

World Wetlands Day 2010: *Caring for wetlands - an answer to climate change*

Lake Serpentine Open Day 6 Feb 2010

It takes a special kind of person to get excited at the sight of a tiny, red thread-like larvae poking its head out of the stem of a wetland plant.

But when Dr Bev Clarkson told a group at the National Wetland Trust's World Wetlands Day event that he's called Fred the Thread, was discovered only a few years ago, and lives *inside* the stem of a rare plant found in only 3 wetlands in the whole world, everyone crowded round for a look.

Dr Clarkson's guided walk to see a re-constructed peat bog, featuring the rare giant cane rush (*Sporadanthus*) and its moth larvae Fred, was one of many events at the Lake Serpentine open day attended by around 75 people last Saturday.

Keith (Bog Man) Thompson led a ramble through the mature kahikatea swamp forest and used an auger to dig up a sample of peat soil spanning thousands of years.

Tracey Edwards of NIWA hauled vegetation out of the lake with a specialised scientific tool (a garden rake!) to give folks a close up look at the special native plants that grow in these lakes, and a few nasty weeds that have found their way there too.



Mike Lake and Amy McDonald from the Department of Conservation (DoC) had the audience hooked with their fish talk, while Judy van Rossem of Environment Waikato and Kate Scarlet entertained the kids with wetland-themed face painting and colour-in.

National Wetland Trust trustees Don Scarlet and Gordon Stephenson showed visitors the Trust's ambitious plans to build a National Wetland Centre on reserve land adjacent to the Serpentine lakes.

It was a hot day, so the Waipa District Council and Mighty River Power shade tents were very welcome, almost as much as the Monavale blueberry ice-cream truck that did a roaring trade.

During the event, Jan Simmons of DoC launched the Waikato Wetland Directory produced by the National Wetland Trust with funding from the Department. The directory outlines where to visit wetlands in the Waikato Region, and is available on the National Wetland Trust website:

http://www.wetlandtrust.org.nz/directory_waik.html

Big thanks to the Department of Conservation and especially Kathryn Carter for co-organising the event, and all the people and organisations who helped out on the day.

Karen Denyer, Executive Officer
National Wetland Trust

8 February 2010

