



Issue #7 – April 2026

Photo by Jo Roberts – Foxton Beach Jan 2024

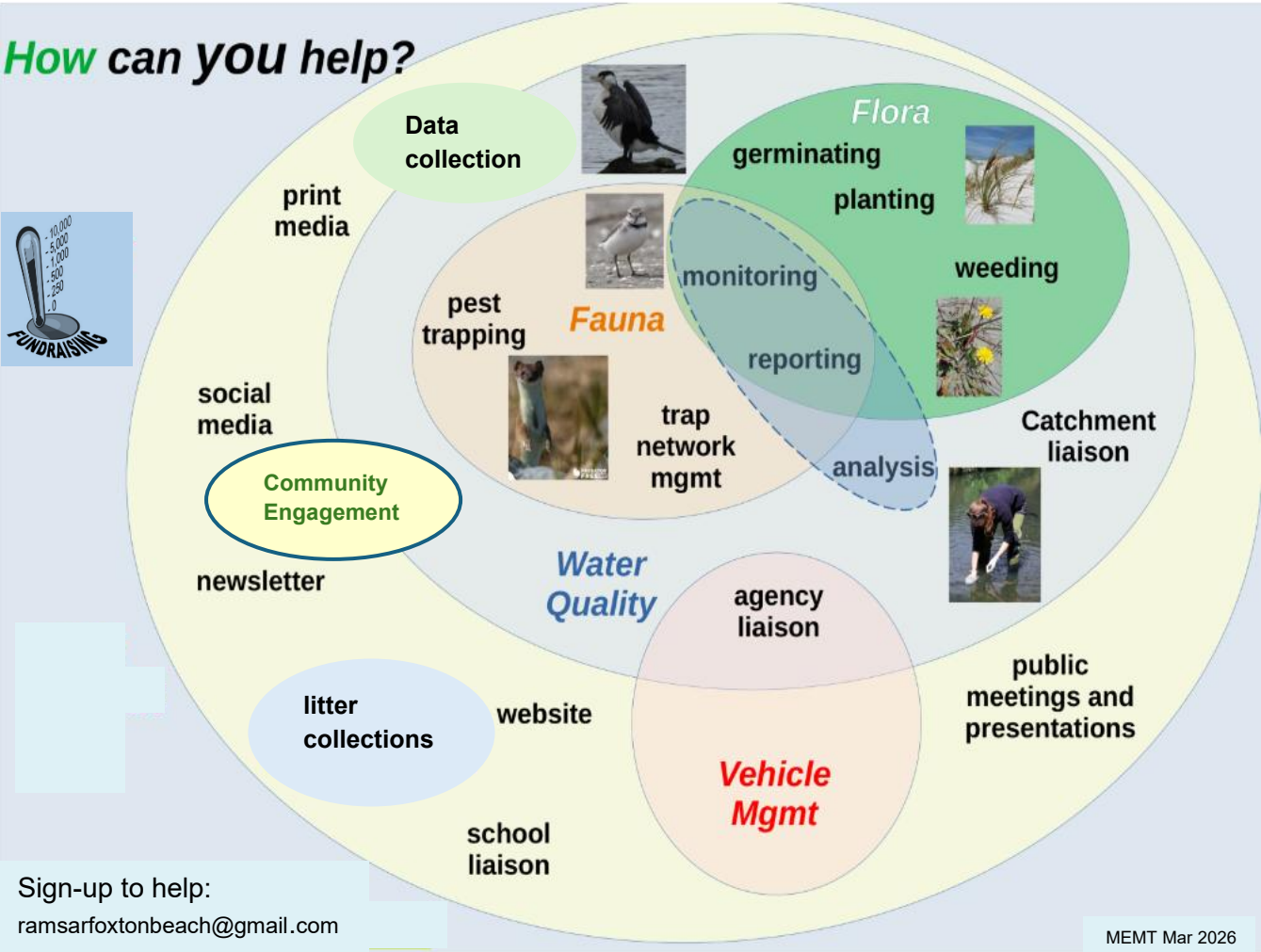
Papangaio Te Wharangi Manawatū Estuary Newsletter

Kia ora / greetings, welcome to the seventh edition of our community newsletter from the Manawatū Estuary Management Team.

Getting Involved

In today’s busy world and life, finding time to support causes that help you, your environment and your community can seem daunting. However, a lot of the work being done by current volunteers is small, bite-sized chunks of time without needing to commit to a consistent time and place each week or fortnight. On the other side of that ‘coin’ we are always appreciative of those people who have skills and passion to help on a set time basis – be it a roster or more definitive time management. In our previous newsletters you have started to see the growing mahi as well as information on the area we aim to protect and enhance. Come chat to us on where your interest/passion area is and see if we can help you contribute. Volunteers are available to talk to at Wildlife Foxton Trust Mondays through to Thursdays 9am to 12noon @ 207 Seabury Avenue; email info@wildlifefoxton.nz or ring 022-684-9813 (leave a message outside those hours).

How can you help?



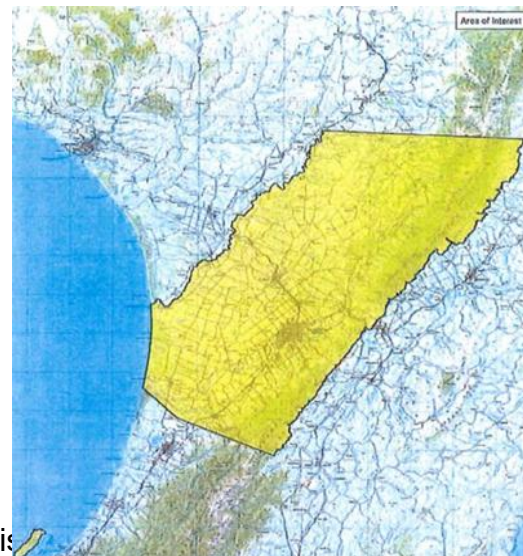
Let's look at the history of the area, in this edition, through the eyes of Rangitāne.

Rangitāne has had an unbroken connection to the Manawatū Awa and estuary and Okatia Coastline since Kupe first sailed into these waters over 900 years ago after following the godwits/kuaka on their migration across the Pacific.

Haunui a nania, the Kurahaupo ancestor was the first to traverse the coastline naming many features, including the Manawatū Awa. Hau also identified key resources and places that guided the settlement of the Okatia coastline for his Rangitāne descendants. Rangitāne settled the area over 700 years ago, and continue to have an unbroken connection to the area and its environment, which is represented in the numerous archaeological sites uncovered in the coastal area. Complimenting the numerous archaeological sites are Moa remains and sites of Moa hunting/preparation that coincided with the arrival and settlement of the Manawatū Estuary by Rangitāne. The area was first occupied by Whatonga and Tanenuiarangi who expanded the Rangitāne rohe and their descendants settled the Manawatū Catchment.

Papangio was one of the first settlements/mahinga kai established along the coastline due to the large ngaio trees that existed in the southern bank of the Manawatū Awa. The Ngaio tree was a valuable resource that provided shelter and provided a source of medicinal oils and material to ward off sand flies and mosquitos.

Papangaio was also a place that provided easy access to the Manawatū Estuary to gather shellfish and fish in the estuary. The location was also an elevated area that provided shelter, a safe crossing point in the Awa for coastal travellers and access to Wharangi.



Wharangi on the northern side of the Manawatū Estuary was established last 700 years and was used as fishing station, waka mooring area and fish/whale/shark processing area. The area was used as a port area seasonally, where waka would leave for fishing expeditions, deep sea expeditions, waka journeys going both north to Whanganui/Whangaehu and south to Te Wae Wae Kapiti ko Tara raua ko Rangitāne and then on to Rangitāne o Wairau in Te Waka a Maui.

Nearby Papangaio, was Puru Rarauhe which was well known as a cultivation area and place where fern root aruhe or raraue was cultivated. Large scale horticultural practises grew in scale and area over 500 years ago due to climate change adaptation that also coincided with the expansion of over 400 settlement sites along the Manawatū Awa. The cultivation sites at Papangaio and Puru Aruhe were still in use when Europeans arrived in the early 1800's.

Rangitāne has had an unbroken relationship with the Manawatū Estuary the Okatia Coast and continue, today, to gather resources in the area.

Though Rangitāne o Manawatū has settled their Treaty Claims, which is a Crown process and through their settlement their interests in the Awahou area have been acknowledged their links remain to the area in accordance with Māori Lore and ahi kaa through their ongoing use of the area, which remains unbroken.

The above information is an excerpt from the

[Management Plan | metrust](https://www.metrust.org.nz/management-plan)

(<https://www.metrust.org.nz/management-plan>)

where a full account for each Iwi can be found.



How to Report Vehicles & Trailbikes in the Dunes

Our Dune Protection team has been trialling this, with great success. We've already seen some trailbikes seized and various vehicle owners spoken to by Police.

Here's what to do to make a report:

- Take photos if safe to do so, try to get at least some of the number plate if there is one.
- **Most important:** Note the **date** and **time** and **location**.
- Either email all that along with a brief description of the incident and your contact details to foxtonandbeach@cpnz.org.nz
- Or fill in our form
 - Get it from Wildlife Foxton Trust at 207 Seabury Avenue
 - The form will be up on the MET website by mid April
 - Or email ramsarfoxtonbeach@gmail.com or phone 022-684-9813 and ask for it electronically or to be popped in your letterbox.

This is just the first step, we are sure to learn more and make improvements to this process.

Bird species focus: Kuriri/Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*



Native. At risk-declining.

The Pacific Golden Plover breeds in Siberia and Alaska, so it is only seen in Aotearoa New Zealand during our spring and summer months arriving from mid-September onwards and heading back in March and April.

The annual migration round trip is 25-27,000km.

Usually seen in small flocks of up to 12 birds. It feeds by making short runs, stopping abruptly when it sees something on the surface of the mud, and then snatching at what it's spotted. Small crabs, marine worms, invertebrates and earthworms, plus some berries and seeds on their breeding grounds make up their diet.

In non-breeding plumage Pacific Golden Plover are a mottled dark brown and buff on top with some hints of gold. It has a short black beak and grey legs, with a pale stripe above the eye, a pale forehead, and pale underparts, with some dull yellow-gold and dark speckled markings on the throat. Towards the end of summer black feathers will begin to show through as they prepare to migrate north to their breeding grounds.

Plant species focus: Māori Musk *Thyridia repens*

Native. At risk-naturally uncommon.

This rare flowering species is found in estuaries around Aotearoa New Zealand. We are fortunate to have some in the Manawatū Estuary. Currently found in a relatively inaccessible area – but worth watching out for. The flower is distinctive, when not in flower the plant can resemble Mākoako.



Flower colour varies between shades of purple but are sometimes much lighter, bordering almost to white.

These distinctive blooms appear between November and May, but are relatively short-lived.

Trapping

Trapping is starting to bring results!

	Jan 29 – Mar 30	YTD Total
Mice	34	144
Rats	26	66
Ferret	0	1
Weasel	1	1
Stoats	2	6
Hedgehogs	23	39
Possums	17	43

Want a trap? Email Suzanne on

traps@wildlifefoxton.nz

OR leave a message on 022-684-9813 for one of the team to contact you,

OR drop into Wildlife Foxton Office at 207

Seabury Avenue, Foxton Beach.

Available on loan, free of charge.



Volunteer Opportunities

At Wildlife Foxton they have a range of tasks that need a commitment of a couple of hours each week, so come see us or reach out at: info@wildlifefoxton.nz or come drop in to Wildlife Foxton Trust: Open Mon thru Thurs 9am – 12.00noon; +50's Friendship Club Mon and Wed 1pm - 4pm; @ 207 Seabury Avenue, Foxton Beach. Other events and what is happening where you can join in, are available on the website under the Events Calendar: <https://www.metrust.org.nz/current-events>

Upcoming events:

11 April Levin Repair Café (2nd Sat every month) 10-1pm Cnr Cambridge & Montgomery Streets, Levin.

18 May (Monday) 1.30pm: Horowhenua Forest & Bird meeting and public talk @ Wildlife Foxton Trust, 207 Seabury Avenue Foxton Beach. Come hear from the knowledgeable Caitlin Lavery – Lead Ecologist on the O2NL Northern Alliance on the environmental work associated with protecting local fauna.

An interesting short video: <https://youtu.be/xNriFnGjQ2M?si=4YAScWp4xkYrIhL>

6 June (Saturday) 10am Community Planting Day with Horizons Regional Council @ Pinewood Road Foxton Beach. Planting wetland area – 500 plants. Volunteers need to bring spades and gloves although a supply of gloves will be on hand.

Cousins East Foxton Beach forest walking tracks CLOSED

Please do not ignore the safety tape, nor access the old trails from backyards or other ways. There has been such significant damage the Horowhenua District Council is currently consulting with contractors to remove dangerous trees. This may or may not mean the whole forest – we await updates. In the meantime, please keep clear and keep everyone safe until we know what areas are safe to use.



metrust.org.nz



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receive our newsletter by email?

Connect with us at: ramsarfoxtonbeach@gmail.com

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