

Beech Trip - 17 April 2016

On a calm cloudy day, Manawatu's Forest and Bird Society had 13 people on its monthly walk learning about predators, beech trees, plants and bugs along the Oroua River valley track towards the Alice Nash Heritage Lodge in the Ruahine Ranges.

Graeme Richards and Jill Rapson lead the trip, with Jill's botanist background providing a fantastic introduction into the world of the New Zealand forest.

We had lunch at the Lodge and the day began to fine up. Other people had stayed overnight at the Lodge and they were very interested in talking with us about what we had seen. We all enjoyed ourselves and certainly came home richer in information. Jill had very kindly given us some books to keep and refer to about New Zealand plants.

We were: Robyn and Kevin with Kasin, Koben, Allyka and Ryker; Pete, Mary, Ann, Graeme, Sarah (photographer), Jill (botanist) and Fiona (Co-ordinator).



Graeme Richards explaining how a stoat trap works to an interested F&B group in the Ruahine Ranges. Graeme is often up in this area to help re-bait the traps with fresh eggs.

*Back (left to right): Ryker (blue jacket), Koben (green jacket), Robyn, (red jacket), Pete (hat)
Front (left to right): Nearest to Graeme is Ann (blue hat), Fiona, Mary, Kevin, Jill*

Koben's comments summarise what proved to be a very interesting discussion for all on what stoats like to do in the forest. "I enjoyed learning about the Stoat traps. I didn't know that fresh eggs would help bring the stoats to the trap better. I like how the trap works. It used a very tough spring which made the strike plate make a loud noise! Jill was funny!"

Other comments:

Kasen: "I learned a lot about the stinging nettles (Onga Onga). If you touch them it will hurt. It was funny when the plant [Bush Lawyer] got stuck on the back of Jill after she just told us about it."

Allyka: "I liked taking pictures. I want to find more millipedes."

Ryker: "That Jill lady told us about plants and trees. I like ferns now. I really liked picking up sticks, but bugs eat the sticks."

Other pictures from the trip



Kasin holds the tape, while Ryker looks on. "Using the measuring device around the beech tree was cool. By going around the tree it told us the diameter of the tree (161 cm!)"



Bridge over the Oroua River - F&B members plus others enjoying the bush



Bush Lawyer



Mingimingi berries



Fungi - not sure what species



Millipedes found under a rotten log



Black fronds are the fertile fronds on the fern Kiokio