



Monitoring the Establishment of Native Forest

Tāne's Tree Trust has long promoted the importance of monitoring native forest establishment. With planting or encouraging the regeneration of native forest, monitoring helps landholders, managers, community groups, and funders understand what's working, what's not, and how to improve outcomes. It also provides valuable feedback to supporters and the wider public on the success of native forest establishment efforts.

Native Planting Monitoring Tool

Many native planting projects focus heavily on the initial planting phase, with little or no follow-up monitoring—often just a quick look over the fence or a few casual photos. But the first 1–5 years after planting are the most critical. Without timely weed and pest animal control, young native plants are highly vulnerable, and survival rates can suffer.

Given that it can cost up to (and occasionally more than) \$20,000 per hectare to establish a diverse native forest, it's essential to monitor progress in a systematic way. Robust data on early survival and growth allows for timely interventions—such as weeding or pest animal control—and helps evaluate whether the species mix or techniques used (like nurse crops) are supporting successful growth.

To make this process easier, Tāne's Tree Trust and Trees That Count, with support from partners including Tasman Environmental Trust, Auckland

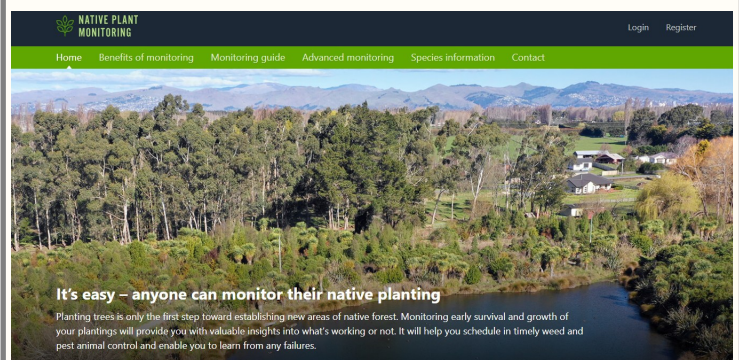
Council, Pamu Farms, and The Tindall Foundation, have developed an easy-to-use online monitoring toolkit. This tool lets anyone planting natives to record survival and growth each year in the early stages of establishment.

Most well-managed sites should develop a native canopy within five years, at which point monitoring is no longer needed. Some sites may only require one or two years of monitoring before it's clear they're on track.

Start monitoring your planting project today:

Visit <https://monitoring.tanestrees.org.nz> for more info.

For questions or help, contact Michael Bergin: michaelbergin.eryl@gmail.com



This online tool is for short-term monitoring of planted natives, and has been jointly developed by Tāne's Tree Trust (TTT) and Trees That Count (TTC) with support from project partners the Tasman Environmental Trust, Auckland Council, Pamu Farms and The Tindall Foundation.

It focuses on assessing early survival and growth of planted natives to be undertaken by planters including community groups, iwi, landowners, councils, consultants, environmental NGOs, etc. This includes:

- Registering as a user to gain access to the Tāne's Tree Trust Monitoring Tool for planted natives.
- Recording site and planting information
- Taking a photographic record of the planting site



New Online Factsheet Series: Establishing Native Forests

Tāne's Tree Trust has also launched a new series of free, downloadable factsheets to help people establish native forests in Aotearoa to meet multiple objectives. These fully illustrated, easy-to-read guides share practical advice based on the latest research and best practice, for projects ranging from planting small blocks to landscape-scale regeneration.

The series was supported by Te Uru Rākau's One Billion Trees Partnership Fund, Tāne's Tree Trust's research fund, and The Tindall Foundation, with help from project partners including Pamu Farms, iwi, community groups, Trees That Count, and landowners.

The 18 current factsheets cover topics such as native tree planting and managing natural regeneration, with more planned as funding and research allow. They're designed to support landholders, farmers, foresters, community groups, and anyone interested in restoring native forest.

Explore the factsheets: Visit <https://docs.tanestrees.org.nz>

For more information, contact Dr David Bergin: davidbergin.ert@gmail.com



Heading to Mystery Creek this year? 11-14 June

The New Zealand National Agricultural Fieldays®, held at Mystery Creek near Hamilton is just a couple of weeks out (11-14 June 2025) and we're looking forward to attending. Once again, Tāne's Tree Trust will be a part of the Forestry Hub organized by the Ministry for Primary Industries and Te Uru Rākau-New Zealand Forest Service.

The Forestry Hub (the Hub) will be located at the same site as previous years, site G80, which is in a prime location on the corner of G Street and I Road, a key thoroughfare, so make sure to drop by and see us if you want to have a chat about native forestry in New Zealand, grab a copy of our many resources and view our exciting videos.

For more information on Fieldays and how to buy tickets visit the Fieldays website. <https://www.fieldays.co.nz/>



Trustee highlight

Warwick Reflects Last Writes

It was 25 years ago that Rob McGowan phoned me and said we need to talk about native forests. Over coffee we lamented the fact that the enormous interest in saving our native forests following the Pureora logging and tree sitting had such a perverse outcome. Overnight there had been a step change from destruction to preservation and any thought of managing native species for their amazing timber values was forbidden. We arranged a conference to gauge interest in restoring our native forests for all their ecological and economic values. We thought to attract 20-30 people and 120 turned up. There was enthusiastic support for such a venture and one year later Tānes Tree Trust was formed. Rob McGowan was the catalyst for this, and we must never forget that.

This all occurred at a pivotal time for me personally in a way that paralleled the above step change. I was

thoroughly frustrated in my university position where, amongst other irritations, financing of Departments became solely a matter of the dollars that each student represented, and as Department head it became seriously competitive to maintain funding. In my retirement address to science colleagues, where I



initiated the title Last Writes, I was moved to apologise to colleagues in other Departments for the competitive tactics that we used to maintain numbers. My retirement was precipitated by this other step change, this time in university governance and even philosophy (of similar magnitude and consequence to that of native forest) and it was incumbent on me to find other outlets for whatever energy I had left, "to put in place the lessons that life teaches that school never will," - lesson number 1 "If you like something do more of it". In this regard let me encourage those thinking to retire early - I was only 61 - one needs to have a satisfying exit strategy and quite fortuitously TTT became a major part of that. It has given me focus, it has provided me with new challenges and above all provided an amazing group of working colleagues in the complete absence of the competitive dog eat dog that the university had become. Ian Barton, in a similar retirement situation, took over the helm of TTT and expertly steered us through our first 10 years.

A little earlier Ian had introduced our family to some American friends interested in investing in a family forest in NZ. Thus, was initiated Amakiwi Forest, a joint venture between an amazing American family and some dozen NZ friends. On 150 ha of Waikato hill country we planted, weeded, pruned and finally felled a range of exotic species, mainly pine. It was a wonderful learning and collegial



experience, ably led by Ian and fulfilling my need to "do more of it".

Retirement gave me the opportunity to fulfil another latent possibility. Having spent the first few years of my life in Ohakune during the war and having introduced our daughters and grandchildren to skiing on the maunga, we decided we would like to build a recreation place. So, a 10 acre derelict quarry came to be translated into The Beech House. For the past 25 years over 9000 native plants have come to transform this beech forest remnant where rimu, matai, red, silver and black beech, kowhai, red tussock and tawa are thriving again. This ongoing project, which has become my turangawaewae, also includes both fun and hard work on Ivan (Ivan Scavinsky Scavar, scavare = to dig) my 30-year-old seven tonne digger. Have quarry, must dig.

Fortunately, I had other related interests to fill my retirement years - I had recently been appointed chair of the Pukemokemoke Bush Trust. This is a 42 ha (100 acre) gem of a forest remnant just outside Hamilton. Totally infested with privet, gorse, possums and rats at the time, it was ripe for restoration. With an amazing group of volunteers, we attacked these pests and today, after 20 years hard work, this is a beautiful example of lowland kauri podocarp hardwood forest with boardwalks and shelters providing a prime example of what volunteer enthusiasm can achieve and what used to adorn our hills.

And just to keep me grounded, over much of this time, I was on the Rotorua TAG, the Technical Advisory Group, grappling with the Rotorua lakes' nutrient enrichment problems. Again, a dedicated group of specialists concentrated on one problem and working collegially to understand it.

Concurrently I spent two terms on the Tongariro Taupo Conservation Board, in times that were marked by large changes towards co-governance. Two most challenging, and enjoyable outcomes, sprang from this appointment. While chairing a subcommittee of the board dealing with

the next five year plan we were challenged by a group of three Ohakune residents to look again at reviewing and preferably re-opening the Ohakune old coach road. This cobbled road was laid through dense bush 120 years ago, to service the construction of the main trunk railway over the high country, between Ohakune and Raurimu. The challenge was confronted, but in the wake of Cave Creek, DoC was in no mind to entertain such a major project. This project brought me into the company of some amazing Ohakune characters who remain close friends today. Together we made it happen by diverting attention to Wellington and the Historic Places Trust. The road was rediscovered, restored and reopened to become a major attraction for walking and biking, out of Ohakune.

Also springing from The Conservation Board, I was appointed to the Blue Duck (whio) Trust. This trust was sustained using monies required from the diversion of Ruapehu streams to supplement hydro electricity production. We spent many years overseeing the distribution of funds for predator trapping and blue duck conservation throughout the central NI. A very rewarding pastime with a group of dedicated enthusiasts which has seen a massive increase in whio.

All of the above interests have kept me focussed and caused me to reflect on just how much volunteer effort is being expended in areas of conservation, by enthusiasts who, so unlike the competitive environment I left in university life, were dedicated to a simple cause. These causes attract the most amazingly positive, congenial and collegial people, and I have been singularly blessed to be part of these causes. Above all, TTT remains the only group I belong to and, though my time commitments must reduce, I hope to remain in touch and have to say that this cluster of colleagues still amazes me and keeps me young with your selfless dedication to our cause. Thank you TTT.

Warwick Silvester 26 May 2025

Emerging Stronger Conference - 26-28 June

Tāne's Tree Trust would like to make members aware of the upcoming NZ Institute of Forestry conference in Napier. An excellent programme is lined up based on the theme "**Emerging Stronger**". Registration closes on 15th June 2025.

TTT will have a presence at the conference with an exhibition booth. Several of our trustees will be attending, and we will be delivering a CPD (continuing professional development) session on *Native Afforestation* (on 25th June) plus a conference presentation on *Transitioning exotic forests to native* (on 27th June) which will outline the early results of our SFFF Transitioning project. This is geared around transitioning standing radiata-pine forests to permanent native forest cover on our highly erodible steepplands.

Here is more info about the conference -

In the wake of devastating cyclones and other extreme weather events, our forests face unprecedented challenges.

These challenges are not only an East Coast North Island problem, they affect forests of all types across the country.

To address these critical issues, **the New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF) are organising the "Emerging Stronger" conference**, which will bring together leading experts, researchers, conservationists, policymakers, and community leaders.

The conference will run from **26-28 June 2025 in Napier**, with speakers presenting on topics ranging from:

- Assessing impact on forests and infrastructure,
- Policy and funding for recovery,
- Education, social licence and awareness,
- Community involvement,
- Building resilience in forest and infrastructure,
- Innovative restoration techniques,
- Biodiversity conservation post cyclone and,
- Technological advancements for forest restoration

For the full programme, speakers and other information or to register go to www.nzifevents.nz/emerging-stronger.

Registrations close 15 June.



DONATIONS: A note from the Treasurer - all members should be aware that all donations (but not subscriptions), are eligible for a 33.33% tax rebate on your income tax. If required, we can send you a receipt of donation for you to submit to IRD with your tax return.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Membership renewal notices are sent out annually on April 1st via email or post. Members can access all resources at www.tanestrees.org/resources. If you need to update your contact details, simply email us at office@tanestrees.org.nz