

Poland QEII Covenant Trip

Saturday, July 15, 2017

Organised by Dell Hood

After some very cold weather, Saturday proved to be a sunny, dry day just perfect for a visit to the Poland QEII bush reserve on Limeworks Loop Road, Karamu.

We were joined by some members of the 'weedbuster' group and Robbie Bennett, regional representative of the Waikato/Taupo QEII Trust.

The QEII Trust helps private landowners in New Zealand permanently protect special natural and cultural features on their land with open space covenants. The Polands' pocket of bush was protected in perpetuity with a covenant under QEII Trust in 2003.

It is a small pocket of bush, 1.47 hectares, with a few weed issues but an impressive wide diversity of native species. It is level ground bordered by a river and certainly in the winter there were considerable areas of 'ponding.'

The canopy consisted of tall specimens of kahikatea, miro, rimu, tawa, rewarewa and totara.



As we walked further into the reserve we were all kept busy finding the many different native species.

It was interesting to see *Podocarpus hallii* (Hall's totara), with thinner papery bark, and *Podocarpus totara* with thick, stringy bark , growing almost side by side.

Starting out on our walk / species list started.

There were lots of maire seedlings but the verdict is still out, I think, on whether they were *Nestegis cunninghamii* or *Nestegis lanceolata*. Very hard to tell when the mature trees seemed to be unavailable.

Thread fern/ panako / *Blechnum filiforme* was in abundance both as a carpet on the forest floor and then climbing up tree trunks. Apparently it is the only New Zealand fern that has three different kinds of fronds : small rounded leaflets on forest floor, larger pointed leaflets and fronds when climbing and long, thin fertile fronds like pieces of thread. (Hunt, J. and Lucas, R. *From Weta to Kauri*, Random House, N.Z. 2014)



Black or White Maire ?



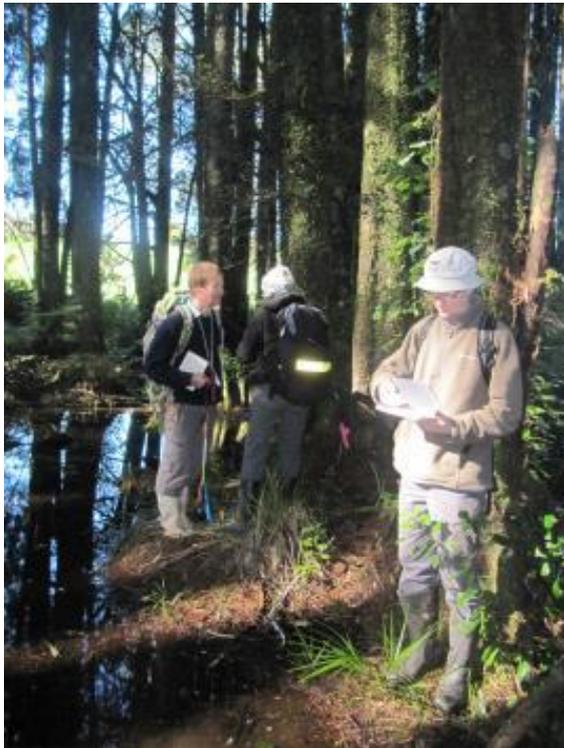
Blechnum filiforme / Thread Fern

There were lots of attractive specimens of mangeao, (*Litsea calicaris*), *Coprosma* species, orchids, kohekohe, *Pseudopanax*, rata, *Astelia*, tree ferns and many more species (please refer to species list)

At one stage seedling nikau were plentiful. Obviously, seed had been brought in by birds.



Nikau seedlings



Water lying in parts of bush and the species list being checked

There was no pest control undertaken in this reserve. The re-growth and diversity of species was exciting to see. Holly and Chinese privet were the main weeds evident. The weed buster group has had multiple working bees and cut and pasted a large area of privet and were returning to replant with native species.



Discussing what might be planted



Privet after being the working bee heaped into piles

The sheltered lunch spot was just what we all needed to warm up and 'pretend' spring had arrived. Planting is going to take place in the areas where the weeds have been removed.

A delightful reserve well worthy of another visit to see new plantings and observe the growth of native plants already established there.

Thanks to Robbie Bennett and the members of the Weed Busters group for joining us and widening our network.