



Welcome to our latest Newsletter of 2021

2021 is off to a busy and exciting start. We would like to begin by thanking you for your ongoing support, and we hope you enjoy the latest update on conservation news and events from around the Bay of Plenty.

Bay Conservation Cadets - Taurira Mahi

Back in January, we had our cadet launch for our first intake of Taurira Mahi. A real highlight was the heartfelt welcome from Reon Tuanau from Ngai Te Rangī and his reminder to us all that when the land is well, the people are well – ki te pai te whenua, he pai te iwi. We were also delighted to have our Environment Minister Hon. David Parker join the occasion along with staff from the Ministry for the Environment and a range of our partners including iwi, DOC, and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

“We want to grow a cohort of people across New Zealand that have environmental management skills; from pest control, fresh-water restoration, environmental monitoring, and planting, to conservation work and more”, said Environment Minister David Parker.

The cadetship will run three times a year until June 2025 and at the end of the 12-week programme, the cadets will have an insight into a range of career options that support environmental outcomes ranging from data collection and GIS, through to water management, pest control, biodiversity monitoring, restoration planting and more. Good luck to our first round of cadets!



From left to right: Nathan Wakley, Monique Neenee, Reuben Aikman, Anna Wentsch, Hon. Minister David Parker, Shane Gregory, Liberty Jones, Misty Peni, Levi Pouwhare & Hayley Reber

Created and managed by Bay Conservation Alliance, the program is supported by a grant of \$3.5 million and is part of the Government’s Jobs for Nature scheme launched in the 2020 Budget to boost employment, and protect and enhance the environment while accelerating the recovery from the impact of COVID-19.



Cadets Continued...

Since the launch back in January, the cadets were faced with their first 12 weeks of training. They began with duck banding at Waewaetutuki, then moved onto 4 days with John Bissell, an industry expert in predator control. Weed control, coastal monitoring, career coaching, growsafe, animal rehabilitation, fencing are just some of the other topics studied, both out in the field and back in the classroom.

It's not just hands-on work though, the cadets had some days where they have had to hit the books in the classroom and complete theory work paired with tests.

Testing the cadets gave us a great opportunity to see how the cadets were gaining knowledge and by the end of the programme, the results were very rewarding. At the end of the course, we are able to use all of this testing data and obtain a visual of the knowledge gained. We were able to see that forest bird recognition had grown over 51% compared to the beginning of the course. Check out some of the other growth areas below:

- Weed recognition growth - 43%
- Wetland/Shorebird recognition growth - 118%
- Bird call recognition growth - 44%
- Forest/Dune plant recognition - 88%

This is amazing to see, not only for us to know that what we are teaching is having a great impact, but it is also great to see that the cadets are learning and enjoying it along the way.



Excitedly the first course has ended and the cadets are now out looking for jobs to make use of their new skills and expertise. We couldn't think of a better way to celebrate that, than taking them back to where they began. Starting with a hike up through the beautiful Otanewainuku forest here in the Bay of Plenty and ending with a picnic together.

We are so very proud of every one of the cadets and how far they have come. We have seen them all grow right in front of us and have this amazing little community of cadets out there doing it!

With intake one coming to an end (feels like yesterday we launched!), that only means one thing...ONTO INTAKE TWO!



Volunteering in the bay

Approximately 21.5% of New Zealanders undertake volunteer work. The value of formal volunteering is estimated at \$4 billion per annum. New Zealanders contribute a total of around 159 million hours of formal volunteer labour each year. That's impressive Kiwis!

Wherever you are located in the Bay, there is a conservation group nearby who would appreciate your help. Conservation groups can't do what they do without volunteer support. Supporting our members, or any conservation group is a fantastic way to give back to your community, be a part of something bigger, and experiencing the unbeatable feeling of doing something good.

Groups need a diverse range of volunteers ranging from trapping to weeding and planting through to administration tasks like writing newsletters, accounting, public speaking, or supporting educational activities.

We have several members who need support in the Tauranga, Whakatane, and Rotorua districts.

Check out our '[members page](#)' [here](#) for more info or get in touch with us by emailing admin@bayconservation.nz to inquire about volunteering.



BCA's Member Spotlight



The Kaharoa Kōkako Trust was formed in 1997 by a group of local residents who wanted to save the few kōkako that remained in the area. By reducing the number of pests (possums and ship rats) in the Kaharoa Conservation Area, they have enabled kōkako numbers to grow. The increasing number of kōkako is living proof of how the community can play a vital role in enhancing the environment and this continues to inspire our work today.

The Trust works closely with the Department of Conservation to achieve these successful results.

Locations and areas covered

30km by road north-east of Rotorua, halfway between Rotorua and Te Puke with approximately 900 hectares under management. [See map here](#)

The importance of increasing Kōkako numbers

In 1997 there were 26 kōkako counted in the Kaharoa Forest, and the numbers were decreasing due to lack of pest control. When an adult census was conducted in 2006 there were 121 adult kōkako counted, with a large number of juveniles. These numbers are increasing thanks to ongoing pest control, their latest census in 2015 counted 173 adults, 77 pairs, and 19 singles.

The Kaharoa kōkako population is a relic population. It has been used in the past as an important source of birds, for restoring kōkako numbers in other protected local areas. This is an important way of introducing genetic diversity to fragmented populations.



Translocations are managed on a national basis by the Kōkako Specialist Group (DOC).

In August 2017, 11 Kaharoa kōkako were translocated to Otanewainuku Forest to boost the number of birds as a population establishes there and a further 9 birds were transferred in August 2018.

Achieving Success

Their long-term goal is to increase the kōkako population so that they spill out into neighboring, pest-controlled forests.

[Find out more by visiting http://www.kokako.org.nz/](http://www.kokako.org.nz/)



2020 Annual Report



Credit: Ben Haumann

2020 Annual Report

The purpose of Bay Conservation Alliance's annual report is to tell a collective story of community conservation groups across the Bay of Plenty and showcase our member groups' work and aspirations.

[For a copy of the report please click here to download a copy for yourself.](#)



Community Conservation Hubs

In 2020 DOC selected six different groups around New Zealand to pilot the value of providing support to community conservation groups through regional conservation hubs. Bay Conservation Alliance is one of the recipients alongside Predator Free Hauraki Coromandel Community Trust, Wild for Taranaki, Biodiversity Hawke's Bay, Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust, and Whakatipu Wildlife Trust.

The Predator Free NZ Trust has been playing a welcome coordination role to connect the six hubs to share and learn from one another and engage in some national discussions about the future of community conservation. All the hubs met for the first time at Zealandia in Wellington in late March for a full day of presentations, networking, and planning. Lots of focus was around the Predator Free 2050 movement, investment in innovation, and new tools and technologies. Another insightful focus was on Predator Free Miramar and Predator Free Wellington which highlighted the huge value in combining the energy and investment made by volunteers alongside professional support and input too. To look at a map of trap locations across the Miramar peninsula is hugely inspiring and something we hope to see continues to grow here in the Bay of Plenty. We also talked about engaging whanau, iwi, and hapu and incorporating matauranga Maori in conservation.

A highlight was the opportunity to meet with 'like organisations' and such a great group of passionate people. We all acknowledged the challenges and opportunities for conservation in New Zealand. Being a part of that was empowering.



BCA Team Update

Farewells & Welcomes



BRIAN IRELAND

Our Education and Training Manager Brian Ireland has added so much value to us here at BCA. The cadets came from one big idea to being an actual programme and we couldn't have done it without him. It is with sadness that we announce that Brian has resigned, but we are really excited to see what he does next. He has been an enthusiastic, energetic member of staff and his imprint and everything he has done for BCA will live on. "Ma te huruhuru ka rere te manu - Adorn the bird with feathers so it may soar" was a whakatauki Brian had chosen for the cadetship and it works perfectly if you ask us! Haere rā Brian, it won't be the same without you!

EMMA RICHARDSON

We are super excited to welcome Emma Richardson as our new Cadet Training Manager. Formally a senior lecturer of marine studies for the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic for 8 years, she brings a great strength in adult education. Emma has already been contracting to Bay Conservation Alliance for 2 years, supporting school education delivery. Emma has also been teaching the cadets fresh water management and monitoring which makes her a perfect fit for this role. Her great attitude, love for conservation and teaching blends perfectly for the role. We are very excited to have her on board! Welcome Emma!



JANIE STEVENSON

We are also very excited to welcome Janie Stevenson as our new Education & Engagement Manager. Janie has a background in education, community engagement, and facilitation, and has worked across the Bay of Plenty in teaching and community development roles, all with an environmental focus. Janie has a deep respect for nature and its inhabitants and enjoys sharing this with others, facilitating experiences for people to connect and form a lifelong love of the environment. Janie will oversee the Maketu Ongatoro Wetland Society and BCA education programme. Welcome Janie, we are delighted to have you join the team.



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