

Forestry for life Flora and Fauna



Eastland Wood Council

Caring for native species

WHEN people see exotic forests, they think of trees, but Eastland Wood Council chief executive Kim Holland says there is so much more going on.

"Our forests are home to a wide variety of native plants, fish and animals, and forest companies in our region take their responsibility to protect them very seriously," says Kim, "particularly during roading development and harvesting periods."

The quality of waterways, freshwater streams inside forests and their fish life are considered a great indicator of the environmental condition of the forests.

The 1.8 million hectares of planted forests in New Zealand are home to many species, including at least 120 threatened indigenous species covering plants, birds, bats, invertebrates, amphibians, lizards and aquatic ecosystems.

Many of New Zealand's threatened species find favourable habitats in or adjacent to exotic plantation forests. Some may utilise plantation trees on a full-time basis including kiwi, falcon (karearea), Hochstetter's frogs, and long-tailed bats. Other threatened species often utilise plantation forests to supplement food supplies but remain reliant on adjacent natural forest (e.g. kaka, kea, kakariki and kereru). In either case, plantation forests provide key habitats for these species and, with careful management, contribute to their continued survival.

Within the plantation forest estate alone there could be as much as 200,000 hectares of indigenous forest remnants, riparian strips, watercourses and wetland. There is plenty of effort that goes into protecting these species. The Resource Management Act 1991 protects areas of significant indigenous vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna, and alongside that are a number of strategies and action plans that fulfil New Zealand's international responsibility under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification promote sustainable forest



management. The council is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests. Of New Zealand's 1.8 million hectares, more than 1 million is FSC certified.

"There are numerous examples of forest management that include scheduling activities around kiwi and karearea breeding, fish spawning and maintaining riparian buffers during logging," says Kim.

"Predator control is another activity that directly improves biodiversity."

While a lot is known about some species, others have very scant information available.

"The number of species recognised in planted forests will increase with further research, as will our knowledge of how they contribute to and interact in the planted forest environment. Those working in planted forests and using them for recreation can help build knowledge by using apps such as NatureWatch and the Biodiversity in Plantation Forests Project which allow people to record their sightings. The forest companies in our region are ensuring the protection and value of the indigenous species that call our forests home.

Tracking the falcon

by Sam McDell, PF Olsen harvest manager

KAREAREA, or New Zealand falcon, have been sighted in five PF Olsen-managed forests on the East Coast, ranging from 40km south of Gisborne to Tolaga Bay so far this year.

One was sighted in a pre-harvest visit, two during active clear-fell operations and one in a recently harvested area. These sightings are recorded in an app called iNaturalist which is aiding in building a register of indigenous species (animals and flora) sightings throughout the country and especially in our plantation forests. Recording sightings and managing operations around native and endangered species is an important function of what we do as forest managers under our FSC group scheme, which PF Olsen has been certified with for 10 years.

Harvesting operations at one site were halted after the crew's tree fallers were dive-bombed by two mature falcons. This behaviour is a key indicator that the crew members were getting close to a nest. Karearea's nesting season generally occurs between August and May. The crew stopped work for the day, informed the manager and an alternative work area

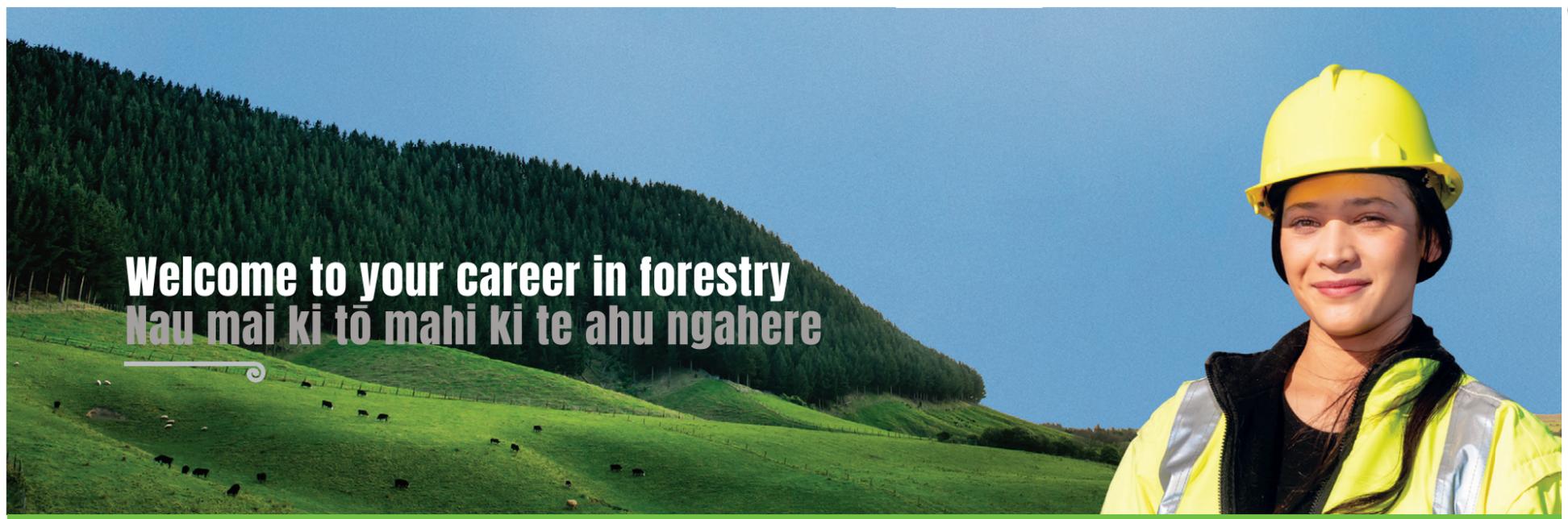
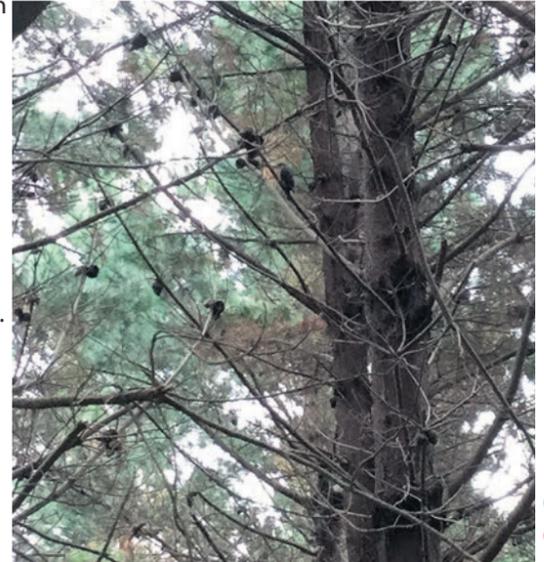
was planned to minimise any disruption to the nesting birds.

By the time the crew were back to the original harvest site there was no sign of the birds, presumed to have found a more peaceful area to settle in.

Numerous sightings have been made in Paroa forest over the years, just west of Tolaga Bay.

The birds are regularly seen resting on old skid sites and slash piles or in-flight above the hills. Karearea nest on the ground in the cover of the larger logs and can roam up to 9 kilometres around the forest.

It is amazing to see these birds settle into our exotic plantation forests so well, whether it be in mature forests, during harvest operations or into the second rotation.



Welcome to your career in forestry
Nau mai ki tō mahi ki te ahu ngahere

LOVE OUR FORESTS

YOUR FUTURE DOES



OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE AT

FORESTRYCAREERS.NZ



Looking out for bats, birds

PLANTATION forests both pre-and post-harvest can provide attractive habitat or corridors for native species, including rare and threatened species such as the endemic New Zealand falcon and long-tailed bat.

All staff and contractors working within the Hikurangi Forest Farms (HFF) estate are encouraged to report all sightings of rare and threatened species. As such they are all provided with information on the rare, threatened and endangered species they are most likely to encounter during their day to day work in the forest

There are two projects we are currently focusing on:

Long-tailed bat pekapeka-tou-roa (Chalinolobus tuberculatus)

In 2010, a bat monitoring programme commenced to determine if any populations of the long-tailed bats were present in our forests. In addition, if found to be present, information collected would also determine what habitat types and feeding areas they were using within and adjacent to the forest. Our initial survey confirmed a population existed in one of the forests within the estate, and that the bats use a network of rivers and native patches as habitat for feeding and flight zones.

The aim of this work is to enable better management decisions to ensure the long-term protection of this threatened species during infrastructure, roading and forest harvest operations and as a guideline to determine where to implement effective vertebrate pest management. The most significant threat facing this species is introduced vertebrate pests, particularly ship rats.

As such, prior to any operations commencing in the bat management zone a bat management plan was developed around the bat protection area. This plan incorporates protection

of feeding corridors and riparian and stream corridors, protection of potential roost trees, more intensive and targeted pest control, continued monitoring and establishing artificial roost boxes into the area.

The protection area is monitored on an annual basis using digital sound meters that register and record the long-tailed bat echo location.

The ultimate goal of continuous monitoring and management of the population is to:

- Identify possible roost locations
- Record changes in bat pass rates to measure the efficiency of the pest control and protection programme.

Ongoing surveillance will be maintained to ensure effective management and protection continues into the future.

New Zealand falcon karearea (Falco Novaeseelandiae)

The native karearea or New Zealand falcon tend to nest on the ground and are often seen nesting or hunting in recent cutover.

As such, it is essential to monitor and manage falcon to ensure protection of nests as their location can often conflict with harvesting and roadline operations. Management around any confirmed nesting sites during breeding season, primarily involves ensuring they are protected from any forestry operations and implementing a pest management plan targeting mustelids, cats and possums.

HFF have implemented a programme of ongoing monitoring of potential and confirmed falcons. Reported sightings undergo a follow up survey for verification, in particular around breeding time. The area surrounding any previously recorded nests is monitored in spring prior to any

upcoming operations, resulting in identification prior to harvesting crews moving into an area; however, this is not always the case and harvesting has been postponed in some cases due to the reporting of falcons by a crew.

As an example, a nest was located and confirmed approximately 30 metres from a skid site. The logging crew was instructed to stop cutting down trees and move to another location within the same block to give any chicks the best chance of survival and time to fully fledge. Pest traps were then placed around the perimeter to protect the chicks from predation.

The crew enjoyed daily sightings of the adults and eventually the chicks, getting to observe hunting lessons and flying practice. Once the chicks were well on their way to independence and had left the nest site, the crew was brought back to complete the harvesting of the block.



Long-tailed bat.



Short-tailed bat.



Karearea.

We have been operating in Gisborne since 1985 and are very proud to support the local industry

PHL
Pacific Haulage Ltd
107 Aerodrome Road Gisborne • Ph 867 8483

25641-01

Creating wealth. Naturally.

For nearly 50 years, Forest Enterprises has been helping kiwis grow their wealth by investing in sustainable, renewable forestry.

Contact us about our latest investment opportunities.

Forest Enterprises
Creating wealth. Naturally.

0800 746 346
www.forestenterprises.co.nz

25642-01

Are you part of the forestry industry?

Let me connect you with new clients

Contact me today on 869 0618
matt.vick@gisborneherald.co.nz

Matt Vick

The Gisborne Herald
TE NUPEPA O TE TAIRAWHITI

23708-01