



Bush and Beyond Guided Walks Newsletter – issue 11

Hello everyone, and welcome to our eleventh issue of the B&B newsletter. As per usual, the past year has disappeared in a blur of activity for us here in Motueka. Also like elsewhere in the world, the subject on everyone's lips these days, seems to be the weather! The planet is certainly in a state of turmoil with its record breaking heat, cold, rain, snow etc, etc... And Kahurangi has experienced a bit of the lot over the past 12 months! For the first time in 18 years we had to cancel, not one, but two Heaphy walks, as we couldn't cross the fords leading to the tracks start, due to flooding. In fact the flooding was so severe; we couldn't even get near the fords. The first flood was December 28, and has been heralded as the biggest flood Golden Bay has experienced in its 169 year European history!

And of course, here in NZ we have had the very traumatic and dramatic earthquakes that hit Christchurch. As I write this, they have just suffered two more very violent shakes, just days ago, which has caused more injury, damage and trauma to the already suffering Christchurch people. To all our Christchurch clients, our hearts go out to you, and we wish you well. We have a sister who lives there, and we live this terrible time through her.

[This Years Trip Diversity:](#)

Our trips this summer, ranged from Mt Owen and Matiri Tops, to the Wangapeka and Kahurangi Lighthouse, with just about everything else in between! Each of these trips certainly shows the diversity of what Kahurangi has to offer. The Mt Owen trip was joined with the Matiri Tops, and made this a wilderness hike, not for the faint hearted! It was an 8-day trip in November, and there was still plenty of snow around the Owen area, so made this a very rugged trip indeed. It was completed by all – without mishap - thankfully. Bill guided this walk with one of our young guides Cliff and everyone enjoyed the experience.



As per usual, the Heaphy Track was our most popular walk, as it is the most well known of Kahurangi's walks, being on New Zealand's 'Great Walks' system, but we are finding, more and more people are looking for a walk outside the mainstream advertised walks, to find something away from the crowds. Our 'comfort' walks are filling a niche with many people who prefer not to carry a full pack, but still want to enjoy the wilderness.



Year by year we are getting more and more Australians joining us on one of our Kahurangi adventures, and we are pleased to be sharing the wonders of this park with our Aussie neighbours.

[Taylor made trip for October/November '12:](#)

For anyone who may be interested in a slightly different Kahurangi adventure, we have an 8 ½ day trip organised for October 28 to November 5. It is a trip which can be split into two sections, so if anyone wanted to just do one of the sections, then that is fine.



The first section is the Mt Arthur Tablelands and Upper Cobb Valley, and will include summiting Mt Arthur itself, before continuing over Gordon's Pyramid on day one. The following 3 days will be spent crossing the Tablelands and walking up the Cobb Valley to the Fenella Hut.

The second section is for the more adventurous, and is into the 'Lakes Area'. So named as there are a total of seven alpine lakes in this area. All but the last day of this part of the hike will be off track, so a higher level of fitness is required. In all, 6 of the 7 lakes will be visited, with camps at three of them, including Lakes Lockett and Diamond, pictured at left.

For anyone who is interested in hiking this trip (or part of it), send us an email and we can send you an itinerary and let you know the finer details.

Heaphy Mountain Bike Trial:

You may recall last year, we were calling for help with submissions to stop mountain biking on the Heaphy track. Unfortunately the decision was made to give mountain biking a three year trial for the months of May through the end of September, so it has begun. It will be very interesting indeed to see how this trial goes. It is only a trial, but the Department of Conservation are about to replace all the single swing bridges in the Heaphy Valley, for sturdier wooden bridges. As one of the DOC rangers (who has worked on the Heaphy for about 35 years) told us, there is nothing wrong with the bridges that are in use now. We are hearing it is difficult for bikers carrying their bikes over the existing bridges, and that is why they are primarily being replaced. We are very worried that DOC has already made up its mind on the status of mountain bikes

on the Heaphy, and are therefore preparing for their continued future use. In our view, the replacement of these bridges is an absolute waste of money, especially at a time when the DOC budget has been drastically slashed by the Government, and they are facing hefty cuts in personnel – especial the scientific sector – the knowledge arm of DOC. We are very aware the decision on mountain biking on the Heaphy, is a political one.

Watch this space...

Meanwhile, Bush and Beyond will not guide walks on the Heaphy during the months of May through September, whilst the bikes are on there. We believe it will take away the enjoyment of the walk for our people, and we deem some areas of the track to be unsafe to use in conjunction with bikes.



This year Bush and Beyond became a member of the Sustainable Travel Network. This is the world's only non-profit website, which was founded in 2009. It offers a superb variety of accommodation, activity, tour and rental vehicle providers, all of whom are sustainable. The difference to other travel booking websites is that ALL commissions made on bookings through the website, are donated to local conservation or community projects. This is a wonderful innovation, and if anyone would like to check out the STN website, you will find it here: www.sustainabletravelnetwork.org

Conservation News:



Maryann and 'Friend'

When writing our newsletter last year (issue 10), we had just released 12 kiwi into our Friends of Flora conservation projects 5,500 hectare protected area. We are very pleased to report all the birds are still in the Flora and doing fine. At least we think they are **all** still in the area, as one of the transmitters appears to have failed, so we don't know where the bird is. We can only assume he has stayed in the area with his fellow kiwi. If he had died, the transmitter would have set off a 'mortality' signal, and we have searched high and low for it. In the early days, we had one of the female birds head away from the other birds and out of the protected area. We kept an eye on her for a couple of weeks (through our telemetry gear), and the decision was made to go in and collect her. Since bringing her back alongside her mate, she hasn't moved. We believe she lost contact with them whilst out feeding in an area she didn't know, and was more than pleased to be brought back into the fold. We didn't have any incubation last year, but neither were we expecting it, having uplifted them from their homes and putting them into an unknown area. Now they have settled in, we are hopeful some of them may have young this season.

We at Bush and Beyond have been busy extending our trap lines, as has Friends of Flora. Our two trapping networks have now merged in a number of places. We (B&B) now have over 200 stoat traps with our recent extensions.

Thanks Team!

Once again, we had a wonderful team this year; Guides: Andy, Paula, Cliff, Cindy, and Steve, and Jin who helped with portering. Also thanks to Nick who is our driver, and also helped with food carrying. All those having walked the Heaphy, would have enjoyed the fresh meal he brought in for your last evening on the track!

And thank you to each and every-one of you, who we had the pleasure of returning for another adventure, and to those we have met for the first time. It is all of you who make our work a fun and rewarding place!

That's it for this year folks! Take care, and as usual, if you don't wish to receive our annual newsletter, please reply with 'Unsubscribe' in the subject line and we shall take you off our emailing list.

Wishing you lot's of fun and laughter
Maryann and Bill ☺