

Island wood pigeon) and we were able to see many of these magnificent birds flying around and feeding in the regenerating bush beside the road.

A school party of boys from Lindisfarne Presbyterian Boys' School (Hawkes Bay) were helping to construct a track in the reserve and performed a haka in the middle of the road. The parea did not seem bothered by all this activity! As we left the reserve we were fortunate to see a flock of five parea grazing in a roadside paddock. Apparently they like clover!

At our last evening meal at the Waitangi Hotel we thanked our hosts and the staff for their care of us, and our guide Alison Davis was presented with a pair of colourful floral-patterned gumboots which she immediately put on.

4 DECEMBER – DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION OFFICE

Gillian Giller

On the last day we stopped briefly at the DOC office before continuing on to the airport. There are 15 full time staff based from this office plus some part time staff. They are mainly involved with the management of the reserves and covenants which cover about 7% of the main island. One of their many jobs includes fencing, for without stock proof fences the vegetation will always be vulnerable to browsing.

Behind the office is a small nursery where a range of local plants are grown for several different programmes (Figs 18 & 19, p.24).

The threatened plants programme involves about 15 species. 2,500 plants are produced annually and planted in reserves and covenants. *Cortaderia turbaria* is the main species propagated. *Hebe barkeri*, *Brachyglottis huntii*, *Aciphylla dieffenbachii* and *Leptinella featherstonii* are produced in smaller numbers. Several of these species are initially propagated at the Motukarara Nursery and flown over in banana boxes to be potted up and grown on to a larger size.

A revegetation programme on Mangere Island was restarted in 1991, continuing the earlier planting done by the Wildlife Service in the mid 1970s to early 1980s. Currently there are about 5,500 trees planted each year. The bulk of these are *Olearia traversii* which are grown by local people. The DOC nursery supplies a few hundred larger grade trees each year which can include *Coprosma chathamica*, *Myrsine chathamica*,

Plagianthus chathamicus, *Macropiper excelsum*, *Pseudopanax chathamicus* and the Chatham Island version of *Myoporum laetum*.

Another programme provides plants for sand dunes along the northern coast. About 7,000 to 8,000 plants are grown each year for the Tioriori and Mairangi areas. *Olearia traversii* is again a key species. Some smaller plants such as *Myosotidium hortensia*, *Embergeria grandifolia*, *Desmoschoenus spiralis* and *Pimelea arenaria* are planted on the seaward side of the olearias.

DOC arranges an annual planting day involving the community at Ocean Mail Reserve in an area which is dominated by exotic grasses. Once again *O. traversii* is the main species planted with smaller numbers of *Corokia macrocarpa* and *Myrsine chathamica*.

A small number of plants are grown for the local Weedbusters programme. Residents are able to exchange recognized weedy species from their gardens for the appropriate native species.

Amanda Baird who is in charge of the work programme is thanked for her contribution to this report. Amanda has been a member of this Society for many years and she has always helped visiting botanists to the Chatham Islands who have special requirements.



Figure 18. The DOC nursery at Te One is explained to our group. *Photo: M. & B. Geerkens*



Figure 19. Another view of the DOC nursery at Te One. *Photo: A. Baird*