech, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish, have also been gratifying. But our greatest pleasure is reserved for the recent recognition by our peers, with the award last September in Glasgow of 'Exceptional Lifetime Achievement Awards' by the British Ecological Society.

NOTICEBOARD

Annual appeal for Kauri Fund for Ecological Science

Help send students to INTECOL 2009

We invite you to help grow the science of ecology in New Zealand by contributing to the NZES Kauri Fund. This fund was established in 2001 to provide resources for initiatives that assist the development of ecology and ecologists in New Zealand. As the Fund grows, it will play an increasingly critical role in advancing the Society's goals and fund exciting new initiatives for New Zealand ecology.

In its initial phase, the Fund has simply been accumulating capital but the Council now wish to start using this resource. A fast approaching need is to assist graduate student travel to the 10th International Congress of Ecology (http://www.intecol10.org/) to be held in Brisbane, Australia on the 16–21 August, 2009. This will double as the NZES annual conference for next year. The Council wish to use interest generated from the Kauri Fund over the next year to support students to attend this important event.

Please consider a contribution, whether $10, $20 or $50, to the Kauri Fund now to help send our students to Brisbane.

You can make your contribution to the Kauri Fund in two ways:

Send a cheque made out to the "NZES Kauri Fund" to the New Zealand Ecological Society, P.O. Box 25 178, Christchurch 8144.

Use internet banking, to credit your donation to NZ Ecological Society, bank account 06 0729 0465881 00, identifying the payment as "Kauri Fund".

Communication strategy

Please send your comments to John Sawyer (submissions@nzes.org.nz) by 18 April 2008.

The primary objective of the Communication Strategy is to improve the communication of ecological knowledge to science users and non-scientists to increase ecological awareness among the general public and decision-makers, and, in doing so, achieve better decisions and outcomes in resource use and resource management, to reverse the decline of biodiversity in New Zealand.

The draft Communication Strategy is still open to feedback from members and can be viewed on the Society's website.

You were there – NOW get the t-shirt

CONFERENCE 2007 T-SHIRTS: LAST CHANCE

We have a small number of t-shirts for sale with the rock-art logo from the 2007 conference.

You can see these at www.newzealandecology.org/conf2007/tshirt.html. The shirts are stretch fabric, chocolate brown with the logo in cream. Women's shirts have a V neck, men's is round.

Sizes available are Womens size 12 (five on hand), 14 (one) or 16 (two). Men's sizes are Small (one) and Large (two). You can own one of these handsome mememtoes for only $20 each including postage.

E-mail *dave.kelly@canterbury.ac.nz* to reserve a shirt or post a cheque to me at Biological Sciences, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch 8140. Include the mailing address for me to send the shirt to.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

INTECOL Downunder 2009

The 10th International Congress of Ecology (INTECOL) will be held in Brisbane in August 2009. INTECOL is an international society founded in 1967 which has organised major scientific meetings, in particular the International Congresses of Ecology.

The Brisbane meeting will be the first INTECOL congress to be held in the Southern Hemisphere. The bid was fully supported by the Ecological Society of Australia and the New Zealand Ecological Society. It will include fieldtrips in New Zealand as well as Australia.

INTECOL promises to be a great opportunity for NZ ecologists to attend a major international conference. For more information on INTECOL 2009, visit www.intecol10.org.

"Fifty years of invasion ecology – the legacy of Charles Elton"

Announcement of a symposium

12-14 November 2008

Stellenbosch, South Africa

Hosted by the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence for Invasion Biology, Stellenbosch University
www.sun.ac.za/cib

2008 marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of a remarkable book – Charles S. Elton's "*The ecology of invasions by animals and plants*". The book has been acclaimed variously as: "an accessible and enduring classic", the "bible of invasion biology", a "classic book", "the cornerstone work in [invasion ecology]", an "invasion classic", a "magisterial book", "one of the most forward-looking publications in ecology", a "pioneering work", and a "seminal work". It is generally accepted as the foundation for the scientific study of biological invasions. It has been cited more than 1500 times in the international literature (more than any

other single publication in the field), and continues to be cited more than 100 times a year.

Elton's landmark volume brought together previously disparate themes (including biogeography, conservation biology, epidemiology, human history, population ecology) to show the true global scale and the severe and escalating implications of biological invasions for life on earth. It placed the phenomenon in the context of ecological understanding of the time, and provided a map for new research directions.

The study of biological invasions has, like invasions themselves, exploded over the past half century, and invasion ecology is now firmly established as an important and popular field of study.

The aim of this symposium is to explore developments in invasion ecology, to assess the level of understanding of different facets of invasions and our ability to manage them, and to discuss priorities for the future.

Keynote speakers include

- Tim M. Blackburn, Zoological Society of London, UK
- Steven L. Chown, Centre for Invasion Biology, South Africa
- Mark A. Davis, Macalester College, USA
- Harold A. Mooney, Stanford University, USA
- Guy Preston, Working for Water programme, South Africa
- Petr Pyšek, Institute of Botany, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic
- David M. Richardson, Centre for Invasion Biology, South Africa
- Daniel Simberloff, University of Tennessee, USA
- Peter M. Vitousek, Stanford University, USA
- Michael J. Wingfield, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Attendance will be strictly limited to 150 people. Sessions will address key themes, with 1–2 invited speakers per theme. Ideas for poster presentations are invited. Time will be allocated for break-away sessions, workshops, and panel discussions. The registration fee will include lunches, teas, and a symposium dinner. The venue for the meeting will be the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (www.stias.ac.za/).

Further details are available at www.sun.ac.za/cib

8th International Wetland Conference – INTECOL

The 8th INTECOL Wetland Symposium will be held in Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brazil, from 20-25 July, 2008. The host institution is the Federal University of Mato Grosso (Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso) and the Pantanal Research Center. This is the first meeting of the Wetland Working Group (WWG) in South America and it will be the largest international meeting on wetlands in Latin America. It will stimulate international and continental-scale interactions and promote wetland education, research and management throughout the region. A major field attraction is the Pantanal of Mato Grosso, an excellent example of international co-operation in research and development of wetlands, bordered by three countries. The city of Cuiabá is the gateway to the Pantanal the capital of Mato Grosso state. Adequate convention center and modestly-priced housing are available. In the city a special effort is an being made to facilitate student participation and international exchanges.

See http://www.cppantanal.org.br/intecol/eng/venue_cuiaba.php.

MINUTES OF THE 55TH NZES AGM 20 NOVEMBER 2007

Held on Tuesday 20 November 2007, University of Canterbury, Christchurch (during annual conference)

The meeting opened at 6.12pm.

Present: Shona Myers (chair), John Sawyer (acting secretary), and 41 other members (see list below).

1. **Apologies:** Mark Sanders, Bruce Burns, Morgan Williams.

2. Minutes of 54th AGM:
Shona Myers moved that they be accepted as a true record of last years meeting, Seconded Dave Kelly. Carried.

3. Matters arising
There were no matters arising.

4. Annual reports

1. President
Shona Myers presented her President's report thanking a wide range of people that have assisted with the society over the last year. Shona described the depth of initiatives being undertaken by the society including the Kauri Fund, the Nigel Barlow Trust and the Communication Strategy. Shona described other new initiatives such as sponsoring two representatives of local community groups to attend the conference.

Shona thanked Susan Timmins for her work as President and Vice President of the society, Rachel Keedwell for her excellent work as Treasurer, John Sawyer as Immediate Past President, Ruth Guthrie and Hannah Buckley on the Society newsletter, Kate McNutt for her work on Intecol, Mel Galbraith for work organising next years conference and Karen Denyer for writing the Communication Strategy, Chris Bycroft for taking on the council position running the awards. Shona thanked Peter Bellingham and Duane Peltzer for work and high attention to detail in producing and editing the societies journal. Shona explained that there were several positions available on the committee.

2. Treasurer
Rachel Keedwell presented the annual Treasurers report including switching accounts around to National Bank to maximise interest. Conference profit has influenced the state of finances. She described how subs had been increased to cover costs and to reduce pressure on the conference to make money.

Dave Kelly thanked Rachel and the committee for developing the funds and running a good ship.
Rachel moved that her report be accepted as a true and accurate record. Seconded Mel Galbraith. Carried.

3. Journal editor
Peter Bellingham presented his annual report (directing people to his full report in the last issue of the newsletter). Issues for next year are well underway. Peter said he was eager for new submissions. Landcare Research is providing technical editing of the Journal. Peter said he had now subscribed us to rules governing treatment of animals. Dave Kelly has offered to b the guest editor for the Feathers to Fur issue.

John Sawyer explained that for the first time this year the Society would be putting out a media release to draw attention to one or two of the key papers in the journal.

Rachel Keedwell presented a short report on options for publishing the journal in a different way with different companies. She presented the costs and how we could save money by printing a different format. Dave Kelly suggested that A4 might be better for members and that Council should investigate this.

She also presented data on the survey of members about whether they would still like to receive a hard copy of the journal. 207 people wrote back about why they wanted hard copy. 42 said they would be happy with an electronic version. Rachel said that the new subs form would include an option.

4. Webmasters report
Jon Sullivan presented his webmasters report and described the number of visitors and downloads of copies of the back issues of the journal. He also said that the work of the society had influenced many other societies in putting their journals on-line.

Tim Park moved a vote of thanks to Jon for all his work on the website.

5. Election of Officers

President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer
Shona Myers nominated as President by Peter Bellingham, Seconded Dave Kelly. Carried.
Shona nominated Bruce Burns as Vice President, Seconded Mel Galbraith. Carried
Shona nominated Ruth Guthrie as Secretary, Seconded Rachel Keedwell. Carried.
John Sawyer nominated Clayson Howell, Seconded Rod Hay. Carried.

Shona moved a vote of thanks to Rachel for her work as Treasurer.

Councillors
Rachel nominated Mel Galbraith, Seconded Shona Myers
Shona Myers nominated John Sawyer Seconded Kerry Jane
Alastair Robertson nominated Isobel Castro, Seconded Frances Schmechel
Ruth Guthrie nominated Chris Bycroft, Seconded Shona Myers

The nominees made short presentations about who they are and why they would like to be members.
An election was conducted and the following three councillors were declared elected: Mel Galbraith, John Sawyer and Chris Bycroft.

Newsletter Editor
Shona explained that Fleur Maseyk had indicated she would be willing to take on the newsletter editor position.

6. General Business

1. Intecol
Kate McNutt gave a brief presentation about Intecol 2009. Kate described NZ`field trips (a key part of the NZ involvement) and work going on to organise the conference. She thanked Dave Kelly and Carol West for their work on the scientific advisory committee. Kate explained that the Sponsorship package has been prepared with a top 30 list that will be approached. There will be no NZ Ecol Soc conference as Intecol will take its place as a joint conference. Kate said that she had really enjoyed being on Council and being involved with Intecol and will assist the incoming person. Alastair asked whether people could suggest symposia. Kate described the process which allows people to nominate symposia ideas via the website. Dave Kelly said that the scientific committee will be making suggestions but others will be welcome.

Dave Kelly asked if the AGM will be in Brisbane at Intecol. Kate said that the expectation was that there would be a minimum of 500 from the two societies collectively. David asked if we will get profit from Intecol. Kate explained that NZ has a memorandum indicating that we have co-chair on the committee and two on the scientific committee. 30% of any profit will come to the NZES.

Peter Bellingham said that he would like for us to ensure needy people attended the conference especially if we will be getting the profits. Shona said that this was an issue that could be discussed at Council. Rachel Keedwell said that we could offer more travel award. Janet Wilshurst said that Landcare sponsored travel for the Cairns conference.

John Sawyer explained that we would have ordinarily had a joint conference in Australia in 2010 so this will be instead of that.

Carol West moved a vote of thanks to Kate McNutt for her work on the Council as Intecol rep.

2. 2008 Conference
This will be 28 September to 2 October in Auckland based at Unitec Campus focussed on island restoration, with a symposium on Tiritiri Matangi Island. Carol West said that this will also be Richard Henry's 100th Centenary.

3. Comunications Strategy
John Sawyer presented Karen Denyer's draft strategy for communicating ecological science. John asked for feedback over the next six weeks so that the final strategy could be ratified. Wren Green explained that remaining a member of the IUCN would be a key part of this strategy.

The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

Present at 55th AGM

Members: Kathrin Affeld, Dave Bell, Peter Bellingham, Chris Bycroft, Isabel Castro, Nicky Eade, Mike Fitzgerald, Mel Galbraith, Robin Gardner-Gee, Hazel Gatehouse, George Gibbs, Wren Green, Ronny Groenteman, Ingrid Gruner, Ruth Guthrie, Rod Hay, Jillian Hetheringham, Robert Holdaway, Clayson Howell, Ian Jamieson, Rachel Keedwell, Dave Kelly, Graham Loh, Bryony Macmillan, Alan Mark, Fleur Maseyk, Matt McGlone, Bruce McKinlay, Kate McNutt, Shirley McQueen, Laura Molles, Sarah-Jane O'Connor, John Ogden, Tim Park, Alastair Robertson, Frances Schmechel, Jon Sullivan, Carol West, Janet Wilmshurst, Kerry-Jayne Wilson, Laura Young.
Observers: Rarir Karacok, Anne Tommlinson.

MINUTES OF NZES COUNCIL MEETING 19 NOVEMEBER 2007

These minutes have been edited and abridged.
Meeting held at Canterbury University.

Present

Mel Galbraith, Rachel Keedwell, Chris Bycroft, John Sawyer, Shona Myers, Dave Kelly, Peter Bellingham, Jon Sullivan, Ruth Guthrie, Kate McNutt

Apologies

Jacqueline Beggs, Karen Denyer

Minutes from last meeting (24 August 2007) – matters arising

1. Process for approval of new members at the start of each council meeting needs to be reinstated and be added as a standing item on the agenda. Approval of new members over the past few years needs to be instigated. Shona to action by checking when the last approval happened.
2. Electronic Journal—a survey has been completed asking members if they would like the option of receiving NZJE in an electronic form as well as/ instead of a printed form.
3. Media coverage is being done for the journal. John and Peter to determine the lead story. Peter suggested talking to Steve Pawson who has experience with this.
4. Kate McNutt is resigning from NZES council; we need a new committee member to take on the INTECOL work.
5. Positions that are to be filled on council include: Treasurer, Secretary, two councillors (for 2-year term), newsletter editor, INTECOL (co-opted perhaps). Maybe a submissions coordinator is also needed.

Shona moved that the minutes are a true and accurate record, Seconded by Mel Galbraith. Carried.

NZES Conference 2007

Dave Kelly reported on the conference: 242 delegates are registered, meaning a potential profit of approximately $12,000. There has been a lot of positive feedback; especially about the toxins symposium and the Feathers to Fur symposium. There has been an advisory sent out to the media to publicise the conference, and press releases are being prepared. The closing session will consist of three invited talks from early career ecologists in the 'Barlow Session' and John Ogden will give a closing presentation summing up the conference.

NZES is sponsoring two community group members to attend the conference; these will come from Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust and Summit Road Society. Someone pulled out so that registration was offered to Di Carter from Christchurch City Council.

Archives

Back issues of journals and old council paperwork has been stored at Canterbury University. A plan was formulated for the disposal of left over paper; Dave Kelly offered to deal with this. Dave suggested checking old papers to see if there is anything of interest that could be archived at Canterbury Museum. This has the downside that it is not easy to access after it has been deposited.

Barlow Trust fund for Students

Ruth reported that Universities often have a large trust fund set up for scholarships. There are several ways to manage the funds (e.g. through the Vice Chancellors Committee) but it is easy for Universities to administer the scholarship by invoicing the Barlow Fund if one of their students receive the award. Jon Sullivan asked if the Royal Society could do it in the same way they do their scholarships. Mel Galbraith will investigate Royal Society and Vice Chancellors committees to see how they run their scholarships.

Logo and re-branding

Rebranding and redoing the logo is part of the Communications Strategy, this will be discussed at the AGM.

Financial Report

Rachel presented information about the process for cheque signatures to be changed following the AGM and election of new council members. A trust process needs to be set up for the Nigel Barlow fund. The new Treasurer will need to keep the Kauri Fund in a high interest account but this will depend on the use of the fund. Suggested that back issues of the journal could be archived at Te Papa or another place such as Canterbury University to reduce the cost of storage with the Secretariat. Financial papers could be stored by the Treasurer; this would reduce storage costs to zero.

John Sawyer moved a vote of thanks to Rachel Keedwell for her work as Treasurer over the past few years. Seconded by Peter Bellingham.

A more formal time contract may be required with the Secretariat. Rachel will write a list of time-bound jobs from a Treasurers point of view, and Shona will do the same for Secretarial activities. Re-sizing the job may be required by a new member of the committee.

Journal report

Peter read his report. Dispatch is imminent for Volume 2, 2007. MRST has put up a discussion document about combining New Zealand journals into one monthly New Zealand Journal of Science. Submissions are still open. This would result in one super editor for the journal with current journal editors taking on a secondary role.

Peter raised this as an issue and Matt McGlone said that New Zealand identity was most important. An NZES submission may be wise indicating that a New Zealand identity journal is important and that our members publish in these publications. Therefore MRST continued support for publishing New Zealand research is vital. Shona to look at this and prepare a short submission.

The general feeling is that hard copy journals may be on the way out over the next 15 years. NZJE may in time incorporate into this. There is lots of merit in being electronic, but there is no reason to rush into this; therefore there is no sense of alarm at this stage for NZES journal.

Rachel outlined the costs for producing the journal. She obtained quotes from a variety of companies. Some of these quotes come in a lot cheaper (up to $3000) than our current printing cost. Mock journals have been made up that will

be available at the AGM for members to examine. Stylex have proved to be the best and have experience with journals. Rachel suggested getting feedback from members about the mock journals. Rachel will present results at AGM from the e-mail survey asking whether members wanted electronic version or hard copy of the journal. Rachel suggested that next year's sub form will allow for people to choose electronic and/or hard copy. Rachel said she would contact the Secretariat about changing the sub form to allow for this.

Mel suggested that Peter keep the committee up to date over the Royal Society activities.

Webmasters report

Jon will give an update at the AGM. Jon to draft a letter for Shona to send to Al White describing the success of TFBIS funded website digitising.

2008 Conference – Auckland

Mel Galbraith gave an update on progress planning the 2008 conference. Rooms have been booked at Unitec, where there will be no charge for use of the facilities. No conference organiser has been contracted yet. The timing is set for the end of September and beginning of October: Sunday 28 September – 2 October 2008.

INTECOL

Kate McNutt provided an update. A new person is needed to fill this position after Kate steps down from the committee. Issues surrounding field trips (e.g. insurance which does not apply in New Zealand). Sponsorship ideas have been provided to INTECOL. $20k (Aus) was promised to the organisers (Tourhosts) for their services for the past year, of which NZES owes some but the exact amount has not been determined yet. This will be clarified by Kate before she hands over to the new INTECOL person. An accountant's advice is needed about how this money can be paid to ensure we minimise tax. Kate will provide information to the incoming council member.

Shona moved a vote of thanks to Kate for her work on the committee as co-chair of the INTECOL committee.

Science communication

John talked about the process in implementing the Communication Strategy. John will give a short presentation at the AGM and ask for final feedback on the document before the committee ratifies it as a Society strategy.

Awards

Chris raised discussion about rules of entering the Best Publication by a New Researcher award. The rules need tightening. Chris will prepare a short summary of improvements to awards for the next meeting.

Chris was thanked form the committee for taking the awards on.

IUCN

John explained how he would like to defer discussion to later after an article written by him is published in the newsletter covering options. John is to encourage Wren Green to provide regular feedback to members via newsletter about IUCN activities and to the Council.

Australian Ecological Society Newsletter

We need someone to continue writing articles for the Australian newsletter.

AGM

Shona finalised the agenda for the AGM.

Kauri Fund

No grants have been awarded yet, waiting for money to build up.

Meeting closed.

MINUTES OF NZES COUNCIL MEETING 15 FEBRUARY 2008

These minutes have been edited and abridged.
Meeting held at Auckland Regional Council

Present
Shona Myers, Mel Galbraith, Fleur Maseyk, Chris Bycroft, Jaqueline Beggs, Bruce Burns, Ruth Guthrie (minutes)

Apologies
John Sawyer, Clayson Howell, Peter Bellingham, Jon Sullivan

Minutes from last meeting (19 November 2007) – matters arising
1. Putting new members into the minutes at each meeting (new members need to be approved by the council); the last time this was done was May 2005. We need a list of new members since then. The concern is a hostile take-over of the society.
   We will have the Secretariat compile a list of all new members since May 2005—and look over the list at the next meeting. We will make this a permanent agenda item.
   The current list of new members (November – February) was looked over. We welcome new members (Moira Pryde, Joel Pitt, Hilary Webb, Timothy Park, Grant Crossett, Kim Weitjmans, Clayson Howell, Rhiannon Dhilion, Jodi Rees, Antony Beauchamp and Stephen Hall) and accepted resignations from (Bruce Watson, Phillip Dawson and Mairi Jay).
2. Results from electronic survey of electronic journal—results to be clarified with John Sawyer.
3. Kate McNutt has resigned; Bruce Burns has taken over the INTECOL work
4. Barlow Trust Fund: trust process to be set up for the fund—we have had discussion about who should take care of these funds. We need to set up a trust document, but it could be that we don't need to do so because the Barlow family has entrusted Council with the decisions around the fund. Fund is still accumulating (there is a time before the fund will be ready); carried over to the next meeting.
5. Webmasters report—letter to be drafted to Al White; carried over to next meeting
6. Australian Ecological Society Newsletter—someone from NZES needed to write articles.

Shona moved that the minutes are a true and accurate record, Seconded by Mel. Carried.

Financial Report
Clayson Howell

Secretariat sent a profit and loss statement.
Clayson sends his apologies and his report:

Account balances from last statement.

Westpac.	31/12/2007	3,896.70
National cheque	31/12/2007	14,970.45
National Cash fund	20/12/2007	60,994.48
Kauri Fund	31/12/2007	35,177.36
Barlow	30/09/2007	1242.38

Most up to date account balances

Westpac.	31 December 2007	not available on-line
National cheque	07/02/2008	17,728.60
National Cash fund	07/02/2008	61,880.36
Kauri Fund	07/02/2008	35,612.00
Barlow	07/02/2008	52,651.63

Other Items

I don't yet have a budget for 2008. But I will base it on the 2007 budget prepared by Rachel. I aim to have this completed mid-March.

Auditor. It is my intention to keep the same auditor that Rachel used.

Journal printing costs. I have the quotes that Rachel obtained. These are significantly cheaper than what we currently pay.

Apologies I can't make the meeting.

Rachel last year changed the high interest account to the National Bank. Rachel's work on reducing the cost of printing the journal was discussed. Clayson has the quotes that Rachel obtained. We need to make a decision and take it back to the AGM to get a resolution on this. No resolution was achieved at the previous AGM, but Rachel's work has moved this forward significantly. We need a recommendation from Peter Bellingham as Journal editor; this will be a significant agenda item at the next meeting where we will go over the samples, costs and costs to move this forward.

Journal Report

No report from Peter Bellingham, but he will send one if he gets a chance.

Newsletter

Shona moved a vote of thanks to Fleur for taking on the newsletter.

Aiming for first newsletter to come out late March. Due to the timing of conference this year (September/October) there will two in the middle of the year close together, and one following the conference.

Discussed what the content of the newsletter should be; agreed that controversial issues should be checked with council, or that a right of reply is sought to print together with controversial letter.

The recommendations from the Communication Strategy are to be put into the newsletter for discussion by the Society—could be spread over several issues.

Membership

Covered in matters arising above

Conferences

2007 – Christchurch

Shona received a report from Dave Kelly (8 February 2008). Thanks was received from the Vice-Chair of the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust who sent a member along to the conference, funded by NZES (as part of the Communication Strategy). The council agreed that this process is to be continued (funding registration fees for two people).

Mel asked about the budgeting for the number of people attending a conference dinner—it seemed that less than half of delegates attended the dinner—the cost is prohibitive and hard to budget for.

Bruce moved a vote of thanks to the conference organising committee

2008 – Auckland

Mel reported that rooms are booked at UNITEC, at no cost. There is a pool of people organised to help with the conference organising. Letters for sponsorship are set to go out next week. Mel has approached several conference organising companies to get quotes on running the 2008 conference. Has a meeting set up for early March to talk about the Tiritiri Matangi journal proposal.

Ian Westbrook raised the issue of funding people to conferences, there was an issue with DOC staff having to pull out, and could we consider webcasting the conference. If the conference was webcast then DOC might help out with the cost of this? The feeling is that we should say no to this at this stage (but keep an eye on future developments) as the networking is an important/critical component of conferences for members.

The number that can fit in the main lecture theatre at UNITEC is 240, which does place some restrictions on budget. This does not mean that a cap needs to be put on delegate numbers (a video can be set up in another room for plenary sessions etc to cover all people). Jacqueline noted that the restoration of Tiritiri Matangi has been a huge community effort and that the conference may pick up extra delegates from the community and in fact we may want to target these people.

Shona moved that we provide a float of $1000 for the 2008 conference committee so that deposits can be made. Seconded by Bruce. Carried.

Intecol

Bruce Burns has taken over this role from Kate McNutt. A company has been set up to manage NZES input into INTECOL as there will be a shared profit from the conference. This removes NZES from liability. Kate set up this company, with two directors (Kate and Susan Timmons).

Mel moved that Shona and Bruce take over as directors of this company. Seconded by Jacqueline. Carried.

Key points: in terms of sponsorship; Kate and Bruce have provided to the Australians a list of potential New Zealand sponsors and Tour Hosts are approaching all the sponsors.

Bruce is also on the programme sub-committee which includes New Zealand based field trips before and after the event. Currently the committee is looking for professional companies who already run eco-tours. It has been suggested that existing companies run the tours because they will already have insurance (Intecol will not sanction an ecologist in a mini bus); but we may cost in having an ecologist accompany the group who would provide more interpretation and also suggest the tour route (or provide lectures). These fieldtrips will need to be set up soon so that the options are available on the website for delegates to book. Mel will pass on to Bruce all the trip options that have been investigated so far.

Programme sub-committee also deals with other conference events; questions were raised around how to inject a New Zealand flavour into the other conference events (e.g. a Maori welcome in Brisbane or equivalent indigenous representation as it is also the NZES conference). Other suggestions include a New Zealand vs. Australian wine tasting, or a taste of New Zealand dinner.

KPMG auditors want to sponsor the New Zealand field trip programme in New Zealand, by providing $5000 worth of accounting services.

Awards

Chris Bycroft provided summary of the awards for the newsletter.

IUCN

A rolling agenda item. The society's membership of IUCN was discussed at the AGM; this needs to be followed up by John Sawyer with the promised article for the newsletter and his catch up with Wren. Council used to make submissions on various issues as they arose (we had a submissions co-ordinator at that time) and at that time membership of the IUCN was seen as appropriate. This debate is ongoing; we need feedback from Wren as to what activities are going on. This really needs to go into the newsletter as this debate keeps surfacing.

Committee roles

Australian Ecological Society Newsletter

In the past we have had a reciprocal relationship with ESA in terms of writing articles for each other's society newsletters. It could be not a high priority for either society right now (with INTECOL going on).

Communication Strategy

We need to find someone to take on this role and see out the implementation of the Strategy.

Submissions

Bruce inquired about any particular projects or submissions that the council should be involved in. Discussion around being proactive to pick up on issues and provide feedback and submissions. Another role is to get media interest in particular issues (e.g. tenure review) – our role is to ensure that the scientific research is used to make decisions.

Things coming up that we could be involved in: conservation management strategies, Coastal Management Strategy etc. Bruce suggested that we consider discussion around very topical issues and pull in science around it—move debate away from the emotional issues (as ESA does very proactively e.g. conference on ecology of bio-fuels); this could be around the development of sustainable energy in New Zealand.

Jacqueline suggested running a workshop on such an issue next year in New Zealand (since the conference in overseas).

We should start to build up ideas on these issues and work out how the society will contribute to the debate. We could potentially ask the members about such issues via the newsletter, and set aside part of a future meeting into brainstorming about which issues we think we might want to attack in the future. Setting time aside for this is part of our Communication Strategy. Decided we need to set up an Implementation Plan for the Strategy and follow it through so that we can move forward with these ideas.

Jacqueline will put together an Implementation Plan based on the recommendations from the Strategy.

Kauri Fund

Bruce raised two points:

1. Needing a trigger point at which we start to use the funds, as that will encourage people to support the fund. Currently the fund is too low, but we need to find the balance point—needs to be trigger in terms of time or value accumulated
2. Wondered about sending out an e-mail appeal to all members and anyone else appropriately, asking people to donate to the Kauri fund.

Bruce put the motion that we set $50k as a trigger for us to start using funds, Seconded Jacqueline. Carried.

Bruce will put out an e-mail to members, and write a paragraph for the newsletter asking them to contribute to the fund.

Other matters:

Jacqueline suggested the society could look at a mentoring system—for recent graduates in the workforce, or for postgraduates. One initiative by ESA is their SEEDS programme which assists indigenous people into training and ecology jobs; potentially we could start a chapter of this, or start up something similar. Jacqueline will have a look at the SEEDS programme and discuss at next meeting.

Professional membership of Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand (EIANZ); Ian Spellerberg keeps promoting this to society members: discussed the benefits of becoming accredited. Mel will bring some information to the next meeting about it; Bruce to ask the Australian Ecological Society if they recognise such accreditation.

Next meeting to be held in Christchurch or Wellington depending on the availability of Peter Bellingham.

Meeting closed.

NZES LISTSERVER

Dave Kelly
Dave.Kelly@canterbury.ac.nz

RULES FOR THE NZES LISTSERVER

This listserver is for "issues of general interest" to NZ ecologists (conferences, jobs, etc). The list has three key guidelines.

1. Only messages of genuine general interest. No ads for things being sold (this does not include job ads which are OK) and no fringe interests. If in doubt check with me first.
2. If you want to reply to a posting, the default is for you to reply only to the sender. Do not reply to the whole list unless you are sure your point will be of "general interest", which most replies are not. Please check what "To" field you have set before pressing "Send". Remember this listserver is primarily for announcements, not discussions.
3. No attachments—put your message in plain text, with if necessary a link to a pdf on a web page.

RECENTLY REMOVED ADDRESSES

The NZES listserver accumulates "dead" addresses, and every time a message is sent to the list, we get a list of errors for the dead (or temporarily blocked, or whatever) addresses. So I regularly remove those that seem to be dead, to tidy up.

Here is the latest list of removed addresses as at 15 January 2008. If you are here and your account was actually only temporarily disabled and you want to stay on the listserver, simply subscribe again (see below). If you are unsure if you are still on, just subscribe again and it will tell you if you were already on, and take no other action.

Amy.K.Higgins@Dartmouth.edu
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HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

To subscribe to this server, e-mail a message to the automatic Mailserv processor at: nzecosoc-request@it.canterbury.ac.nz

Include nothing in the e-mail except the following text in the body of the e-mail:

SUBSCRIBE NZECOSOC
END

To **unsubscribe from the listserv**, send this message to the same address above:

UNSUBSCRIBE NZECOSOC

Once subscribed, you will receive instructions on how to send messages, unsubscribe etc. PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS AND FOLLOW THEM.

TO SEND A MESSAGE

To send a message to everybody on the list, use the address, nzecosoc@it.canterbury.ac.nz. Only people subscribed to the list are able to post to it. If you are not on the list and don't want to subscribe, but want a message, send it to me (Dave.Kelly@canterbury.ac.nz) to forward on.

IF YOU CHANGE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS

If you change your e-mail address, you have to unsubscribe from the old one, and subscribe from the new address. The easiest way to unsubscribe your old e-mail address is to send a message while you are logged on at the old address; if the old e-mail address is dead you will not be able to unsubscribe it because the system sees you as someone else. In that case e-mail me and I can do it for you.

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(Effective from December 2007)

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Contributions for the newsletter—news, views, letters, cartoons, etc.—are welcomed. Please e-mail to editors (newsletter@nzes.org.nz) with document attached (Word formatted for Windows) or post. If posting, if possible, please send articles for the newsletter both on disk and in hard copy. Please do not use complex formatting; capital letters, italics, bold, and hard returns only, no spacing between paragraphs. Send disk and hard copy to:

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Next deadline for the newsletter is 25 April 2008.

Unless indicated otherwise, the views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the New Zealand Ecological Society or its Council.

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