

## Trustees' Report Financial Year 2021

What a crazy year we have had! Despite all of the ups and downs caused by COVID-19 the MBNZ has managed to keep on track and continue its worthwhile work.

There is a growing interest in climate change and the devastating effect it is having on all of our species. Lepidoptera around the world is very much affected and the work of the MBNZ is contributing to the knowledge bank, conservation and protection. We are well aware that Aotearoa New Zealand has a rich diversity of moths and butterflies, most of which are endemic. Our Lepidoptera display the world's highest rate of endemism, with the majority of species (92%) not found elsewhere. There are almost 2,000 species of moths that have been described but the scientific community say there are still more which have not yet been discovered or documented.

### Vision

Our vision is to ensure that New Zealand's ecosystems support thriving moth and butterfly populations.

### Mission

To engage with New Zealanders to ensure our biodiversity promotes a thriving moth and butterfly population.

### Sponsors

We are very fortunate to have the support of sponsors such as [Richmond Plains](#), [Sandfield Associates](#), [Storage King](#), [Yates NZ](#) and [Yealands Wines](#) as well as [Daltons](#), [Fiskars](#), [Kings Plant Barn](#), [Kings Seeds](#), [Kiwi Gardener](#), [Omni Products](#), [Parva Plants](#) and [Redpath Pacific](#), our magazine sponsors. As well we would like to mention our calendar sponsors: [Gibson & Associates Ltd](#), [Tui Garden Products](#), and [Zealandia Horticulture](#) for making our fundraiser a success.

Without their help we simply could not function, and we are very fortunate to have such a great group of sponsors. Our chairman has personally contacted all of them to thank them for their support and we are delighted to say they all have confirmed their commitment for another year. We would be grateful, of course, if you, our members, would mention their support when you are visiting their stores, buying or recommending their products. I know they will appreciate this.

### National Butterfly Centre

Our plans for the development of the National Butterfly Centre/Te Matauranga o nga Pūrerehua o Aotearoa are still a work in progress. Work on the site next to the Auckland Museum has been understandably delayed by COVID-19 but we are continuing to consult with local organisations and iwi. Watch this space!

### Outreach

Jacqui Knight continued to promote our work wherever she goes, explaining the need for everyone to protect our butterfly and moth species. Jacqui often receives requests to speak at garden clubs and schools and is very happy to do so. Her presentations always receive excellent feedback and I know she is thrilled when she hears people are planting stinging nettle and other host plants, or more nectar species.

A few years ago, we increased our subscriptions to cover, in the main, the cost of visiting schools and clubs by Jacqui when she puts on a presentation. There was something like 85 of these events last year. Some of these organisations do reimburse us for her attendance but the majority of these expenses is covered by your donations.

Travel costs are always rising and so we were concerned that an increase in the subscriptions may have resulted in a decline in membership. We did not need to worry; we in fact noticed an increase in membership. Without our partners and loyal members like you we would have had to close the doors.

Of course, we can always do more and this year a friend of the MBNZT donated his time and expertise to create this lovely advertisement. It was much appreciated and as cash allows, we want to use it this year to increase awareness of our mahi and hopefully attract new members as well.

Of the various social media channels we use, our FB and Instagram pages are most popular, and the free e-news is always well received, going out to people all over the world. We have been fortunate this year to have a very able young woman helping with social media.

A very special thank you to Jacqui and the team for all their hard work and dedication.

### **Forest Ringlelet Project**

Throughout the past twelve months we have continued our work to protect the forest ringlelet (*Dodonidia helmsii*) ably led by Norm Twigge with support from Hugh Smith, both in the Bay of Plenty, and from our office. Sadly, however, the butterflies have been hard to find and we need to do this to find out what is causing them to be vulnerable.

We were very fortunate last year in receiving a grant from Lottery NZ to help us develop the next stage of our plan to save the forest ringlelet, an endemic forest species, a very beautiful at risk species of butterfly – not only rare but the only one in its family. Our plans are on track to make this butterfly better known, studying the butterfly and find out more about its predators, parasites and any pathogens.

### **Tagging and Transects**

This project has come under the wing of the Science Operational Group – three of our trustees (Alma de Anda, Mary Hayek-Williams and Hugh Smith together with Caitlin McLeod). It has been decided that tagging will not continue after 2021 and you will be able to read the report elsewhere. We will continue to encourage members and others to report sightings of monarchs and other species, to encourage more people to walk transects and to become involved in the [Monarch Larva Monitoring Project](#) with our American colleagues.

### **Publications**

Four 16-page, colourful magazines were issued over the year giving our members news and articles about NZ's moth and butterfly species. The feedback we receive is always excellent.

We investigated going on-line only but were dissuaded by a large number of you who prefer to receive it in the post. We will continue with both formats but as well we now send out regular e-news for your interest. Please feel free to send those on to friends and colleagues – they may wish to join us too!

### **Funding**

We are extremely grateful to funders such as [Foundation North](#), the [Lion Foundation](#) and [Lottery](#) for their generous grants over the past year which have made initiatives such as the Forest Ringlelet Project – and others – possible. We are also thankful for our financial members who not only get to enjoy our magazine but also seeds and other mementoes from us to support our cause. In Wellington Joanna Gordon and Marilyn Little have been selling butterfly-related items at fairs and markets. We will provide more details in the e-news so you can include these events should they be close by.

We were delighted to receive a grant from the [Auckland Council Community Co-ordination Fund](#) towards developing the [Blockhouse Bay Recreational Reserve Butterfly Habitat](#), a project which is dear to Jacqui's heart. If you are in the area, please take a look – it is impressive!

Once again we have had several plant sales or sales of cuttings and we would be keen to replicate these in other parts of NZ. If you have friends who would like to have a one-day plant sale in your area, please contact Jacqui.

Several of our members have been very generous with donations as have those who contribute using Payroll Giving schemes with their employers. Please encourage friends and family to join us as well. Your subscriptions contribute to the day-to-day work of the Trust.

### **Trustees**

We have an excellent group of trustees who have met throughout the year via Zoom.

We are always keen to attract people from wider NZ locations and with different life experiences, lifestyles, and outlooks to maintain our diversity while we plan for the future. Please contact Jacqui if you have an interest in joining us as a trustee.

### **Volunteers**

We wish to place on record all those people who help in so many ways with the administration of the MBNZT. Our treasurer has served us for many years, and we hope will do so for many more. We have great support from others with repetitive tasks such as collecting the mail, sending out products, helping with social media, research, editing videos, packaging seeds, putting tags in bags, collecting seeds... Thank you so much to you one and all.

### **Future possibilities**

Our Planning Meeting (for the trustees) will be held in May of this year and once again, using the internet as a medium.

For those of you who are attending the AGM thank you for taking an hour out of your busy lives to sit at a computer screen and showing your interest in the work we do. Our work is never-ending but extremely satisfying and without your help and the support of all our sponsors and grant providers we simply could not function.

To make it more enjoyable we have asked Jacqui to share a presentation after the AGM, 'My Butterfly Garden has Gone to Pots' which will share ideas, using techniques from the Create Butterfly Habitat On-line Course we run, for encouraging butterflies in a small space, or on a deck in an above-ground apartment.

The agenda for the AGM is on the next page and will also be on our website with supporting paperwork. Please email [trust@nzbutterflies.org.nz](mailto:trust@nzbutterflies.org.nz) or phone Jacqui if you intend to be there as we will need a quorum.

So thank you all again one last time.



Maurice Mehlhopt  
**CHAIR**