

Summer : Feel the heat...

Where does the time go? We've been busy, many shows to organise (as you will read). We've welcomed a new trustee, Lyn Ridge from Ashburton... we've been at shows up and down the country. And the time just seems to fly by!

Our wonderful Admiral butterflies have been getting marvellous support from many people, amongst them radio host Graeme Hill, who is encouraging everyone to plant nettles and release the ensuing populations of Admirals. We are fortunate that in some parts of the country there are plenty of these beauties, but in Auckland, for instance, it is a rare sight to see them here.

As this newsletter goes to press, on Radio Live Graeme is interviewing George Gibbs, entomologist, about the Admirals and also trustee Norm Twigge, who is actively breeding them at his home in Whakatane.

Another of our members, Rob Jones, is working with the team restoring the habitat at Mt Eden, and has planted nettles there where people are unlikely to go – even *Urtica ferox*, the ferocious tree nettle! Meanwhile at Cornwall Park, after promises that they would spray the nettle no longer, the farmer there recently sprayed, with a consequent outcry. We have now had reassurance from the management that the nettle will NEVER again be sprayed.

Through the work of our member Darren Gedye, we have a special page for Kids on the website with a colouring contest running – something for your children to do over the holidays. Each entry submitted receives a free packet of swan plant seed, and there is a major prize as well.

We are thrilled to announce another certified butterfly garden/habitat – the first in the South Island, and this is in Owaka, in the Catlins, or south of Dunedin and north-east of Invercargill. Jacqui went to vet the habitat in September, when the snow was deep so very little habitat to see, but it was obvious from the efforts of Gordon and Janine that they were passionate about increasing the awareness, the habitat and the number of species in their corner of New Zealand.

We wish them well.

the Trustees



At the Blockhouse Bay Garden Festival, Charlotte was rewarded with this gift of a mohair sweater. The designer (and knitter) was also exhibiting and gifted the sweater to Char.

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New Trustee

Lyn Ridge from Ashburton came on board as trustee last month.

For the last few years Lyn and husband Richard have struggled to keep the plants up to the caterpillars, reverting to pumpkin as a backup when required. Every summer a forest of 'stripped' swan plants has adorned their home. She has decided that this year she is going to get ahead of those very hungry caterpillars – by getting her milkweed established earlier in the season, and growing more host and nectar flowers from seed.

Lyn is a real estate administrator by day and wife/mother for the remainder. Lyn and Richard are diverse in their activities, which range from Latin dance to geo-caching (an outdoor activity where GPS tools are used to locate hidden items), to travel and of course watching the life cycle of the Monarch (real-time) in the comfort of their home.

They would dearly love to visit Mexico during the Monarch overwintering... but then there's also Christmas Island during the crab migration. And Rome and China and...

"Actually, I want to see the whole world, and I want to see it now!" she said. "But right now NZ has its own butterflies to learn about and to protect... so let's do it!"

Rotorua Home Show

This was the second time that we had had an appearance at this show – and this year much of the hard work was done by Johnny and Chelsea Wilson, Shona Purves, Anderley Middleton and Norm Twigge. Mary Parkinson, who has in the past been the key organiser, became very ill and was unable to undertake any of the shows she normally does.

We hope you'll soon be on your feet again, Mary - we miss you.

Our new Treasurer

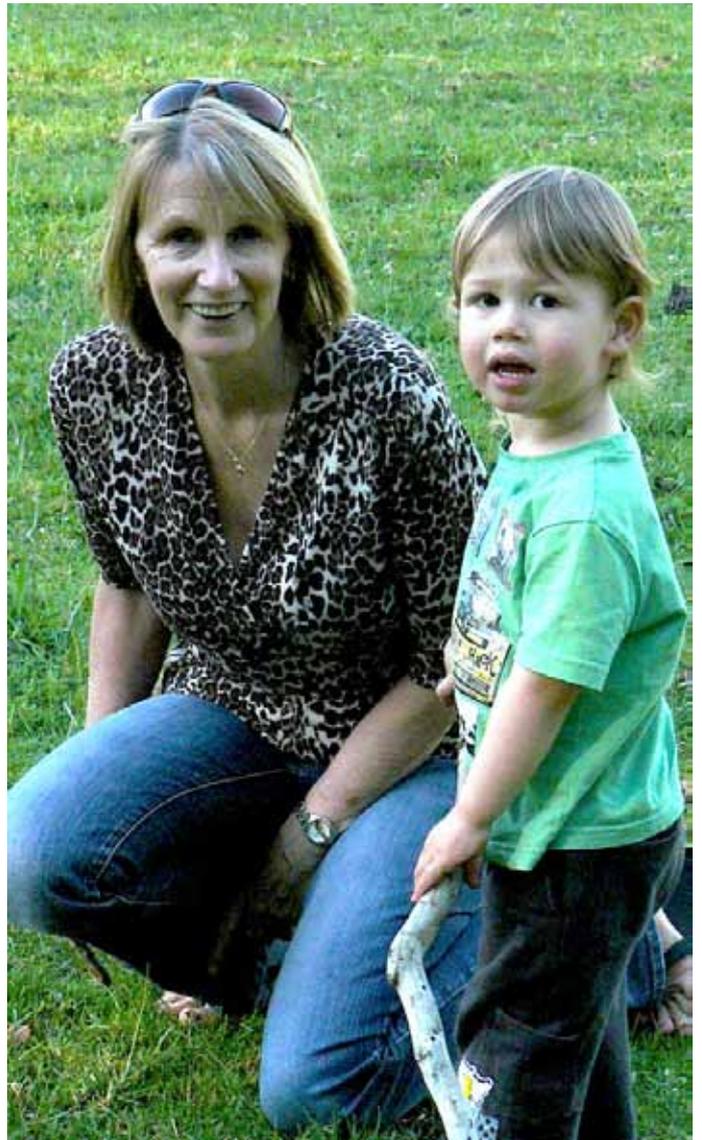
Carol Stensness lives in the South Auckland area and has had a long interest in Monarchs. She remembers having swan plants at home as a child.

In 2002 she started rearing butterflies in a couple of adapted banana boxes, partly to help save the few plants she had, and also to protect the caterpillars from paper wasps. Now she has a caterpillar castle... and is thinking of getting a second one.

Carol has been a member of the MBNZT since 2005, has participated in tagging each year and has now taken on the role of Treasurer.

Thanks Carol, with your admin. background we're going to work you to death.

Pictured: Carol with her two-year-old grandson, Riki.



The show was busier on the Friday and Saturday; although it was quieter on the Sunday, there was still plenty of interest.

The live Monarchs and Admirals were a huge attraction. Next year it's suggested that they will pay for a 'commercial' stall so that swan plants can be sold on site.

Thanks to all who were involved in the three days - a busy time for all as we have few members in the immediate area.

Just Gardening, Kumeu

Charlotte Beesley organised a stand promoting the MBNZT at the 'Just Gardening' show, Kumeu north of Auckland in September.

Swan plants were a great seller on the day.

During the day someone brought in a puriri moth for us to identify. Jeff, Judy and I had never seen one before and we were amazed by its size. Twelve-year-old Kirsty, a new member who was helping on the stand, knew all about it. She had just done a study at school on it! She was most informative.

We did have a few Monarchs and a Yellow Admiral on show that everyone loved to look at and asked questions about. Next year we will make sure we have a bigger stall and have a much better live display.

Raffle results: First prize was a butterfly-themed cake donated by Auckland Cake Art, second a ceramic pot with swan plants donated by Palmers of Hobsonville, and third prize a wooden butterfly wall decoration, made by Al Beesley.

Anyone joining on the day went into the draw for prizes of cup cakes (made by Marziann Cakes) won by Lola Prikkel of St Heliers. Second prize was the book 'Lady of the Butterflies' (donated by Random House) won by Ann & Richard Croker of Albany. Welcome!

Charlotte Beesley



Nelson Growables

Local members of MBNZT had a highly successful stand at the Nelson Growables Fair on 14 November.

This is a general garden fair that started last year; we very cautiously decided to wait and see how it went. But over 4,000 people attended in 2009 so we decided to join in this year. Exact figures aren't available yet, but at least that many turned up again – probably more!

Rae Herd (pictured) and Mary Willett staffed the stand with Chrissie. Rae brought along her caterpillar castle, sporting five pupae on the 'ceiling' and several large caterpillars munching on swan plant stems in a vase. One of the caterpillars decided to hang himself up in a J during the course of the day.

The castle was a source of great interest and three people ordered them. Five calendars were also sold; what with that, plus the sale of seeds, 52 swan plants and assorted

nectar plants, a good profit was made.

Of course making money is not the sole purpose of the stand, and we were kept busy talking to people and answering their questions. We also handed out information sheets about the Trust, good nectar plants for butterflies, food plants for caterpillars, and updated fact sheets about the Large White Butterfly, (*Pieris rapae*) a new pest species discovered in Nelson earlier this year. All in all, it was a thoroughly worthwhile day.

Chrissie Ward

Te Puna Quarryfest

Sadly, Mary Parkinson, Te Puna's Butterfly Lady, was confined to bed and unable to attend this year's event. I can't imagine how she stayed in bed – Mary is a great organiser and likes to be right in the middle of what's going on.

But it was a great chance for others to do some early Christmas shopping and have a family day out.

MBNZT members had a great time selling swan plants and informing people all about the butterflies. Thanks Norm, Yvonne and Doreen for your hard work.



Blockhouse Bay Garden Festival

Charlotte Beesley did the legwork organising the display again at the Blockhouse Bay Community Centre. The stand was set up in no time, with the help of her granddaughter, Skylar (pictured above).

A butterfly release at the commencement of the festivities, in the presence of the local MP, David Cunliffe, was impressive and launched the festival on the right note.

This year the attendance at the two-day festival was down, and disappointing. But being there – as always – was worthwhile. There were many good contacts to be made, and some items sold.

For Charlotte the highlight of the weekend was when a knitting designer approached her and gave her a beautiful mohair sweater with a Monarch butterfly knitted into the front and back. Charlotte was proud to wear it, and after all her hard work it was very well deserved.

Thanks to Jeff, Judy and Margaret who helped us out too.

Jacqui Knight



Butterfly Gardening for Summer

Butterfly populations peak in the summer – and that’s when we want our butterfly garden looking its best, with loads of nectar, and host plants for the species you want to encourage.

People are now considering xeriscaping principles for their gardens, a healthy way of reducing, even eliminating the need for extra water. The word comes from the Greek ‘xeros’ for ‘dry’. Xeriscaping is gaining acceptance worldwide as climate patterns change. Here’s some tips:

Plan and design

To begin with, you create a scale diagram showing the major elements of your landscape, including house, driveway, existing trees and other elements. Then you think about how you want to use your space.

Do you need somewhere for the kids, or the chooks? What do you want it to look like from the road? Do you want to hide the neighbours – or see them in their bathroom?

Flowers are what bring butterflies to your garden; their shape or arrangement, colour and scent all play an important role. Their eyesight is poor and they are attracted by concentrated colour, masses of colour. A single flower may not be bright enough and be overlooked.

Soil amendment

If you’re not already adding compost to your soil, now is the time to start recycling all your household waste. There are various methods of composting now, and there is one to suit every lifestyle. All plants benefit from the use of compost, which will help the soil retain water.



Efficient irrigation

You want to make sure you water efficiently. Watering first thing in the morning, before it gets hot, is the most efficient time of day. Water

deeply and infrequently to develop deep roots. Never water during the day to reduce water lost to evaporation.

For the lawn larger droplets and low angles from your automatic sprinkler systems will reduce loss of water to wind drift. Spray or drip line are most efficient for watering trees, shrubs, flowers and groundcovers. The most efficient sprinklers release big drops close to the ground.



Appropriate plant and zone selection

I used to think that to reduce water consumption in your garden meant a garden of cacti and succulents – but no.

Group your plants so the ones with similar water, light and wind needs are together.

The ideal butterfly garden will have six or more hours of sunlight and be sheltered from strong winds.

Put moderate-water-use plants in low-lying drainage areas, near down-spouts, or in the shade of other plants – or handy to the laundry if you want to bucket your grey water from your washing machine.

Beds of perennials and shrubs need less water. Dry, sunny areas support low-water-use plants. Planting a variety of plants with different heights, colour and textures creates interest and beauty – and is best suited to butterflies.

Flat stones in a sunny, open area of the garden will provide a place for butterflies to bask in the sun to dry damp wings, warm their bodies and seek refuge from predators.

Butterflies will shelter in trees out of the wind and wet and if your garden has a variety of nectar-producing plants flowering throughout the year, such as the butterfly bush (*Buddleia* spp.), Hebes and Asclepias, butterflies can surprise you at all times of the year.

Butterflies feed through their proboscis, a straw-like



appendage curled up when not in use. They use chemical receptors to detect fragrances in the air, and then land and sense nectar quality with their feet.

Flowers with strong, sweet scents such as heliotrope and viburnum will attract butterflies, and shape/arrangement of flowers need to provide a good landing surface.



the persistence of clover in her lawn and was wondering which herbicide to use to eliminate this 'pest' from her garden. Of course we know that clover is great for the bees and also our blue butterflies, so I don't think we would try and eliminate it. Clover also takes nitrogen out of the air, bringing this most essential fertiliser down to earth by means of nitrogen-



Mulch

Mulch keeps plant roots cool, reduces weed growth, minimises evaporation and

fixing bacteria living in nodes along the roots. Free fertiliser!

Lawn mowers generate as much



keeps soil malleable. Organic mulches, such as bark chips and pole peelings, should be applied 1-4cm deep.

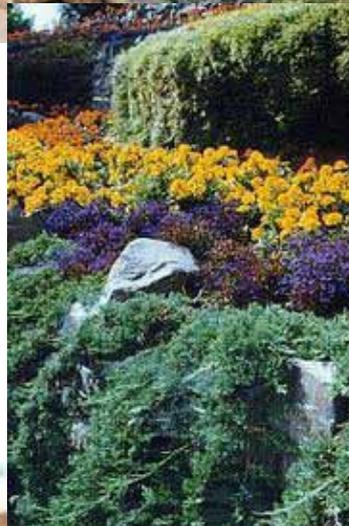
Fibre mulches create a web that is more resistant to wind and rain washout. Inorganic mulches, such as rocks and gravel are hard to control and makes the surrounding area hotter so use with care.



CO₂ in a half hour as a car does on a 240 km road trip! If you don't play petanque, then why not plant native plants and flaxes as ground covers – or use the area for vegetables. If you're not having to mow the lawns you'll have more time to do other things.

Maintenance

All gardens require some degree of care during the year. Beautiful lawns require spring and autumn aeration



Remember the trend of the 60's, where everyone covered their soil with black polythene (to get rid of the weeds) and added scoria or metal chip and strategically placed rocks on top, with some plants? We soon learned that this technique of gardening would sour the soil – everything was doomed.

Alternatives to lawn

Do you really need all that lawn?

I listened to the gardening session on the radio this morning, where a woman had a 'wide expanse of lawn', and the lawn of choice was Mercury Bay weed. But she was concerned at



along with regular fertilisation (every 6-8 weeks). Keep your grass height at 10 cm and allow the clippings to be absorbed back into the lawn. Trees, shrubs and perennials will need occasional pruning to remove dead stems, promote blooming or control height and spread. Much of the removed plant material can be shredded and used in composting piles.

In many towns around NZ there are Sustainable Living courses where we can learn more on saving water, see www.sustainableliving.org.nz for more information. You will be able to utilise many of their tips every day.



Earthlore Certified

Gordon and Janine Thompson are very excited. Not only are they developing their 4 ha block near Owaka, in the Catlins, into a centre where people can come and learn about Nature... but their property has just received certification as a fine example of butterfly habitat.

The couple was inspired by the principles of permaculture when they set about planning the evolution of Earthlore. Half of the property is conservation habitat where they have planted a wide range of native trees and plants, creating ecosystems to attract and sustain native insects, birds and fungi.

Earlier this year they applied for certification of their butterfly habitat and were thrilled when they heard that they had been accepted.

“We are buzzing at the moment,” said Gordon, “thinking of all the possibilities this opens for us.”

They are holding a big open day at Earthlore on Sunday, 30 January. Lepidopterist Brian Patrick will be present and will present the plaque to them on behalf of the MBNZT.

When Jacqui Knight called to see their property it was the coldest day of the year, with horrendous snowfalls in Southland (see above photo). Not the best day to see habitat up close and personal!

The Thompsons are calling their open day ‘BugFest’ and will have all sorts of attractions such as slater races,

It sounds like it’s going to be a great event – so if you’re in the area at the end of January, or if you know people who are, please tell them about it. They would be more than welcome.

Owaka is an hour and a half’s drive south of Dunedin.



Two great butterfly plants

Tithonia rotundifolia, or Mexican sunflower, shown above, is a sun-loving perennial which can grow to almost 2 metres and about 1 metre wide. It may need staking.

It will provide you with beautiful orange-scarlet flowers, dahlia-like, 7-10 cm in diameter throughout the summer – and your butterflies will love you for it. What’s more, it isn’t hard on your water... the occasional shower of rain should be enough to quench its thirst.

Tithonia makes a bold statement in the garden. With its large heart-shaped leaves, *Tithonias* light up your garden mid to late summer. It’s also a great cut flower – to maximise life in the vase, seal the tips of the hollow stems by plunging them into boiling water after cutting, or singe the ends with a flame before placing the stems into a vase of water.

Tithonia is related to the zinnia and also the sunflower – and also to the next plant I’d like to mention, *Montanoa grandiflora* or the daisy tree (below), an erect evergreen shrub with thick stems, growing about 3-4 metres tall with equal spread. The hairy leaves are deeply lobed.

During the fall and winter, the plant is covered with white daisy-like flowers with yellow centres, giving off a chocolate/vanilla perfume.

Montanoa should be planted in full sun and while it can handle a drought, it looks much better when it is watered.



Christmas Presents

It's that time of year again – and we would like to encourage you to think about a gift which would help the butterfly population, spread knowledge about our NZ species and boost our funds when you are looking for that special something for friend or family:

2011 Calendar – there are only a few left. Get in quick! The feedback from these has been 100% positive. Email the treasurer, treasurer@monarch.org.nz, please, before making payment.

Caterpillar Castles – Another shipment of large (33 cm



x 33 cm x 61 cm) caterpillar castles has just arrived, \$20 to financial members, \$25 to non-members, plus P&P \$5. Also, a new product, small (25 cm x 50 cm) and medium (50 cm x 1 m) sleeves or socks. These can be tied over branches of your plant to keep caterpillars safe outdoors. Small \$8, Medium \$15, plus \$3 P&P.

Gift cards by Pauline Morse – Beautiful gift cards featuring original artwork by NZ artist Pauline Morse. Pauline depicts the Monarch butterfly on one, our Blue butterfly on another and on the third, the Yellow Admiral. Each card (folded) measures 105 x 74 mm. The six-pack



contains two of each card (\$2.50) while the pack of thirty has ten of each butterfly (\$10.00).

Seeds – Giant Swan Plant, Tropical Milkweed (choose either Scarlet or Gold – or both), Swamp Milkweed (pink flower), \$5 a packet, or Butterfly Mix (wildflowers producing nectar, \$4 a packet.

Bookmarks – Hand-made with original art and short



slogan referring to Monarchs and/or butterflies, these make wonderful gifts and are easy to post. Double-sided, full colour one side, trimmed with satin ribbon and beaded decoration. Different colours/butterflies, each one is unique. About 150 mm long. \$3.50 each

Brooches – These are beautiful little pins, 'flat' (showing four wings) is about 2.5 cm diameter, and 'side' (with forewing and hindwing showing) is about 2 cm diameter. They have a pin and a keeper which goes on the inside of



the garment. Can also be used as a tiepin! Please specify which one you want – 'flat' or 'side'. Only \$4.50 each.

Stickers – sheet of six for only \$2, stunning photography by Sally Phillips in Hamilton.

Cheques should be made out to the MBNZT, or pay by internet banking into our account with Kiwibank, account number 38-9009-0654693-00. Please ensure you code your payment with your surname and postcode, and send an email to us (trust@monarch.org.nz) with details of your purchase, address etc.

If your order is received by 10 December you should receive the items in good time for Christmas Day.

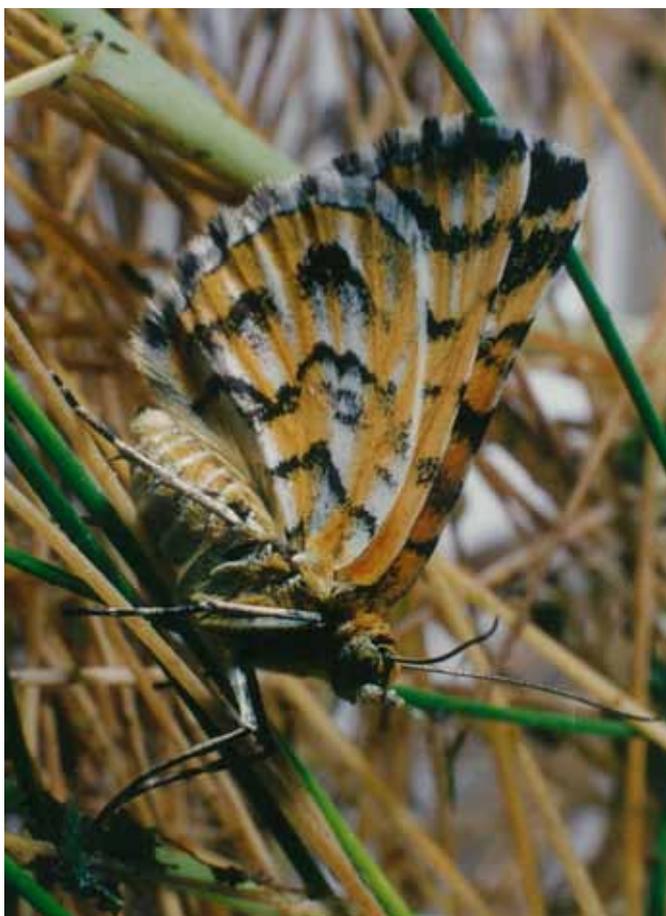
Conservation management for coastal *Notoreas* moth species

The endemic moth *Notoreas* is a group of brightly coloured, day-flying species. The caterpillars all feed on various species of *Pimelea* (native daphne) and its close relative *Kelleria*. At present 17 species have been described and there are possibly eight or more which are undescribed. Many of the described species are found in the subalpine and have wide distributions. The undescribed species are primarily coastal and often have limited distributions, partly as a result of human impacts on coastal habitats.

Conservation for the coastal *Notoreas* species is mostly aimed at the species' host plants or their sand dunes/coastal turf ecosystems rather than the moths themselves. In general, our experience has been that where *Pimelea* occurs the moth will be present also. The more numerous the host, the more numerous the moth. On more than one occasion, on the north-west coast of Golden Bay, I have found populations of prostrate *Pimelea* as a result of first seeing a *Notoreas* moth make its characteristic short flight above a herb field.

One of the difficulties in *Notoreas* conservation is the lack of clear taxonomy for these coastal species. There is debate between entomologists about just how many undescribed species there are. It will always be more difficult to justify the expense of managing a population in a difficult site if there is a chance that another, healthier population some distance away may be the same species.

A brief overview of management activities undertaken by the department relevant to coastal



Notoreas species follows:

In **Northland**, *Notoreas* sp. 'Northern' occurs at a scattering of coastal sites with a few on the Auckland coast. A NorthTec student is currently working on this species, seeing whether it is more active at different times of day and how the weather affects its activity. Survey methods can then be developed, making use of the moth's activity patterns, and then key *Notoreas* sites will be identified along the west coast. The intention will then be to determine management requirements at these sites to improve the future for both plant and moth.

Tongariro Whanganui Taranaki Conservancy undertakes visual counts of *Notoreas* where they are known to occur, in herbfields on the Taranaki coast. It is important to protect the habitat from weeds, especially lupin and gorse.

Some people think the Taranaki populations are the same (undescribed) species as those of the more extensive populations along the north-west coast of the northern South Island. This is just one of the taxonomic questions concerning *Notoreas* that needs resolving.

In the **Wairarapa Wellington Hawkes Bay** Conservancy, DOC is tackling its *Notoreas* species on two fronts. They are contracting Brian and Hamish Patrick to survey, this summer, for a number of rare or little-known moth species, including the Castlepoint and Cape Palliser *Notoreas* populations, thought to be two different species. They will also try to re-find the Cape Turnagain population, only ever recorded once before.

The **Wairarapa** Area Office is continuing with restoration plantings of native coastal species at Castlepoint, including

the *Pimelea* on which the *Notoreas* depends. The site has been fenced to keep stock out and the original vegetation has been restored over recent years.

The *Notoreas* populations along the north-west coast of the **northern South Island** (south of Farewell Spit) appear to be quite strong. Substantial areas of the saltmarsh habitat which they inhabit are on conservation land at Kahurangi Point and Wharariki Beach.

With the agreement of the owners, other habitats on private land have been fenced from stock. There may be opportunities to extend this protection on private land in the future.

On the east coast, *Notoreas* sp. 'Cape Campbell' had an unexpected boost during a recent visit to the region by Brian and Hamish Patrick when they found a thriving population at the **Waima River** mouth, bringing the total number of populations known to three. The other populations are south of Cape Campbell and on the foreshore of Cloudy Bay, near Blenheim. The species became extinct at Gore Bay, **North Canterbury**, some years ago when its host plant population died out.

The Cloudy Bay population is in an area with a number of rare/threatened moth species, including another *Pimelea*-feeder.

A local landcare group, supported by **South Marlborough** Area Office, actively manages the habitat. They have provided signs and interpretation on site, erected driftwood barriers to protect key groups of plants and are currently

undertaking weed control and a replanting programme. Area staff control woody weeds on the site (e.g. pine trees from wind-blown seed) and are restricting 4-wheel drive vehicle use, one of the major threats.

In the **Otago** conservancy, Oamaru Field Centre staff, with help from Brian Patrick, have surveyed *Notoreas* sp. 'Shag Point' at Shag Point over three seasons. The population is not in large numbers although it is possible that the surveys are not coinciding with the main flight times of the moth. This will be investigated this summer.

On **Stewart Island** *Notoreas* sp. 'Mason Bay' caterpillar feeds on the rare sand daphne *Pimelea lyallii*. The Mason Bay dune complex extends over 676 ha and it is threatened by encroaching marram and lupins.

Marram forms dense plant swards which out-compete the native sand binders at this site (pingao and sand tussock) and alter natural dune processes.

The lupins overtop and shade out native species behind the active dunes, one of the most fragile parts of the system. Stewart Island Area Office has a programme to restore the entire ecosystem to its original state, which will benefit both plant and moth.

At present 310 ha is under active weed control and the intention is eventually to eradicate marram and lupins from the entire site.

*Ian Millar, Technical Specialist Officer,
Invertebrates with thanks for contributions
from various DOC staff and Brian Patrick*

We're NOT breaking the law!

On 5 September 2007 a new law, the Unsolicited Electronic Messages Act 2007, came into effect. Briefly, it means that we (or any organisation/person) cannot add you to a mailing list unless you agree.

There are different ways of going about it and the MBNZT has chosen to use a service called MailChimp, which will help us manage emails and also block robots from joining the list. Spammers now outnumber the genuine people on our current list!

You need to complete a registration form to be subscribed to our list. A confirmation email will be sent to verify it really is you. Clicking on the link in that email completes the loop and you will then be on the list.

If you have email access, please, as soon as you can, go to this website and register: <http://eepurl.com/bsHBL>

If you're a Facebook user, you can use the form on our Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Monarch-Butterfly-New-Zealand-Trust/102560346481084>

If you have problems, email darren@monarch.org.nz

But remember it is essential that YOU opt in if you want to receive email news from us. We risk breaking the law if we register for you.



Tagging

Tagging will resume in March 2011. Please ensure that you have re-registered (see information to the left.) This is VERY IMPORTANT.

Merry Christmas!

And a Happy New Year to you all. Let's hope it's a great season for our butterflies as well.

Kaea (left) and Zharnay (right) were two of our butterflies in the Santa Parade at Henderson, Auckland, this year.

It was a marvellous day, and they enjoyed themselves tremendously. Well done to the team of butterflies.





A Budding Scientist

Last year eleven-year-old Sarah Visser got in touch with the MBNZT. She was working on a project for the NIWA Wellington Science Fair with Monarch butterflies. However, her Monarchs were dying... and she wondered why. Was it the local Council spraying?

Several members of the MBNZT were able to help – and later Sarah wrote to thank the Trust:

“My monarch butterflies didn’t die from predators (well there is still one I’m not sure of I still haven’t found out, but it’s been seven months since I first had it), and they didn’t die from the Oe parasite or even because of the Council, even not the Senegal tea plant?”

“I think they died from the cold temperatures! Just as George Gibbs had said ‘Sarah’s photos of black chrysalises and butterflies with crumpled wings are probably a result of being too cold to develop normally. This almost always happens in the late autumn when the last caterpillars to metamorphose get caught.’

“And now you’re probably wondering did I win any special prizes. Well I didn’t get a special prize but I did get a special commendation! Two certificates! And \$20 in cash! Only one out of the four of the people that went from my school got a special prize. Everyone in my class and my family thought I was going to win a special prize but I didn’t, but I do have next year!

So thank you very much for all your kind help.”

Local Groups

It’s fun getting together with other members who live nearby – and you can share resources. Sometimes one will have a surplus of just what you need... or you’ll spot a plant in their garden, and our members are always willing to share cuttings.

In Nelson-Marlborough the members there communicate by email, sharing ideas, problems and resources. There is never a shortage of swan plant – or, for that matter, caterpillars.

In Auckland, we’ve been selling swan plants to feed the hungry hordes, and cuttings of some very popular nectar plants too.

Tauranga members have been getting together at Te Puna Quarry Park once a month. It must be interesting to come back and see how that garden has evolved with the change of seasons. The next meeting is Sunday, 5 December. Email darren@monarch.org.nz for more information.

You could try something in your area too... You never know – you might even get inspired and begin on a project that would help create more habitat, or help with a school butterfly garden, or hold a stall at a show. It can be great fun.

If you need any help at all, or resource material, write to trust@monarch.org.nz and we’ll be glad to help you and put you in touch with other interested butterfly people in your area.



Painted Lady — picture courtesy of Mike Lusk
taken from the MBNZT calendar

Migrants

October and November is the time when migrant butterflies often appear in NZ.

Our most common migrant butterfly is the Australian Painted Lady (*Cynthia kershawi*) which sometimes arrives in large numbers in areas along the West Coast, New Plymouth and North Auckland being two localities where it is often seen. Within Australia the Painted Lady is known for its migrational flights, and large migrations have been recorded in a southern or southwesterly direction along a broad front down the eastern side of the continent. The size of the migrating population can vary from year to year, starting anytime between mid-August to October and can continue for seven or eight weeks, and in such instances stand a good chance of being blown off their usual course and transported across the ocean on the prevailing westerly winds which are too strong for the butterfly to fly against.

It has been estimated that the wind-assisted journey would take from two to four days depending on the wind velocity, and it is still unsure how such a fragile creature can survive that long without food or water. Of course it is not known how many of these wind-directed populations miss land altogether and perish somewhere out in the vast ocean.

It is quite amazing how near perfect the arriving specimens are, however it is contact with rocks and vegetation that causes broken and damaged wings. Once rested, the Painted Lady butterflies will then disperse over a wide area as sightings have been recorded throughout the country over the years.

Most Painted Lady butterflies appearing in NZ after New Year are probably locally bred individuals resulting from the Spring arrivals, but the onset of cooler temperatures seems to prohibit any further generations.

Approximately the size of a Yellow Admiral, the butterfly looks distinctly orange in flight and with a life of probably three to four months is considered a long-lived butterfly. Host plants include *Helichrysum* species, capeweed, Scotch thistle, *Artemisia* and paper daisies.

Norm Twigge

Conference?

In the last newsletter we told you something was in the pipeline... Plans are being made for the weekend of 4-6 March, 2011:

Friday, 4 March: Tentatively all day workshop aimed at primary school teachers and home educators

Saturday, 5 March am: Possible bus trip to visit school butterfly gardens

1 pm AGM and workshop/speakers

Evening - bushwalk looking at insects with Auckland members of the Entomological Society of NZ

Sunday, 6 March, it's EcoDay at Olympic Park, New Lynn – www.ecoday.org.nz

If you are interested in attending or otherwise getting involved, please email charlotte@monarch.org.nz or jacqui@monarch.org.nz, or phone 09 551 3383 (Jacqui).

Hey Kids!

Would you like to enter our colouring in competition? Print out the entry form on our website (feel free to copy it for your friends or classmates) and colour it in. Send it to MBNZT Colouring Competition, PO Box 44100, Pt Chevalier, Auckland 1246

If you include a stamped self-addressed envelope we will send you (while stocks last) some free milkweed seeds (*Gomphocarpus* sp.), host plants for Monarchs. Each entry will be scanned and loaded onto this website for public voting. The entry with the most votes will be declared the winner. Only one vote per email address please. The winner of each quarterly competition will be announced in our newsletter and be sent a mixture of nectar plant seeds, attractive to all kinds of butterflies.

Did you know?

One of the reasons why studying butterflies and moths is important...

The French scientist Louis Pasteur (1822-1895), by studying silkworms, discovered the parasite that was infecting and killing them. Before then nobody knew of the importance of germs in disease. This study eventually led to the most important single medical discovery of all time: germ theory, or that many diseases are caused by microorganisms.

Pasteur went on to develop the first artificial vaccines. These discoveries and the technology developed as a result have saved countless millions of lives.

Beautiful Bugle Butterflies

Recently Nelson's Suter Art Museum Gallery had a display of gorgeous hand-crafted butterflies made by local sculptor Deborah Walsh. Her vivid creations are made from natural materials such as tapa, flax, willow, wool, raffia, lancewood, etc.

Deborah was October's Artist in Focus, invited to put together a small body of work expressing an idea. Deborah explained her idea through an intriguing story:

"In 1835 adventuress Baroness Lettice Mabel Walsh came to New Zealand aboard the HMS Bugle as ship's naturalist. Her collection ended up in the bowels of the British Museum. This year it was rediscovered and reclaimed by descendants, of whom Deborah Walsh is one.

It is sincerely hoped that displaying these splendid specimens will go some way to rehabilitate the baroness' reputation. 'Far from being the quixotic dilettante she was portrayed as in her day, the Walsh collection should prove conclusively that she belongs in the rarefied pantheon of noble and notable scientists', Deborah Walsh says."

What a great story! But when I telephoned Deborah for details, she admitted it was all a hoax.

"They wanted an idea," she said, "so I invented a bodice-ripper. I'm very sorry if I took people in."

You are forgiven, Deborah. Great story, and great butterflies!

Chrissie Ward

Workshop and Annual General Meeting

of the Monarch Butterfly NZ Trust will be held on Saturday, 5 March, 1 pm at YMCA Mt Albert, Taylor Room, 773 New North Rd, Mt Albert

Annual General Meeting

1. Appointment of Chair for the meeting
2. Quorum Present?
3. Apologies
4. Minutes of AGM, 28 March 2010
5. Matters Arising
6. Trustees' Report
7. Audited Accounts for 2009-10
8. Auditor's Report
9. Budget and annual subscriptions for 2011-12
10. Elections of Members of the Board
11. Projects for 2011-12 – our aims
 - find funding for an office,
 - demonstration butterfly garden
 - raise public awareness and increase biodiversity
 - maintain, protect and increase biodiversity/ protection-enhancement of Lepidoptera
 - increase opportunities for communities/public
 - enable research groups/individuals to carry out research/education
11. General Business
 - Conference in 2012?
 - Endowment Fund?

At the conclusion of the AGM we will have workshops (to be announced)

3 pm – Afternoon Tea & Social Time

3.30 pm – Panel Discussion

Please note: *Times shown in italics are approximate. The afternoon's programme will begin at 1 pm, and the AGM will start promptly, but the rest of the programme will fit around that. Note: We may also change the order of the programme to fit.*

