



2020 What a Year...!

Kia Ora friends of Flora and Fauna of Aotearoa, Thank you to our wonderful network for your ongoing support over these past two years. Despite the disruptive and challenging year we are making headway bringing important issues and creative sustainable solutions into focus. We're keeping the momentum going right through to the end of the year with various actions, live discussions and community meets. We hope you'll join us in greeting 2021 with added focus and determination for positive change.

On December 6th we will be holding a meeting on Sprays and Solutions in Waipapa at Faiawa Farm in the Far North. This is the first of many to come that focus on practical solutions. A Non-toxic Neighbourhoods group Northland has also just been started up by locals and we're keen to support others around the area to do the same. Let us know if you want to get one going in your neighbourhood.

On December 10th along with the Weed Management Advisory, we are encouraging people to take part in a Call To Action to make their voices heard by sticking a sign on their verge for all to see. Also, at 6:30pm on 10th there will be a live online presentation by The People's Inquiry 2020 Committee which will cover the use of Toxic Chemicals in New Zealand, solutions and a Q & A session. A link to this discussion will be sent out closer to the date for those keen to join. Make a note in your diary if you want to join.

Our Annual Appeal - Can you pitch in?

We're starting our annual appeal to our networks and beyond. As part of our appeal we're calling on all our friends and supporters to pitch in just a little bit to help us achieve our goal of creating a fun, engaging and educational stall at Waitangi in 2021. If each of us gave just \$10 we'd have our wish list checked off! Check out our "wish list" on the next page to see if there's anything specific you'd like to help out with, or make a general donation of your choosing - it's all gratefully received and supports our 100% volunteer work. **Thank you, Asha Andersen & Felicity Taylor**

November Newsletter



Gilly Jackson's latest rescue, a nest of blackbird chicks.

Annual Appeal Wish List ...

What you take from
the earth you must
give back.

That's Nature's Way.
- Chris d'Lacey



\$300 - No Spray Zone Signs x 10

Help kickstart our Nature's Verge campaign by helping up create attractive, durable signs for the roadside verges.

\$100 - Organic Wildflower Seed Mix

Help share the benefits of wildflowers with people and encourage them to plant and maintain their verge without the use of poisons.

\$200 - Green Hi-Vis Vests x 10

While working on the verge or picking up rubbish on the roadside we need to be visible. Help us buy 10 vests and screen print them with our Kaitiaki logo.

\$175 - Waitangi Day Stall

Waitangi Day is the perfect opportunity to raise awareness of the issues and take positive solutions to the nation and spread the word. Help pay for our stall to get us there!

\$100 - Printing Educational Flyers

Factsheets and other educational information can help us raise awareness around the serious issues of poisons and our environment. Help us get the word out by funding our educational flyers.

Bank Account:
Flora and Fauna of Aotearoa
12-3091-0037573-00

**Thank you for your
generous support.**



TAKE BACK YOUR VERGE



We are raising \$500+ to help us get started! If you can pitch in and support this, please make a donation. Thank you!

Kia Ora Friends!

On Waitangi Day 2021 (8th Feb) we will be launching our Nature's Verge initiative! This initiative is all about supporting people to take back their verge and plant it up for birds and bees without the use of poisons.

We're asking for your support to help us get this off the ground and make this campaign a success. Here is what we are working on...

- Guide to which species to plant for birds and bees
- Spray Free Zone sign to go on the verge
- Green Hi-Vis Vests for wearing while working
- Wildflower seed mix packets



**Bank Account:
Flora and Fauna of Aotearoa
12-3091-0037573-00**



CALL



TO



ACTION

THURSDAY DECEMBER 10th
International Human Rights and Animal Rights Day

Stick your message on the Verge.
Make OUR voices heard!

WE ARE
PLANET
PEOPLE
NOT TOXIC
SYNTHETIC
CHEMICAL
SHEEPLE

PROTECT
OUR
CHILDREN
Healthy
Safe &
Poison-Free


Dangerous
decision makers
at work

OUR CITY
NEEDS TO BE
ALIVE
MORE THAN
IT NEEDS TO BE
GROOMED

The People's Inquiry 2020

The People's Inquiry final newsletter for the year has gone out to those following the Inquiry, it can be read on the PI2020 website [here](#). There's lots covered in the latest issue, including:

- The Committee's involvement in the Social Movements Resistance and Social Change Conference
- The recent backdown of Auckland City Council over the use of Glyphosate across the city
- A call to action from The Weed Management Advisory and Flora and Fauna of Aotearoa for December 10th Human and Animal Rights Day
- A call for advocates & supporters to help spread the word of the Inquiry with our new flyers, posters and cards
- Non-toxic Neighbourhoods groups popping up around the country
- For the Love of Bees in collaboration has put out a series of great podcasts

If you haven't already, consider registering on the website to follow the progress of the Inquiry and get links to the latest interviews etc. www.peoplesinquiry2020.nz

Bird Egg Collection Gifted to Flora and Fauna

We have been gifted an egg collection from an Ornithologist in Auckland who needed to find a new home for the collection. Rick Law started this collection at age 5 and continued for 47 years! He and was happy to pass it on to us to be caretakers for and to share with people for educational purposes. The collection which looks to have more than 70 eggs includes those from fantails, NZ Dotterel and Pukeko. We're looking forward to learning more about them and sharing this precious taonga (treasure).

Rick recommends if you are interested in learning more about birds specifically, consider joining [The New Zealand Ornithological Society - Birds of New Zealand](#).

"Birds New Zealand is committed to the study of birds and their habitat use within New Zealand through encouraging members and organising projects and schemes. Activities are organised at both the national and regional level, with 20 regions providing a local network for members to engage in bird studies. We promote the recording and wide circulation of the results of bird studies and observations through the production of a scientific journal and other publications promoting birds in New Zealand. Birds New Zealand seeks to assist the conservation and management of birds by providing information, from which sound management decisions can be derived." - Birds of NZ website

Do you collect bird eggs, feathers or any other natural objects? Send us a photo and share a bit about your collection.



The People's Inquiry - Te Uiuinga a te Tāngata

The People's Inquiry into the Impacts and Effects of Toxic Chemicals and Poisons on our People, Wildlife and Environment – Te Uiuinga e pā ana ki nga Pātanga me nga Tukinotanga a nga Matū Tāoke me nga Paitini ki ngā Tāngata, nga Kararehe Kōwao me te Taiao

Recent News & Updates

Auckland City Council's move to 'harmonise' the roadside weed management by reintroducing glyphosate based chemicals across the city has been halted because of the efforts of many submitters, campaigners and residents who showed up to the Council meeting on Thursday 12th. A huge thank you for their efforts! You can read more further on and watch the submissions [linked here](#).

Members of our Inquiry Committee joined the Social Movements, Resistance and Social Change Conference for 2020 also on Thursday 12th November. The Conference was held in Wellington and streamed online to people throughout the country and international participants. We facilitated a discussion on the use of toxic chemicals and poisons in Aotearoa, the impacts and effects and pathways forward to a sustainable, healthy, poison free environment.

We will be holding this discussion session again via zoom on Thursday December 10th at 6:30pm, with a Q&A session afterwards. This will be recorded and shared online for those unable to join us live. The details for this session will be shared soon with all those who are registered with the Inquiry.

Thank you to those who have recently sent in their submissions. Recent submissions include those from scientific researchers, gardeners affected by spray drift and comprehensive reports on the effects of 1080 poison. Have you started writing your submission yet? We've tried to make the process as simple as possible including accepting submissions through email or post. Read more about [making your submission here](#).

The Executive Committee - peoplesinquiry2020.nz / contact@peoplesinquiry2020.nz



Committee Members: Stephanie McKee and Ursula Edgerton at the conference in Wellington. Bee Hive in the background.



Nature's Verge National Launch

We are excited that we will be back again at Waitangi Day in February 2021 with fresh ideas and solutions to share with the nation. We are currently working on getting some No Spray Zone signs made up, green hi-vis vests, t-shirts and packets of wildflower seeds - all for sale at Waitangi Day for our Nature's Verge initiative. Empowering people to take back their road-side verge for nature - and to get rid of useless risky poisons.

We're looking for people keen to give input on different techniques and various species that can be used on our verges. Get in touch via email if you are interested in contributing or keep an eye out for future zoom hui.



Posters to Share

A great selection of posters can be [downloaded here](#) from For the Love of Bees. These would make great posters to use as part of the Call To Action on December 10th - have your voice heard, put a message on your verge. There are about 15 to choose from, or get creative and make your own.



Our Vision

Living in harmony with nature.

Sustainable living and environmental responsibility through kaitiakitanga are primary values.

We recognise ourselves as an integral part of the natural world and as kaitiaki of all life.



THE LITTLE OWL - an example of NZ Government madness, and to show that nothing changes

By Carol Sawyer

A creature can be treated as a monster one minute and, in a flash of time, become treasured. Possums, magpies, stoats, deer - one day in the not too distant future, when they are all rarities, people will look back with sorrow at today's attitudes.

This is a story not many people know, and it is relevant to the 1080/Predator Free 2050 debate in that it shows the misinformation that was taken as gospel by the government of the day - not once, but twice! (Nothing changes!) The Little Owl was introduced here from Europe to do something it doesn't do, and

was then almost killed off for doing the thing it doesn't do, even though it didn't do it, (bear with me), and it is now partially protected.

The Little Owl, (*Athene noctua*), a European owl, was introduced to Marlborough, Canterbury and Otago just over 100 years ago. Because it is a pastureland bird it is probably doing better than the Morepork these days - no 1080 for it, except on the forest perimeter. It has never reached the North Island, or Stewart Island, or the West Coast of the South Island. It is not a strong flier.



It was introduced SPECIFICALLY to kill the birds in the orchards.

The problem though is that it is an insect-eater in the main (98% of its diet), and will usually only kill small birds and mice when raising young, and was NO USE to orchardists in ridding the orchards of birds. (In fact it probably helped them by getting rid of insect pests.)

However that did not stop the government declaring war on the owl in the 1930's. A bounty was put on the head of the Little Owl and they were killed in huge numbers. The reason? The government thought that the Little Owl was eating native birds!

In 1942, Professor Brian Marples, of the Zoology Dept of the University of Otago, did a study of the Little Owl and, because he had many dead Little Owls at his disposal, he was able to examine the stomach contents of 242 of the poor little beggars. He found the remains of 5,443 animals. Mainly insects, of which caterpillars and beetles were the most common. The remains of 20 birds, 9 mice, 4 lizards and 8 frogs were found. With two doubtful exceptions, none of the birds were native species.

So the bounty was taken off their head and today the Little Owl is partially protected in New Zealand - which means that it can only be hunted or killed if it is damaging property or crops, which it doesn't do of course. It is possibly extinct in Liechtenstein, and its numbers are declining in Europe. (See below.)

The Little Owl's numbers are probably declining here too, as they are vulnerable to pesticides. I received a number of Little Owls in spring, over the years, with paralysed legs. People found them and assumed they had been hit by cars or otherwise damaged mechanically, but a raptor vet told me that in early spring they have started using up their fat supplies, which releases the poisons they have ingested from pesticide-affected insects into their body, and this in turn paralyses them.

Photos : 1) Athene, (Teeny for short). She lived with me for 7 years. She is still a baby in these shots. Baby owls turn their heads in all directions, to make sense of their new world. 2) Little Owls arriving in Otago from Germany in 1906. This photo is of some of the sixty Little Owls (*Athene noctua*) arriving in Dunedin on the ship 'Aotea', from Germany. Imported by the Acclimatisation Society, now Fish and Game NZ, they were released off the Otago Heads in 1906.

What must they have made of it all?! Kaka, Kereru, Moreporks and Harrier hawks, and all manner of birds they had never seen before, as they worked to establish their own little territories.

Little Owls are often called German Owls in the south of NZ but they are in fact an European owl and were only called German owls because this shipment came from Germany. Little Owls were also released in Canterbury and Marlborough around the same time.

PS The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species says this about *Athene noctua*: "Population levels can suffer marked decreases after severe winters. Its range has contracted locally in many parts of Europe, which is thought to be mainly due to habitat changes, including the loss of suitable nest-sites and, less often, the use of pesticides. Industrialised farming practices have resulted in a reduction of prey items such as voles and earthworms. Agricultural intensification, ground clearance, excessive use of toxic chemicals and road traffic deaths all contribute to declines as well (Holt et al. 2014). The loss of nest holes from the felling of old hollow trees and the restoration of old buildings is also likely to affect the species (Tucker and Heath 1994)." It is listed as endangered on the Dutch Red List.