

## **To all members of the Upper Clutha branch**

### **Recent branch activities**

As most of you will know, the Upper Clutha branch of Forest and Bird runs a varied programme of field trips to various places, and participants report that they thoroughly enjoy these trips.

Some of our members have been running the stoat trap line on the Haast Pass, and they have reported that they get great satisfaction from clearing these traps.

Then we have the re-vegetation of the Millennium Walkway from Wanaka to Glendhu Bay, which has been carried out in conjunction with students in the community group from Mount Aspiring College. The few Upper Clutha Branch members who have been working with a local group on the Lake Hawea Foreshore say that this work is the social event of the week. And those members who have been working with the Lindis Conservation Group report 'getting a kick' out of their conservation activities.

All of these members report feelings of satisfaction and enjoyment in being involved in these worthwhile activities.

### **A proposal for improving club communications**

The committee strives to keep every one of our members fully informed of what is going on in the Forest and Bird Society as a whole, as well as reporting the local happenings. Twice a year we send out an Upper Clutha branch newsletter to our branch members, but we feel we could keep everyone more regularly informed of our branch's activities and of news for the Society as a whole through email.

As well as being a quick and cost effective method of communication, sending our branch's newsletters by email is more environmentally friendly because it would greatly reduce our branch's use of paper.

Central Office has given us the names and electronic addresses of those society members from our branch that has email, and we intend to forward this letter to these members by email. Those members that Forest and Bird who have no email address will be sent a paper version of this letter by post. If anyone receiving this letter by post has an email account and would like to receive future news letters from Upper Clutha Forest and Bird electronically, please send us your contact details - [info@uppercluthaforestandbird.org.nz](mailto:info@uppercluthaforestandbird.org.nz)

### **The historic and future roles of the executive committee**

At the Annual General Meeting of the Upper Clutha branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, which was held at Lowburn on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2008, questions were asked about the historic and future roles of our branch's executive committee.

The Upper Clutha branch of Forest and Bird came into being some 25 years ago. It embraces a large part of the hinterland of Otago, mainly in three distinct areas: the Wakatipu Basin, the Upper Clutha Basin and the basin in and around Cromwell and Alexandra. We have 174 members, who come from as far away as Glenorchy, Makarora, the Lindis Pass and Oturehua, as well as from the more densely-populated main centres. The distribution of our members is spread roughly equally between the three distinct areas mentioned.

Up until this year, the executive committee has had members living in Alexandra, Bannockburn, Cromwell and, at times, in the Wakatipu area, but today all eight members reside in Wanaka, Hawea or Tarras.

The committee meets once a month, meeting in the various members' homes. In the past committee members have had to travel significant distances to attend these meetings – sometimes a round trip of 200 km – and this could be the reason why the members of this year's committee live relatively close to one another. But the current committee is concerned that this arrangement may make it less representative of our branch's more widely-based membership, and worries that it may not be able to do justice to the various environmental matters for such a large area. Would it not be better to have a committee with a more diverse membership, reflecting the geographic make-up of the membership of this branch of Forest and Bird?

### **Forest and Bird Society in the Wakatipu and Alexandra Basins**

The committee believes that our branch's activities should be as wide-spread as possible, extending to the Wakatipu and Alexandra Basins and more actively involving those of our members who live in these areas.

Some Forest and Bird staff has suggested that the Upper Clutha branch of Forest and Bird could change its name to "Central Otago Lakes" and make the Wakatipu and Alexandra areas into sub-sections of our

and Treasurer. We wonder if this is too onerous.

Alternatively, because the committee has the power to co-opt, members from the two outer areas could nominate a spokesperson to represent them. That person could either meet with or become part of the executive committee, and the entire committee could meet in Cromwell, say, once every two or three months so it is not too far to travel from Cromwell/Alexandra and Wakatipu members.

**Situation Vacant: Branch Secretary**

The position of Secretary was not filled at the Annual General Meeting. We invite anyone who is interested in volunteering for the position to contact us.

**And finally**

The Upper Clutha branch of Forest and Bird is all about people and being involved in protecting our flora and fauna, but this does depend upon us having a central committee to co-ordinate our branch's activities in this important and fascinating part of the Otago region.

We would like to see more branch members involved in the activities that come before the committee, even if it is simply leading one of the programmed walks or helping organise a talk. Involvement does not necessarily mean being a committee member – you can contribute as a working group or sub-committee on a matter that interests you, or even just as an individual, liaising with an elected committee member. The more active branch members there are, the more the workload is eased for each working member, the more effective we can be and the more rewarding our work is.

**We ask you to think about our branch and how best to run it – to the benefit of all of our branch members and so that we can be most effective in our conservation efforts – and to send us your responses by email, or post.**

Our best wishes to all.

John L Turnbull

Chairman, on behalf of the executive committee Upper Clutha Branch

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